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A LOCAL MUSEUM
IN A GLOBAL WORLD

a practical guide

Workshop tools presented in the book

dynamika
ekspozycji

Locativo

Ministerstwo
Kultury
i Dziedzictwa
Narodowego

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Introduction

Who we are?

Us – Exhibition Dynamics

We hope that many museum professionals reading this already know us through the Exhibition Dynamics workshops we developed and organised at the Małopolski Institute of Culture in direct collaboration with or through, *Muzeoblog*. We also want our book to reach those outside of the museum world, people whom we can encounter either through this publication or meet personally in the future.

The idea of 'meeting' seems to be most important here. When we were preparing a description of our program over 10 years ago, we deliberated on who we were, who we were working for and why, and came up with a sentence beginning with: 'A museum is a meeting place ...' because a meeting entails mystery, inspiration, flow...

We will explain what a museum means to us – a question that is still valid and evolving; but let's take a moment to think about who we are. We have been working with museums for over 10 years within the Exhibition Dynamics program which was implemented by the Małopolski Institute of Culture. At first we organised and conducted workshops for museum professionals and later on our actions were validated because we were invited to co-create or consult on exhibitions and didactic paths in museums, even to prepare competition guidelines for new investments. And so we found ourselves 'on the other side'. Whilst remaining ambassadors of the audience we also became co-creators of projects addressed to an audience. We collaborated with Institutions such as: the Ethnographic Museum in Krakow on the exhibition Raslila: Liberation Through Dance; the Municipal Museum in Wadowice on Karol Wojtyła's Wadowice; the Jozef Piłsudski Museum in Sulejówek on the concept of the museum; the National Bank of Poland – Centre of Money - and the Interactive Center of Ostrów Tumski History, consulting on concept for both institutions; Oscar Schindler's Factory (a branch of the Historical Museum of the City of Krakow) on creating a series of didactic walks around its former ghetto area; the Historic Salt Mine 'Wieliczka', co-creating its Miners' Route etc. We also co-created other (already completed) museum projects by the Małopolski Institute of Culture: *Muzeobranie*, the international project *Pro Spectatore*, or the latest project: Małopolska's Virtual Museums portal.

Using our experience, we have come up with the project 'A Local Museum in a Global World' which includes this publication. However, let us return to our core idea.

Manifesto:

Mission

A museum serves society, not itself.
A museum has a mission and an ethos; it does not advocate market requirements.
A museum creates new demands rather than merely responding to the highly valued ones of an audience.

Presentation

A museum presents contents, not just objects.
A museum helps to understand the contemporary world, not just the past.
A museum poses questions, not only provides answers.

Communication

A museum lets its users speak, it doesn't just formulate its own message.
A museum creates space for discussion and then participates.
A museum considers the needs and narrations of minorities instead of imposing one perspective.

Our views are the result of practical collaboration with museum professionals as well as observation and analyses of contemporary tendencies in museology and, most of all, of true passion and involvement rooted in a conviction that museums are important places which help to create (find, realise, negotiate) identity and understand the world, also ourselves; finally, they are places where in spite of the postmodern crisis of authenticity, we can make contact with real artefacts. If we wanted to give our actions a theoretical context we would refer to Peter Vergo and The New Museology, or the qualities of the phenomenon of participation; Nina Simon, (Museum 2.0) or finally, to the concept of a critical museum expressed according to the Polish perspective by Piotr Piotrowski (The Critical Museum 'Muzeum krytyczne'). We want a museum not to be an institution of power and unquestionable authority, but instead to be able to manage multiple voices, also within an institution itself. We are also familiar with a more classical approach, be it that of Jean Clair in his book Museums and Discontent (at least some of his intuitions and fears regarding the 'Disneylandization' of museums), or his approach to the main notion of this book and project, i.e. the concept of interpretation by Freeman Tilden, which will be discussed later.

A Local Museum in a Global World. A practical guide

We are convinced that careful interpretation conducted with attention to receivers is the key to the implementation of our manifesto postulates.

Interpretation is what makes the contents presented in museums matter to people.

Joanna Hajduk
Łucja Piekarska-Duraj
Piotr Idziak
Sebastian Wacięga
(Exhibition Dynamics team, Małopolska Institute of Culture)

The project; the interpretation of a museum

The project summarised by this book did not concentrate on the role of a museum as such, or other aspects of museum activity, such as management, modern education and promotion but practised these instruments being presented in this book for a conscious interpretation of museum resources, taking into account global and contemporary contexts as well as local deter- minant factors. We will not go into a deep analysis of ideas (this has already been done by classical authors), instead we will present the instruments we use, analyse the results of our projects and show you how we do things.

Before we move to the workshop, let us briefly go back to Freeman Tilden. This classic theorist presented the notion of interpretation as a didactic activity, designed to present different meanings of a thing and the relation- ships between them in a manner which is more than merely a transfer of information.

In order to further define this notion, Tilden set out six principles of inter- pretation:
1. Interpretation (what is displayed, described, explained) should relate to something familiar to the visitor, e.g. a personal experience of the visitor.
2. Interpretation is not only information; it is based on information yet constructed in such a way that visitors can discover facts and connec- tions independently.
3. Interpretation combines many disciplines, be they academic or arti- stic.
4. The main aim of interpretation is 'provocation' – an inspiration for inde- pendent thought, as opposed to 'instruction' – education through the transfer of information.
5. Interpretation aims to address itself to a whole person, to seek for such an approach to the theme as to be able to understand or discover

the complex, wide phenomena in human life rather than just introduce 'things' and their properties.

6. Interpretations addressed to children (people under 12) should follow a fundamentally different approach than those interpretations addressed to adults. (Based on: Tilden Freeman, Interpreting Our Heritage, Chapel Hill 2007)

Why is the interpretive approach so close to us?

In our work with museums and their resources; in the course of consultations, meetings and deliberations with museum professionals; when analysing questions or issues arising during the course of our work, we realised that a lack of interpretation is often the problem with many museum products (exhibitions, didactic programs)! And we saw clearly how often there is not enough time (?), will (?), need (?), instruments (?) to reflect on the true meaning of these products. The fundamental questions are not being asked: 'Why?', 'For whom?', 'In what context?', 'What is the connection with today's world?', 'Why should it interest our receiver?' 'How (if at all) should it influence one's perception of oneself, of the world one lives in?', and so on... Having analysed museum resources we are under the impression (luckily it is not always the case) that the 'let's display it' stage comes too soon.

In our approach we therefore dedicate a lot of time to interpretation and use various instruments to facilitate this consideration; we do not mean the creation of an oppressive message, i.e. 'one correct interpretation of content'; we mean the creation of a situation where a museum consciously shapes its message at the same time as providing its receivers with instruments for interpretation, thus creating room for discussion and participatory action. Therefore, when using the term 'receiver' in this text, we are aware that it does not fully convey the relationship between a museum and its...visitor...guest...client...said receiver? In the context of planning a good message, (i.e. interpreted content) this concept seemed most appropriate. However, to us, at the same time, the receiver also acts as a sender, which we should remember each time the word is used. Our intention is to create an involving situation where a meeting with museum content results in a better understanding of the present and inspires the ability to voice opinion, despite the hegemony of time and history. We need a global context, i.e. a thorough analysis of what happens in the world, with the world, and how this influences human behaviour and needs. We also need a local context, i.e. make yourself aware of how a museum operates along with references to its environment in order to avoid creating a message which is out of place, not rooted in its reality (its character, also its geographic, historical and social conditions; most importantly, its resources), so that museums do not become amusement parks with a theme that might just as well be presented in Adrychów as in Alaska.

Therefore, in our approach to Tilden's concept we considered global and local aspects, also the aspect of developing competences. Aside from the analyses of a museum's global context, resources and environment, it became important during the course of our work to reflect on a museum itself. We asked ourselves the questions: What did a museum use to be? What is it now? Looking further ahead; what will a museum be in the future? (See table on page 38)

We invited experts in place branding to cooperate on this project because we were convinced that museums can and should support the development of branding the locality in which they operate; also that marketing instruments would be useful in our methodology of heritage interpretation (for instance those used for the development of a receivers' portrait or in support of a search for a brand essence).

Us – Locativo

We joined this project run by MIK for two reasons, one practical and the other emotional; these reasons are intertwined and mainly concerned with the project's subject matter and what was to result from our joined, several months worth of work, i.e. the development of a methodology for creating, to put things simply, really good museums. 'Good' in the sense of adjusting to the requirements and demands of contemporary receivers whilst speaking their language on important and universal matters, and finally, to be able to compete with many other places, attractions and phenomena which are a 'must-see' and a 'must' experience.

We joined the project hoping that our knowledge and experience in territorial marketing would result in a different perspective on the function and position of museums among other cultural and tourist attractions in the country. Museums have great branding potential for cities and regions. We experienced this when working for the Silesian Voivodeship on the development and commercialisation of their Industrial Monuments Route. Today it is one of the flagships of that region's tourist trade and the pride of its inhabitants.

One of our most valuable and fascinating professional experiences is also connected with a museum, specifically with the development of the Miners' Route in Wieliczka, and not only because of the dozens of hours spent underground in narrow corridors that are still inaccessible to regular tourists; it is also the feeling of being associated with unique heritage and an awareness that it is our task to translate it into an intriguing story; quite a challenge, even greater a responsibility and also a true adventure.

Working for cities and regions; creating promotional strategies and concepts; we are more and more convinced of the superiority of systemic action over spectacular but individual action. Sustainable changes can only be implemented with a plan, a clear vision, and almost genetically encoded consistency.

Adam Kałucki
Piotr Sawiński
(Locativo)

What and who is this book for; How can it be helpful?

As has been mentioned before, this book is a result of our latest project 'A Local Museum in a Global World', implemented in 2013 together with three museums in the Małopolska region: The Tatra Museum in Zakopane, The Regional Museum in Tarnów and The Orava Ethnographic Park Museum in Zubrzyca Górna; also with the Locativo company and support of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. We wrote this book to make the tools of our everyday work available for use, be it within the Exhibition Dynamics team or at Locativo. You will find tools for creativity training (semantic maps, brain storms etc.) as well as those known in the area of marketing (brand positioning, market segmentation, mood board etc.). Some of them are well known and widely used yet we have nonetheless collected them here in a logical order which is designed to firstly find an interesting theme which defines our heritage (e.g. a collection) and its analysis, then find an essence which creates and defines the character of a museum as well as any museum activity, be it didactic, promotional, participatory... and finally to create an interpretation plan. All these stages will be described in the following chapters of this book in correlation to the stages of the approach we implemented in the course of this project:

- Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme'
- 'Dare to think differently! From a theme to an essence'
- 'Act! From an essence to implementation'

This book speaks in multiple voices, you will find several different narrations here, and it is written by all the members of the Małopolski Institute of Culture/Exhibition Dynamics team. Each of us brings in their competences, experience and… as we like to call them, 'personal obsessions'. When working together, we clash perspectives: anthropological, ethnographic, economic, political, philological…

Professionals from the museums who participated in this project will also have a say: Julita Dembowska from the Tatra Museum in Zakopane; Jolanta Adamczyk from the Tarnów Regional Museum; Regina Kudzia from The Orava Ethnographic Park Museum in Zubrzyca Górna. They will describe the trial implementations of the results of our work in their museums. Invited experts will also express their opinions, both those who co-created the project itself i.e. Adam Kałucki and Piotr Sawiński, as well as those whose actions and way of thinking are our daily inspirations: Antoni Bartosz, director of the Ethnographic Museum in KraKow; Wacław Idziak, expert in creating local tourist and didactic products based on cultural heritage; and Anna Nacher, anthropologist and cultural specialist.

In a sense, the construction of this book corresponds with the construction of the project, i.e. it is to a large extent of workshop construction. Step by step we describe actions, suggest specific workshop tools, provide comments on actions – therefore this book combines theory with practice, just as we do in our every day work with museums. The project itself involved workshop collaboration between us and all three museums as well as individual sessions with each museum. All meetings happened in the museums, in real environments and with wider museum representation, which meant that the workshops could be attended by larger museum teams, not only project coordinators. We would like to express our appreciation to all the museum professionals who collaborated with us for all their collective creative work.

There wasn't much time (May – August 2013), however it allowed us to implement the project's guidelines, i.e. practice the approach to heritage interpretation that this book describes on three living museum organisms along with their creative participation, and to work out small products – implementations, in order to test them. You will find that this book describes steps and workshop tools as well as examples of results of exercises conducted in individual museums and descriptions of implementations. The implementations described, however, are not the only results of exercises, as working on them was a complex process which could have certain consequences on the museums' and their teams' future actions. We hope that by presenting this publication we will add to the blooming of new ideas, and not only in the museums which participated in the project. In the course of the project we created an essence for each of the museums (we describe how this is done in the second chapter) and many concepts of activities (partly described in the final chapter) that implement the guidelines of an essence.

The method implemented in the project and described here may be of help in many situations: in the search of a concept for a temporary exhibition; in search of a concept for a new museum. It will also be helpful if we wish to prepare a new didactic path, a single workshop or an idea for an activity

involving a local community. This method will be useful wherever there is a need for an interpretation of content. Each time, we wonder to whom, why and what we are saying. In short, each time we ask about the deep meaning of our actions.

The method; a short summary, i.e. how we interpret heritage

The basis for our method of heritage interpretation which is presented in this book is an assumption that a museum is like a story – it transfers contents to its receivers, illustrates them with an exhibition, and creates narrations around them. In order to create narrations and additional contexts for its contents a museum can also implement didactic, animation and promotional activities.

A museum's story has a specific character as it results from the themes that have been derived from its resources, as well as the contexts related to them; although not always the most important one, an exhibition is the basic medium for this. Additionally, a museum's story is characterised by the fact that it provides a wide potential for contacting receivers. A museum can be a platform for opinion exchange, expression and a place where multiple voices are heard. However, in order for this to be possible, a context is necessary for the kind of communication to take place that a good museum story can provoke.

Interpretation helps a museum's team to find answers to questions which can be posed when preparing to create such a story - what story are we telling, for whom and why are we telling it, what means do we have to convey the content and how should our story be constructed? What do we want to communicate with it to our receivers?

The interpretation method consists of three stages, which are the chapters of this book:
- From resources to a theme;
- From a theme to an essence;
- From an essence to implementation.

The steps happen one by one as elements of a process; however, above all they are different levels of reflection. In practice, they often intertwine, connect and repeat. Therefore, they should not be treated as strictly separate.

By interpreting its contents a museum can stop concentrating on the presentation of its collection and start touching on subjects which are important to its receivers.

A Local Museum in a Global World. A practical guide

First stage one of interpretation: from resources to a theme

A museum's theme is the main motif of its story, the central issue it discusses. In the case of many museums a theme is defined by resources (e.g. biographical museums) or set tasks (e.g. the protection of a facility or a specific area of heritage). Yet there are cases where defining a coherent museum theme is more complicated. This can especially happen in the case of large centres, also those museums with diverse collections, with multiple motifs (e.g. municipal or historical museums). In both cases, at the first level of interpretation, a theme can be defined with similar instruments. This is because even with a roughly defined theme, a reflection on it can verify our convictions regarding the contents at hand. This stage serves mostly to perceive resources from a different perspective.

> A global perspective can be found by answering the question: what important message about the present can we convey through our resources?

The search for a theme begins with an analysis of a museum's resources. This entails not only its collection but also its scope of relevant information: the knowledge and skills of its staff; its exhibitional, social and workshop space; its environment (city, district, immediate neighbourhood). A museum's resources are then further analysed from three perspectives:
- receivers' needs
- environment
- global trends and present problems

By looking at a museum from these three perspectives we search for what is particularly interesting about it, what is special, unique, and cannot be found elsewhere. Based on these perspectives, one can identify a theme for a museum as a competitive advantage.

One of the main challenges when identifying a theme is the organisation of content. The theme defines our main and secondary activities. Concentrating actions around a main theme allows for better utilisation of limited museum resources and helps to reach specific groups of receivers, also to formulate clear promotional messages. This does not mean, however, that there is nothing else to be done. A theme's role is similar to the main motif of a story – it leads a narration which also includes subplots and

events... Finally, the objective of a theme is to define a direction for further interpretation.

Qualities of a good theme:
- It is concrete – can be defined in a concise manner.
- It is broad – has the potential of becoming a source of reference, associations, metaphors.
- It is specific – clearly connected with a museum's resources, it is not easily explored elsewhere.

Second stage two of interpretation: from a theme to an essence

The choice of a specific theme can initially suggest that a museum's actions will be limited to just one issue. If, however, a theme has been properly formulated and has solid ground in a museum's resources, then by its interpretation, one can find many references, meanings and inspirations as a result. This means that the chosen theme is only a starting point for the creation of a wide selection of possible things to think about. When looking for these things, three basic aspects should be taken into consideration:
- Updating – what problems within the selected subject-matter are particularly important in view of present-day problems and challenges? What is particularly important and interesting to the receivers of the day?
- Location – what important message does a theme convey about an environment (museum, city, district...)? What is particularly worth mentioning in the context of our resources? Why are we raising this issue in this particular location?
- Presentation – what within this thematic scope is particularly inspiring in terms of exhibition, animation, didacticism, promotion..?

At this stage, interpretation serves to explain a theme and find what is most important to us, our receivers and the world. Explaining a theme is the basis for interpretation – the central element of this method. At this stage we aim to grasp the gist of a matter: what exactly is the story? This is not about summation, it is about defining a deeper meaning, identifying the qualities that a chosen theme presents. This is the basis for formulating an ESSENCE – the leading metaphor of a museum. An essence can take the form of a sentence as well as a single term. The most important thing

is that it accurately expresses the subject matter of a museum's content. An essence should have a poetic quality – bring new meaning to our contents, without referring to them directly.

Good essence is:

- intriguing – backed by emotions and metaphors, it has a component of mystery, it puzzles, encourages one to look deeper
- inspiring – it indicates previously undiscovered areas of activity or brings new meanings to previous activities!
- captivating – it is convincing to a museum's team, we want to join the game
- unique – results from a theme being interpreted by a museum's team
- realistic – based on varied museum resources
- unifying – it works like an umbrella combining all key assets of a chosen theme; it has strategic longevity.

Theme vs. essence

- A theme is the main issue we discuss, an essence is how we understand it.
- An essence is our interpretation of a theme.
- A theme concentrates attention, an essence opens up a wide horizon of meanings, actions and connections.

Third stage three of interpretation: from an essence to implementation

At the final stage of the interpretative workshop we create a set of activity suggestions which can fall into three basic presentation fields: exposition, education and promotion. This involves the entire scope of content and ideas generated as a result of the whole interpretation process – both at the stage of searching for a theme as well as its analysis and the formulation of an essence.

When planning individual actions we have to consider the conclusions from the analysis of a museum's potential, its receivers and environment as well as the set of inspirations and references formulated during the analysis of its theme. This entire process becomes the basis for planning at this stage. The role of an es-

sence can be defined here as inspiring and verifying. On the one hand it suggests possible areas of action, and on the other hand it facilitates assessment of whether undertaken actions maintain a chosen direction.

> An essence must be directly communicated to receivers, however, when addressing specific contents to them and taking actions involving them, we should know the answer as to how these actions implement the adopted essence.

In short

The graph below illustrates a set of contents which will be generated during the interpretation workshop described later in this book. The layout reflects the order of work and connections between individual analyses.
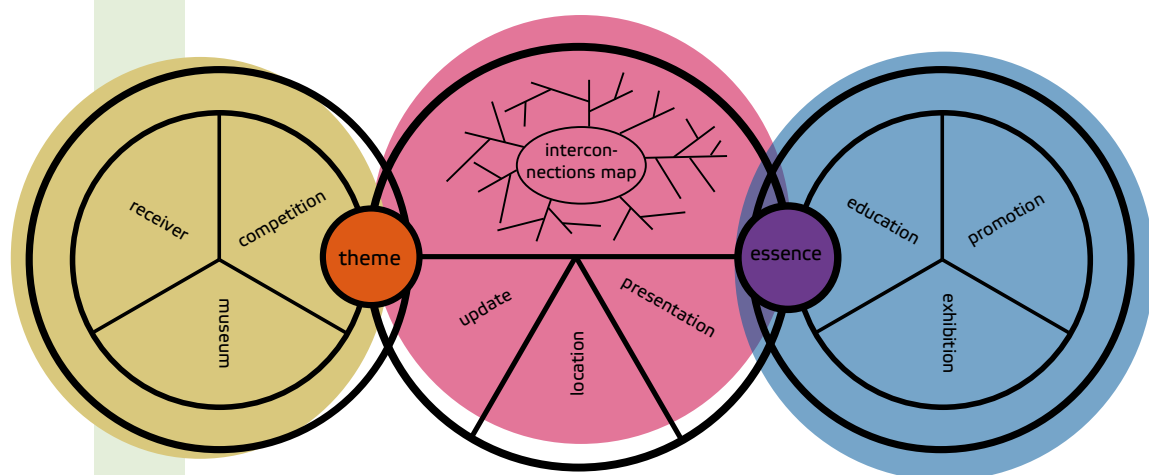
Frequently asked questions

Our historical/ethnographic collections are very valuable, why do we have to refer them to contemporary phenomena, global trends and the needs of receivers? Do they not present value on their own?

The value of resources, which objectively can be very high, is not necessarily perceived as such by visitors. If a museum is concerned about involving visitors who are less familiar with a collection, they can consider an upda-

ted form of presentation, which leads their visitors from contemporary, catchy issues to an interest in a museum piece itself.

Updating may increase receiver numbers, it can help to understand and also substantiate the value of a collection. Updating a museum's content serves not only to build communication with receivers but also helps a museum's team to discover the meaning of content, and subsequently, to appreciate their own role in an institution which has an important message to give to the contemporary world.

We have a valuable art collection, why should we interpret it if visitors can do it themselves?

Museum visitors sometimes feel overwhelmed by the value of a collection, and in the case of contemporary art there is sometimes discomfort resulting from the fact that visitors lack the competence (or think they lack the competence) to appreciate it.

Thanks to interpretation, a museum can support the reception of art, providing visitors with the instruments to understand and admire it.

Doesn't a museum impose its message on receivers by introducing an interpretation strategy, thereby preventing their own interpretation?

This is a very complex issue. On the one hand a museum should definitely support and appreciate a receiver's interpretation of its message. On the other hand, it is a museum's staff, with their knowledge and experience that can make a message expressive and valuable, and in this way, museum pieces become more available to the receiver. In our opinion, the best situation is when a museum does not limit itself to passing on information about a theme but rather provides tools for a better understanding of the world, especially the one fragment of it which is presented in the museum through its showpieces. In this way a museum does not assume only one possible line of interpretation but instead aspires to support the public with a wide and multidimensional perspective in order to provide knowledge, emotion and impression.

Is adjusting to receivers' needs not lowering standards (losing authority)?

No, it is not. A good exhibition or didactic program constitutes most of all of an efficient message and situation that facilitates the experience of heritage. This philosophy of presenting resources is based on the assumption that culture, in order to exist, must circulate. In this sense, heritage becomes valuable because it matters to someone, someone needs it and someone receives it. In order for this to be possible with reference to the museum mission, it is worth considering a receiver's receptiveness and needs.

receiver

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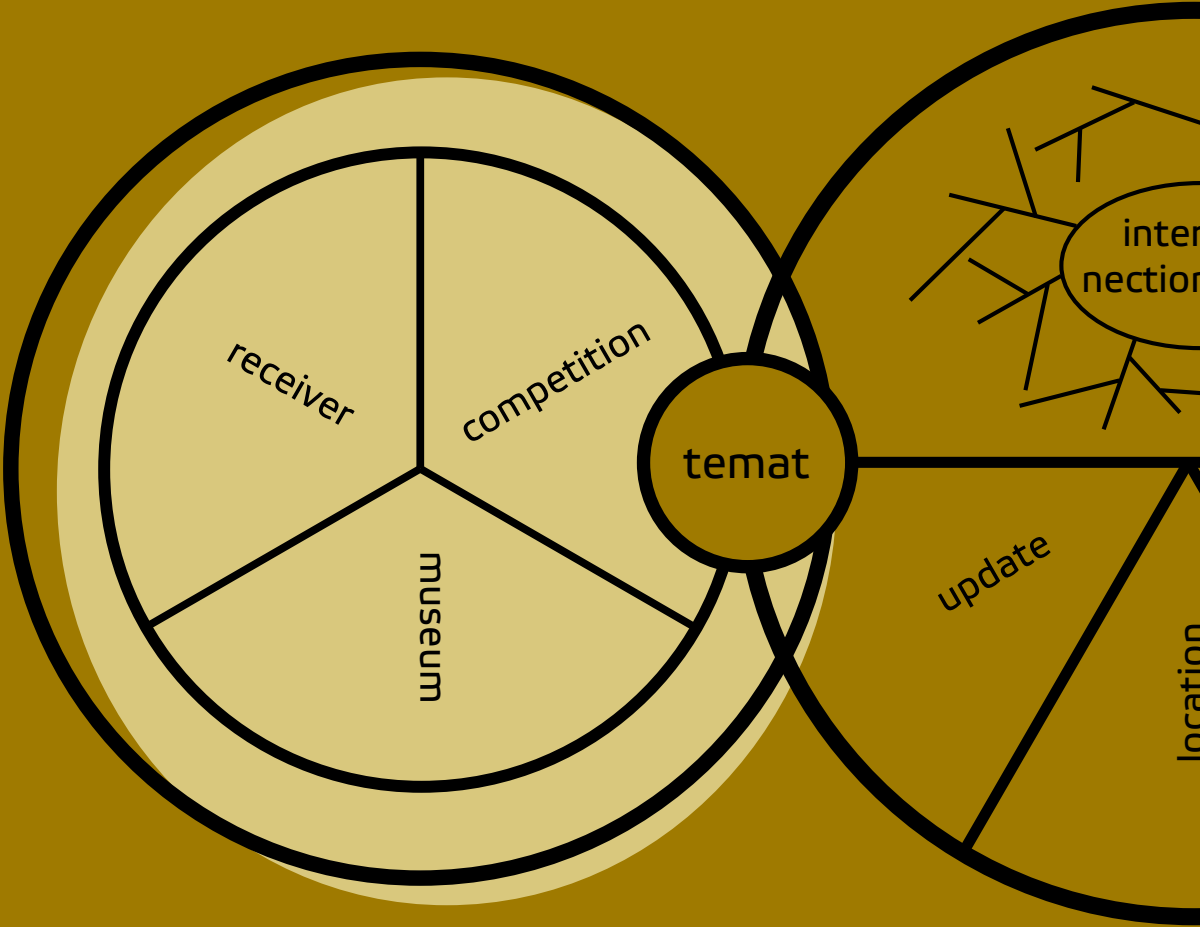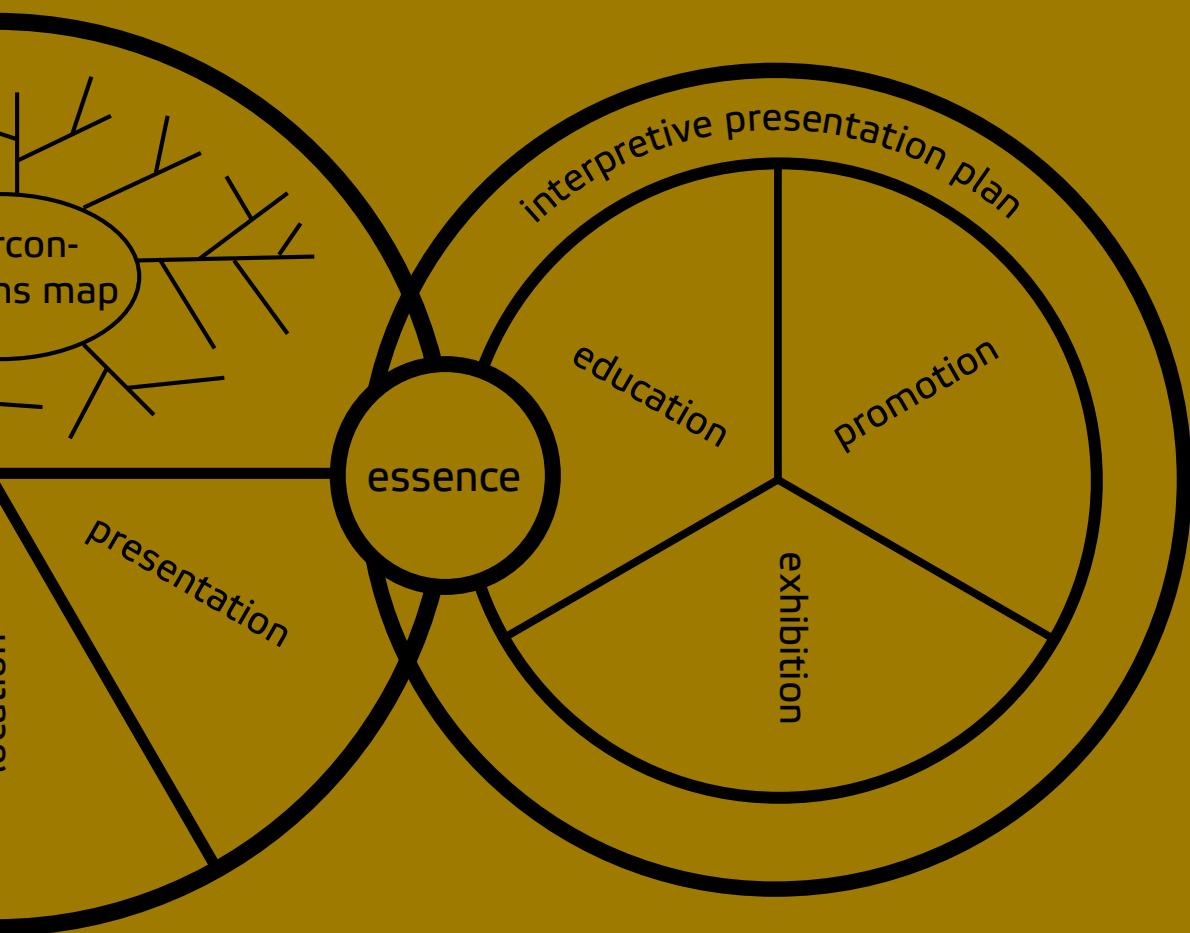
Get to know yourself!

From resources to a theme

(A description of stage one of the method for interpreting heritage.)

I. What is this chapter about?

In this chapter we will describe the starting point that comes before the search for a theme and ways leading to a main theme (stage one of the model of the heritage interpretation method presented here). We will examine a museum's resources and its receivers and environment whilst considering global trends which the museum can address in its activity.

This analysis will serve as the basis for:

- a well-considered choice of main theme (the result of stage one of the method);
- an interpretation of a museum's content, i.e. looking for wide references to the main theme (the result of stage two of the method);
- concepts of projects to be implemented (the result of stage three of the method).

Stage one of the model can be treated as a strategic diagnosis of an institution and its environment. It results in systematized knowledge for the possibility of a museum to operate with outside determinant factors (receivers, important objects in its environment and further factors, for example phenomena and trends considered as significant). The results of a conducted analysis can also be used to create several years worth of development plans, or a museum strategy.

In stage one of the suggested model we analyse resources and trends in order to formulate a main theme. Within the 'A Local Museum in a Global World' project, we began our work in Zakopane, at the Władysław Hasior Gallery (a branch of the Tatra Museum). Initially it seemed that the choice of theme would not be too demanding, and initial ideas connected with it seemed indisputable and obvious: Hasior's house, Hasior's studio, Hasior's art, the artist and his work, Hasior's output vs. his contemporaries etc.

Such themes had one major drawback – they could refer to any artist. What we wanted was to find motifs specific to Hasior and the place where he worked.

The analysis conducted in stage one of the model allowed us to depart from these obvious approaches towards a slightly narrower and more original theme, which became Hasior's creative method (the theme was developed in stage two of the model, and the so-called 'essence' was added, see: chapter two, p.75). It's selection was not only based on pure analyses, global trends, the gallery's resources and its receivers (visiting an exhibition in an individual receiver's shoes, see p. 50) but also thanks to normal curiosity and the asking of a layman's questions. When looking at the artist's astonishing and original works, often created from 'used props of everyday life', we also wondered: 'How did he do it?', 'What principles did he follow by putting together different everyday objects in one artistic piece?' and 'Why are these works both funny and scary?', 'What were the author's intentions and objectives when he used commonplace objects to take up meaningful subjects?'.

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme

We began our work in stage one of the model by identifying and creating a list of global trends which seemed significant to contemporary museum activity (See p. 35). When analysing the ones which can today be attributed to Hasior's work, we noticed the contemporary phenomenon of the increased importance of creativity as a competence connected, among others, with the need to discover one's own potential and improve one's own productivity. We also analysed the Hasior Gallery in relation to its environment and neighbourhood (e.g. kitschy attractions in Krupówki, which today could be used as inspiration or material for creations true to the spirit of Hasior's works). We considered other cultural institutions in Zakopane as 'the environment' and noticed a certain affinity between Hasior and Witkacy. The Provocative character of Hasior's works brought to mind an association with the nearby Witkacy Theatre, named after an author and artist whose work and personality often provoked pre-war receivers. We also prepared a detailed portrait of a gallery receiver and experienced the exhibition 'in their shoes' (See p.50). A wide look at trends, environment and a potential receiver resulted in the choice of a theme (Hasior's creative method). In stage two of the model we formulated an essence, i.e. an interpretation of the chosen theme. The interpreted essence of the Hasior Gallery (provocation of imagination) indicated how we could develop ideas for the gallery's further activities. A tentative list of such ideas (a draft interpretation plan) and test implementation (cards with selected works by Hasior) were prepared in stage three of the model.

From a portrait of a receiver to a meeting with a receiver at the Hasior Gallery – a memorandum

22 May 2013, Zakopane
Work meeting of the team at the Hasior Gallery in Zakopane

We outline a portrait of a typical receiver at the Hasior Gallery: Nina Włodarska, age 40+, monthly income ca. 3000 PLN gross, independent profession, higher education in humanities/arts, inquisitive, looking for self-fulfilment, a dreamer, emotionally intelligent, emphatic, individualistic, egocentric, uncompromising (more: receiver's profile, page 48).
Having outlined a psychological portrait, we get 'in their shoes' (See: exercise on page 52) and visit the exhibition as Nina Włodarska... During the exercise, one of the gallery visitors spontaneously approaches our group. After a while it is clear that the characteristics of the lady who has approached us are 90% compatible with the ones roughly defined in the receiver's portrait. She was encountering Hasior's work again after many years... Our meeting with the receiver turned into a longer conversation.

When choosing a main theme and an essence, as well as implementation ideas (stage three of the model) we bear in mind our meeting with 'Nina Włodarska' and her remarks, personal needs, observations and ideas such as: 'Hasior's work inspires deeper reflection, bold, brave ideas'; 'The exhibition is characterised by mysteriousness, it is a true mystery, a true find for those who are looking for something exceptional'; 'I could not find any information about the museum, the museum lacks promotion in the town'.

II. Why should we attempt an analysis of resources?

The starting point for working on stage one of the method is to look at a museum with fresh eyes, rediscover it; discover its hidden potential and make reference to contemporary global phenomena. Sounds utopian? Not necessarily; if we approach the matter with a system, and implement the instruments of a 'strategic diagnosis' –i.e. the examination of an organisation's potential and environment (especially its present and potential receivers, not to mention present and potential competitors and partners in its environment). Based on a systematic and collective review of available resources, the examination of a museum's potential in the context of its environment and selected global trends, it is possible to indicate a group of themes which can become a starting point for further plans and exhibitions, also didactic and promotional activities.

Why should we get to know something already well-known?

Why is it worth making the effort if we know our institution inside out, prepare regular collection documentation, can provide catalogues, publications, professional studies? Here are some benefits of analysing a museum's resources and its environment:

1. A fresh, distanced look at one's institution allows the discovery of previously unused possible actions; it is a way of developing the institution, by discovering and exposing1 its potential; and benefiting from it.
2. A fresh look at a museum, from the outside, lets us get closer to the receivers, adjust to their needs and meet their requirements and limitations, e.g. their knowledge (or lack thereof).

1 —— Kazimierz Sowa observed that development, *(developpment)* in French and *(development)* in English, is derived from the Latin word *develo*, i.e. 'uncover' or 'expose'. Therefore development can be understood as 'uncovering something that existed before' (K. Sowa, *Lokalizm, centralizm i rozwój społeczny,* in *idem, Socjologia, społeczeństwo, polityka,* Rzeszów 2000, p. 104), bringing to light a hidden, previously invisible potential.

3. Thanks to a regular and detailed analysis of receiver groups a museum can better reach them on every level of its activity – didactic, exhibitional and promotional.
4. An analysis of environment (competitors as well as potential partners) allows a museum to see more clearly which visitor requirements it meets, this makes it more aware of its unique resources and possible actions. It can also increase its attendance by creating presentation plans that use its institutional potential and resources more fully, taking into consideration the organisations of an environment that address their actions to similar groups of receivers.
5. Identification of global trends influencing our everyday lives and reference to them in a museum's activity transforms a museum into a contemporary medium which not only presents the past but also uses it to help explain the present or question and debate contemporary issues.
6. Detailed analysis of a museum's potential in the context of its receivers, its environment and global trends brings out valid contemporary themes which the museum can address in its activity. This way, museum collections and resources can be presented as a value not only in itself but also interpreted in such a way as to involve new receivers who have not been previously interested in museums or the objective value of their resources.

Workshop. Get to know yourself!
How to progress from resources to a theme

How to get to know a museum afresh?

A look from the outside, discovering a museum anew, getting to know an institution in the context of global trends, receivers and environment may sound like a utopian postulate.

This type of work can take quite a compact and organised form. To illustrate it we put down a list of steps and actions to be taken at stage one of the model. We also added examples of instruments (e.g. questions, exercises), which can be helpful in unassisted work. They should be treated with some flexibility – adapted and transformed according to need and ability.

Create good working conditions

Firstly, we select a team – efficient work requires at least 2 people. It is good if they represent two perspectives (e.g. diffe-

rent divisions, have different experience). Team work allows for a wider perspective, verified views, task division, and agreed upon, realistic conclusions.

Appointing a project team can bring a new quality to an institution's operation. It is formed of people who can perform different functions to their every day work. In order for a project team to be efficient, it is worth obtaining the management's consent as well as defining a time frame necessary for the work i.e. from diagnosis to implementation of a prepared concept (e.g. one day a week for a determined number of months).

In order to initiate collective work, especially if it is the first of such a project team in an institution, it might be helpful to integrate the team through a warm up task. For instance, at the beginning of work, each team member could reveal a competence that other team members do not know about.

The appointed project team should adapt to roles that facilitate efficient work: the leader, who coordinates all the work; the secretary, who will write meeting memos (such as prepared contents and decisions) and a person leading meetings. In practice, if teams are small then duel roles can be created. If a team needs specific specialist knowledge, it is advisable to invite field specialists for permanent or temporary cooperation. However, if a team wishes to get a fresh look along with new questions and perspectives on well-known problems, issues or collections, they should invite a friendly layman to cooperate.

What if we do not have the time or space to work?

In the case of little or no time it might be worth gathering a team inside a museum for several meetings outside of regular working hours. Perhaps it would be worth investing some of this private time in collective reflection, especially when we have the feeling of acting as if we were inside a hamster wheel.

A hamster in a wheel – a metaphor of pointless, repetitive, endless work

If there is no room inside a museum you can meet outside it – at a cultural centre, school, library, or a common dayroom.
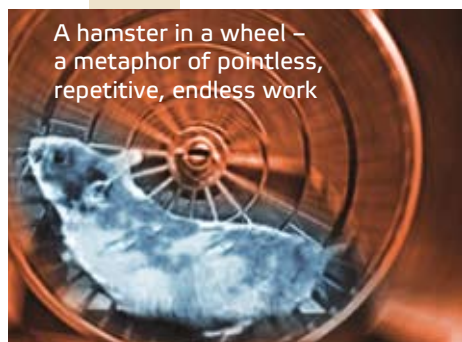
Workshop tool: An exhibition about me (Dixit cards)

Dixit cards with metaphorical images can be used for a team to get to know each other and integrate. You can lay a deck of cards on a table and ask the team to create an exhibition about themselves. To do so, each team member chooses one card without showing it to the others and gives it a title that refers to the image on the card. Then, all the cards are collected, shuffled and laid on the table face up. The creator of the exhibition reveals their title and based on that title, the team's task is to point to the right card.

Some other good opening phrases are:

'If this card were the cover of my autobiography...'

'If this card were the museum poster...'

The choice of option depends on our objective: is it to find the potential of individual team members or is it to have a collective vision of the museum. We should stick to the pattern of statements; for team members not to digress or speak for too long.

Workshop tool: Unidentified competence – passions and interests

At the beginning of work each team member reveals one of his competences or skills that other team members do not know about (e.g. related to a hobby). If a group feels like it, they can prepare a list of more competences and skills.

Workshop tool: Quit the role exercise

In this exercise we adopt a randomly selected role and describe our – imaginary – visit to a museum, as if the person speaking about it was:

- an estate agent who wants to sell the venue
- an anarchist who wants to change museums into places of greater social utility
- a child who came with its grandparents
- a junior high school boy, visiting with his classmates
- a minister of culture
- an interior designer
- a foreign and lost tourist
- an 'agent' of a rival museum.

During the presentations, (which commence after a few minutes time to think and make notes) spontaneous comments can be

put down on pieces of paper. This type of role play exercise helps create a distance from one's institution.

Workshop tool: The Himalayas – a team exercise

This is a very important exercise which helps to appreciate a team's potential. The idea is to notice and use the fact that museum staff are not a set of posts and functions but a group of specific people with: knowledge, experience, passions, competences, hobbies, contacts... All these things constitute resources which can enrich a museum's activity (which is not to say that they are obligated to commit everything they have for the benefit of their work).

This exercise is very easy to conduct. The group should gather in one place in order to be able to see the leader. The leader is the moderator and actively conducts a brain storm, writing ideas on a flipchart.

The leader informs the group that the objective of the meeting is to organise a trip to the Himalayas. Of course, we are aware that it is quite unexpected and most probably no one is planning such an expedition but we want to see if we can plan a trip with the participation of everyone. What counts now is that within our competences, skills etc. we find everything that can possibly help our plan. The desired result of this exercise is to set a realistic date for an exhibition.

What examples of resources can we refer to? For instance: a familiar trainer could help to prepare a team physically; in exchange for promotion, the team agree to test sportswear from a familiar sports shop, etc. We need to utilise personal abilities and share ideas.

What is the point of this exercise? To reach the finishing line, together, i.e. determining when and on what terms we are going to the Himalayas lets us feel that anything is possible. Moreover, we can clearly feel that the strength of a team requires a collection of individual resources. It also turns out that even seemingly unrelated resources can be useful.

The analogy to a museum venture is very clear.

Find the time and space

If possible, it is good to find (e.g. get the boss's consent, ask a colleague to substitute) the time to conduct work which leads from an analysis of a museum's resources to a specific implementation. It is also recommendable to find a separate working space, free of interference.

Adoption of common team work principles

The beginning of team work should be treated as a new opening, a new project, where participants set themselves new roles. For the sake of successful work, a few basic principles should be adopted to facilitate this, for instance:

Firstly, we accept the possibility of being wrong and making mistakes – the risk of a mistake is a part of any new action and experiment.

Secondly, we do not criticise others; we try to reach an objective together.

Thirdly, we assume that there are no stupid questions – everyone has the right not to know something, not to understand, and ask questions about the discussed issues.

It is an important job for the workshop moderator to maintain the emotional health of a team, and at the same time stick to the point of the session and not allow personal remarks.

We recommend that you formulate your own team work principles, e.g. not to leave a meeting prematurely; setting a regular day for meetings; calling in lateness or absence in advance. Make sure mobile phones are switched off.

Let us remember to take 'inter-lesson exercise' and air the room. This may sound trivial but it does improve comfort and effectiveness. Simple stretching and breathing exercises can work miracles. The easiest one is to stand in a circle and ask everyone to demonstrate an exercise for everyone else to copy.

Choosing a meeting secretary and making notes

Work meetings often generate ideas and remarks which can be useful later -unfortunately they are often forgotten. This is why it is a good idea to write these down on large Bristol boards or flip chart pads, then, after each meeting, make a memo and send it to team members.

A minute taker who will write memos and distribute them to other team members can also be decided upon. This can either be a permanent role or one that is assigned before each meeting.

The following can be useful at a meeting:
- large sheets of paper (e.g. Bristol board, the back of a poster, large cardboard or a flip chart),

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme

- markers,
- post-its.

Let's start working!

Stage one of the model is an area for asking questions and of speculation; for the team and other staff members to give their opinions on possible answers. The example questions and instruments presented below can be used as a methodical process for getting to know your museum anew.
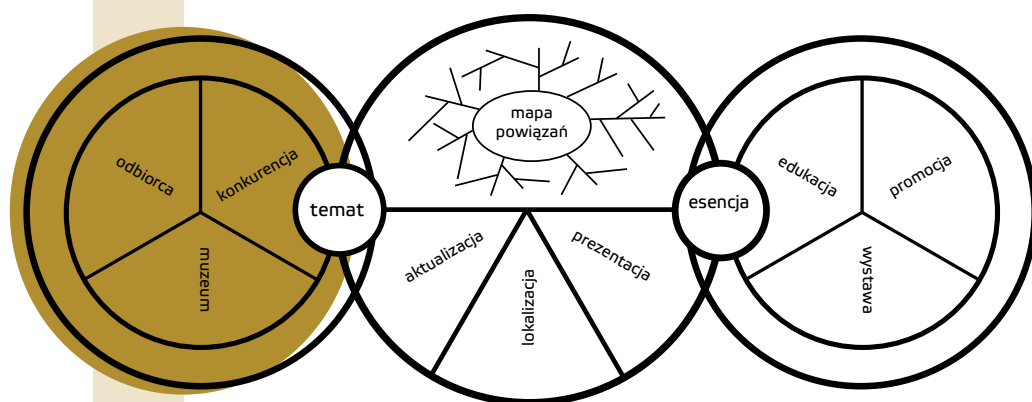
Step 1. Global trends

In step one it is worth considering in which direction the world is moving. We assume that the museum is not an enclave and that to some extent it is subject to global trends and can also refer to them in its actions. Obviously, there is no set of objective trends in this area; this is why we should not be shy to ask questions or be ashamed of our ignorance. We should have the right to refer not only to professional literature but also to personal experiences, observations, and intuition. We should explore the power of team work – ask questions, make bold hypotheses and discuss possible answers.

About global trends

The last decade has been a period in which there has been a real outburst of ideas and global concepts. The scale of this phenomenon is unprecedented, particularly when it is compared to the 20th century, which was dominated by several great narrations. The present situation, which can sometimes be considered an overproduction of new ideas has been made possible by global digitalisation and unlimited access to the internet, which allows information to spread like a virus, reaching the most remote places on our planet.

How to separate the wheat from the chaff? i.e. valuable, accurate diagnoses and inspiring concepts - from eye-catching slogans with no intellectual depth; and finally, how to distinguish a fashion from a trend? The general criteria include: period, range and intensity of a phenomenon. In this sense, a trend is something 'lasting, developing, growing in intensity and appearing in ever wider social or consumer groups'[2]. Many theorists recognise that there are short-lived trends and passing fashions, but how to label such phenomena? This could be the subject of an academic dispute, however, we are interested in something else.

According to the generally adopted methodology, we have divided trends into categories befitting the needs of workshops for museum professionals: demographic, economic, social, technological, legal and political. The most important ones, often referred to as 'megatrends' are: migrations, the aging of society, changing family models, urbanisation, economic crisis, ecology; the universally available Internet. There are also some equally interesting trends in the context of museums which we focused on:

- authenticity, locality, homeliness – unique experiences, looking behind the scenes to find manifestations of authentic experience
- *edutainment* – learning through play, a modern form of active tourism - 3E (education, excitement, entertainment) pushes out the traditional, passive form - 3S (sun, sea, sand)
- professionalisation of hobbies – developing private interests (e.g. culinary, sports or artistic) through participation in specialist courses, writing blogs, being part of a community
- seniors on the market – the growing average age of societies connects with a growing need for health services and comfortable travel
- the cult of youth – keeping active and staying socially, physically and intellectually attractive regardless of age; modelling one's behaviour, clothes and interests on younger generations

2 —— M. J. Jaworowski, P. Polański, *Trendy społeczne i konsumenckie w Polsce u progu Unii Europejskiej*, Warszawa 2004, p. 3.

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme

- a child-centred approach – increased family expenditure on children, focusing on children's offers when choosing a place for holidays or free time
- *slow* – a postulate to slow down the huge speed of life, carried out on many ideologically coherent levels - slow life, slow food, slow city…
- 100 lives in one life – a growing number of duties, both professional and family orientated, at the expense of private time
- using instead of owning – an attitude forced by crisis which involves the borrowing and renting of material goods (flat, car etc.).
- do it yourself – enjoying the creation of something with one's own hands, discovering one's abilities and potential, an opportunity to show one's creativity, and original perspective of the surrounding world.

Behind all these concepts, neologisms and borrowings, there is a portrait of contemporary man, a participant in social life, a citizen, parent, consumer; a spectator and cultural participant etc. The surrounding world makes him want to adapt, become similar and at the same time stand out; emphasise his individuality and manifest his uniqueness. This is very practical knowledge for all those who want to reach receivers with what they offer, and is just as valid for producers of material goods and cultural professionals.

Many dominating trends are accompanied by counter-trends – with a different character, often specialised, constituting a form or response of some consumers to such ubiquitous presences. So for instance, smart-phonisation, one of the symbols of the present decade and brought about the so-called 'digital detox', which itself resulted from an urge to escape at least momentarily from the permanent state of being online and being surrounded by electronic gadgets. This translates directly into tourism. On the one hand, this branch offers a hugely increased number of interactive, multimedia attractions, and on the other hand, many hotel owners and holiday organisers offer rest and relaxation as a form of temporary detox from the abundance of every day stimuli (e.g. 'no Wi-Fi'). The paradox of this situation is the fact that both trends, despite having obvious differences, can often refer to the same group of people, for instance busy inhabitants of large cities.

Perhaps in as soon as in five years' time the list of trends will become at least partially obsolete. Research institutes, journalists and marketing specialists continue to publish comparative lists of presently dominating phenomena (James Harkin listed as many as 723 in his Big Ideas. The Essential Guide to the Latest Thinking). The trivial statement that change-ability is the only unchanging trend is still valid. This is why it is extremely important for anyone's work, including that of museum professionals, to simultaneously develop three key competences that relate to existing trends:

3 —— J. Harkin, *Trendologia. Niezbędny przewodnik po przełomowych ideach*, Kraków 2010.

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- knowledge – I know the present trends, I know where to find them.
- skills – I can make use of them, translate them to my own activities.
- attitudes – I am open to changes connected with new trends and am ready to take a possible risk.

Speaking of an open attitude, the results of observations made in one's immediate environment, family, group of friends, public life and mass media can be just as valuable as reading about trend ratings. Independent searches for trends and attempts to find the terminology for them can become an unusual intellectual adventure that is beneficial to one's work.

Looking for contemporary trends (Zakopane)

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme
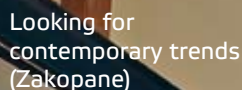
What is it like in your case?

At the beginning of our work we should ask ourselves a few questions:
- Which of the listed trends are also visible in our region, family and home?
- Which trends apply to museums?
- Which of the identified trends are related to museum pieces and contents; subject matter referred to by our museum?
- Which of the trends do we notice in our receivers?

Workshop tool: List of trends

Make a list of trends which can be applied to you, do not be afraid to use your intuition, take a look at yourselves, do not judge (it is best to avoid the discussion of whether it is good or bad, stay cool)!

The table below includes the results from one of 'A Local Museum in a Global World " project team meetings. At the meeting, participants suggested different trends and museum qualities which they considered to be important. As a result of the discussion we prepared a table regarding the discussed trends and museum changes. We agreed to divide it up according to museum characteristics at the beginning of their operation, and their present distinguishing features. The final column includes possibilities as to what direction a museum might take.

Considering global trends in your work is done not to please the public and blindly follow trends, but instead to realise what kind of a world we operate in. The point of trend analysis is to notice these changes – to see museums from the perspective of constant change.

The changes of museum roles and functions identified by the 'A Local Museum in a Global World' project team

Auxiliary questions	Trends/cultural codes		
	Rooted	**Dominating**	**Emerging**
Who visits museums?	the elite, aristocracy, connoisseurs	school trips, tourists, families with children, individualists, local citizens	families (2+1), sightseeing parties
Attitude towards the museum?	respect, awe	fashion, obligatory visiting destinations (top museums only), it is the right place to go	friendly, helpful and useful place; a place to spend free time in an interesting way; to look for inspiration, a place that supports development

What is the museum's social function?	a salon, a sanctuary of arts	developing national and regional identity	social space, a space for discovering your identity
What is most important in a museum?	a museum's pieces, its collection	interaction, multi-level education, new technologies	theme, interpretation of museum pieces, learning through play
Who/ what can a museum be compared to?	shrine	cultural centre	centre of authentic knowledge and competence, a place of dialogue
Who creates/ organises a museum?	collectors, aficionados, the state	public administration, social organisations	private founders (arts patrons), local communities (countryside educational programmes)

The above table presents our reflection on the place a museum has in the contemporary world. Creating a trend analysis table for our institution can become an element of the interpretive workshop at this stage. It helps to define the direction of further work from the very beginning. A table of trends is a form of state diagnosis, it incorporates our present situation in a broader process and at the same time allows for a better definition of the state we aspire to. The table below includes examples of issues which can be considered. The list of questions can be broadened by specific issues connected with an institution's operating conditions.

Auxiliary questions	Trends		
	Rooted (before)	Dominating (today)	Rising (tomorrow)
Who visits our museum?			
How do the visitors feel about our museum, what do they expect?			
What is the museum's function in the life of our city, district, street?			
What competences are our staff required to possess?			
What/who can our museum be compared to?			
Who creates, organises the museum?			
What expectations of our museum does an organiser have?			
What are the main elements of what we offer (exposition, education, events...)?			
What does our promotion involve?			

GAY FRIENDLY? INNOŚĆ ZAGRODZIE
WIELOKULTUROWOŚĆ

MĘSKIE OBOWIĄZKI! MĘSKI ŚWIAT (ROLA MĘSKIE
WE WSI)
→ TEST NA MĘSKOŚĆ W SKANSENIE
MĘSKIE PRACE (SURVIVAL!)
NATURALNE METODY LECZENIA MĘSKOŚCI

DZIECIOCENTRYZM — ŚCIEŻKI RODZINNI,
→ DZIECKO MUSI SIĘ CZEGOŚ NAUCZYĆ
„OTULINA SKANSENU" (OFERTA DLA
ROLA DZIECKA   RODZIN)

KULT MŁODOŚCI— KIEDYŚ MŁODY MIAŁ TYLKO
→ SIŁA   WIEK = AUTORYTET   SŁUCHAĆ!
→ NATURALNOŚĆ   KIEDYŚ OBOWIĄZYWAŁ
→ AUTENTYCZNOŚĆ   KULT SIŁY
                     PRZYDATNOŚĆ
3P
                  → LOKALNOŚĆ
PROFESJONALIZACJA → DZIAŁKOWCY (ROŚLINY,
   HOBBY   STOŁECZNOŚĆ)
                   → MIŁOŚNICY KWIATÓW (NASIONA)
                   → ZIELARSTWO
                   → PRZEMYSŁO LOKALNE (TRWAŁE)
(AKTYWIZACJA MIESZKAŃCÓW) → MŁODZI PROJEKTANCI
                   ARTYŚCI / STYL OTMALSK/MOTYWY
                                    → SAKRALNOŚĆ
                   → KULINARIA   → TRADYCJA
                                        Z SUROWCÓW
AKTYWNOŚĆ ← → SPOWALNIANIE
              SLOW   KONTEMPLACJA
PRZESTA CZASU   RÓWNOWAGA MIĘDZY NATURY
   → ŻYCIE W RYTMIE MAN ŚWIAT CZŁOWIEKA
   PÓR ROKU NA WSI   RYTM
   • RYTM PRACY/ŻYCIA
   • UMIEJĘTNOŚCI ODCZYTANIA ZNAKÓW
   (JAK CZYTAĆ POGODĘ PRZYRODY

Contemporary trends found in an open air museum (Zubrzyca Górna)

Step 2. Receiver: who is listening to us and who is speaking to us?

When working with the interpretive method we take into account the receivers' perspective, we try to become more aware of their abilities, limitations (e.g. knowledge, perception), habits and expectations. We try to learn about their interests, what they consider to be important and their needs. With an interpretive approach to heritage we look for ways to reach and get closer to receivers so that we can imagine their point of view in order to build a message (select a theme and its interpretation), which will both interest and involve them.

The way we define a receiver influences the result of stage one of the method i.e. the choice of main theme. During team meetings we look for answers to different questions regarding the receiver. Receivers do not have to be researched by specialised companies only. A museum team, despite its many limitations (e.g. financial), is also equipped with many possibilities. Most of all, it has constant access to the receivers who visit it. We can gather knowledge about receivers using our professional connections, but also through social or family connections with people who represent museum receivers or know them well (e.g. teachers of specific subjects, students of specific schools and specialised classes). How to begin the process of gaining approach a better knowledge (understanding, feeling) of the receivers? We should ask ourselves a few questions about receivers and then develop a portrait of a receiver.

Who visits a museum?

People say that there is no such person as a tourist. Most of us just become tourists from time to time; some of us become travellers, others consumers of local services and products while others still, are pilgrims or spa-goers.

It is obvious that museums are not only visited on holiday, and that what they offer should not be based on the needs of such a vague target group as tourists.

What word best defines a member of the target group of what a museum offers? They will have different names depending on how we perceive the most important function fulfilled by people who visit a museum.

We are convinced that there is no single word to encompass such a complexity. However, as we are ourselves trying to appreciate the particular content which allows a museum to function as the sender of a message, we often use the word 'receiver'. The problem with 'receiver' is that it only emphasises one direction of transfer (the receiver is the one spoken to, not the one who speaks), which linguistically implies a reduction in participation, which is an important part of a valuable museum experience.

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme

Perhaps 'visitor' then? This simple linguistic solution, where emphasis is put on the activity of visiting, has strong connotations with an approach associated with observing, a passive experience, where actions (including personal interpretation) are considered less important.

'Guest'? Yes, in some contexts this word seems very useful: the museum invites and receives guests. At the same time we can expect that besides being a guest and a visitor, that person will also become an active member of the museum community and bring their input to its operation.

'Customer'? Here, the difficult part is that we consider only one aspect of a museum's operation: the business aspect. The advantage of this approach is that the public's self-esteem is boosted as they are the ones who 'pay and demand' – their opinion matters.

'User'? This term is borrowed from the language of internet technology. The user utilises what he needs in the moment. From this pragmatic perspective, a museum must answer how and for whom it can be useful, in what ways could users utilise its content and how to encourage them to do so? In practice, this approach can collide with the vision of a museum being understood as an organisation defined by the ethos that it promotes contents and ideas, not one that just responds to present demand.

'Public'? This is certainly a compromise, as it emphasises collectivity. But it is also a weakness: the public are a mass, it is difficult to prepare a valuable message which would be equally good for all.

Each of the terms has its use. We do not want to adopt only one perspective here, as this book should mostly serve as a practical guide, and at the level of implementation these roles and approaches are interconnected. This book uses the terms interchangeably, depending on which role is most important in a described interpretive situation. Defining the role we attribute to people who come to a museum will be one of the elements of the method. As a result we will plan actions addressed to receivers, users and visitors.

Workshop tool: Questions for the preliminary identification of a receiver

It's a good idea for a research team to include museum staff who have the most contact with the everyday public of a museum: doormen, cashiers; people working in the cloakroom or exhibition halls.

When beginning to identify and analyse receivers, we should ask questions which will help us to go through the general group of visitors or entire society a museum is addressed to, in order to select specific types of receivers, with specific needs, habits, interests or behaviours. Asking general questions with regard to receivers can be supplemented with detailed questions and, based on the answers, a detailed portrait of a receiver can be prepared.

Visitors past, present and future (Tarnów)

Below, we have gathered some questions which can be useful for a better understanding of our present or potential receivers.

- ■ Who is our most frequent receiver (what receiver type)?
- ■ What type of receiver is becoming more and more frequent at our museum? What could be the cause of the growing participation of this group?
- ■ What receiver would we like to involve, convince to pay a visit? Optionally, Which group would we like to see an increased participation of at our museum?
- ■ How are specific types of receivers informed about what we offer?
- ■ What do groups of receivers selected for analysis value most, and what do they expect from the museum?
- ■ What do receivers miss in our museum? What do they complain about?
- ■ Which parts of an exhibition do they skip, and which parts make them stop for a long time?
- ■ What do visitors ask about the most?
- ■ Which global trends are particularly influential to present visitor behaviour?
- ■ Which of these trends have the strongest influence on the behaviour of our potential visitors i.e.. those we want to reach? How do receivers find out about what we offer culturally, how they choose to spend their free time, or other specific activities.

By using these questions and the above instrument i.e. developing a portrait of a receiver – we developed profiles of two groups of receivers at the Władysław Hasior Gallery.

About a receiver's portrait

A classic marketing author Philip Kotler referred to this field as 'a societal process, by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and freely exchanging products and services of value with others'[4]. What is important is that the benefits of such an exchange of transaction are mutual – the individual receives satisfactory goods, services and ideas, and their providers can implement their objectives. As we can see, this is a very wide definition, which does not only limit marketing to commercial activity, and refers to regular commerce as much as to more refined activity, for instance the exchange between a museum and its receiver.

A necessary condition and absolute starting point for a successful transaction of this kind is to recognise receivers' needs and desires, both rational, and emotional. A regular analysis of statistical data will not be of

4 —— P. Kotler, *Marketing. Analiza, planowanie, wdrażanie i kontrola,* Warszawa 1999, p. 6.

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much use here, because, as the creators of one insurance company pointed out, 'There is no statistical Pole', and argued humorously and bluntly – 'a statistical Pole's breakfast consists of 50% cereal and 50% frankfurters, he has a quarter of a cat and half of a dog...'. It is for the same reasons that market segmentation does not work, i.e. division of receivers into different categories done only with demographic criteria such as age, sex, education and income. We have simply detached from the model of a world where a place of birth and background determines an individuals' fate and the social functions they can perform.

Presently, demographic segmentation has been replaced with psychographic segmentation, where consumer division includes lifestyle, interests and ways of spending free time. Running, (a recently very popular phenomenon among Poles) does not divide people according to age or profession; therefore in one training group we can see middle aged individuals as well as teenagers, also a communication in which generational and mental barriers are hardly visible. A shared passion connects them.

Workshop tool: Preparing the receiver's portrait

When we know a museum's resources well and have a solid grasp of global trends, we can begin portraying a receiver whom a museum intends to attract. The long list of questions below will be a useful instrument. Many questions refer not only to the present, they also refer to a person's aspirations, dreams, expectations... i.e. everything that drives them and motivates their actions. Gathered answers should present a clear, colourful, coherent portrait of a person who has feelings, desires and needs. The so-called 'mood board' is a practical application for such a description. It is a collection of cut out newspaper photographs, images and advertisements that show the world of an analysed receiver's values and what it could hypothetically look like; where they could go out; what type of activities they could enjoy, etc. It is a good idea to make up a name for the portrayed person at the beginning of the exercise. This simple action will let you imagine the receiver as someone real.

- How old are they?
- Do they have children? (How many, how old?)
- What is their education?
- Where do they work, what position?
- What car do they drive?
- What does their work mean to them, what could be their dream job?
- How and where do they live, how and where would they like to live?

POZNOŃ
nue ttvu-hx,

ŁUKASZ GOŹDEK

CAŁA POLSKA

TORUŃ

ok. 40 LAT

3000 netto
INŻYNIER/NAUCZYCIEL
WYŻSZE

dociekliwy, ambitny,
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ważne: RODZINA, PRESTIŻ
DOBRZE SPĘDZONY CZAS
NIE ZNOSI SZUMU MEDIALNEGO,
BYLEJAKOŚĆ, SZUKA NOWOCZESN
ROZWIĄZAŃ
NIE AKCEPTUJE WULGARNOŚCI, POLITYKI

SAM DOBRZE UBRANY
DOBRE MARKI DLA DZIECI
KINO NOWOŚCI Z DZIECMI
OBSESJA SMAKU
POLSKA KUCHNIA
MIESZKA W BLOKU
GRA Z SYNEM
DUŻY TELEWIZOR
X BOX FIFA, KINECT
WYŻSZY POZIOM STABILIZACJI

WOLNY CZAS -> RODZINA
(BASEN, ŻUŻEL, SPORT, KSIĄŻKA => Millenium
BYWA W MUZEUM DLA DZIECI
ok. 100 ZNAJOMYCH NA FB
MAZURY, MORZE,
OGLĄDA SPORT, FILMY SENSACYJNE, CZYTA PISMA
TECHNICZNE,
SŁUCHA RADIA W SAMOCHODZIE LOKALNEGO
MOTORYZACYJNE
KULT MŁODOŚCI (SIŁOWNIA)
SKODA OCTAVIA 2,3 letnia

- What is their house equipped with and how?
- What does 'family' mean to them?
- What traits of character do they have, what is their personality?
- What matters most to them?
- What do they believe in?
- What are they afraid of?
- What do they try to avoid in life?
- What do they like, what do they dislike and cannot accept?
- What would they certainly oppose?
- Who would they like to be, what are their dreams and aspirations?
- Who and what do they identify with?
- What do tradition, future and modernity mean to them?
- What is their attitude towards ecology, politics and religion?
- How, where and with whom do they spend their spare time, and how would they like to spend it?
- Where, if at all, do they go for their holidays?
- What do they enjoy watching, listening to and reading?
- What media do they use?
- What brands do they use?
- What influences their shopping decisions?[5]

These analyses can be further developed by investigating a receiver's relation with a museum, their attitude and expectations towards it. By the way, it might be useful to find an answer to the immense popularity of the Night of Museums. Lines of people queuing to get to museums are never so long as then. What rational and emotional needs does this general European action fulfil? What motivates people to visit museums exactly then? For some, it may be the first and last visit to such an institution in a year. Some obvious reasons are: an attractive program; numerous accompanying events; an opportunity to see normally unavailable pieces. However, it is possible that many people will find the awareness of participating in something big and widely advertised equally significant. Still others will appreciate the atmosphere of uniqueness, even celebration, which accompanies the event. We should ask these questions to ourselves as well as our visitors.

We need to remember that the target group we are describing is not a reflection of all brand users (to use a marketing term), i.e. in the case of a museum: all visitors. It is more of an attempt to define a perfect customer, taking into account their life style, but also the character of an institution and what it has to offer as well as its strategic objectives and mission. Analogically, a BMW car advertisement is addressed to businessmen, i.e. to a defined group of receivers with a highly specified profile who constitute only a

5 —— M. Tesławski, *Po prostu strategia. Instrukcja budowy silnej marki*. Warszawa 2013, p. 163

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme

fraction of those who eventually become owners of those cars with a blue and white chequered emblem. This only confirms an old truth that the strongest brands are addressed to specific groups of receivers but purchased by all. Why should this principle not relate to the world of culture?

Portraits of selected target groups exemplified by the Władysław Hasior Gallery in Zakopane

Auxiliary questions	Kuba Lechita	Nina Włodarska
Where do they live?	Warsaw	Krakow
How old are they, how much money do they make, where do they work, what is their education?	30 years old, income of 4000 PNL net, specialist university degree	40+ years old, ca. 2200 PLN net, of independent profession, university education in humanities/arts
What traits of character do they have, what is their personality	Open, looking for adventure, mobile, demanding, aspiring – looking for his identity, snobbish, willing to stand out, individualist, nonconformist, active, ambitious, travelling the world, hipster	Inquisitive, looking for self-realisation, dreamer, emotionally intelligent, emphatic, individualist, egocentric, uncompromising
What matters most to them, what can they not accept?	Uniqueness of experience, authenticity of place and experience, comfort, good service; does not accept shoddiness, mediocrity, mass tourism	Gaining knowledge, expressing herself, art, culture, truth, quiet, nature (medicine, homeopathy, feng shui, slow food); does not accept superficiality, shoddiness, cheap, trashy products
Who would they like to be, what are their dreams and aspirations?	Would like to be someone special, outstanding, distinguished, needs personal development, above the crowd, above average, erudite, a worldly man, modern day Renaissance man	To be appreciated for social and artistic skills, to be fulfilled, to have a larger income; concerned about the world

A Local Museum in a Global World. A practical guide

How, where and with whom do they spend their free time?	Active, well considered, although occasionally spontaneous, in small groups of carefully selected friends with similar interests	Creative workshops, museums, galleries, theatres, cinema, books, small circle of friends, wine, fashion (creative)
What do they watch, read, listen to (media)?	Follows cultural and specialised news online, on Facebook, listens to non-mainstream music on mp3 and goes to special, sophisticated concerts	Classical, alternative music (Polish Radio Trójka, Polish Radio 2, TVP Kultura), books - albums, handbooks (W.A.B and Czarne publishing houses)
What brands surround them?	Quality of clothing matters but not necessarily a brand, can be second hand; a self-created style is important	Second hand, vintage, well known brands bought in sales
Where can we meet them in Zako-pane?	The Witkacy Theatre, all branches of the Tatra Museum, the Dworzec Tatrzański club, cultural events, mountains, sophisticated bars in Krupówki; stays in guesthouses with a unique atmosphere	The WitkacyTheatre, all branches of the Tatra Museum, the Dworzec Tatrzański club, cultural events, mountains, sophisticated bars in Krupówki; stays in guesthouses with a unique atmosphere

Creative session at the Władysław Hasior Gallery (Zakopane)

Workshop tool: Sightseeing in a receiver's shoes

Finding out information about a receiver does not end at gathering and analysing characteristics. We need empathy for a better understanding of the receiver. This exercise is on the one hand to find distance from a collection and well-known place and on the other hand to introduce the receiver's perspective. Unlike most guests who visit a museum, museum professionals can identify the greatest treasure of a collection, they know what should be emphasised, and what information should definitely be remembered. This very professional and factual approach makes it more difficult to see the exhibition through the eyes of a receiver.

An important difference between these two perspectives (of a museum professional and a layman) is that visitors come to the museum for one total experience, in which learning the content is just one of several elements, whereas professionals see the museum as a more natural, familiar environment. The latter are involved in substantial work, whereas the former associate a visit to a museum with more than just getting to know the collection and also with many aspects of the visit which are often disregarded by museum hosts. For instance, when visiting an exhibition with a small child, that child's guardians are involved in activities other than the contemplation of the exhibition's pieces; for example: picking the child up for it to see better because all the pieces are too high up; making sure that the child does not touch any valuable pieces; making sure the child does not break, stain or destroy anything; looking for a place to rest, a bathroom, or a place to have some juice; calming down other visitors who do not appreciate a child running around - and so on.

In this exercise we experience the exhibition as a selected representative of the museum public would do. To make the experience more believable we use the psychological portrait prepared earlier, including a specific (made up) first and last name. Remembering all the characteristics of the person we imitate, we put ourselves in their shoes and then visit the museum.

What welcomes us? What is the first impression on entering the museum? Is the entrance space inviting or off-putting? After entering, is it easy to tell which way to go? Do the staff initiate contact, or do they ignore us? What happens next? If our receiver came with a child we have to remember that. Let us see, for instance, if by using available information at an exhibition, we can answer all arising questions: What is it? What does it do? Why is it great? What pieces make us pause longer? Which do we skip?

Having visited the exhibition, we then go back to the workshop room to share the new experience. We relate what happened

whilst not forgetting the gender of the person we impersonated – what happened to us (I, Nina/Kuba…). It is a good opportunity for a discovering hidden acting talents and very helpful to give the summaries in a relaxed atmosphere, with a sense of humour. It is particularly important not to be disheartened by critical remarks if any are raised, for let us remember that by gathering this information we allow for the possibility of change.

We conducted this exercise during a workshop at the Hasior Gallery in Zakopane and at the Regional Museum in Tarnów. Museum professionals visiting 'in receivers' shoes' made comments such as:

'I felt followed by the ladies who were switching the lights on and off and I couldn't relax'.

'I was afraid that my daughter would break a glass display stand or hit her head against its edge'.

'I did not read any of the longer comments because they were placed on grey plaques and their texts were printed in white letters'.

'I had difficulties understanding the descriptions. They were shortened too much. My son expected me to explain individual techniques in which the pieces were made as well as their functions but I did not have the knowledge and I felt uncomfortable because of that'.

'The exhibition lacked information about the artist's life. I thought I should have already known it before coming here. The whole time I had the feeling I was lacking the knowledge to enjoy the visit'.

'The light in one room was flickering all the time and I could not focus on anything'.

It is worth noticing that the above comments do not refer to museum content at all. Therefore, walking in a receiver's shoes actually detaches from a museum's content (content as in: information communicated by showpieces and descriptions). The next exercise is an impulse to a different form of visiting, even more detached from the research and content oriented aspect of a museum's activity, than walking in a receiver's shoes (and yet it can influence a visitors' experience).

Collected thoughts of a visitor met at the exhibition

- I could not find any information about the museum, it lacks promotion in the town.
- I would like to visit the gallery again with a guide or an audio guide.
- The character of the exhibition allows up to 10 visitors at a time, certainly no crowds.
- The exhibition is characterised by mysteriousness; it is a true mystery, a true find for those who are looking for something exceptional in art.
- Hasior's work inspires deeper reflection, bold, brave ideas.
- Hasior's works make me feel proud, 'it is something typical to us Poles'.
- I will gladly recommend the gallery to my children. I want them to see what influenced me.
- Young people today are not familiar with Hasior's work, yet for me and my generation he was an exceptional artist, one of a kind, his works were new and fresh.
- Today Hasior is forgotten, this is why history should be brought back, his work should be used to show a different face of the Polish People-'s Republic.
- The multimedia in the gallery, although necessary should be inconspicuous, and when modifying an exhibition it should not be changed too much.
- Zakopane should have a 'Hasior trail'.
- The gallery is a good place to organise creative workshops.
- A virtual talk with Hasior is my idea for an addition to the gallery.

The team's initial comments after visiting the gallery as Nina and Kuba

- There is no introduction, description, context.
- Hasior's Gallery without Hasior – we see the work, but we do not meet the master.
- There is something missing at the entrance (a banner, installation, sound).
- Hasior means more than a memory, his work carries a current content.
- *Hasior 'peeping' at the visitors.*
- *This gallery is a **sanctuary** of imagination.*
- *The idea of organising a happening, a procession through the town - **Hasior Reloaded**.*
- ***Hasior inspires** (comics, music).*
- *The idea of organising **A Holiday of the Imagination** (e.g. the Hasior Day - 14 May).*
- *'Hasior's Zakopane' guidebook, a Hasior route around Zakopane.*

- *An outdoor educational game for young people (paper chase).*
- *Lesson plans (legendary lessons based on Hasior's didactic method for schools).*
- *It would be good to present Hasior through an anecdote; what do we have:*
  - Hasior's Diary from his motorcycle tour of Europe (1 October 1959-23 April 1960) is a fascinating read. Besides, it has a good collection value (this publication appeared on Allegro with a price of approximately 100 PLN). The gallery owns the Diary manuscript.
  - *Hasior was a runner when he was young (athletic scholarship in 1952) – we found his photo from that time online:*

Władysław Hasior at the finish line (Zakopane)

Photo: property of Zbigniew Styczyński

Workshop tool: My best museum memory

Everyone has a memorable experience which, when recollected, can be a source of strength (and pleasure). The purpose of this exercise is to choose a memory from an experience connected with a visit to a museum. It is important that the participants do not refer to their professional experiences but remember themselves as guests (receiver, user, visitor). The leader instructs the participants to first close their eyes for a while and remember as many details of the perfect visit as they can. What was the weather like? What season of the year was it? What were you wearing that day? What was it like? The idea is not to concentrate on content but on different elements of the experience.

TO MUZEUM OPOWIADA O

O POTRZEBIE PIĘKNA

O WOJNIE I MIŁOŚCI
O ŻYCIU CODZIENNYM ARYSTOKRACJI
O HISTORII MIASTA
O WIĘZIACH MDZY LUDZKICH : — RODOWANIE
                                - TRWANIE

O CELEBROWANIU CODZIENNOŚCI

O USTROJU, PAŃSTWIE, O DEM. SZLACHECK.
O POLITCE — DUMA — WARCHOLSTWO
[Z JEDNEJ STRONY O POTĘDZE I DOMIE
   A Z DRUGIEJ] O WARCHOLSTWIE,
              NIEUCTWIE, ZAŚCIANKOWOŚCI
              PIENIACTWIE

O TOŻSAMOŚCI
O ZAGROŻENIU, POLOWANIU,
O WALCE O DOMINACJĘ

SPONTANICZNOŚĆ / EMOCJE

The fundamental question
(Tarnów)

Usually, when sharing our best experiences we learn that a museum experience as defined from the perspective of a receiver is a general one, as opposed to referring to the process of an exhibition's preparation. This is worth remembering, especially when we get involved so much in specific museum actions that the perspective of the receiver can escape us.

Step 3. Our museum: who we are and what we have at our disposal

We have identified global trends and got to know our selected receivers more closely. It is time to recognise our museum's potential, i.e. its ability to reach a selected receiver, bearing in mind the selected important trends at hand. Actions of the team involve mostly stocktaking. We list various museum resources which could become useful for future actions. We broadly understand these resources as:
- space - venue, neighbourhood, location
- the collection – the museum's pieces and knowledge about them
- people – competences of the team, their interests and contacts; friends of the museum, donors, organisations and activity groups operating at the museum.

Besides a detailed analysis of our museum's resources we should also look for a general approach which could define its character, organisational culture; its particular way of acting. This can be done with the help of metaphors that describe our museum as well as our way of perceiving it.

Workshop tool: the metaphor and metaphorical description of a museum

The point of this exercise can be referred to by the assertion of Ludwig Wittgenstein that 'The limits of my language mean the limits of my world'. It involves speaking about the same thing (phenomenon, organisation) in several different ways and thus being able to rediscover it. Metaphors, the main substance of this exercise, are connected with images and imagination. It is important that we can create a collective image of our museum or exhibition. Developing a story in several linguistic registers releases associations and interrelationships that are not obvious, but can (for example) help in the development of a specific policy used for communicating with receivers. The idea is that as a result the world opens up and develops one's imagination.

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme

The exercise is done in groups and takes half an hour, which includes the presentation of results. After dividing participants into groups (not more than 4 people in one group) all the participants are informed that their task is to describe the museum with one of the following metaphorical 'styles': water (sea), music, or the building industry. To start with, groups can write down all metaphors, sayings, phrases and proverbs which come to mind. For instance, the 'water' list can include: sharks (business), small fry, go with the flow, rising tide and low tide, wash away (guilt), go deeper into etc. Then, using this list, we create a story of the museum.

After reading out/presenting our stories, we make a summary in order to find an answer to the question of whether we discovered new aspects of our organisation and if so, what new aspects we discovered and how they could be useful to our future work?

Workshop tool: *Strollology*

'Spacerologia' (Strollology): a once popular song by Mariusz Lubomski in which he praised the benefits of having 'hands in your pockets, and pockets as big as the ocean'. This exercise is about 'walking and looking around' with an easy style, and without pressure. Relatively speaking, this is about concentrating one's attention on a museum's space. It is hard to present straightforward and definite guidelines for this exercise but in order to define its objective; most of all, we should allow ourselves to feel a space as a set of different stimuli and not only as one important meaningful element, crucial for the arrangement of an exhibition. We have to let it lead us... Perhaps this way we will free some aspects of an exhibition space and also of the venue itself, thereby attributing new meanings to a presented collection. Let us then touch the walls, listen to the floors squeak, look out the window (usually hidden behind display stands). It is important to feel free, observe one's reactions, but also to think about the exhibition, be aware of using one's multiple senses in a space, as it is not true that we visit exhibitions using only our analytical minds. Even if the way our museum presents its exhibitions is classical and very qualitative, without the use of smells or sounds (and, on top of that, we do not like the disneylandisation, just the 'meat of the museum matter'), it does not mean that the sounds or smells are not there. Why is this important? Because a place itself creates a potential, which can become a serious obstacle in the clarity of the end message. In creating an involving presentation we can use the natural, though not always noticed factors of a multi-sensual space.

Let us make a museum walk with smells only! Perhaps we will need to close our eyes or use the help of a guide. The smell of coats in the cloakroom, the ticket, a geranium on the window sill, the sewage system, a nearby cafeteria, wood preservatives?

And it is time for sounds! What can be heard in our museum? Is it quiet and do people whisper? Are there many overlapping sounds in the exhibition?

This exercise begins with instruction. We walk around the exhibition: first freely, without limitations, and then using one selected sense (what can be heard, smelt, touched with fingers/feet etc). The idea is to activate non-obvious ways of experiencing the space.

We can conduct this exercise in pairs. We should make notes during the visit and share our discoveries with the group at the end. Have all participants noticed the same things? What new things have we discovered?

Step 4. A museum's environment (especially its competition and potential partners)

The analysis of a museum's environment is an important element. It can include entities (companies, institutions, people), that occupy the free time of the same receivers whom we want to involve. Perhaps we are competing for the attention and interest of our receivers. In this category any attractions for the spending of free time (sports centres, cafés, even shopping centres) become our competition. There could also be institutions in our environment with attractions for our receivers which complement what we offer and therefore could create a collective cultural offering within the scope of local activities of this kind. In such a case it might prove that we are able to begin a collective cooperation or support of one another. We should notice organisations or people in our environment whose support would be helpful for a museum's operation. And this does not only involve sponsors. Perhaps a local taxi network could become an important partner because it drives tourists; perhaps a priest supporting the development of cultural activity in the town.

A regular neighbourhood review leads to a better understanding of a museum's role, and also of the local available activities and initiatives. It also allows us to recognise the opportunity of cooperating with other local partners. A network of such contacts and connections could also be treated as a museum resource when used at the right time. The following questions can be useful for the analysis of a museum's environment:
- what organisations do we compete against for the free time/attention of our selected receivers?
- what other entities (public or commercial) can fulfil their needs?

- what particular thing do we have that others do not? (unique resources, e.g. collection, location, architecture, specialists in the field, meeting room, contact with people with unique know-how, skills),
- what actions are we better at than those institutions selected as most important which operate in a similar way or fulfil similar receivers' needs?
- which of our competitors could become partners, so that instead of competing for receivers we can direct them to each other?

Step 5. Formulating initial themes for a museum

We have identified (and written down) both a museum's potential (which includes the needs and expectations of present and potential receivers against the competition) and selected global trends. The next step will be to define the scope of the most interesting themes which a museum could raise.

The main theme is an answer to the question: what is this museum about? Or: what is this exhibition about? We assume that the museum is a modern medium which can raise issues and points for its receivers' consideration. The museum can also act as a modern forum for the presentation of certain topics, stimulation of discussions and the creation of space for disputes or reflection for visitors.

Choosing a catchy theme becomes particularly important not only for educational and promotional reasons but also because of the museum's role as a medium and a forum. Therefore, it is recommendable to thoroughly investigate themes, without stopping at the first idea, and the decision for a theme should be made having considered as many options and ideas as possible.

Workshop tool: A list of possible themes

To start with, it is a good idea to formulate and write down a list of themes which immediately come to a team's minds, to take a look at notes and survey a museum's resources and, once again, its selected receivers. Referring to notes can help direct our thinking and search for a theme. We can suggest possible themes by answering the following questions:
- what could the exhibition tell a story about?
- what important contemporary issues could it raise?
- why could this theme be (or is this theme) interesting to selected receivers?

Participants of a meeting can write down themes on yellow Post-it notes and stick them to a table, a piece of Bristol paper,

or a flipchart. Identified themes can be grouped according to their subject area – similar themes together. This way we can clearly see whether the themes are connected by a group of issues. We can also look for the best expression of a theme within individual groups of Post-its.

Workshop tool: Creating a list of key words (tagging an exhibition)

Creating a mind map is to some extent a process of chaos management. We attribute patterns and order to a large and varied mass of associations and interconnections which do not seem to decrease. How to begin and how to support the creation of an elaborate mind map referring to a museum? One of the possible exercises is to tag an exhibition, i.e. to visit it assuming a short stay (limited to a quarter of an hour). Visitors receive note paper (not more than 20 sheets) with an instruction. Their task is to describe an exhibition with key words which they write down on sheets of paper. We should remember that key words should not only refer to the content carried by objects presented at the exhibition but also be based on free association. In other words, we try to distance ourselves from our 'expertise' and observe what individual and fragmentary messages could be hidden in an exhibition. We encourage the naming of emotions that are felt when experiencing an exhibition, finding associated moods, words, sayings, proverbs, images, melodies, thoughts…

Having tagged the exhibition, the group return to the workshop room and, guided by the moderator, order all key words according to spontaneously suggested categories. At this stage it is good to see how many references the exhibition can generate, regardless of its main theme.

Workshop tool: Telling a story

Creating a story with key words follows the tagging exercise. The value of tagging is to show a variety of unconnected references and contexts, whereas this part involves the creation of associations. The story becomes a thread connecting individual key words that act as beads. It is good to spend at least 15 minutes working in groups to create key words; it creates distance from the adopted, principal museum narration. Stories which are created along the way can also be used when preparing activities, for instance when inventing fictional guidebooks for children.

In this exercise each group receives sheets of paper with random key words. Based on these words, groups create stories

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme

according to a commonly adopted structure. The easiest outline is a story of a journey, a trip, a protagonist who accepts a challenge and can is realistically be motivated to accept it; encounters many obstacles, managing to overcome them in order to finally achieve the goal and return triumphant. It is important that the protagonist undergoes personal change which can be accompanied by magical

What is the story about
(Zubrzyca Górna)

objects and situations. Using key words to create the story adds an element of randomness and unpredictability to the process but at the same time strengthens the narration as an axis for ordering its content.

When presenting objects at a museum, stories are also created by varying interpretations of them. We should remember that (depending on the context of the narration) the used objects will have different meanings each time they are viewed.

The principal objective of this exercise is to draw attention to the power of narration. This can be illustrated by gathering ten different key words and asking everyone to create two compound sentences that include all of them. The time for this exercise should be limited and it is a good idea to give all story tellers the same beginning and ending. For instance:

'One day... ', 'There had been no signs the day would be so strange...'. 'I reached in the drawer and took...'

'And it all ended happily', 'But this chain of events was just the beginning of a greater change', 'And then he remembered nothing'.

A Local Museum in a Global World. A practical guide

These stories will differ just as those of our guests during their visits. Therefore you should support them with interpretation guidelines. Everyone will create their own story anyway when they become familiar with the objects and contents presented.

Workshop tool: Criteria of a catchy theme

It is difficult to indicate universal criteria for a catchy and well-formulated theme. The following are some suggested qualities of a good theme:

■ concrete – can be described in a concise way;
■ broad – is a potential source of reference, associations, metaphors;
■ specific – clearly connected with a museum's resources, it is not easily explored elsewhere;
■ current – refers to the lives of present day receivers, refers to the present.

Step 6. Confronting a theme with a receiver – receiver's test

After selecting and formulating several themes it is time to move to stage two of the model, where a selected theme (and its interpretation) is used to distil an essence and create ideas for new actions. At first, however, we will take a quick look at the results of our work from stage one of the method we use for museums and reflect on what thematisation means.

The confrontation with a receiver's portrait to a large extent results from the choice of target group. A good theme should be able to withstand the following questions of the receiver portrayed: 'What do I care?' and 'Why should I go to this museum?'.

The summary of work after Stage I concerning museums that participated in the project

The Władysław Hasior Gallery in Zakopane

(a branch of the Tatra Museum)

1. **Identification of global trends significant to the Gallery's operation:**
- 'anyone can create art' - do it yourself, finding joy in the creations of one's own hands, discovering one's abilities and potential, the growing significance of creativity as a useful competence,
- imagination as a predisposition – self-management, identifying one's competences (Drucker).
2. **Analysis of the Gallery environment (useful institutions, places, contacts);**
3. **Preparing the profiles of two selected receiver types (Nina Włodarska and Kuba Lechita).**
4. **Preparing a list of themes the Gallery can refer to:**
- a visit to the sanctuary of Władysław Hasior's art,
- Władysław Hasior's house, study and unique gallery,
- Hasior against the Polish art of the second half of the 20th century
- Władysław Hasior's creative method
5. **Selected theme:**
- Władysław Hasior's creative method.

The Orava Ethnographic Park Museum

in Zubrzyca Górna

1. **Identification of global trends significant to the operation of an open air museum:**
- the slow movement as an opposition to the accelerating lifestyle, a postulate to slow down the speed of life,
- a growing importance and search for authenticity, locality, homeliness.
2. **Preparing a profile of a selected type of receiver (family with children, who want to spend time in an active way, combining educational activities with relaxation)**
3. **Preparing a list of themes an open air museum can refer to:**
- Orava as a specific region,

- nature and traditions at the foot of Babia Góra,
- multiculturalism shown by the example of the Orava region
- daily life in an Orava village years ago.
4. **Selected theme:**
- daily life in an Orava village years ago.

The Tarnów Town Hall

(a branch of the Regional Museum in Tarnów)

1. **Identification of global trends significant to the operation of the branch:**
2. **the issue of national identity in view of globalisation and Europeanisation,**
3. **nationalistic tendencies and problems with citizenship**
4. **conflicts and chances of multiculturalism,**
5. **edutainment - learning through play.**
6. **Preparing a profile of a selected type of receiver (Kaśka – works in the service industry, mother; and Łukasz – father, who wants to introduce history to his son).**
7. **Preparing a list of themes the Museum can refer to:**
8. **Sarmatism,**
9. **the Sanguszko family collection,**
10. **Sarmatians,**
11. **Hetman Jan Tarnowski,**
12. **the Tarnów Town Hall**
13. **history of the town.**
14. **Selected theme:**
15. **Sarmatians**

Frequently asked questions

We are not planning any changes in the museum – how can the initial stage of diagnosis be useful?

For instance to get to know your environment better in terms of promotional actions and creating messages for receivers.

We have analysed our public/environment, we have an image strategy and we conduct regular evaluations. Do we have to repeat the process?

Excellent! Perhaps you will find some questions and tools useful which you had not used before.

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme

We have catalogued our collection very thoroughly/we have digitalised our collection. Why should we conduct an analysis of museum resources?

The analysis of resources involves more than the analysis of a collection – it also refers to the team and the support a museum can receive. This is why it should be conducted.

We want to/must address our activity to different groups of receivers. Do we necessarily have to decide on one? Won't we exclude others if we choose one group of receivers?

In order to create a good concept for implementation it is necessary to think of a specific receiver. This way we can adjust to our receivers. However, this does not have to exclude other interested receivers.

Thematisation is the essence of the work of stage one in the method described above. Let us take a closer look at it.

At the stage of thematisation we determine our main work: the most important aspect of our museum and what it mainly tells us. When looking for answers to these questions we narrow down the area of interest to one specific issue – the main theme. In the interpretive approach we are mostly interested to find out what problems can be raised by an adopted theme. The answer to the question can be found by creating a mind map of associations with our main theme and analysing it in terms of different directions of updating, location and presentation. An essence, defined with the use of these analyses as a basis, helps us to find ways of using a theme to raise issues that are important to our receivers. A theme narrows down the area of interest, whereas an essence and analysis broaden it – they expand the opportunity horizon. At the action planning stage we rely not only on the specific theme but also on the connections and interpretations resulting from that analysis.

How did we come to the main theme at the Hasior Gallery

We present a detailed, methodical course of actions in the section 'Workshop: get to know yourself! How to progress from resources to a theme' – and the six steps that need to be taken (). Then we presented subsequent tools, and here we will describe thematisation as such, and how it developed in the case of the three museums participating in the project.

Thematisation – what does it actually mean?

When considering museum thematisation we have to seriously and consistently treat an exhibition and other forms of activity as acts of communication. This means that – just as in any other act of communication – there has to be a message, a sender, a receiver, a channel, a context... Each of these elements, essential to a successful transfer of content, requires attention; each has its significance. We cannot communicate over the telephone if no sound can be heard or if there is no connection. We

Get to know yourself! From resources to a theme

will not receive feedback if the code we use is not properly decoded by the receiver (because of, for instance, of a lack of linguistic competence). These deliberations may sound trivial, but they significantly change one's way of looking at things: working on the message of an exhibition is different from concentrating on trying to protect, present, or carry out attendance plans.

The process of thematisation refers mainly to content, and therefore, communication. Using the method presented by this publication, we argue that in order to formulate a message, it is also essential to consider all other elements of the communication process. Therefore, when formulating the main message of an exhibition it is advisable to consider its receivers as well as its context (local, global…) or the specificity and potential of a museum's professional team (sender). All this will influence the shape of the message and the success of its communication. In this sense, the choice of a target group or analysis of an environment are both important steps for the preparation of thematisation which, as we will see more clearly, is at the same time a process which involves the expansion of interpretive contexts and selection of contents.

Thematisation in its broadest sense means looking for an answer to the questions: What are we talking about? What is it that we need to communicate? What story does our collection tell? What topic are we speaking about?

Obviously in our case all answers will to some extent be related to the collection and the museum itself. In the interpretive approach it is essential to focus on the content and not the artefacts, and therefore focus on interpretation and not the objects themselves. By thematising we constantly select contents but also – and this is the uniqueness of this stage of the method – expand the semantic area of the main issue.

At this stage, the workshop pulsates, and resembles – to use a film metaphor – a constant change of film sets: from a general plan to a detail and so on. We need very meaningful details as well as broader contexts. Free associations developed during creative sessions will be necessary at every stage. We will also have to decide which direction we want to take, what we want to keep, what we care about the most, and what we can waive. It is a big challenge. But most of all, it requires finding the courage to think differently, the courage to search, the courage to abandon what we know for the sake of what we want to communicate. A team's work on the theme of an exhibition brings out a museum professional's interests and passions, it is also an opportunity (a rare one) to talk about 'what we actually have here'. Finally, an accurate expression of the theme helps find a precise essence, which we describe in the following chapter.

A Local Museum in a Global World. A practical guide

A story about the starting point and the way to finding a theme

Case study
Place: Zakopane
Institution: the Władysław Hasior Gallery in Zakopane (a branch of the Tatra Museum)
Key words: contemporary art, creative method
Chosen theme: Władysław Hasior's method
(alternative themes: 1) Hasior's sanctuary of art;
2) Hasior's home, study and a unique gallery;
3) Polish art in the second half of the 20th century)
Essence: provocation of imagination
Work results: test cards facilitating the reception of Hasior's art, also a presentation plan

The Gallery's characteristics

The Gallery is situated approximately 100 meters from the Zakopane Bus Station. In 1984 the town authorities granted the artist (1928-1999) the building of a former deck chair rental business, where he lived, organised a studio and created his study and a unique gallery, arranged by the artist himself, that contained the largest collection of his works in Poland. Hasior stayed there until his death in 1999.

In the second half of 2013, partial renovation of the building was planned (they were planning to arrange one of the rooms outside the gallery space for didactic purposes and group workshops). The investment would require the museum to reach new groups of recipients, increase attendance, and remind the people of Zakopane (both the citizens and tourists) about Hasior's original work, and reinforce the presence of his gallery on the cultural map of Zakopane.

From analysis of resources to a main theme

In **Zakopane** the main theme seemed obvious. It was Władysław Hasior. Just like that.

But how to present the theme in an interesting way and avoid just one more encyclopaedic exhibition about an eminent figure?

The question of how the theme would be presented was important for further analyses and implementation ideas. Again, we started wondering what is more important: the biography, the gallery, the works, the reception of the figure, or something else entirely. We also captured the town's specific character, defined by the tension between the artist's home-study (cosy, intimate) and a sanctuary of art (monumental, imposing). It appeared

that both feelings: of homeliness and sacred pathos, often accompanied visitors. Another feeling which often appears is the disappointment connected with 'shoddy' materials, objects of daily use, purposefully used by the artist in his work. The above three factors of the Hasior Gallery had to be taken into consideration. When discussing themes which could become the Gallery's leitmotif, we referred to guests impressions entered in the gallery guest book, i.e. we directly referred to the recipients, their needs, and also their emotions. The auxiliary questions were unchanged: what does this museum have that others do not? In this respect the Hasior Gallery had the advantage over other places in Poland presenting works by the same artist.

It was here that Władysław Hasior lived for fifteen years, created his work and met with the receivers. It was here that he personally arranged the gallery, left his collection and contributed to the spirit of the place.

So, what was chosen as the main theme after analysis of the gallery's characteristic features in the broader context of receivers and actions of institutions responding to similar needs? We answered this question by focusing on Hasior's unique way of perceiving the world and his working technique as an artist, teacher and 'a story-teller'. Throughout the years the artist worked out a specific, original way of thinking, creating, teaching and looking at things. We referred to it as the 'Hasior Method' and nominated it as the main theme, an initial answer to the question: 'What is this museum about?'.

This choice of theme also fits in well with present (global trends), because creativity as a competence or skill is becoming more and more important. The gallery, with its proven creative technique, can become an important and needed place.

And what about other museums?

In order to illustrate the complexity of the process of finding a good theme, let us refer to the remaining examples implemented within our project. Each of the three places were different in this respect. In the case of the **Zubrzyca** open air museum, finding a main theme was paradoxically hindered by the unusual, even overwhelming picturesqueness of the place. This picturesqueness seemed to be enough by itself for a valuable experience in Orava; 'picturesqueness', however, is a notion which does not allow for diversity, after all, there are many picturesque places.

We listened carefully to our guides' stories: 'In Orava the wind blows differently', 'Each hill and house is a part of the exhibition', 'Local people are independent and value freedom'. Yes, but what is this exhibition about? We know that all the things mentioned above are worth discussing however what is its theme, the main axis of the story? After many discussions we managed to agree on the expression 'daily life in the countryside', and these words included both the characteristics of the region and a certain

SARMACI

BROŃ · MODA · MENTALNOŚĆ · HONOR · FANTAZJA

MISJA · URSZMIENIE BYCIA · GOTOWOŚĆ BOJOWA · VOIENICZOŚĆ · OBRONDZIEŻ

SPECYFICZNA · ORIENT · SAPRANIE

DEWOCYJNOŚĆ · RELIGIJNOŚĆ · SZCZWINICH

TECHNOLOGIA · WYZNACZENIE WARSTWY · SPECYALCICA · PASJON SPOŁECZ... · ... · POGRZEW (LICZ) ZGON · JEDYNKI · OBYCZAJE · ZAJAZDY · UCZTY · ŚWIĘTA · STAWNOŚĆ

TOLERANCJA · PATRIOTIZMEM · PRAGMATYCZNOŚĆ

POLITYKA · ELEMENIA/GSĄDKÓW · DLA WCKNĄ/... · PRZESTRZEŃ · PR · PRZER · WNĘTRZE · ORIENT · ARCHITEKT · BROŃ · PORTRET · PANKA FUNERALIS · NASKOBKI · TRUKICHUM · DWORKI · KARICE

DOEJŚCIE: RAZACOL – UCZTY / KONTOR / ZAWIĘŚĆ – GOŚCINNOŚĆ / LEWISTWO – POŚCINNOŚĆ / BRTWARZA – PRACOWITOŚĆ... / WARHOLSTWO – ODPOWIEDZIALNOŚĆ – ŚWIAT... / BRTWORNA – ODPOWIEDZIALNOŚĆ / – POŚWIĘCENIE

universal interest in what life was like before, and how different it was. This decision meant, however, that as **the main theme is** 'daily life in the countryside', **it is not** 'wooden architecture' or 'Orava multiculturalism'. But this does not mean that we will not mention them at all, although we obviously cannot focus on everything.

In Tarnów there were quite a few suggestions concerning the answer to the question: 'What is this exhibition/place telling a story about?' – and they were quite varied. The first one was accepted by curators; unfortunately however we laymen did not understand it. It was: 'The Sanguszko Dukes' Collection'. If the theme was phrased this way, the exhibition would have to analyse the phenomenon of collecting in reference to the history of the Sanguszko family, which might be interesting but not to a very wide public. Such a theme would not exploit the local character of the place itself. And we continued asking: 'What story is your museum telling?'. The context of the location, the Tarnów Town Hall, was mentioned. However, as the exhibition does not mention it, so it could not become the theme. The 'Sarmatism' suggestion met with the specialists' scepticism as they anticipated problems with a precise illustration of the definition of Sarmatism using the artefacts at hand. We thought this theme was not adequate because of its abstractness and lack of specificity. However, we moved from 'Sarmatism' to 'Sarmatians' and realised it was a good theme right away. Why so sure? Most of all, it was immediately controversial because it was ambiguous, and even our opinions on Sarmatians were very different. A dispute erupted immediately, the theme had aroused emotions. Moreover, contrary to the neutral 'Sarmatism', the theme of 'Sarmatians' is illustrated with specific faces, biographies and stories. Such a theme appeals to a varied public but also corresponds well with the collection which is based in Tarnów, among other things, on famous Sarmatian portraits. And a good theme is one that refers to people.

Cultural theme trails and theme villages provide good examples of thematisation which should be mentioned before workshop sessions are begun. Cultural theme trails provide a tourist experience that presents heritage in such a way that its contents are connected with one clear theme. Space, and very often the landscape of cultural trails connects different places together and they become fragments of one story. This story then becomes a support for tourists with their interpretation of heritage which they encounter on their trails. Cultural trails are a good example of how historic sites or other elements of heritage can simultaneously co-create different narrations. Interpretation is crucial: the same church can be a part of a Roman architecture trail, a pilgrimage trail or a local language trail. Each time it becomes interpreted as part of a different narration.

Even without a well-grounded knowledge on the subject we can imagine that in a situation where the principal axis of narration about a place is not obvious, the choice of main theme requires a stocktake of resources. It is similar to the search for possible meanings. For instance: let us imagine a wine culture trail. What objects or places would we look for? Which ones would we reject? And what would find its place on a beans trail? What story could it tell? When finding a theme for 'wine' or 'beans' we can refer to both existing local traditions and broader references, not just specialist contents accessible only to experts; we can also refer to images present in pop culture, songs, cartoons and games. This broadening of a key word's semantic field is very important in thematisation. It provides initial incentive for new ideas for specific actions. Let us remember these ideas and keep them for later. Theme villages on the other hand are an example of thematisation used for the creation of tourist products. The main theme serves as inspiration for attractions, events, didactic services, but also, for example, to arrange a village's space (See: http://www.wioskitematyczne.org.pl/polska.html). When creating a theme for a village we look for plots which are closely connected to a local context (e.g. emerging from the heritage of the place) but at the same time provide it with new meanings and allow a wider search for reference and inspiration.

Why is it advisable to stray away from the museum for a while and take the perspective of a creator of a trail or village? The thing is that a museum story is often treated as something obvious. The courage for a new perspective is blocked by tradition ('we have always told this story and it worked') or ... by existing exhibitions which cannot be changed but for some reason their message is unclear.

receiver

competition

museum

temat

inter
nection

update

location
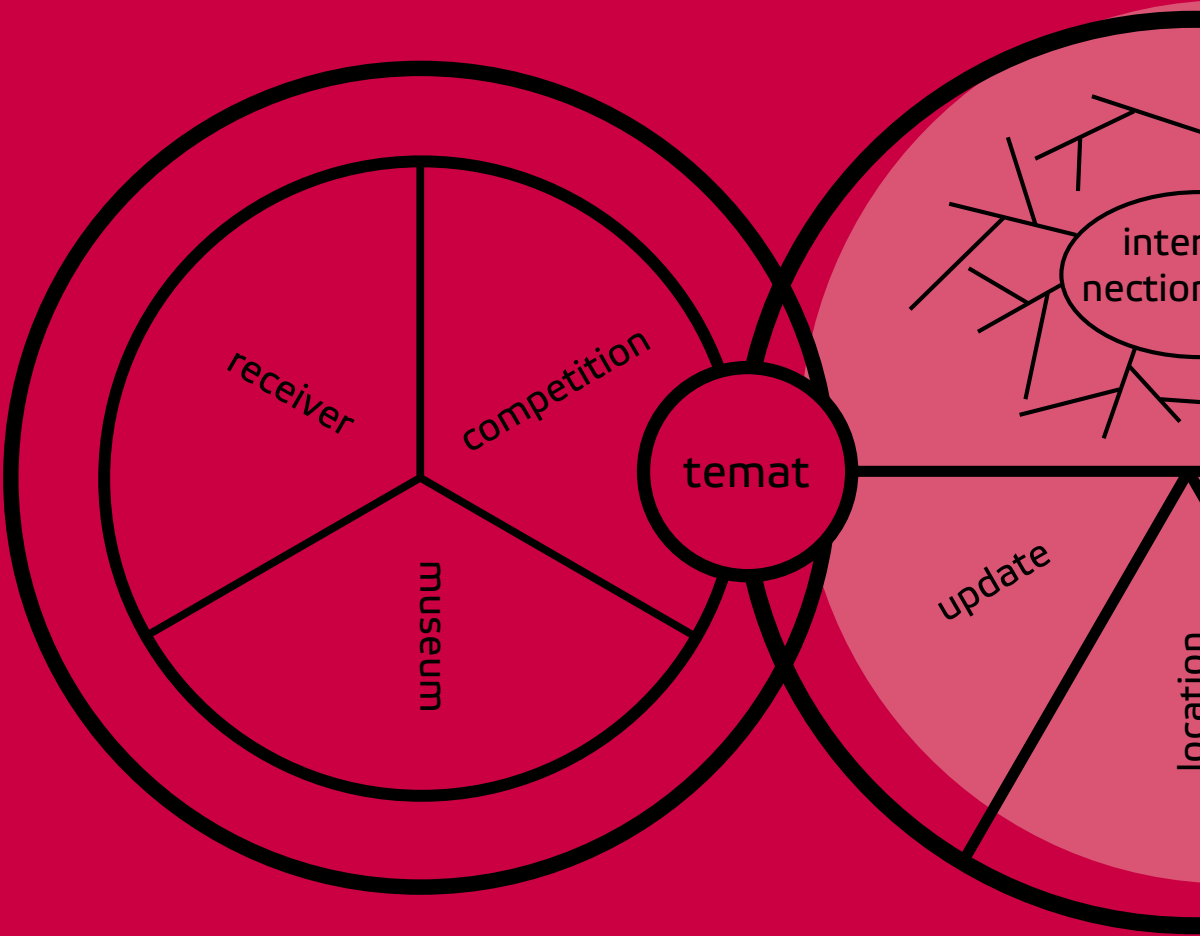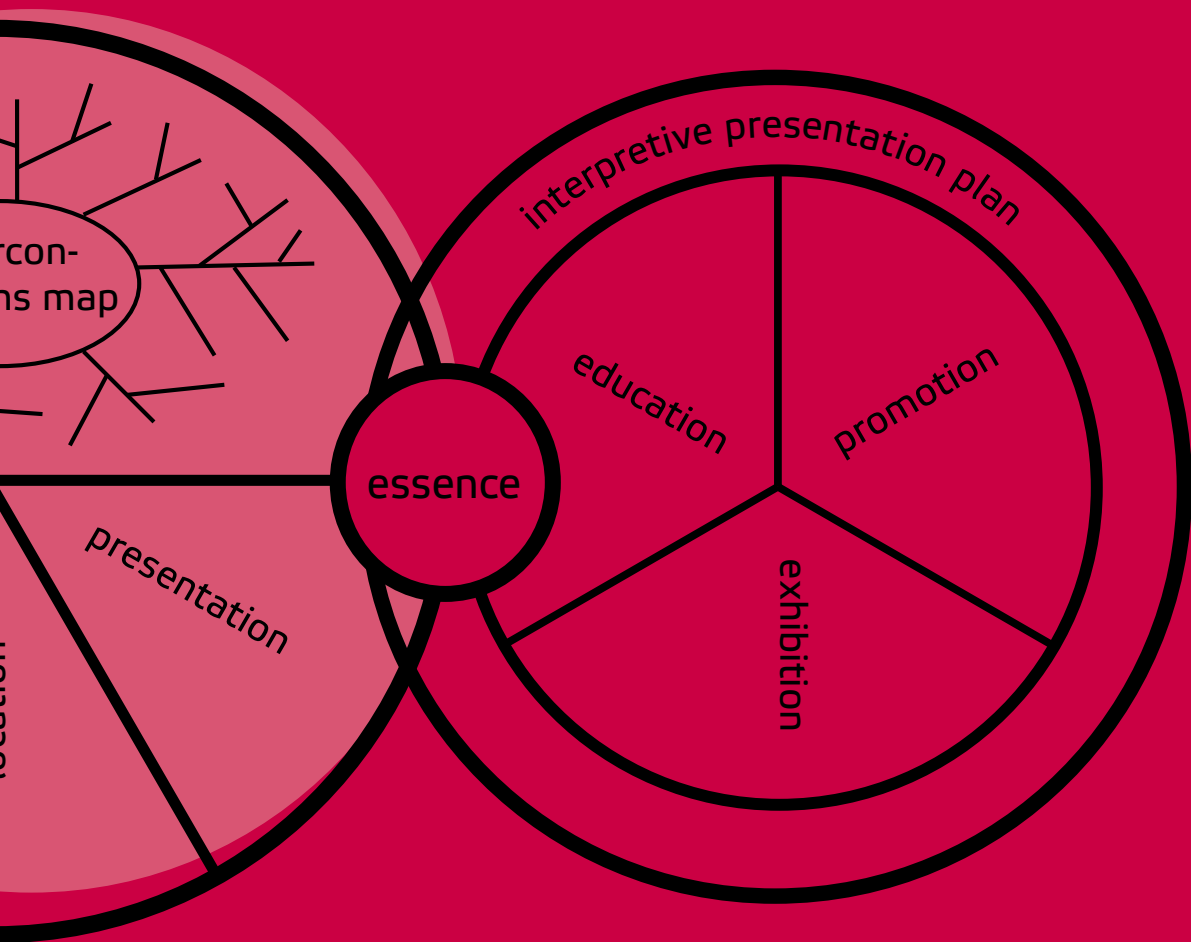
Dare to think differently!

From a theme to an essence

I. What is this chapter about?

In this chapter we will discuss why it is advisable to consider heritage as a network of interconnections. Later we will show which tool a museum could use to show this understanding of heritage (via presentation of that museum's contents) and connect it with the potential of the dynamics of a group creative process. What should occur in order for us to be able to distil an essence (i.e. the main message which influences the organisation of all museum actions) from a semantic map, developed in all directions around the previously identified main theme? Finding a simple answer to such a question is difficult. However, although there is no recipe for an unquestionably brilliant invention or a perfectly enchanting metaphor, we can at least try to describe the conditions favourable to a discovery. This chapter will, to a large extent, describe what could be useful in such a search.

Stage two of the method is a phase of search and, related metaphors will be repeated in this chapter (maps, directions, discoveries, inspirations...).

We entitled it 'Dare to think differently!', and we chose Tarnów as a good example of what happens in this stage.

The boldness of the Tarnów collection is displayed in several ways. It is enough to take a close look at the faces of people in the Sarmatian portraits or the elaborate weapons used for duels which are presented at the museum. It is therefore a great place to take up this topic. The Tarnów Sarmatian collection is highly valued by art historians and its elements are often lent to outside exhibitions. Moreover, the exhibition space itself was recently renovated and well-exposed pieces fit the spacious rooms perfectly. This itself could be enough to make the museum's professionals feel good. however they were bold enough to take a look at their museum from a different perspective. This was neither easy nor obvious, especially as this institution enjoys a long tradition and is well-recognised in some circles as both professional and reliable; all the more reason why Tarnów should be treated as an example of the courage to think differently.

The entirety of stage two of the workshop was an elaborate and multi-threaded process of interpretation. Eventually, after agreeing that the main theme should be 'Sarmatians' (not 'Sarmatism' or 'the Sanguszko family collection'), we performed many exercises together, in which we collected associations, developed a context for Sarmatism, made references to the present and continued to ask the difficult questions: Why do we talk about it today? How can knowing about Sarmatians be useful? How is all this interesting to the guests of the Tarnów museum? Any ideas that arose were asked of the two imaginary people portrayed during stage one of the workshop.

Dare to think differently! From a theme to an essence

SPĘDZA CZAS:
KOLEŻANKI Z PRACY,
KONIAKI Z INNYMI
MATKAMI POD BLOKIEM

WAKACJE:
RODZINA NA WSI
CZYTA(?)-KOLOROWA
PRASA

ŚLEDZI INTERNET
(PROFILE SPOŁECZNOŚCIOW
PORTALE "PLOTKARSKIE")
-SŁUCHA RADIA ZET
-ODWIEDZA GALERIE
HANDLOWE, KORZYSTA
Z PROMOCJI

KAŚKA N - 30+
(D) KOBIETA, MŁODA MATKA
MĘŻATKA,
ŚREDNIE+
PRACA-USŁUGI
BEZ WYRAŹNYCH ZAINT.
SFRUSTROWANA
NIESPEŁNIONE
OCZEKIWANIA
CHCE BYĆ DOCENIONA+
POSZUKUJE WZORCÓW
ZACHOWAŃ
PRAGNIE ZMIAN ALE
NIE MA KONKR. POMYSŁÓW
NIE AKCEPTUJE KRYTYKI

At Tarnów, Kaśka turned out to be the most distinctive one: a quiet and withdrawn, quite frustrated young mother and citizen of Tarnów with a high school education, working in services, and visiting the museum with her five-year old daughter. What did Kaśka find here? First of all, she was completely intimidated by the exhibition, she felt unprepared for such a visit, which was made even more obvious by the inquisitive child she brought with her. What Kaśka was looking for in the museum was an anecdote, something about the daily life of the upper classes, and she needed to have her attention drawn to what particularly attracted it. Unfortunately, she had a sense of chaos, even though at the same time she appreciated the beauty of the displayed objects - as well as recognising the fact that there is a method behind the exposition. The need to tame the space and control the chaos was so dominating in Tarnów that the action selected for implementation in this project was also an attempt to respond to it, and so in the next stage of work we prepared a small 'guide yourself' tour book as an implementation. The idea for the Top 10 qualities of the Tarnów museum (elements of comics, pastiche, clash of the past and the present, non-literal quality, humour) resulted mostly from the interpretive work done in stage two. A collective search for possible associations, key words, stories, fun facts, as well as more universal truths created a very broad interpretive context around the theme 'Sarmatians', and consequently determined one all-encompassing essence, namely 'hot blood' and refers to both the national character of the Polish people (and so is valid), and also to Sarmatian customs and traditions (those related to the museum's collection).

A prototype of the 'guide yourself' tour book (Tarnów)

Dare to think differently! From a theme to an essence

In Tarnów we were looking to involve stories and anecdotes connected with Sarmatian life whilst trying to avoid a shallow sensation. It was a challenge to find the balance between a need to provide good quality content with, what we thought receivers would like to hear. During one of the exercises, in which we created a historical newspaper full of Sarmatian content, we came up with the title 'What's under a nobleman's robe?' – which led us to look for an exclusive theme addressed to adults.

To be frank, having eventually distilled it from very elaborate semantic maps (thanks to the attitude of museum professionals participating in the workshop as well as invited guests) we realised just how accurate 'hot blood' was as an essence. There was no 'objective' assessment of the Sarmatians, or as to what sort of image should be presented by the museum and some harsh words were spoken on a topic which proved to be controversial. The museum professionals fought so fiercely for the Janus-faced Sarmatian nature that we were convinced we were on to something and that this theme can arouse real emotions.

We thought real emotions were good criteria for proving the accuracy of an essence which was determined through interpretive search.

II. Why should heritage be interpreted?

The word 'interpretation' appears many times in this book. We keep referring to our conviction that museums should not only present heritage but also (most of all) make it available, which requires an interpretation of it as well as a non-neutral presentation of content. (Of course, academic approach and research as well as proper preservation and other statutory actions performed by a museum are also necessary.)

According to a famous maxim by Tilden, interpretation is always more than information. Correlatively, we indicate that for museum professionals this activity is more than the creation of additional duties and is not a time-consuming social game – however pleasant spending time together creatively can be.

Interpretation, especially in reference to work at a museum, is related to the added value of team thought. Interpretation deals with 'what happens in between', (Latin: *inter*) and is one of the tools for supportive management of professional staff.

A museum's public can benefit from this, provided their expectations, needs and lack of knowledge are taken into account. This is why the third basic indicator of good museum interpretation is the acknowledgement that whilst experts are not the only ones to have the right to interpret heritage, they are the ones with the required knowledge, and should therefore

What results from an essence? (Zakopane)

support the interpretive competences of the public. In this way, a museum visit is no longer merely an opportunity to learn more about a subject but also to increase one's ability to understand the contemporary world as well as oneself

In our method we directly refer to three other principles formulated by Tilden which are worth mentioning here. In the interpretive approach it is very important to withdraw from a biased way of presenting content. We should provoke questions, and support independent search rather than communicate only one truth. We aim at evoking reactions and do not support a polite, undisputed reception. Another important principle refers to the necessity of building semantic connections that include receivers. Tilden observed that information does not exist by itself in a separate world, and that it is very helpful to absorb this information with reference to previously gained knowledge and experience.

And now the final phase which brings us directly closer to the interpretive approach presented in the method here. Tilden noticed that it is not a good idea to concentrate on detail without making reference to the whole, i.e. a broader context. Tilden clearly stated that mentioning everything is not worthwhile, and that a certain 'strategy of cohesiveness' should be maintained, i.e. the main message should be defined and later referred to in many ways, thereby leading narration with the development of our 'interpretive niches'.

In our method we interpret a museum's resources (including, among others, local context or contemporary determinant factors) through an adopted theme. This principle may seem limiting (after all, museums do have so much to tell!), however it results mainly from the need to strengthen what a museum offers along with its image, and a receivers' limited ability to absorb information.

Dare to think differently! From a theme to an essence

Within this approach, we encourage an interpretation in which details are treated with the utmost attention as elements of a broader context which can be interpreted with their help, and not as closed, separate entities. We deliberately avoid the word 'explain' here because we assume that a museum's interpretation does not pretend to be an academic model for explaining the world (the world is different and more comprehensive in character). Moreover, the use of detail in a presentation of heritage makes it easier for people to create a more personal relationship.

The theme – understood here as an interpretive perspective – is formulated not only in reference to a collection, which is a popular museum practice. The entirety of stage one's method of analysing receivers, environment and a museum itself, is the preparation for an interpretation that takes place before the development of a presentation plan which will be based on that interpretation. The linchpin for the plan of development is an essence, i.e. a theme reduced to its core (however ambitious this may sound…). In this sense, defining one leading theme facilitates the development of interpretive contexts without limiting the opportunity for absorbing knowledge.

Treating museums as separate mediums and communication platforms with characteristic means is another important issue. In our method we strengthen the communicative aspect of a museum's activity, for instance by substituting the word 'visitor' with the term 'receiver', even though in some situations we are hoping that there is room for conversation in a museum and that a receiver can also become a sender.

We could also ask: Why should we open interpretive contexts? The most important answer is: because heritage is not a collection of separate elements but more a part of the dynamic social world, shaped among other things by the processes of memory and forgetfulness. It has the properties of a process and occurs in a complex semantic network. Heritage therefore needs to be presented through references to contexts, which are presented as an original exhibition.

About heritage as a network of interconnections

The interpretive method presented in this book refers to heritage. It is therefore sensible to explain how we perceive this term and what consequences this approach entails.

Dynamics

We assume that heritage is not a static, permanently granted inheritance, a legacy which simply has to be accepted. A much more accurate definition would be to treat it as a dynamic social construction developed to a great extent from contemporary perspective and as a response to contemporary needs.

Lokalne muzeum w globalnym świecie. Poradnik praktyczny

Heritage by its nature is rooted in the past but is not a natural medium for the past. It can therefore be subject to political abuse but this potential for ambivalence can also be seen as strength.

Identity

Heritage can become a valuable point of reference in our attempts to define who we are (and who one is), as it answers the question of where we come from. In the process of defining a local collective identity, institutions of heritage – particularly museums - exercise the supreme authority of attesting to the shape of the past.

We believe that despite this there can be room in a museum for different – not necessarily unanimous and often complementary - narrations.

Esprit de corps

Heritage is not neutral; despite its form i.e. usually reflecting an official national discourse (or European one, i.e. reflecting a politically institutionalised character) it is bequeathed mainly as a source of pride. It indicates how powerful heritage is; it is important enough to create the feeling of belonging to a community, to support its image and longevity. However, in order for it to become a truly efficient tool for promoting civil competences, heritage cannot be concentrated on itself. Museums should therefore not only teach respect for the past but also provide tools for a critical view of the past.

Contextualisation

The fact that heritage can truly support the understanding of the present is equally important. For this to be possible, heritage cannot be treated as a merely material legacy contained in objects. It is necessary to develop both broad and meaningful interpretive contexts.

The 'dynamic' and 'linear' approaches

Because heritage is also a dynamic social construct co-created by individual memories, political actors, individual stories and history both official and unofficial, it should be considered as a network of interconnections. A different take on history can be simply be referred to as linear; the past in this approach is a series of consecutive events which, according to the logic of progress, were necessary. Adopting any of these approaches has significant consequences for the style and method of conducting museum work.
 When using the dynamic approach it is more important to develop your own relationship with heritage and support personal development,

especially the competence (including interpretive ones) of a museum's public, who are not treated merely as a group of 'receivers' of a message communicated by an institution of heritage but instead as co-authors and co-owners. If we seriously consider heritage to be something that belongs to society then logically speaking it cannot be appropriated by one way of understanding that is obligatory to all.

Stage two of the interpretive method, based on search, is connected with all the most important aspects of understanding heritage, as indicated above. Therefore:

- it is based on interpretation as a development of a network of inter-connections and interpretive contexts
- it includes official narrations as well as stories which are not usually heard, due to being articulated by different minorities;
- it is connected with the social dynamics of creating heritage as an important communication platform
- it results not just from an awareness of the fact that heritage is the past moulded today, but that this method is also based on a necessity to update its content, i.e. refer it to the present
- it uses creative group processes which accept the personal associations and experiences of participants
- it is a time of search and, as a result, it encourages personal search along with the development of personal networks of interconnections...

Workshop: how to progress from a theme to an essence

We have managed to formulate one main theme for a museum's message – we can take a deep breath and start thinking what it can actually mean, in what contexts it should be mentioned, how it is connected with the present... and therefore venture interpretation. A collective, creative interpretive process at this stage is in a sense crucial for the method described in this manual. It is closely connected with the way of understanding a museum: its social use and function concerning social identity; its reliance on contents which refer to the needs of the receivers of a museum's messages.

Its description, however, is a serious challenge. We can certainly say that this stage is based on a search, it constantly pulsates and takes a lot of time and energy, involves and evokes constant questions; it is unpredictable to a large extent (as many creative processes are). Moreover, there are no objective

indicators which can assure us that we have achieved a good result. What we present in this chapter is more of an attempt to describe the conditions and character of work at this stage, as well as a detailed description of tools used rather than a schedule of work to be done. Sounds discouraging? Have courage! The taste of discovery and victory lasts longer than that of failures...

Interpretation, meaning a search

Any search, that of new land, oil, gold, or new ways to use resources – is successful on several conditions. It is always very useful to be open to discovery. We all know examples of great discoveries which happened by accident, but also those which had been unimaginable before. Good maps are useful; good, meaning accurate and up-to-date. Discoverers are also ready to verify existing maps and add to them with the results of their searches. A map created at this stage of the method can also be added to. Moreover, its value and usefulness increases if it is to be regularly developed.

What else can help such a search? It is good to have time for it and not work under pressure. We should let ourselves take pleasure in getting lost and asking questions. It is good not to be occupied with anything else and thereby commit fully.

And finally, there is the question of courage. When we realise that we are not the first people to try and achieve something in this field and that furthermore our predecessors often have a guaranteed place in history, we may lose our breath. We should think of those giants before us not minding us using their thoughts and achievements and so stand on their shoulders; they can also give us a piggyback ride… In our search we should not be shy about tradition, we should certainly know it, as well as know how to use it.

Being open is easier said than done. It is also easy to speak about the necessity of courage. What can we do make things easier?

Serendipity

Very often, the paths taken by our thoughts are completely unpredictable. Occasionally an image, memory or sound sends a thought so fresh and from another realm that we become immediately enchanted. Even more: it makes us see ourselves and the world in a completely new way. But we could also (and this happens most of the time) let the thought escape, telling ourselves it

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does not matter and is irrelevant. Who knows how many brilliant inventions we have lost because of this attitude?

There is one simple way for great ideas which are not necessarily relevant and come out of the blue not to escape. Let us get a notebook or put a sheet of paper on the wall and write down such associations, phrases, ideas and vocabulary. You might use them or not; but it could be very useful. We can find real treasures along the way - accidentally.

Another very interesting solution is to keep an alphabetical list of ideas. Such a way of organising things may seem useless but in reality it is a good idea to have a list like that at hand all the time.

The unthinkable

Basic exercises and assumptions of creative training are connected with the unlocking of brain capabilities and support thinking in such a way as to create new, non-obvious connections. At the beginning of a good workshop we ask our inner censor to leave, i.e. we allow ourselves the freedom of unlimited search. It can be done in a fun way; at the beginning of a creative session ask all the participants to say as many self-restricting sentences as they can, e.g.:

'This won't work anyway, no need to even talk about it'.
'I don't know anything about it'.
'I'm sure it's been done before'.
'It's irrelevant'.
'But we've already been doing this'.
'We can't afford it'.

After that we agree to exclude these sentences from our vocabulary.

Time

Unfortunately, we cannot assist anyone (including ourselves) in increasing this asset. With busy museum professionals in mind we produced a doorknob sign that might help discourage people from coming in with all kinds of urgent matters.

Let's give ourselves the time… Haste is an ill advisor, and you should always be convinced when it comes to making important decisions. We advise museum professionals to sleep on their essences and take breaks to catch their breath between creative sessions.
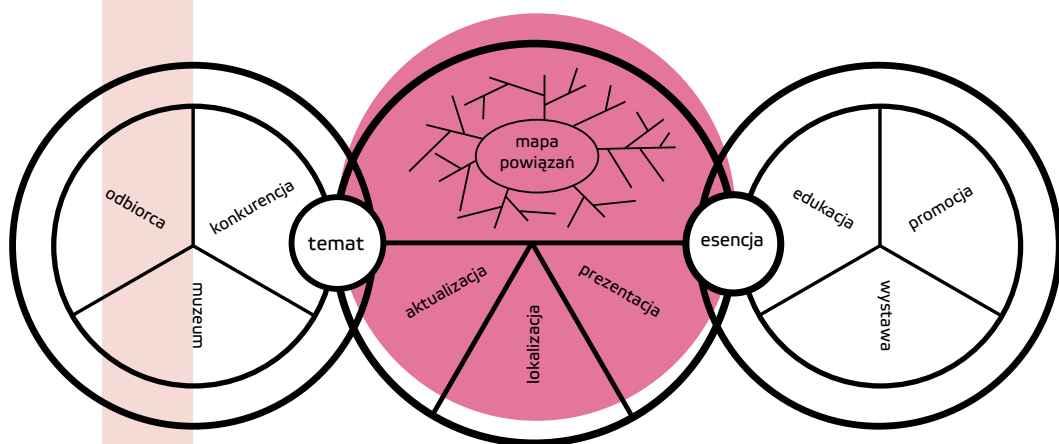
Step 1. Map of a semantic field

At the beginning of stage two we all have to agree (more or less) on the destination of our journey. Before we create a map, we have to at least decide on a common direction. In the case of a semantic map/mind map, the direction this takes depends on theme (i.e. the result of stage one's work on our interpretive method).

The main theme will be the basis for interpretation. It is defined after analysis of a museum's resources, environment and receivers. In order to progress from a theme to specific presentational actions we have to explore a theme and examine its meanings and associations with other issues. All this is done in order to fully explore any inspirations resulting from a theme and then use them in future actions. In this step we create semantic maps around a main theme, to be used with interpretation steps as the basis for an analysis of possible directions of presentation. They will also help define essence – the most important aspect of a theme. The results of such work on the semantic field of a theme can be valuable on their own.

Mind maps and association maps developed in the present can become an inspiration for future actions and projects, as can the effect of the entire workshop – an essence and presentation plan.

Workshop tool: Mind mapping

Mind mapping is a technique associated with fast learning and a way of making notes. It is a way of recording content which helps to memorise it and concentrate. It works thanks to cooperation between hemispheres. The method was designed by British scholars Tony and Barry Buzan. When working with this method you do not write down contents in a linear manner, item after item, but create map-like images around the main issue. They form radiating lines – branches – where you put words, images and symbols (e.g. arrows connecting branches and clouds). Thanks to the use of images and colours, the right hemisphere which is responsible for imagination, intuition, and spatial perception is activated. The objective of mind mapping is also to make the process of learning more pleasant, which increases its productivity.

Before any further work, it is a good idea to create several mind maps referring to random themes (e.g. cow). The following are the main principles of creating a mind map:

- Draw an image associated with the theme at the centre using at least three colours.
- Use images and symbols in the whole map.
- The most important words should stand out the most.
- There can only be one image or word on each branch.
- The branches should be as long as the words.
- Use different sizes and styles of letters.
- Use many different colours.
- Let yourself be carried away by imagination – create the most abstract, absurd maps.
- Create your own mind mapping style.
- Put down thoughts, not only facts, but also problems, associations etc.
  (Tony Buzan, *Mapy twoich myśli*, Łódź 2004)

How can a mind map be useful during an interpretive workshop? In our process we use this tool not to present existing contents but to create new ones. We use the map's potential to facilitate learning – stir the imagination, notice connections, create intuitive associations, the pleasure derived from creating images. A mind map is used to analyse the range of meanings of a main theme. Therefore we will refer to it as a semantic field Map.

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The construction of a mind map assumes that the main theme is placed in the centre. The sheet of paper we work on should be as large as possible (flipchart pad size or larger), and preferably placed diagonally.

The main theme in the centre can be surrounded with an illustrated image. Let's assume that it does not have to be a work of art but a symbol which we strongly associate with the theme. This is of itself an important moment for the creative process – the attempt to represent a theme with an image can lead us towards non-obvious associations and connections. Now, let's draw the first branches radiating from the main theme. It is best to draw five, six, seven empty branches at the beginning and fill them with contents later. Write down initial associations on these branches and then add further associations and other aspects of written phrases on sub-branches. They should always, however, be related to the main theme. Whilst working we are mainly interested in different associations and meanings of a theme. Here are some auxiliary questions we can ask when we run out of initial associations:

- What can we learn by associating with the theme? What skills, attitudes and forms of knowledge are connected with it?
- How is the theme present in culture? Are there films, books and games about it? Has anyone sang about it, or written poems? Is the theme mentioned in mythology?
- How is the theme associated with our immediate environment, city or region?
- What about the theme is most important to us? How is this issue associated with our passions and interests?
- Does the theme attract any groups of fans, collectors, connoisseurs? What do they do, where do they meet?
- What games are connected with the theme? How can it be used to create a theme park or a playground?
- What in our collection is most associated with the theme; what could be its icon and what additional meanings does it carry?

When creating a map of meanings and associations with a main theme we look for connections on different levels, we use the power of association. A graphic presentation of such work makes it easier for us to reach non-obvious connections. It is a helpful tool for grasping a group's process that is activated by meandering thoughts, the use of different language registers (mythology, pop culture, academic knowledge), the creation of metaphors. In the interpretive method a mind map takes the form of a process, not just rough notes from a meeting. This means that a map can accompany us all the way through a workshop. The sheet of

paper with the mind map on it should be hung somewhere visible to everyone so that new contents can be added even after a workshop. This is important because, as experience shows, the best ideas come at the end of a meeting.

Step 2. Filtering

When the map is ready, which is not to say it is closed (because we still have it at hand in case we have some new ideas), we can begin the process of choosing the content which will construct and support further presentation actions (exhibitions, education, promotions…). In the interpretive method we speak of content filtering, i.e. choosing content which corresponds with properly formulated criteria. We want to agree on the logic behind the selection of content which appears on a semantic field map as well as the criteria for content selection – we refer to this as filtering (we are referring to filters, different views taken when looking at a mind map).

There can be many different filters used for a semantic field map, depending on the needs and determining factors for each museum and each case.

For instance, if we are mostly concerned with adjusting a museum's activities for a school curriculum (in order to prepare classes for a nearby school), the filter we could use for a mind map could be specific topics listed in the national curriculum and while doing this we could ask the following questions: what exactly can we teach using our museum resources? How can our content refer to the curriculum? Lessons in what subjects could take place here?

If we are mostly concerned with teaching key competences, we use a competence filter and ask what specific situations we can create to develop competences.

For the project described in this book we used three filters which we had most willingly and very often used in previous museum projects. These are: update, location and presentation. The order in which they are used is not binding and each time it is the team's decision. Sometimes it is easier to begin with what seems easiest (most evident), another time we begin with what we are specifically required to do.

Each time filtering is used, it involves asking questions in reference to a mind map. This way the selected content reflects the needs of contemporary receivers, strengthens local context and involves a museum's public i.e. receivers of the message formulated in accordance with a selected theme in the strongest possible way.

In practice: we take a close look at resources, written and drawn on a large sheet of paper; we ask filtering questions and look for possible answers. We hang the sheet of paper with the map on it in a visible place. We prepare coloured markers so as to be able to make notes on the map. Each

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filter is attributed a different colour, e.g. we use green to mark the aspects: museum pieces, associations...) which are best associated with current issues; we use red to mark those best reflecting the filter of location etc.

It is the task of the leader to read out the thematically grouped issues, ask questions and write down associations using the appropriate colour. It is worth reminding a team of the fact that these are not necessarily appearing in their final form (actions, exhibition solutions); they can be based on interconnections between words, not necessarily between their meanings. However, even in their draft version they can bring us closer to the discovery of a good essence. It is enough to take a few clean sheets of paper after the filtering and gather the key thoughts, suggestions and associations once again. We can work on this sheet, summarising the process of theme interpretation by voting: each participant chooses expressions close to them and eliminates those they do not agree with.

During this step, time is also one of the key ingredients of a successful process. Experience tells us that many good ideas or metaphors appear unexpectedly and not at all during working hours. This is also worth remembering.

The description of this workshop may seem abbreviated but it is essentially about the continued asking of several questions in reference to a mind map, and carefully looking at its content. Therefore the most important tool for this stage is the list of questions, very easy to use but requiring concentration.

Having created and filtered a mind map we have to make the effort to compare any dominating associations and write down any consequent metaphors, sayings and slogans; eventually we will select one of them. The other ones, which emerged along the way, can be used as a basis for inspiration behind other museum actions taken across all fields, especially the field of communication.

Filter: updating

Updating means referring contents presented by a museum to current conditions and needs. It also means that we are looking for ways in which our resources could help with a better understanding of today's world and give information about how they can be used by our receivers as tools for understanding today's world. Very often local museums are equipped with resources perceived by their visitors as familiar, and therefore easy to comprehend and absorb. At the same time museums can bring themselves closer to their receivers by using familiar contents that refer to global trends.

Lokalne muzeum w globalnym świecie. Poradnik praktyczny

A detail is a starting point
(Zubrzyca Górna)

Workshop tool: A list of questions

- Why are we speaking about this today?
- What contemporary cultural trends/issues/problems can our contents refer to?
- How can interpretations of contents presented here be useful in today's world?
- How can we better understand the contemporary world (or a part of it) by using our resources?
- Why is it important to speak about these things today?

Workshop tool: Newspaper – updating exercise

In order to test the validity of contents presented by a museum we suggest an exercise using today's newspaper.

Select several headlines of different texts in different daily newspapers brought to a workshop and look for objects in an exhibition which could refer to them. It would be good if the references were diversified: either very general or referring to one selected quality common to a museum piece and a newspaper article.

Was the emancipation of women a phenomenon already present during the Baroque period? (for example, connecting the news

about a Nobel Prize winner with an exhibited 'special purpose' handbag)

Was genetically modified food conceivable at the time of the blissful lives of landed gentry? (landscape by Chełmoński)

Who is considered a madman today? What are the limits of one's own myth? ('Self-portrait' by Witkacy)

The objective of this exercise is to look for connections between heritage from the past and contemporary events. Perhaps we have at hand such resources which could illustrate and shed light on unfamiliar, global problems by using familiar and understandable means?

Filter: Location

This filter draws our attention to those aspects of the semantic field of a theme which are particularly close to our immediate environment – the local context of a museum. After a detailed analysis of an environment (conducted in stage one) we are aware of the context in which we operating.

Workshop tool: List of questions

- Why is it a good idea to speak about these topics here: in this city, in this building, in this region?
- In what way can local context (museum environment) reinforce the message of the exhibition?
- How can the local character of the place be used to create the message?
- Would the message differ significantly if this exhibition/activity were organised elsewhere? If so, how?

Filter: Presentation/animation

This filter emphasises issues on a map of interconnections which can inspire exhibition solutions which involve receivers or the development of games, play, exercises, interactions...

Workshop tool: List of questions

- What can we do at the exhibition with reference to the contents presented?
- If we had no limitations, what could this exhibition be? (a labyrinth, a house of mirrors, a curiosity gallery, or perhaps... a gym, 3D cinema etc.)
- What exhibition methods (type, kind) would best present the contents?

An adventure up the
tower (Tarnów)

Primary material
for imagination
(Zakopane)

- What activities can we offer the public at the exhibition? (thematic events, workshops, presentations etc.)
- How can we involve the guests so that they actively participate and co-create the exhibition space?

Workshop tool: Playground – presentation exercise

It is a good idea to detach from the practical content of resources and take a fresh look at the space at hand. Let's imagine the exhibition is a playground for a while. What could children do here if all their attractions were connected with the main theme?

Let's fantasise about a museum playground of pharmacy, military paraphernalia, sound, sculpture, water...

Step 3: The essence, i.e. the grand finale

The entirety of stage two's work with the interpretive method amounts to a dynamic, pulsating search which leads to the formulation of an essence, i.e. a perfect, concise self-definition, in other words: a message, a basic statement. An essence is usually formulated to serve not just an exhibition or didactic program but also for the purposes of all museum actions within the scope of presentation (exhibitions, education, promotions…). At this point we do not have to think about the entirety of a museum because a previously defined main theme will help us to formulate an essence. The interpretive method first of all uses a museum's unique contents – the main theme is their representation, a basic dimension, and clarifies the character of a museum. Essence refers mainly to theme. It answers the following questions: What is most important to us in a theme? What is its core? By answering these questions using an adopted theme we indirectly indicate what matters most in the operation of an entire institution.

This search is to a great extent based on word play and the question: 'How – having drawn a map, reinforced chaos and broadened context; after all these involved journeys to the edge – how to draw one expression which will become the essence?', resembling the insoluble problem – how to write a good poem?

Let us first establish what we are looking for, and then – at the level of an instruction of action – let us see how accurate and useful this poem writing analogy is.

This expression, even though it can just be a phrase, is not the same as a slogan advertising a museum. It has a more practical importance for the planning of museum actions, including communication. It is an answer to the question of what, above all, we are and what we could not do without. Therefore an essence should capture what is most important.

Dare to think differently! From a theme to an essence

An essence refers to the core of a matter

In its concise form an essence captures what is important for a team, what results from the character of a collection and an institution, what can illuminate all the actions of a museum.

As well as being a statement of how things are it is also a call for action.

It is difficult to fulfil all these conditions at one time. A perfect essence which carries the right energy and can lead masses to achieve great deeds is usually a metaphor – strengthened by the power of symbolism and image - it carries a strong dose of meaning.

From a linguistic point of view an essence
- does not contain proper names (because it has to be universal and it is hard to achieve this kind of familiarity and level of association with a specific place/person)
- is not phrased in the past tense
- uses phrases, sayings, portmanteaus; its form may resemble a good headline, it is catchy.

Coming up with a good essence, as when formulating a perfect metaphor, is never done according to one set instruction. We know from experience that the ways leading to a satisfactory objective are always very different. We have to remember however, that an essence is not simply a sum of different elements added up together and it does not directly come out of gathered together mind maps, receivers' portraits, analysis of environment, stories and so on, however, looking at these results helps this work immensely, also because it brings back thoughts which were mentioned once and could have been lost along the way.

Let us return for a moment to the instruction of how to write a good poem. Why isn't there one instruction on how to write poetry which is applicable to all? Among others because of different receivers and poets. It seems however that most often the basis for a good poem is a feeling, experience, emotions... Poetry is an attempt at conveying these things with language. It is a way of linguistically expressing one's own feelings. In order for this to be possible we need to involve attention, conscious work, and honesty in the observation of our thoughts and reactions. We look for the right words, metaphors, rhythms. We want to move the reader, so that with a particularly accurate metaphor they can again see a fragment of the world and perhaps learn something about themselves along the way; so a good poem should not be an airtight side note made by an author for an author.

The tree of (the rhythms) of life (Zubrzyca Górna)

During the process of formulating an essence it is also recommendable to aim at evoking images and emotions. In order for this to happen we have to first bring up our own values and experiences connected with an exhibition or museum (not the intentional, statutory, declared ones) depending on what we are looking for in an essence.

Let's allow ourselves the freedom of a white sheet of paper on which we can write anything. Although we have worked out a lot in terms of interpretation, we still have a lot of work ahead of us in terms of looking for an essence. Ahead of us and within us, to be precise. How to help a team's members come up with content helpful for formulating an essence?

First of all let us see what has stuck in our minds. Let's hide the carefully prepared mind map. If something was an accurate association we will probably remember it.

Workshop tool: What are we looking for?

At the beginning of this workshop it is a good idea to agree on a common direction of search. An introductory exercise – an essence creating game for the objects around us can be helpful. A team can be divided into small groups. Each group secretly chooses one object, for example: bus ticket, paper clip, piece of paper… The task for each group is to create an essence for their object. It should be a statement which includes the basic quality and core of the object without directly indicating what that object is. Some examples of essences created at workshops are: paper clip – 'I connect what is dispersed', 'I organize chaos'; bus ticket – 'I shorten space', 'I provide peace during a journey'; piece of paper – 'I am an outlet for the ocean of thoughts'. Having created their own slogans, groups exchange pieces of paper with the essences written on them. The task is then to guess which slogans created by other groups refer to which objects used in the exercise.

Workshop tool: Key words on Post-it notes

The beginning of this workshop is a summary of earlier stages, but this time around within the context of looking for an essence. Each team member receives ten Post-it notes. On each note they write one key word associated with the theme in use which needs to be given an essence. The words can be free, personal associations, not necessarily resulting directly from previously created maps. A moderator gathers all the notes on a flip chart, grouping them together with the team, according to semantic categories (e.g. groups of verbs, words connected with: a receiver, a collection or

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a team). These key words are now arranged into basic areas which reflect how we want to think about a main theme (and subsequently about an exhibition, collection; an entire museum).

Workshop tool: Receiver's statements

Let us now change our point of view for a moment and remember the suggested receivers from stage one of the interpretive method's work. Let us imagine they have visited our exhibition and are now telling their friends about it at a casual meeting. Each team member speaks about their visitor's experience as a specific receiver. Similarly to stage one this exercise is usually a humorous one.

Now let's see how often the key words formulated by a team appear in these dialogues. Is the receivers' experience the same as the experience we designed?

Let's renew the rhythms of life (Zubrzyca Górna)

Workshop tool: Voting for key words

After an exercise with the public we return to the previously mentioned key words, this time taking the receivers into serious consideration, and try to select the most important key words. Each

team member has one vote and cannot abstain. After the vote we usually end up with a collection of several words, most probably nouns. Write them down on a new piece of paper.

Workshop tool: Verbs energise

Now it is time to concentrate on actions: What can we do/is usually done/can receivers do in connection with the key words?

For example, the most important key words that have been written down are: memory, heritage, experience, light, meeting. Now, let us write down some word associations around them in the form of actions, asking questions such as: If a 'memory' is important, what specifically do you do with that 'memory'? Some answers could be: cherish, pass on, present, research.

We come up with a collection of sets or pairs of words that connect actions with subjects.

Workshop tool: Being there is not enough. You have to be some kind of something

Let us now concentrate on the qualities that our exhibition, education or promotion should have or already has. Some helpful questions will also let us appreciate what we already have and do: What is our exhibition like? Why is it special? What brings us the most satisfaction from our didactic actions?; what do we want to achieve with them? What forms of promotion are the most efficient? What results do we want to achieve? Write down all the descriptions which come to mind on a new piece of paper. In the next step, look for comparisons and metaphors. At this very important stage we should be open to existing titles, slogans, proverbs and sayings. We should remember that an essence is created primarily for a team; if it seems too ambitious, grandiloquent or even infantile, we do not have to advertise it. It is important that it is convincing to us.

Workshop tool: A change of perspective

Perhaps at this stage we still have: questions and doubts; opposing viewpoints rather than good ideas. This results from a creative process which principally includes being mistaken and can be accompanied by a feeling of being lost. One efficient technique that is helpful in finding your way out of such a creative process involves catching a broader perspective.

By this stage we have created several sets of associations and slogans which differ both linguistically and in their level of generality, style and content. Let us bring them together and take a rela-

xed look at them. Sometimes it is a good idea to take a walk along a gallery of notes. Let us now try to see our problem at distance from a collection – see it from a different perspective. Let us forget for a moment that we are working on an essence in a museum and instead let us impersonate other people:

- Writer: if we were writing a novel (e.g. science fiction, romance, a family saga) based on the main theme, what title would we give it?
- Orator: if we had to present our theme at the US Congress, how would our speech begin?
- Leader: if we were looking for a rallying cry to take our army into battle, how could the main theme inspire us?
- Host: if we were making a toast related to the main theme, what would it be?
- Advisor: if we were to formulate life advice connected with the main theme, what would it be?
- Chinese oracle: if we were to formulate a prediction about the future of the world based on the main theme, what would it be?
  This is probably the stage when everyone is already tired.

Experience shows, however, that as soon as someone comes up with a really accurate expression we recognise it, because there is an immediate conversation about it – we have more energy. There are specific ideas about how to translate the essence into actions, and there is a need to discuss why one idea is good and another is not. A good essence triggers flow, it is accompanied by emotions and further associations – it boosts your energy.

Workshop tool: Testing an essence

At this stage of work we usually come up with an extensive collection of different suggestions for an essence. Choosing one of them may be difficult, especially as it involves consequences for a museum's communication and activities; it could be the choice of essence for years... How to choose the best one? Here we would like to suggest a few ways of testing an essence.

Firstly, you do not have to make the choice right away at a meeting – it is a good idea to sleep on an essence. Let us give ourselves the time to see how well it sits in our minds, whether we are able to remember it? Does it sound good when we talk about it to friends? After some time, are we still attached to it?

Secondly, remembering that an essence is not a promotional slogan, let us make a simulation: how would it work on a t-shirt or a museum banner, a slogan on a museum wall.

Thirdly, let us think if and how an essence inspires merchandise for a museum's shop, what souvenir ideas does it provoke?

We know that we have found a good essence if it provokes creativity and inspiration, if we feel like we want to talk about it and at the same time keep it to ourselves.

The essence, i.e. the core of a matter

In this step we wanted to move from the main theme to the essence. We interpreted the contents and meanings resulting from the theme and analysed them from the point of view of updating, location and presentation. Besides creating the phrase that reflected the core of our theme, we came up with a broad set of references and meanings for the main theme. At the end of this step let us take one more look at the essence, its relation with the theme and its meaning for our further work. In this reflection we will refer to the phenomoenological reduction. In the interpretive method this philosophical term can be treated as an inspiration, visible in the solutions and working techniques suggested here.

A good essence is:
- intriguing - backed by emotions and metaphors, it has a component of mystery, it puzzles, encourages one to look deeper
- inspiring – it indicates previously undiscovered areas of activity or brings new meanings to previous activities
- captivating – it is convincing to a museum team, we want to join the game!
- unique – results from a theme being interpreted by a museum team
- realistic – based on varied museum resources
- unifying – it works like an umbrella in that it combines all key assets of a chosen theme; it has longevity

Theme vs. essence:
- the theme is the main issue we discuss, the essence is how we understand it;
- the essence is our interpretation of a theme;
- the theme concentrates attention, the essence opens up a wide horizon of meanings, actions and connections...

IV. Frequently asked questions

Our collection has no connection with the location of our museum. Is the location filter necessary?

The analysis of the connection between a collection/museum/exhibition and local context lets you find a different view on what you seemingly know very well. An example from The Tatra Museum: oriental carpets from the Kulczycki collection – which used to be laid in the tents of nomadic peoples, beautiful objects, but with no real connection to Zakopane. But if we look at them closely, we can see that they are handicraft, an example of applied art. Soft, colourful and often telling a story, they are rich in form and not just because of their function but also because they have come out of a need for beauty – just like any utility item in a highlander's house. We know our culture, why not show its connections with other cultures if there is something connecting them? - Moving to a more general level of reflection expressed in a theme and its essence can be helpful in doing that. The above example indicates the connections between the manifestations of handicraft from different cultures at the level of realising a need for beauty in everyday life. This could be one of the ways of interpreting exotic pieces in a local context. Moreover, this approach opens even more paths (e.g. regarding the updating of content) and provokes questions: How is the need for beauty in folk culture realised outside of the applied arts? What does it look like in the lives of the contemporary inhabitants of our region and what can we learn from past artists today? What in general do we learn about people when looking at aesthetic needs and the way they were realised in different cultures?

Why create a map of interconnections if it lists things which are not directly connected with our contents and we do not work with those themes?

Creating a map of interconnections is a way to work out an extensive set of references which can become a valuable interpretive context.

We can create different theme paths, workshops or museum events based on even the most remote of associations. Additionally, the mind map technique assumes that we cannot precisely define how new ideas, associations and concepts are born.

A mind map helps to extract the most interesting plots from seemingly chaotic associations. It is a type of data base which can be used to order the resources at our disposal and also define what we are missing in our collection and what about it there is still to learn.

Dare to think differently! From a theme to an essence

We have created a map of interconnections and everything is interconnected, we have too many references. What to do?

In this case it is a good idea to take one more look at the set of contents and references through the suggested filters. Ask the questions: Which of these issues are important today? What is worth talking about, especially here? What inspires us to organise interesting exhibitions and activities? You can also take a new look at collected contents from the point of view of what could be particularly interesting to specific groups of receivers or important to an institution (the necessity to organise a celebratory exhibition, create a program for schools etc.).

We came up with an essence on our own – what should we do?

That's great! You should test it with the verification tools. A good essence is an expression which makes you feel as if it is something we were all thinking about but no one had pronounced. Most participants can usually sense when an essence appears in a meeting. At the same time it is always good to look deeper – examine how an essence relates to a mission and the potential of an institution and also the dreams and willingness of a team's members to embrace it. An essence is, so to speak, a power word – it should not only well define the core of a matter but also boost our energy, motivate us to act. Its wording will make us feel as though we are working on a very important matter.

We cannot find an essence!

Sometimes we experience a creative paralysis during a workshop and the best ideas come after a meeting is over. A creative process does not like haste or administration. We work on essence only once during a workshop, however we can devote more time to it. If we come up with an essence which does not convince us, we can stop the meeting and go back to the issue a few days later. An important way of testing an essence is to see if it stays in our minds, finds its way in to an institution, or creates a new perspective on previous actions.

We already have a promotional slogan, why do we need an essence?

A promotional slogan is mostly used to communicate a museum's activities, whereas the basic function of an essence is to organise a museum's actions, for internal purposes which are motivated by the main idea behind them, i.e. the essence. One of the effects of this work can be an Interpretive Plan of Presentation (which is based on essence) and part of that plan can be to create a promotional slogan. An essence reminds us of what is most important, what is the strongest asset of a collection, and consequ-

ently what can be interesting to the viewers and how it can be presented to them. If we say 'hot blood' then it seems obvious that an exhibition is not going to be presented in pastel colours, with nothing but dry curator comment, instead we can expect strong expressions from the relevant period; if we speak about provoking the imagination, we will probably not hand it on a silver platter but instead try to move the receiver, involve them, let them discover things on their own and come up with their own conclusions.

How long is an essence valid for?

An essence needs time to start working. We can say that it is valid until it is useful, until it inspires, and until the basing of individual implementations on it seems useful.

About our favourite reduction

We can adopt the pragmatic assumption that if good exhibitions can be prepared with the method for, let's say, teaching the Tango or baking a soufflé, then it should be implemented. Even if we would first instinctively reject it as not relevant to our practices and objectives, we might learn that the analysis of techniques used for it will show us unexpected analogies which will give our work new qualities.

Hard to believe? In the Tango the idea is not to get too close, leave a small distance between the dancers' bodies. In this way the Tango becomes very erotic without being painfully literal. When preparing a museum exhibition it is also sometimes a good idea to attempt figurativeness; it is also good not to always run away from tension and anxiety. What we love about the Tango is its harmony, sexiness, rhythm, but also the leading aspect. Being led by a strong male arm does not mean being dominated; can a museum support its guests this way? Not to dominate but to show tempo, indicate the next move?

And a soufflé? When baking a soufflé, accuracy and high quality ingredients are essential. You cannot substitute butter with margarine or oil. You have a collection of great works of art and artefacts? Do not be afraid to use them! You think you have nothing to boast with but must carry on regardless? Interpret. A soufflé is not the only tasty dish. Taking the risk of looking for analogies between distant objects allows a fresh perspective. However, for it to be even possible to define the similarities we first have to name the core of a matter or at least find its most important qualities.

Understanding the core of a matter is an important aspect at this stage of interpretive work - i.e. an attempt at answering the questions: 'What is it most of all?', 'Without what (quality) would it lose its character?'

In this step we suggest the free application of an approach used by well-known intellectuals who we refer to, and hope these giants will let us climb on their shoulders (respectfully). As non-philosophers we admit that the method we describe became our inspiration but if someone is interested in its detailed description they should look further (e.g. into Roman Ingarden's writings).

What we are discussing here is the phenomoenological reduction which (also referred to by us as the essential reduction) is one of the philosophical mysteries and touches on several classical issues. Much has been written about this method by Edmund Husserl but to us it is an attempt at connecting the basic intellectual need of the so-called 'common man', which is to answer the question: 'But what is this all about?', with the necessity to justify practicing philosophy at all. It is a bridge between the abstract quality of philosophy in the eyes of most non-philosophers, and a conviction

What is the connection between a soufflé and the phenomoenological reduction? (Zubrzyca Górna)

expressed by many philosophers that the questions they pose are very practical indeed. What is more practical than common sense?

In social studies and philosophy, phenomoenology brings to light notions which at first glance are not connected with the classically academic approaches to sense'. This is also why it is an important point of reference for us: it emphasises distancing from what is obvious as well as reaching deeper, but the thematic fields where such a search is carried out can include 'soft' notions such as 'style of behaviour'. Similarly, we never know at first where the meanings of life are hidden and discovering them can be completely unexpected, just as discovering the core of a matter is not done by means of one right methodology. We could for instance, meditate, and have very good results. In phenomoenology we speak about phenomena, we appreciate the uniqueness of different things and processes; above all we agree that there are no evident solutions and final truths that explain everything. In a museum context the phenomoenological approach also serves to increase a receiver's perception and appreciation of those areas of life which are distant from the classic, canonical forms of describing reality.

Dare to think differently! From a theme to an essence

In the phenomoenological reduction we first try to discover and capture the core of a matter, in other words reduce a matter to its one necessary quality. What makes a table a table? What is the quality which unquestionably defines its uniqueness, its unique quality?

What is our exhibition really, above all, at the core of the matter? What is it not? What makes it different from others?

And now step two: How is this thing/exhibition perceived by our receivers? Are we aware that there is no direct channel for transferring information so that they receive it without misrepresentation, neutrally? This second step means taking a close look not so much at things but at the situation where they are perceived.

Formulating the most important truth about a matter (here: exhibition) is very helpful, although not easy. Above all it is very easy to fall into the trap of expertise. The more we explore a theme, study it and let ourselves be absorbed by it, the harder it is to remember that there are people for whom this theme is an undiscovered land. We probably would not have to think about it at all if not for the fact that they are our receivers.
Therefore if we do manage to formulate a main thought, a semantic essence that carries the main message of an exhibition, it is then possible to trace whether the means we used really support the transfer of the message we care about. And therefore, reducing a message to its essence not only does not restrict the message but is a chance to strengthen it, as it facilitates the creation of a clear statement. The essence which we strive to create should also be a moving metaphor, it should evoke emotion and still refer to the principal message.
In the Zubrzyca open air museum we reached the essence 'Renewing the rhythms of life' by more or less this sequence of associations: a different world (from urban chaos and noise) – a place of renewal – in the countryside you can hear the sounds of daily chores – to experience deep renewal, you have to enter into harmony with the cycles of nature – renewal is connected to the moon as well as the rhythms of field work...
The essence in Tarnów – 'Hot Blood' – was the result of a search for common – usually contradictory – qualities associated with Sarmatians. The main pattern introduced when filtering the mind map was referred to connecting those qualities to the Polish national character (also contemporary).
'Poland derives its personality, strength and unique vitality from a variety of seemingly contradictory qualities. Poland is a part of the West, but it also understands the East. Poles are passionate and idealistic, but also practical and resourceful. The Polish character is defined by ambition, but also by practicality and being down-to-earth; chastity and sinfulness; generosity and pettiness. These qualities coexist, they are contradictory but they are our own. We can live with them and create with them'. The author

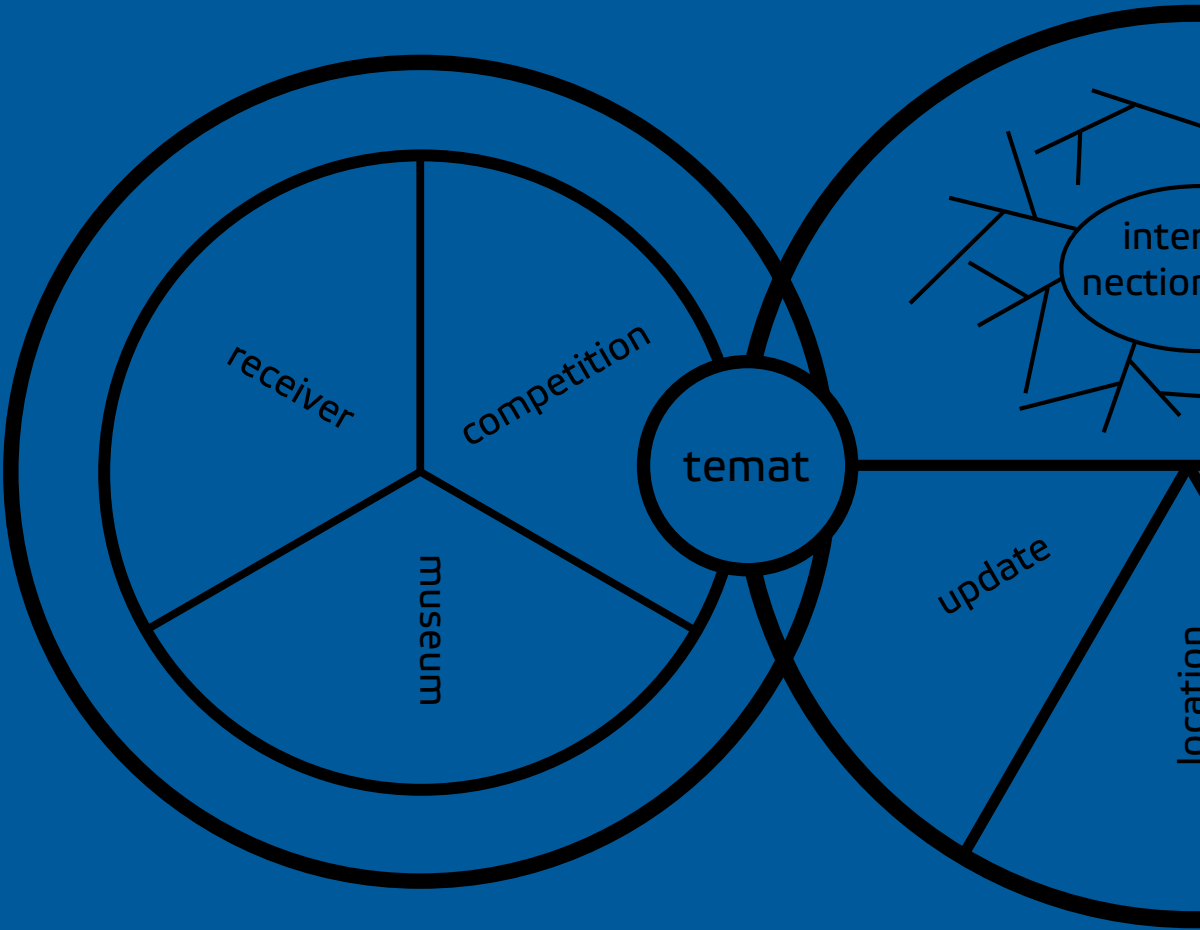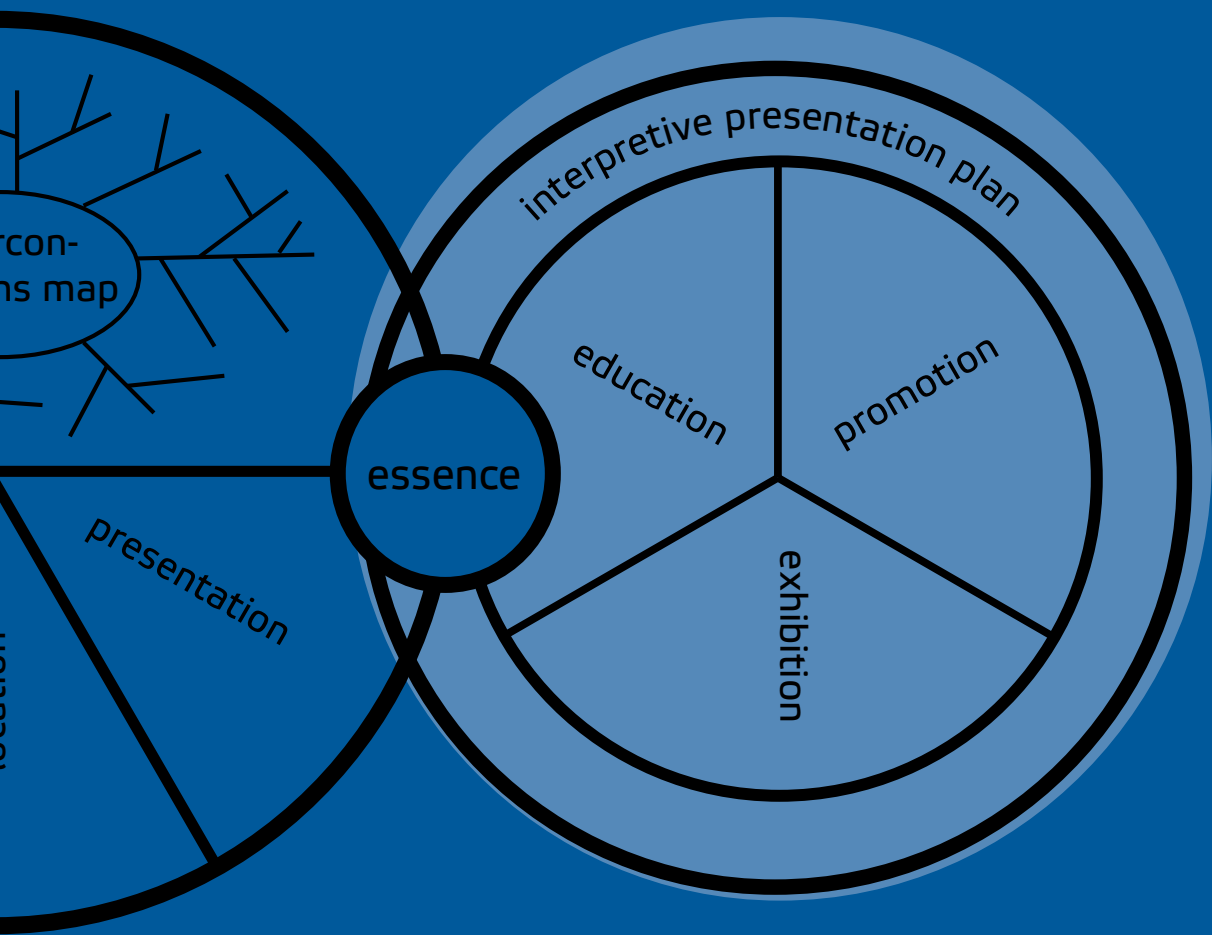A Local Museum in a Global World. A practical guide

of these words is not one of the 18th century Sarmatian chroniclers but Wally Olins, a world renowned British expert in nation branding who was asked to analyse the brand of Poland. In his opinion the words which most accurately define the Polish spirit are *creative tension*.

In Zakopane the essence 'Provoking the imagination' was chosen after an extensive stage of interpretive work when we were constantly concerned with the receivers' needs and determinant factors of context. We decided that Hasior's working method is an important Gallery asset worth emphasising. It is universal (supports the deep, multithreaded perception of space and creative thought) and at the same time, unique, moreover – it is best understood here in Zakopane. When we were looking for confirmation of this intuitive essence we managed to find several adequate quotations by the master (Hasior). The Zakopane essence successfully connects contemporary needs (via updating) with the particularity of a place (a collection of authentic works).

receiver

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interpretive presentation plan

education

promotion

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Act!

From an essence

to implementation

I. What is this chapter about?

In this chapter we will discuss ways in which a museum can use an essence. To begin with, it should be emphasised that when working with essence it is very important to bring a comprehensive approach to an interpretive workshop. When integrating an essence with museum activity, we should take into account the entire process so far – the ideas, afterthoughts and analyses resulting from it. Essence, therefore, is not merely a sentence but also an approach to a museum's contents and their role in the contemporary world behind the sentence.

Working with an essence can take place on three levels:
- defining a cohesive museum statement
- valorisation of a museum's contents in order to fulfil specific recipients' needs and at the same time in order to transfer important messages
- looking for inspiration for new museum actions regarding: promotion, education and exhibition.

The essence workshop and its effects will be illustrated by the example of work performed with the team from The Orava Ethnographic Park Museum in Zubrzyca Górna (within 'A Local Museum in a Global World' project). The workshop included several trips around the open air museum where they were held. The meetings were also attended by representatives of other museums involved in the project: The Regional Museum in Tarnów and the Władysław Hasior Gallery in Zakopane.

During the workshops in the Zubrzyca open air museum we were deliberating on the consequences that the adopted essence – renewing the rhythms of life – might have on the museum, due to the characteristics of the place – an open air museum, located in a vast area – and specific museum activity; what the museum has to offer is certainly very extensive, yet scattered and diversified. We concentrated on three main areas of work on the essence. Firstly, we analysed the museum's prior actions in the context of the essence; secondly we analysed its space; thirdly we treated the essence as an inspiration for advertising new activities. Our first thoughts on the essence confirmed its accuracy to, and connection with, the place. This aspect of renewing the rhythms of life was visible both in the museum's previous actions and also in the character of the park's space. Inspirations derived from the essence also led to actions matching the park's profile. In the case of the Zubrzyca open air museum, the essence was not used to formulate brand new statements and action programmes but instead to provide existing ones with different meanings by reinterpreting them in a new context.

At the beginning of the workshop we analysed previous actions carried out in the open air museum in the context of the essence. It turned out that both the regularly celebrated Blueberry Day (*Święto Borówki* – the biggest

Let's prepare
working conditions
(Zubrzyca Górna)

event organised at the park), and many other elements of what is offered didactically can be used for the renewal of the rhythms of life. The main focus of their activities are regular folk customs throughout the year which are composed of rituals or field and farm work. Looking from the perspective of the essence, we assumed that lessons organised in the park based on these themes can offer experiences that let receivers re-feel their place in the world. As far as the actions of the open air museum are concerned, the essence was not used to introduce a dramatic change but instead to further appreciate the experience they already provide to their receivers. For future actions of the park this means a change of emphasis when planning lessons and events as well as advertising them. The point is to stress this aspect of the experience. The knowledge and skills presented during the classes are still pivotal but they serve to provide experiences which renew the rhythms of life, and not present the culture of Orava as such.

The area of the ethnographic park itself also gained a new quality in the context of the renewal of the rhythms of life. The participants of the workshop discussed it and quoted the visitors' opinions and reactions. The park guests noticed in particular: the silence, open space, peaceful landscape. They said that when crossing the park gates 'you enter a different world', 'you can slow down', 'you forget about stress', 'as if time slowed down'. You can sense a certain 'therapeutic' quality of the park in these statements. The receivers' behaviour suggests the same as they spend their time here not only visiting but also relaxing under a linden tree or sitting on the doorstep staring into space... The experience of visiting the park, as exemplified by collected statements and observed behaviour, is very close to the essence. We can assume that it is conducive to the

renewal of the rhythms of life. In terms of space, the essence let us notice and appreciate those functions of the open air museum which are not directly connected with the presentation of monuments of folk culture but can occur because of it. Actions which are based on the essence can involve emphasising the quality of various areas (e.g.: by marking them on the map of the park; fitting the areas where visitors like to 'contemplate' with benches or haycocks to lie in), and creating new attractions such as a path for spiritual renewal.

The third dimension of renewing the rhythm of life, besides actions and space, results from interpreting the essence with verbal associations. The word 'rhythm' was the starting point. During the workshop we visited the park, focusing on rhythms and sounds. This cognitive experiment indicated that it was a space with a very specific and rich soundscape. There were sounds of the surrounding nature as well as those of country life. The architecture of the houses in Orava was also full of sounds – creaking window shutters, foot steps on the threshing floor, the jangle of heavy wrought locks of opened doors. A simple exercise carried out in the Moniak mansion, the main building in the park, indicated that the interiors of the houses were a real treasury of rhythms. We treated the tools collected in one of the rooms as musical instruments: hand mills; mortar and pestle; loom; kitchen utensils; these things filled the interior with the rhythm and melody of work. Experiencing this change of perspective by concentrating on audible sensations and the unconventional use of objects – not for observation but for making sounds with – became an inspiration for creating ideas for new museum activities. This way, the plan of presentation also included activities focused around the sounds and rhythms of Orava in the past. We treated the renewing of the rhythms of life very literally in this case – by discovering a sound space that can accompany the life of Orava in the past.

II. What is the objective of this stage of work?

The logic behind the interpretive method assumes a three-stage process of preparing heritage for presentation. First we need to define who we are, what we have, what world we operate in and for whom? The second stage is the search; asking questions, a deep analysis of our resources in the light of semantic associations and contexts which they can create. The third stage, which we just reached, involves planning and taking actions. We could say: 'Finally!' but it would be hard to claim that all we had done before was just talk. The idea is to reduce actions which are chaotic and taken under the pressure of time or have only resulted from financial plans. The main theme agreed on in previous stages and the essence resulting from it serve as indicators for the planning of specific actions to be taken at a museum. A theme determines what is to be done; an essence indicates what forms these actions take and also how we communicate them to receivers.

Act! From an essence to implementation

Let's sleep on the essence
(Zubrzyca Górna)

Why is it a good idea to create an interpretive plan of presentation? How to use an essence well? What questions does an essence answer?

In this part we recommend developing a plan of action which is based on the interpretation of a main theme and its essence, and therefore results from what is most important and unique for a museum. Through this book, Museum professionals will gain a tool for planning this work and also get support for the creation of new ways of implementing a museum's mission (and their own passions, where possible). Receivers will get the chance to experience an expressive and clear museum, which is not only attractive because it was created with their needs in mind, but also because it rein-

The role of an essence can be described here as inspiring and verifying. On the one hand it suggests possible areas of action and on the other hand allows assessment of whether actions taken are consistent with adopted direction

forces an institution's existence in the long term, as they will not be accidental, one-time visitors but guests who have something special prepared for them. An interpretive plan of presentation is therefore a good solution for both sides. And what about the organisers, i.e. institutions responsible among other things, for financing museums? According to some opinions, organisers are best convinced by practical (and therefore holistic and comprehensive, rather than temporary and provisory) justifications of expense and invest these in the process of developing a museum's image.

III. Workshop: An interpretive plan of presentation
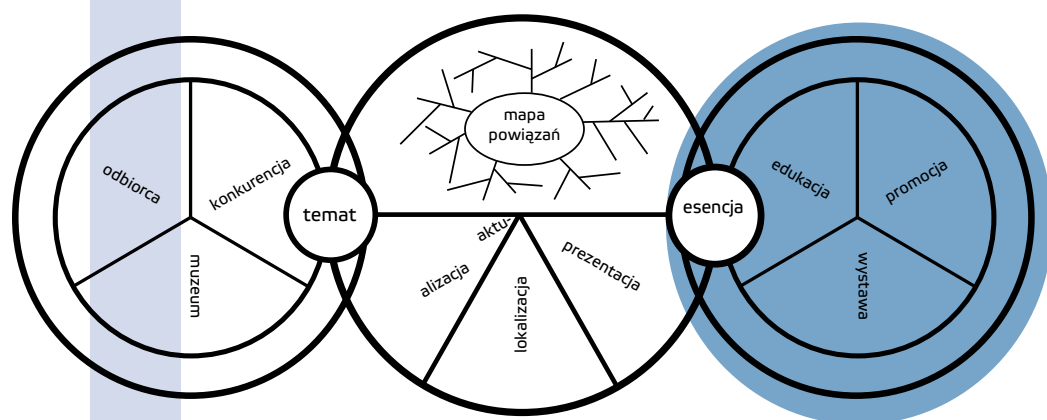
Step 1. Creating a team

Of the process so far, this stage of work is most similar to the everyday activity of a museum.

Working on an action plan is similar to previous stages in that it is based on meetings by a workshop team. If it is possible, the team at this stage should be joined by new members, preferably those directly connected with the didactic, promotional and exhibitory activities of a museum. The inclusion of curators, educators, animators and promotional specialists should have been done before but now these inclusions might be a necessity for the development of valuable plans. In the case of large institutions, it is a good idea to present the plan to all members of a museum's staff at the end of the workshop. This can help new connections to emerge between its individual points.

Step 2. Preparing a creative meeting

Creative work on a plan of presentation should preferably be preceded by preparation. All workshop participants, including those who did not participate in previous stages, should be aware of the results of previous work. As preparation, they should become familiar with any analyses of receivers and environment; they should know what the main theme is, along with the scope of its interpretation as well as its essence.

Workshop tool: Interpretation process brief

You can conduct preparations by creating a brief according to the following pattern:

- Our main receivers are: *(Who have we considered in our work so far? What are their preferences, expectations, needs?)*
- Our environment is: *(Who do we compete with for receivers, who do we cooperate with, who could become our partner?)*
- The main resources we considered during interpretation are: *(What contents do we consider particularly valuable/competitive/special? What makes us stand out in other aspects - space, staff, actions?)*
- The main theme is:
- The essence is:

A report should be as concise as possible; ideally it fits on one page. This way there is a better chance that even the busiest of staff members will become familiar with it. When preparing a meeting we can place it on a poster that is visible to all. Similarly, we can expose other materials from previous sessions, mind maps are especially worth displaying.

Step 3. Defining an objective

At the beginning of the workshop we need to define a clear and common purpose for our meeting. The most general one will be to prepare a presentation plan. However, according to the current needs of an institution, this can be narrowed down, for example, to define ideas for temporary exhibitions, develop a concept for a specific workshop or an idea for a souvenir. Thus the meeting objective tells us what we will mainly be dealing with. We should, however, remember that an implemented process defines different directions of thought and should therefore be used more broadly. When working together to think creatively about something specific (e.g. an exhi-

bition) we sometimes come up with secondary ideas that are distant from the adopted main objective. During a meeting we need to make sure that these are written down and kept for future work.

Private capital of poetry
(Zakopane)

Step 4. Creating a set of ideas

This stage poses a very specific question for a team: In view of the adopted essence and theme, what will we be doing? What will we offer? What will result from it for our receivers? This is therefore an operationalisation of an essence, creating ideas for specific activities. Despite the very practical dimension of this work, it is, as in previous stages, worth using several techniques to stimulate imagination, to question seemingly obvious solutions and once again use an essence, which will now serves as a source of inspiration.
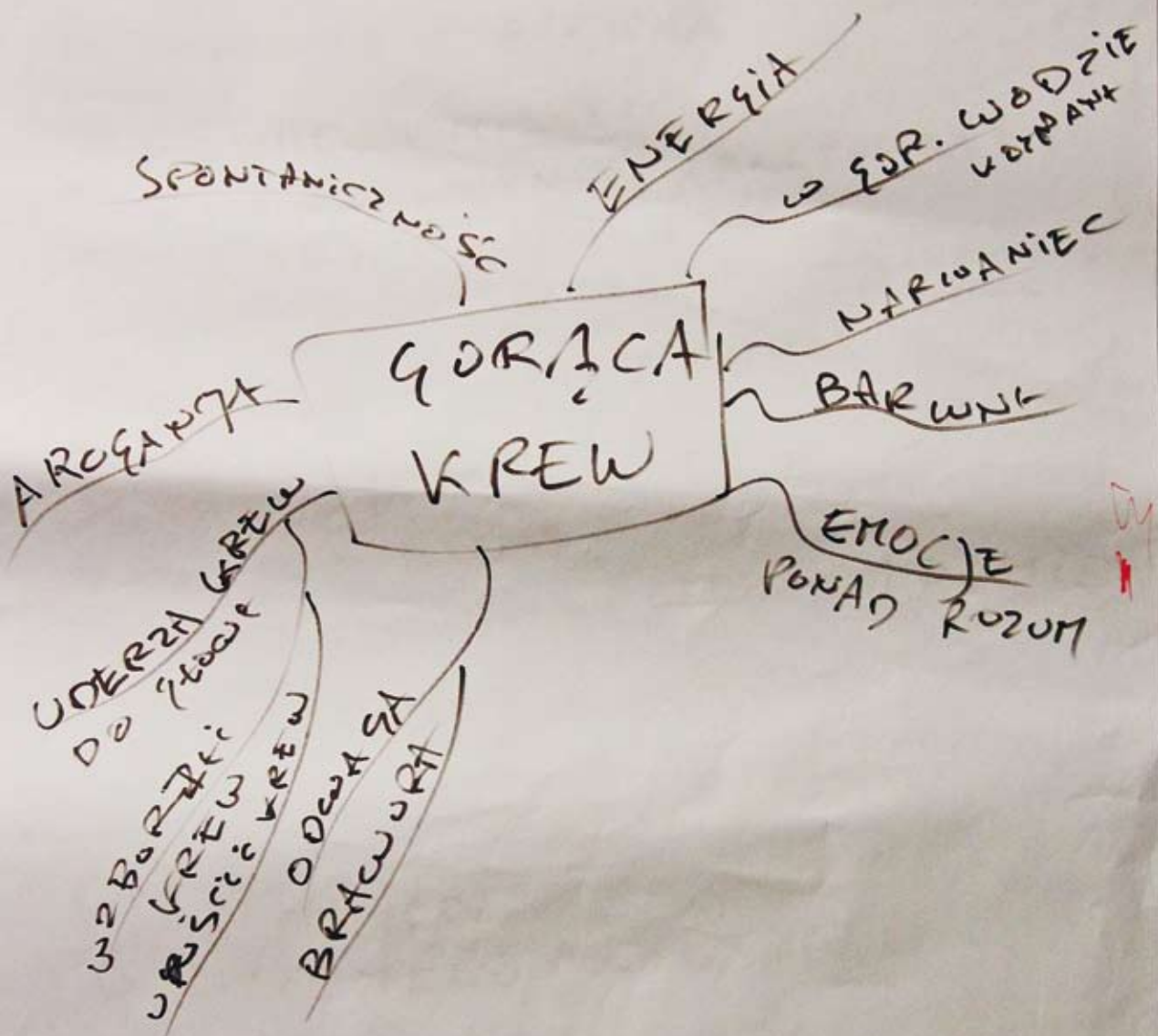
Workshop tool: Understanding an essence together

Such an exercise can work well with a diverse team, to collectivise ways of understanding an essence and acquire a taste for it. During these exercises we will separate essence from museum and look at it for a moment as an autonomous text, with its own meaning.
- An essence is a book. Let us think together what a book that had our essence in it would have as a title. What form would it have, would it be a textbook, a novel, a guidebook, a cookbook?
- An essence is in words. What meanings do the individual words of an essence carry?
- An essence is a work of art. What kind of artist could have created it? What materials were used? What collection presents it? During this exercise we can also try to create a work of art inspired by an essence, using for instance, simple art supplies.

What does hot blood hum about? (Tarnów)

GORĄCA KREW

- SPONTANICZNOŚĆ
- ENERGIA
- W GÓR. WODZIE KĄPANY
- NARWANIEC
- BARWNE
- EMOCJE PONAD ROZUM
- AROGANCJA
- UDERZA KREW DO GŁOWY
- ZDOLNOŚĆ ZAPISCIĆ KREW
- ODWAGA
- BRAWURA

During the workshop at the Regional Museum in Tarnów we were analysing the essence 'Hot Blood'. It had earlier been interpreted from the theme 'Sarmatians'. We began working on a list of ideas for implementation with an exercise for creating souvenirs and museum gadgets connected with the essence. With reference to the Sarmatian portraits in the museum's collection we came up with the idea of t-shirts with patterns that looked like the marks of recently fought duels: scars, torn armour, spear marks etc. At the same time (on the back) the t-shirts would present selected pieces of the Tarnów museum i.e. the weapons which left the visible marks on the front.

Workshop tool: Brain storm, creating a bank of ideas

We can begin work on an interpretive plan of presentation, as well as any other project resulting from an interpretation, by creating a set ideas. This set of initial ideas can be referred to as a bank of ideas. The ideas collected in the bank can be used at the time or later on; new ideas appearing along the way can be systematically added to the bank. Sensitivity to ideas appearing along the way is very important during the entirety of an interpretive workshop – it lets us fully use a creative process.

Brain storming is a method of team work that aims at triggering a group creative process. Ideas during a brain storm appear among everyone, therefore it is a good idea to agree at the beginning of a session that all participants will share the authorship of created ideas. In order for a brain storm to be efficient – resulting in good ideas – it can be prepared according to the following principles:

- Create a diversified team that doesn't just include the staff of one division or work group. Teams should not be too large, the maximum number of participants seems to be ten people.
- Appoint a leader and a secretary. The task of the leader is to pose additional questions in order to develop emerging ideas but also to control the main thread of thought. The task of the secretary is to make conscientious notes, visible to everyone, preferably on a flip-chart.
- We begin work with a warm-up – create a few ideas for a theme that are not directly connected with what we will be working on (e.g. create an idea for an exhibition at our museum about a cow, sweets, Stanisław Lem...).
- Define a common work objective. Agree in a universally understandable way on what will be dealt with and then write this objective down in a visible place.

Act! From an essence to implementation

Following a few principles can help the efficiency of a creative process that happens as a result of a brain storm:

■ Shared authorship of ideas, similarly, not being attached to one's own ideas. All ideas appearing during a meeting are everyone's property. Not being attached to one suggested idea lets participants of a meeting open up to different points of view and creative cooperation.
■ Criticism applies to ideas not people.
■ You can always come up with more. When working with this method there can be a downtime, a moment when we think we have thought of everything. It is in the nature of a creative process that ideas are not really discovered but created. They form an open, infinite set, limited only by the extent to which the collected concepts are connected with the main motif of the work.

Workshop tool: A Selection of ideas

A set of ideas created during a brain storm are only an introduction to the actual work. If a creative process is fruitful, we are ready at this stage to deal with its selection of generated contents. Finding a structure helps to choose the best of these ideas and is determined by the objective we want to reach i.e. an interpretive plan of presentation. The main areas of presentation the plan will refer to are the following: education, promotion and exhibition.

Depending on what objective was defined at the beginning of our work, these areas are more or less represented by the set of ideas created during the brain storm. However, even when preparing workshops for specific objectives, it is worth looking now at which of these ideas can help with promotion, which ones suggest exhibition solutions, and which ones refer to actions that can be realised via a workshop.

Workshop tool: Providing structure – creating sets of ideas

To provide structure for a set of ideas created during a brain storm we can use a flip-chart and Post-it notes (one of the ways of running a meeting). First, every idea from the brain storm is written down on big piece of paper. At this stage new concepts can appear – add them. We write ideas down using concise format and give them titles. Then we draw three areas on the paper in which we will place Post-its with ideas. These areas correspond to the basic areas of our presentation method. They are:

- education,
- promotion,
- exhibition.

By arranging the Post-its in sets we can, when placing them next to each other, additionally analyse which of them together can become new groups. Some of the ideas can be included in more than one set - they should be placed between the sets. It is important that this exercise is conducted in a group, so the Post-its can provoke a new discussion over ideas: you can add new ones, and some can be rejected right away.

Organising ideas (Tarnów)

Having put the Post-its on the board it is time to decide which ideas stay, and which ideas go, either because of being repeated or because they are impossible to realise. The most important question at this stage is: what direction are our actions for presentation taking? What image of museum activity is emerging from this analysis? And finally: having taken these steps, have we achieved anything new? If the actions displayed on the board are more or less what we have been doing so far, we should think about how they implement our essence? What can we change in them so that they serve our essence better?

Step 5. Creating a plan

An interpretive plan of presentation is the final but not the only result of a 'An interpretive plan of presentation' workshop. Whilst doing one of these workshops we also consider newly generated ideas, essence, semantic maps and maps of associations with a main theme, as well as our initial analyses of receivers, environment and museum resources. Work at this stage requires the materials and results from previous stages - boards, maps, summarising reports…

Workshop tool: Presentation plan table

The form of a presentation plan should be as readable and as clear as possible. A table plan can help with the presentation of ideas; it will help to collect and present detailed ideas for actions. Filling out individual fields will also be an incentive for the development of ideas in the direction of specific actions for implementation.

Elements of a table plan

Action	Field	Essence	Thematic range	Receivers	Existing resources/ resources to procure
What we will be doing (short description)	Education/ exhibition/ promotion	How does this idea implement the essence?	In what ways does this idea use the main theme and what elements of it does it present?	Who is this action mainly addressed to?	What resources will be used, what else will we need?

■ Action: short description
In this column we write ideas for actions. Each one should be described with a title and short explanation of its implementation.

■ Field (education/exhibition/promotion):
This column is used to describe which field of presentation an idea belongs to. We assume that many solutions resulting from interpretation can be relevant to more than one field.

■ Essence
Here we should find a short explanation of how an action implements an essence; how it responds to the challenge of an essence. An answer to this question justifies the sensibility of taking this action in view of said essence.

■ Thematic range

Here we explain what elements of an adopted theme's range are explored and presented by an action; which areas of a main theme will be worked on. When creating this description we can use both the semantic and association maps of the main theme as well as filter analysis from step 2. of the 'How to progress from a theme to an essence' workshop.

■ Recipients

This part of the table takes us back for a while to the analysis of receivers from stage one of the process. This is where we define to whom this action is mainly addressed.

■ Existing resources/resources to be procured

Using the analyses from step 1 we answer the question: Which of our resources does this action rely on? At the same time, this part of the table is an opportunity to think about what else will be needed, what needs to be procured, prepared, what we need to learn in order to implement this idea. At the planning stage it is enough to define a general list of needs. Its objective is to create the basis for a comparison of potentially feasible ideas.

Defining the results of this stage

The interpretive plan of presentation is a way of organising museum actions around an adopted theme and realising them in the spirit of an essence. The plan involves a set of presentation actions, i.e. those which are based on the communication between a museum and its receivers. The plan is worked out by a team. It will also include actions for different areas of presentation (promotion, education, exhibition). The plan will also serve to show the connections between different, seemingly distant actions. By working on a plan, a museum is equipped with a bank of ideas which means that not all actions included in it need to have a specified date and way of implementation. However, a plan can be used in situations when opportunities for new actions open or when quick new solutions need to be worked out.

Action	Area (education/ exhibition/ promotion)	Provoking the imagination	Interpretation keys	Receivers	Existing resources/ resources to procure
Fecit: a guide to Hasior's creative output in the form of cards with tasks for the receivers	Education/ Exhibition – using the exhibition area for didactic purposes	The tasks encourage visitors to take a closer look at the artist's work, they direct attention to specific aspects of his creative activity and provoke original after-thought. The cards provoke imagination so that the visitors can see more and are able to formulate their own thoughts in reference to a pre-sented work – they will initiate a personal relationship with it.	Hasior's creative method, quotations from the artist's writings, materials used, connections between his works, their meanings, and materials used, with the con-temporary lives of receivers and contemporary issues.	All visitors.	Existing exhibition.
A parade with Hasior's banners.	Exhibition/ promotion. Using the museum collection and its exhibition activity for promo-tional purposes, a reminder of the artist's creative activity.	A repeat of Włady-sław Hasior's actions; organised parades with his banners; exposing the artist's works in a non-gallery space and an unusual context (the streets of Zakopane) will provoke imagination. Provoking imagination takes place through a clash of art with public space, introdu-cing it to unexpecting receivers (passers-by, tourists)	Hasior's banners as objects of performance. The artist's performance activity.	The citizens of Zakopane and touri-sts, the citizens of Krakow.	Museum pieces/ animators, leaders.

The creative residences program.	Exhibition.	Inviting contemporary artists to work within the context of Hasior's work may provoke their own original creativity. The presence of today's artists may bring about new, provocative interpretations of the artist's output.	Hasior's house was not only his gallery but also his studio. Using this quality to offer the space to artists; Hasior continues to inspire creative work in his studio and the gallery can be a good place for the work of contemporary artists.	Artists – residents, citizens of Zakopane, and tourists.	Studio/contacts within the world of art.
Creative workshops	Education.	Using a workshop as a way of leading receivers through the mysteries of the artist's method; also a way of translating it into one's own creative work. The workshop objective is to provoke receivers' own creativity, both through contact with Hasior's works and in reference to his heritage as an educator and methodologist.	Hasior's creative output and educative activity.	School youth, students/groups of tourists from holiday resorts.	Hasior's study/art supplies, animators, workshop leaders.
Creative workshops	Education.	A creative workshop as a way of boosting receivers' imaginations. The workshop objective is to train creativity and broaden receivers' imaginations, inspiring them to take a new look at the reality around them.	Hasior's writings and notes indicate that one of the elements of his method was constant astonishment at his surrounding reality and he developed the ability to use this to draw inspiration and material for creative work. Developing such an attitude can be one of the elements of the creative workshop.	Companies, holiday groups (integration trips)	Existing Exhibition, Hasior's study – supplies, leaders - experts.

Meetings organised to interpret Hasior's dioramas. Inviting contemporary artists and art historians to create and present their own interpretations of Hasior's dioramas.	Education/ Exhibition. Using the museum collection for educative purposes.	New interpretations of Hasior's dioramas used by him as audio-visual means during his lectures may provoke imagination by developing the ability to appreciate art and form opinions about it.	Hasior as an educator and lecturer who not only developed his own methods but also, means of presentation. The dioramas as a record of the artist's thought which can be reinterpreted today.	The citizens of Zakopane and tourists, the citizens of Krakow – general public.	Hasior's dioramas/ leaders – experts.

IV. Plan analysis: implementation, testing

All the work from within the interpretive workshop becomes justified when it brings specific results – a new museum program, educative or promotional actions or a new exhibition. Creating and testing a prototype is an important stage, which can be defined as pre-implementation. We refer to 'prototype' to describe action which could be presented to the public but is not yet ready in a production sense. Prototypes can take different forms, depending on what their implementation will involve. For instance, if we are working on a didactic path then trial tables and printed guides for visitors could be its prototypes. They will not have all their elements, e.g. full graphics, final materials, but they will let the public become familiar with the idea and also express their opinions during an evaluation at the end of the testing stage. Prototyping is therefore an attempt at proper implementation. It is done to test suggested ideas and solutions. It can prevent mistakes which could be difficult to fix after the implementation of action (for example tables might have been printed,, investments in expensive supplies might have been made etc.).

The workshop at the Regional Museum in Tarnów resulted in the selection of ten objects (Top 10) that correspond with the Sarmatian theme and the creation of a guide book which included these objects, thereby implementing the 'Hot Blood' essence. We made trial print outs of the guide book and presented them to the public. The testers were people who happened to visit the museum during the project's implementation. They received the trial guidebooks at the ticket office with their tickets. As much as possible,

we tried to select receivers who represented the target group defined during the workshop. It is important to note that the receivers were informed that they were participating in a test and experiment and that museum staff would collect their opinions and comments during and after the tour.

Workshop tool: Prototype and observation sheet

The simplest method of testing or implementing a tool is to see how it is used by a museum's guests. It is a good idea to invite and encourage those who monitor exhibitions to participate: they are there, they have the time for observation and are experienced in receiving large numbers of visitors.

In order for observation to bring good results, observation sheets need to be prepared.

As an introduction, we should briefly describe the general conditions of a test (date, day of the week, hours...) followed by a description of a group or individual visitor.

We should note how much time is spent in specific places, what draws attention, whether and how the printed materials are being used. We observe if a visit is accompanied by conversation or more of a solitary contemplation.

Finally, we write down visitor comment which is asked for after the tour, using the following questions:

■ Was the material helpful during the tour?
■ What was helpful/positive/a strong asset?
■ What could be changed?
■ What could be added?
■ How would you phrase the main message of the exhibition having visited it with the guidebook?

In Tarnów, using an office printer, we printed out pages that were prepared for an illustration of a Top 10 – the top ten most interesting pieces. They were chosen with the adopted essence 'Hot Blood' in mind and we selected pieces which were particularly inspiring for the story of the Sarmatians' qualities which are illustrated by the phrase. The guidebook additionally emphasised these qualities by referring to the present

A good prototype:

■ is cheap, easy to produce, can be easily modified
■ represents the core of an idea (i.e. not necessarily all of it); it is prepared in a public-friendly way – its form is user friendly
■ communicates that it is only a test, and not a final edition; it appreciates a receiver – communicates that we care about their opinion.

Act! From an essence to implementation

Prototype of a guidebook (Tarnów)

– connecting the pieces with contemporary objects – and by the original graphic representation of the guidebook, created by the Tarnów museum. The testing involved visiting the museum with the guidebook printouts. The public appreciated both the form of the guidebook and its content, which proved complementary to the captions available at the exhibition and also introduced a new perspective. The format was evaluated as very attractive and most of all, surprising. In the receivers' opinion, the guidebook could be a good souvenir from the museum.

As the result of the workshop within 'A Local museum in a Global World' at the Hasior Gallery in Zakopane we prepared an interactive guide composed of cards for deep, individual analysis of Władysław Hasior's works. The cards were given the working title 'Fecit', as working with them involved activities for active recognition of works presented at the gallery. The essence – 'Provoking the imagination' – was implemented here by referring to Władysław Hasior's creative method. Using the cards, visitors could get to know its basic elements and the ways the artist created the works which 'exceeded the imagination'. The cards did not include traditional, museum captions on art history but instead contained

A Local Museum in a Global World. A practical guide

tasks for helping with a creative analysis of the artist's works by using his own workshop methods (analysis of materials, composition, finding meaning in unusually connected objects), as well as quotations from Hasior's writings.

The cards were created according to a pattern developed during the workshop. At the beginning we chose several works at the exhibition, such as *The Niobe Banner (Sztandar Niobe)* and *Interrogation of the Angel (Przesłuchanie anioła)*. We chose four aspects for analysing each of them, which represents the key elements of Hasior's creative method and is visible in his writings: material, detail, integration, metaphor.

We created four cards for each of the selected works – separating each of these aspects. At the beginning of the visit, visitors were asked to draw a card and find the work it described at the exhibition. Each card contained an illustration of only a fragment of a piece of work and also contained contents, tasks and questions on four levels. Firstly: a quote from Hasior's writings illustrating a described aspect (material, detail, integration, metaphor) in connection to the piece of work. Secondly: tasks to be performed by the visitor. They were usually observation tasks, which let them see more, notice specific qualities of the work. Their objective is also to develop competences required for the conscious reception of art. Thirdly: provoking the imagination – this element of the card referred most directly to the essence. It contained questions which were to move the visitors' imagination, for instance, by referring the work to their personal experience. Fourthly: each card contained a short curator's comment on the exhibition. The choice for cards rather than solid text, made them possible to use in many ways: during group work; also by individual visitors who can draw the cards before visiting. The cards can also be grouped to form sets and variations, depending on specific didactic needs. A card used by an individual visitor can become a kind of museum souvenir.

Act! From an essence to implementation

Testing the 'Fecit' cards
(Zakopane)

Cards for *the Niobe Banner*

Carta: Materiał

Quote: 'I get irritated by the myth of noble materials' (W. Hasior)

Tasks:
List the materials used for this work;

Write what fabrics are usually used for making banners:

List the fabrics you are wearing today:

Provoke your imagination! Imagine a banner made of:
- banknotes
- soil
- fire
- paper clips

Information: Władysław Hasior started compiling assemblages in the form of banners in mid-1960s. At first their objective was to negate the value of banners carried in processions. With time Hasior appreciated them as objects with great interpretive potential.

Card: Detail

Quote: 'being a man occupied by fine arts professionally, it is my job to be able to properly use objects'.

W. Hasior))

Tasks:
List all the colours you can see in the banner:

Besides the Władysław Hasior Gallery, where could you find objects and colours such as those in the banner?

Provoke your imagination!
Remember your DOLL...

Information: Władysław Hasior started compiling assemblages in the form of banners in mid-1960s. At first their objective was to negate the value of banners carried in processions. With time Hasior appreciated them as objects with great interpretive potential.

Card: Integration

Quote: 'Because it is about stirring the imagination, the clashing of opinions – the piece itself does not have to be a masterpiece – it is enough if it is an efficient platform for our collective imagination'.

W. Hasior)

Tasks:
List the characteristics of the objects: DOLL and BANNER. Think about whether they have any common characteristics.

DOLL	BANNER

Think about what results from bringing the two objects together on the banner in front of you. What emotions do they evoke? Try to name them.

Provoke your imagination! Imagine a banner with your favourite DOLL. What does the banner represent?

Information: Władysław Hasior started compiling assemblages in the form of banners in mid-1960s. At first their objective was to negate the value of banners carried in processions. With time Hasior appreciated them as objects with great interpretive potential.

V. Frequently asked questions

What can we do if our exhibition cannot be modified for formal reasons (e.g. it is part of an existing project)?

There are many possibilities for introducing new narratives to an existing exhibition. The most important ones are additional guidebooks which serve as interpretive additions and solutions within a museum's programme: events, workshops, thematic and creative tours. These are actions which can significantly improve how an exhibition is received. The fact that they require relatively little investment is an additional asset.

We have a yearly plan of education/exhibition/research. Why do we need a presentation plan?

A presentation plan does not have to collide with an existing museum programme. The relationship between a presentation plan and other strategic documents (exhibition calendar, development strategy, image strategy) can be complimentary in character – the plan fills these things with content and ideas for specific actions.

We have no influence over curators' work. Does it make sense to create a presentation plan?

The lack of communication between different teams in managing a presentation is a problem in many heritage institutions, especially large ones. In order to avoid this problem it is a good idea to make every effort to create a diverse team at the beginning of your work. However, a presentation plan can be limited to actions performed by the staff who worked on them (e.g. educational or promotional).

Our promotional, educational and exhibition divisions create their own plans. Do we need a common plan?

According to the heritage presentation approach presented here it is a museum's activity which connects promotional, educational and exhibition actions. Creating separate plans and directions by different teams (and also often by a museum's organisers) can cause chaos in communication with its receivers and also within an institution itself. This problem concerns many heritage institutions. That is why it is so important to bring a broad team to an interpretive workshop. Its duration is also an occasion to share or negotiate the directions an institution's activity takes.

And what about our previous/permanent actions (events, lessons, workshops). Do we have to reinvent our activity because we are implementing an interpretive workshop?

Adopting a theme and defining its essence should not negate or disavow the previous activity of a museum. It is more of a way of applying new meanings to it. A presentation plan serves to create ideas for new actions (events, lessons, workshops) and fill the already realised ones with new contents.

Act! From an essence to implementation

SZTANDAR NIOBE

- CYTAT

	I MATERIAŁ	II DETAL	III INTEGR.	IV METAFORA
CYTAT	DRAŻNI MNIE NIŻ SZLACH. MATERIAŁÓW	URWANIE PRAWIDŁOWO PRZEDMIOTÓW	EKSPONAT NIE MUSI BYĆ ARCYDZIEŁEM ALE MARIQNIJNY	PRACA TO MA SEANSIK, VT COŚ OPOWI
ZAD.	WPISZ JAK NAJW. MATERIAŁÓW W PRACY / MA SOBIE	ZNAJDŻI POLICZ. PRZEDMIOTY UOCZPT...	LANKA SUTANDAR CECHY.	HISTORIA NIOBE: CO SIĘ NIE ZGADZA?
	Z CZEGO POGN. SZTANDAR	GDZIE JESZCZE LALKA i GŁOSZĘ	CO WYNIKA ?. POWSTAJE	
PRO WODU ✱	SZTANDAR Z: WODY, OGNIA ZIEMI, KASY	WKOBR. SOBIE SZTANDAR ZE SWOJĄ LALKĄ PRZYPOMNIJ SOBIE SWOJĄ LALKĘ	SZTANDAR ZE SWOJĄ LALKĄ	CO SIĘ NIE ZGADZA? NOWY TYTUŁ ✱ NIOBE : SKRÓT
✱	SKĄD SIĘ WZIĘŁY			SZTANDARY?

Opinions of museum coordinators – project partners

Julita Dembowska
The Tatra Museum in Zakopane, The Władysław Hasior Gallery

What do you consider important and useful in the project?

In my opinion it was very important that we had the opportunity to meet and work with people from other museums as well as people cooperating with museums whom have an 'outside' museum perspective. It let us take a distanced look at our institution and exhibition. Getting to know new methods and learning new tools triggered new ideas and a fresh point of view on how to better use the potential of our collection.

What problems and challenges did you face during this work?

It was a challenge to share our ideas with other workshop participants in a way that was also interesting to them.

What did the process of test implementation involve; how was it evaluated by museum receivers and professionals?

People who participated in the test organised by the Tatra Museum at the Hasior Gallery were willing to fill in the prepared cards. They agreed to answer the few questions related to the implementation. The cards helped them to notice specific pieces. They encouraged very diverse conclusions and provoked new questions (e.g. the issue of fabric used for the works provoked a discussion on the quality of fabrics we wear every day). The visitors concluded that this was an interesting way of getting to know Hasior's work.

Can you see room for continuation, any possibilities for using these tools in the future?

I will certainly use the way of working suggested during the workshop in my work on other planned ventures at the Tatra Museum. The ideas for the Hasior Gallery's promotional and educational actions will be further developed and used in the near future – in our application to the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage regarding cultural education.

Regina Kudzia,
The Orava Ethnographic Park Museum in Zubrzyca Górna

What do you consider important and useful in the project?

I think the most important thing is that we discovered an essence for our institutions together… Now it is easier to create the things we want to do, because we have taken a closer look at ourselves, considered our work as a certain mission, and we have taken a close look at our receivers and rightly tried to put ourselves in their place, recognise their expectations, name their needs. It is also important that we could meet other museum professionals during the project, to inspire each other, talk about common problems and take a closer look at the limitations and possibilities arising from the location of our institution in a specific landscape, both natural and cultural. For me personally it is important that the project confirmed my conviction that the museum can use its activity to speak about contemporary problems.

What problems and challenges did you face during this work?

For me personally it was a problem to work on defining the essence of other museums participating in the project. Even whilst knowing the character of an institution it is difficult to speak about certain aspects of its operation.

What did the process of test implementation involve; how was it evaluated by receivers and museum professionals?

We attempted an activity involving educational classes in herding. A new plan for the classes includes greater involvement of recipients and the raising of global problems, such as: a return to one's roots; the community and its meaning; migrations; pastoral economies and their meaning for people and the environment; innovative economy; ecology; health and natural medicine. All these topics are discussed within the context of the characteristics of a specific pastoral economy from the past that is also in the present. The receivers evaluated the class plan very positively and admitted they had not expected to talk about herding at the same time as paying attention to the problems of environmental protection, rational management of natural resources or making digressions to natural medicine or even art. The symbolism of animals in different cultures and the presentation of a shepherd's instruments were also found to be interesting.

Can you see room for continuation, any possibilities for using these tools in the future?

I think that what we developed during the project will be a great tip for our future events because it refers to a main idea of the Museum. It is now easier to find a permanent thought to be implemented in scenarios

for various events. This shows a consistency of action and in the long run an essence will be especially helpful for planning a coherent exhibition as well as an educational and promotional policy for the institution.

■

Jolanta Adamczyk,
the Regional Museum in Tarnów

What do you consider important and useful in the project?

The cooperation with MIK and getting to know colleagues from other museums better. Also, an opportunity to look at our actions from a receiver's perspective.

**What problems and challenges did you face during this work?**

Mostly of a technical nature. From photographs of adequate quality taken at the right angles to the software necessary for the guidebook to materialise.

What did the process of test implementation involve; how was it evaluated by receivers and museum professionals?

Two trial copies of the designed guidebook were published. It was mainly tested on individual visitors. The general opinion was positive, especially if we asked whether it helped find the most important pieces in the exhibition. References to the present, (e.g. Ferrari) visible on each page, (except one) drew a lot of attention, which occasionally caused visitors to concentrate mainly on looking for them. The response of our and other museums' staff was very positive. There were some remarks, obviously. Most of the time they referred to too fine print or, less frequently, missing commas and typos, in one case there was a complaint about too many elements on one page and ornaments pictured in boxed lines. There were people willing to buy the guidebook. If it is financially possible, the guidebook will be published and introduced as a purchasable item. However, after some corrections, it will certainly be available on the museum's website. As far as other elements are concerned, such as tickets, t-shirts and gadgets, everything depends on the financial means available.

Can you see room for continuation, any possibilities for using these tools in the future?

Of course. They let us concentrate on what is most important, finding an essence, which can be the inspiration for comprehensive actions directed to a specific receiver and adjusting to their needs when creating exhibitions with accompanying guidebooks or events. I think that our guidebook will have a sequel.
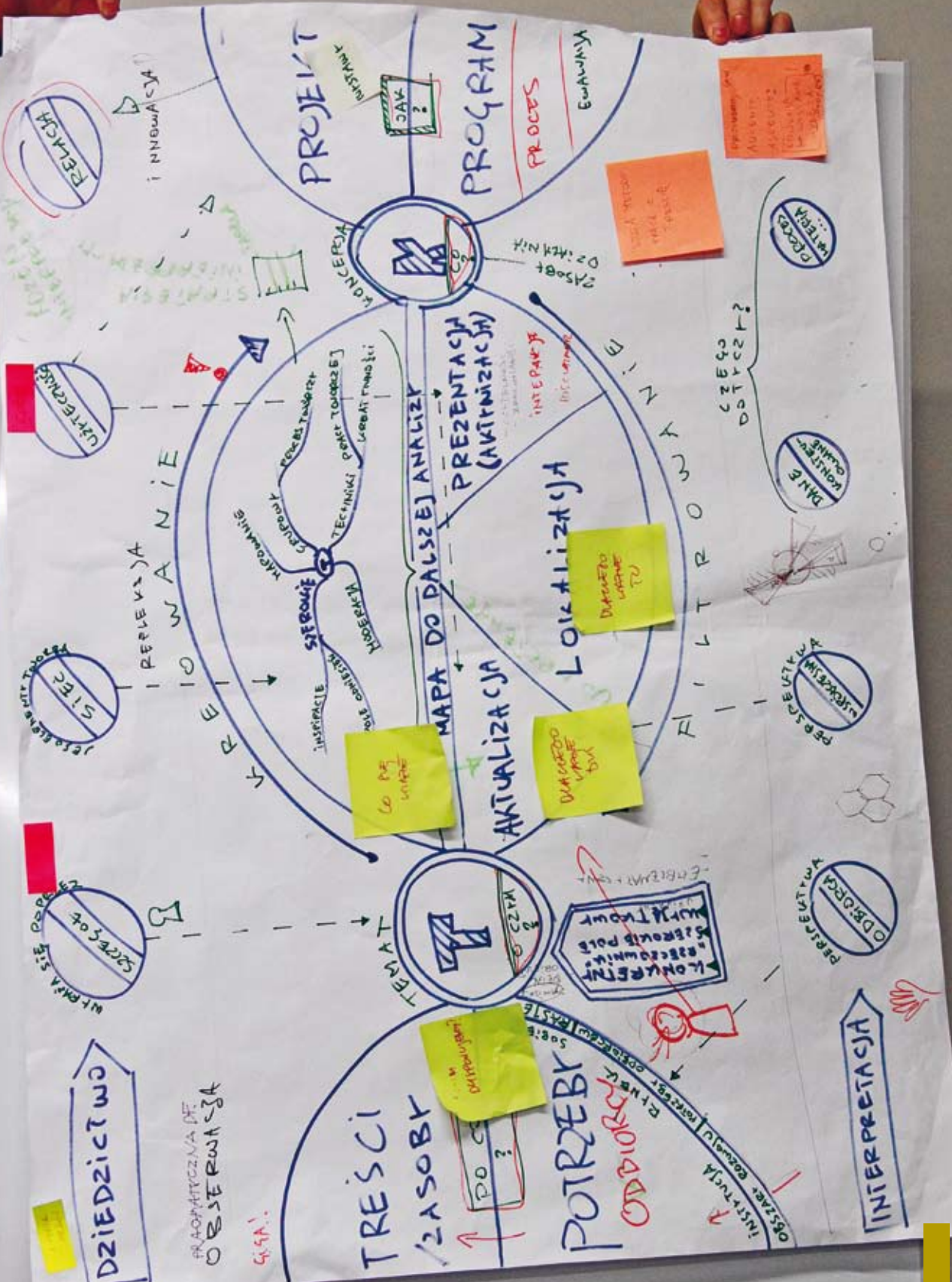
Afterword

We have written a book which to a great extent illustrates our process of acquiring competences to move around a museum's territory in order to practically use them later. We all began as amateurs: specialists in different fields but with no museum education. This is why it was easier for us to speak with the voice of the public, we did not have to pretend anything. Similarly to other receivers, we were not prepared for our visits. Also, we did not really contemplate museum paradigms, the reasonableness of collections or different models of museum institutions.

The past decade was to a great extent a time for institutional actions which were often confirmed by theory ('Oh dear, someone has thought about it before!'). Of course, all we wanted at the beginning was to start a revolution but with time our vocabulary became enriched with phrases such as: 'certain conditionings', 'The museums act', 'conservation reasons'. After we had to fight a few battles against fire regulations and other health and safety requirements we realised that not everything is possible in real life, however, we still believe that a lot can be done. Perhaps the emphasis we put on the interpretation of content is a form of an evasion, from acknowledging the fact that there is not enough financing and staff? An escape towards a story? A rhetorical negation of the impossibility of change?

It is not. Definitely not. Museums for us will always mean a space for the development of new meanings around existing contents and objects. Interpretation happens in between, regardless of how we codify its theory.

This book contains much of our experience, thought and energy.
We still think that it is worth saying more.
Maybe we are simply procrastinating before taking responsibility for typing the last letter?
Maybe we do not want to end with a full stop?

Let us think in capital letters for a change, as in the beginning of a new sentence, as in the Grand Opening.

With no limits.

Interpretation, globality, locality – comments

In the project 'A Local Museum in a Global World' which produced this publication, we were looking for different inspirations and perspectives that allow a fresh look on local museums. We were particularly intent on abandoning the omnipresent rhetoric of 'specific conditionings', 'financial limitations' and 'understaffing', which not only does not support change but also prevents us from thinking about a local museum as a place of self-development; it also degrades it to the function of an institution repeating fossilised action patterns. We also wanted to prove that neither interpretation nor globalism are omissible museum issues – on the contrary, they should be the ones indicating directions for thought and specific work techniques in museums.

In order to broaden the context for the subject matter of this publication we invited three experts to contribute their pieces. In this book Anna Nacher mostly represents anthropology, she focuses on indicating several effects of changes resulting from globalisation that significantly influence museum practice. Antoni Bartosz describes his experience in interpreting the collection of the Ethnographic museum in Krakow, giving it a personal touch (particularly important in the interpretive process). The text by Wacław Idziak features some of the key words related to his fields of interest and activity, such as knowledge-based economy or locality. We also wanted to give the floor to authors who are involved in interpreting heritage in different ways and thus strengthen the three basic aspects for the logic of this project: museum, locality and globalisation. It is due to the interconnections between them that local museums can become valuable centres of inspiration and knowledge but also subjects of analyses; interpretive actions are crucial on both levels.

Interpretation, globality, locality – comments

'Something strong roils through'

Antoni Bartosz

1.

The relationships between people and objects are interestingly portrayed by Rilke in one of his poems. He outlines an intriguing situation in the following text:

> HUMAN beings who have that deep silence
> are like boys who own violins
> passed down from their great-grandfathers;
> and they never play those violins:
>
> their hands, which labor on in darkness,
> became too hard.
> But the violin cases are like forests,
> and something strong roils through the branches
> and the grandsons feel: behind them lies the sea…
>
> (Rilke, Rainer Maria. Diaries of a Young Poet. trans. Edward Snow and Michael Winkler. W.W. Norton & Company, New York: New York City, 1997. (85-86)

The first feature of the world captured in the poem is the confusion of human beings with objects from the past – violins inherited from ancestors. The violins are not described in detail and their small monetary value is implied. Nevertheless, they become the key topic of Rilke's poem, and human beings are described through them.

The state they experience can be described as that of suspension. They do not repeat their ancestors' gesture ('they never play those violins', although they probably could, the ability is implied). Why? Because they are incapacitated, 'their hands, which labor in darkness, became too hard'.

Yet (here the strong word 'but' completely changes the poem's perspective) the human beings seem to sense that these inconspicuous objects ('violin cases') hide inside of them the power of the elements – 'forests', 'the sea'. These violins, 'passed down by great-grandfathers' are throbbing with life. And furthermore – inside the violins the elements merge with a mysterious power ('something strong roils through'). Thus the old instruments do not remain silent. The people do. But even this human silence is not indifferent, as it is attributed with attention to the strange, organic, life of objects, so to speak.

2.

Rilke's poem, brilliant in its simplicity, expresses an experience close to many of us – the state of confusion in view of objects from the past. We do not so much deprive them of our attention as cannot (do not know how to?) accept these objects in our world. We are stuck in-between, immobilized by 'labouring on in darkness' (down to earthness? routine?). Yet – and this is a dominating perspective in the poem – we are not completely stupefied, we are not utterly indifferent to the testimonies of how our ancestors lived, what they looked for, and how they responded. Or to put it in other words – we will not be indifferent to them, we will see more than just their matter if we as 'the grandsons feel'. This lets us sense more.

How to gain access to the secret world of objects? There are different ways, methods which are successful when they introduce us to the immaterial power of material. When it radiates we encounter/rediscover other people, community, culture. We would like to emphasise that the point is not so much objects but anything that directly or indirectly defines them – the techniques used for their production, the language used to name them and give them their metaphorical power, customs which become phantoms without objects, and finally the spoken stories that grant them their second life, providing them with a permanent testimony.

3.

Good questions which can overcome inertia are good guides in the journey to the hidden lives of objects. Questions such as: how, if at all, do objects let us understand ourselves better? I will describe an attempt to pose and fully experience such a question. We decided to pose this question on the 100th anniversary of the Ethnographic Museum in Krakow. Similar to the boys in Rilke's poem, we could sense that the hundred-year-old collection has a message for us. But how do we recognise something that 'roils through' those pieces collected by generations? To start with, we assumed that the collection, just like any human being, has its own life, with a past and present. So what does the 'past' and 'present' look like in an ethnographic collection? And do they help us live now? We selected two key notions to examine the logic of these processes – 'passages' and 'repassages'.
We began by asking about our own 'passages'. We wanted to detect the childhood experiences which we remembered, which marked us, opened us up to new ones. What shapes, colours, objects and sensations define them? Then, in the 'repassage' exercise, we

tried to recognise the power of those experiences in ourselves to-day. A group of over forty people (museum and non-museum staff) participated in these exercises. We processed the written down contents of forty stories that were indeed Proustian, to form themes, threads, and hidden meanings. With this ferment in our heads, we entered the museum's storerooms to choose objects in which we could sense contents that were important to us. It was not about the most beautiful objects. For instance, our attention was drawn to quite unattractive tree trunk beehives. It was enough, however, that we were haunted by them. Later, when we were creating a scenario for the exhibition, the beehives demonstrated their power. The same thing happened with all the other exhibition pieces.

We based the exhibition scenario on unusual building material – the dialogue between our own 'passages' and 'repassages' to the objects in the hundred-year-old collection which we sensed had worlds hidden inside them. Working on their primary meanings and contemporary senses they were beginning to expose, we entered a process in which the collection opened its 'present' to us, creating an unusual language. Our new relationship with these objects gave rise to new sentences, it created an illuminative story which we wanted to share. This is how the 'Passages and Repassages' exhibition was developed – an open space with thirteen areas for personal reflection, places of unexpected sensations for new understandings of oneself. They also opened new ways of understanding those who produced these objects, used them, and wanted to have them around.

Were we understandable and convincing enough because we were on a similar wavelength? On the one hand the exhibition spoke in a non-obvious language. 'I've seen it and I still don't know what it is about' – stated one of our guests. But even more frequently the entries expressed emotion and unusual thoughts. 'So many different worlds! I will be looking at commonplace objects differently from now on'. 'To face the fear and survive. To take the journey inside yourself and return. With a force I did not expect'. Such were the reactions in Marseille, Krakow, Berlin – the cities visited by the exhibition so far.

We began the work with ourselves, because we wanted to share our experience. There is nothing new about it. Still, the consistently posed initial question about the collection's effect on us led us to new places, which proved to be profoundly useful to those who we were working for. I am convinced that the basis for our understanding was our own search, a non-obvious but authentic process which resulted in the selection of specific objects in the collection, the creation of a specific scenario, and the liberation of specific perception/thought abilities.

4.

Any collection is therefore an area for exploration. It is no longer just an area of knowledge but also probes for questions, an area of important, useful and helpful inspirations. Museums should therefore ask good questions about objects and their contexts, as well as about the 'speech' which constitutes and renews these objects. This process also changes the routine approach to the objects which surround us and are simply unnoticed. We use objects as articles, instinctively. We exchange them for new ones (more and more frequently) and we do not think about the environment they create in our lives. Therefore we constantly need to make the effort to see the objects as articles, and to see more than just matter in the objects. Objects are human creations. They let us operate in social circuits. They characterise us at an individual level.

Attention to objects is therefore an act of multi-levelled consciousness. Museums are simple in that they are bound by civil obligations in this respect. The more creative and demanding the finding of the 'something strong' hidden in past objects, the more consciously we will look at the world of contemporary objects. This sense of attention cannot be overestimated.

'Something strong roils through' Antoni Bartosz

Globality – museum: the world and a small museum in it

Wacław Idziak

Introduction

Globality is a challenge for museums, especially those located at a distance from development centres, with collections that have a local or regional meaning. The competitiveness of other, better located and more popular museums means the risk of losing receiver and sponsor interest, and thus facing the difficulties of sustainability and explaining the rationale for their existence. This understanding of a museum's place in the contemporary world is based on the conviction that its value is mostly defined by the pieces it exhibits. We can also adopt a different perspective and conclude that the value of a museum lies in its stories, i.e. what a museum has to share with a receiver by using its exhibited pieces or their replacements. And it is exactly from the perspective of a descriptive, narrative museum that we will look at the connections and oppositions between globalism and a museum. A museum narrative will be presented against the phenomenon of an increasing number of narratives and their economic importance as well as against the requirements of a new type of receiver. The question arises: how can a museum strengthen its local position and establish itself globally by creating narratives and helping other museums to create theirs?

Omni-narrative

There are more and more stories in the world, it is filled with narratives from the past as well as those created every day, every minute. Stories are the content of social life – as is evident in phrases such as: the society of the spectacle, information society, knowledge-based society, knowledge-based economy, experience economy, creative economy, culture industries, etc. Narratology was invented, a separate academic branch devoted to the study of narrative structure[1].

Countries, cities, villages and companies all want a story; parts are equipped with stories[2], and stories of private individuals can come to life through CVs, Facebook pages and blogs. Cities com-

[1] M. Bal, *Narratologia. Wprowadzenie do teorii narracji*, Kraków 2012.
[2] http://suw.biblos.pk.edu.pl/resources/i1/i5/i7/i7/i2/r15772/SzewczykA_Autentyzm-Rewitalizacji.pdf (access: 15 October 2013).

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mission films and stories devoted to them with better or less known artists. People understand social reality as a story with themselves as the characters. This one large story contains individual, personal stories[3]. They constitute grounds for the establishment of the identity of the individual[4]. Urban planners and architects have been creating their stories for centuries. Cities and villages, their buildings and parks, are filled with narratives.

Narratives vs. economy

Creating stories and consuming them becomes more and more significant economically. Already as early as in the 1980s Pierre Bourdieu observed that the market of material goods was being replaced with the market of symbolic goods[5]. With the increased affluence of Western societies consumption of visual media, modern technologies, entertainment, knowledge, culture and tourism also increased. The past division into blue and white collar workers is being replaced with the division into those involved with the analysis of symbols and others[6]. Intellectual capital is increasingly becoming an important asset of companies and states[7].

   Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore emphasise another aspect of the contemporary economy. In their opinion, after agrarian and industrial economy, as well as service economy we are presently dealing with an economy based on experience, the experience economy. In this economy the clients' emotions become goods: joy, sadness, fear, astonishment, curiosity, pride, the feeling of acquiring new knowledge, acquiring new skills, talents, a return to childhood memories. An experience economy means more than entertainment and services. Its purpose is not only to entertain, feed and excite the client. It is different from the regular tourist, entertainment and culinary services. It offers things which long remain in the memory and stimulate emotions. In order to achieve it, the client must be involved in experiencing an adventure which is no longer a mass attraction but

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3 —— J. Trzebiński, E. Antczak, *Historia i stereotyp: dwie przesłanki rozumienia innej osoby*,,,Psychologia Społeczna" 2006, 02, p. 33.

4 —— B. Baszczak, *Tożsamość człowieka a pojęcie narracji*, „Analiza i Egzystencja" 2011, 14, p. 124, http://usfiles.us.szc.pl/pliki/plik_1324374361.pdf (access: 15 October 2013); J. Trzebiński, *Narracyjne konstruowanie rzeczywistości*, [in:] *Narracja jako sposób rozumienia świata*, ed. J. Trzebiński, Gdańsk 2002, p. 37.

5 —— J. Bourdieu, *The Market of Symbolic Goods*, 'Poetica' 1985, no 14.

6 —— See. http://my.brandeis.edu/news/item?news_item_id=104298 (access: 15 October 2013).

7 —— L. Edinsson, M.S. Malone, *Kapitał intelektualny*, Warszawa 2001, p. 9-17.

something happening to them personally. If they want to experience an adventure they have to actively participate in it, transform from an observer to an actor, a participant. In order to provide such experiences, sensations and emotions companies have to transform into a theatre, an arena of events. The receivers and providers of services become actors and co-authors of the experiences. The more emotional the events, the more memorable they become, the more willing we become to relive them and invite our family and friends to join in. The experience economy involves a transfer from function to emotion. The smell and presentation of bread become more important than bread itself. The emotional value begins to prevail over the functional value[8]. According to Pine and Gilmore there are 4 distinguishable categories of experience (4E) – they are experiences connected with learning (*education*), experiences connected with esthetics (*estethic*), experiences connected with entertainment (*entertainment*), and experiences connected with escaping reality (*escapist*)[9]. Each of them is accompanied by stories, those which evoke experiences and those the client takes with them to share with others.

A new generation of receivers

Wim Veen and Ben Vrakking in their book *Homo Zappiens: Growing up in a Digital Age*[10] published in 2006 claim that there is presently a new generation of people, referred to as *homo zappiens* (from: *zapping*, the way of watching television by using the remote control to quickly change channels). The new generation is significantly different from the generation of their parents. They do not want to learn in advance. They learn what they need in the moment. They more often learn from each other and online than at school. They have difficulties making independent decisions. They consult in online forums and with friends. *Homo zappiens* are able to perform several actions at a time, they can multitask. At the same time they eat, do homework, listen to music and play with their phone. School is too small for them and they look for new thrills all the time. If everything changes all the time in a computer game, there is always something happening that needs their reaction, how can they sit almost still at

8 —— *The Experience Economy. After B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore*, http://www.managingchange.com/masscust/experien.htm (access: 21 October 2013).
9 —— B.J. Pine II, J.H. Gilmore, *Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage*, Boston, MA 1999, p. 31.
10—— See: http://www.vub.ac.be/infovoor/onderzoekers/wetenschapscommunicatie/downloads/WimVeen_271106.pdf (access: 21 October 2013).

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school several times in one day for forty-five minutes? We could also ask how they can walk a museum's halls quietly and with interest?

Homo zappiens:

- They learn quickly but only the things they really want to learn – learning is a game, a challenge. They treat school more like a place to meet friends than to learn.
- They act according to the rule: 'we know best not what we were taught but what we taught ourselves'.
- They collect useful knowledge based on information gathered from various sources, mostly audio-visual information.
- They think at the same time as act.
- They cannot focus on one action.
- They make many new friends, but most of them are short-lasting.
- They do not read instructions, and get to know computer pro-grammes by using them.
- When they have a problem they look for a solution online.

Co-creating a story

The Centre for the Future of Museums operating within the American Association of Museums in their report *Museums & Society 2034* indicate the change in the concept of museum narrations, from narrations defined as passive (following a story) to more active and participatory, where a receiver becomes a co-creator of a story or (and) its hero. According to the report the museum of the future should switch from the passive to the active and creative participation of museum narration. It is important to use modern technologies and solutions implemented in various types of games.

According to the report, changes to the narrative structure of a museum can lead to the creation of a new type of connection with clients who will become co-creators of what a museum offers. Acting as the hero of a story can improve their self-esteem and encourage them to take actions in local society. With this perspective in mind a museum can become a place to create local development on a social and economic level. The limitations of such solutions are con-nected with the threats carried by games and fantasy. Therefore, the main question is, how the experiences gained during a game can be translated into the broader context of the real world[11].

11 —— Center for the Future of Museums (2008). *Museums & society 2034: trends and potential futures. Washington, DC: American Association of Museums*, http://futu-reofmuseums.org/reading/publications/upload/MuseumsSoci-ety2034.pdf (access: 21 October 2013).

Globality – museum: the world and a small museum in it

Helping to create a story

Since stories can be important to towns and their citizens as well as to firms and other institutions, museums can help to create those stories. The methods developed to create (co-create) museum narrations can be implemented to create narrations for external purposes. This way the museum can mark its presence in the knowledge–based and experience economy. In order for this to be feasible the range of methods and techniques for creating and telling stories needs to be broadened. It can be helpful to use the experiences from the fields of pedagogy of play, adventure pedagogy, neuropedagogy and even laughter yoga. Techniques developed by situationists and psychogeoraphers[12] for the purposes of anti-tourism can also be used. It could also be interesting to use the methodology of exploratory walks and other experiments in the field of *strollology* to create museum stories. After all, all artistic activities are an endless source of inspiration and the museum is the house of the Muses, at some point the Muses will return home. And when they do, local museums will also be able to mark their place globally.

> 'If you say you can you can.
> If you say you can't you are right'.
>
> Henry Ford

12—— See: http://psychogeografia.wordpress.com/about/ (access: 21 October 2013).

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A museum at a crossroads?
Between a collection and a story

Anna Nacher

What is the role of a museum today? Paradoxically, at the time of dynamic changes to the world, this question is more important now than ever. Nearly everything changes: culture patterns, the ways of popularising cultural assets, the trajectories of artefact migration, meanings and practices and the receivers themselves with their expectations also change. This situation, however, is not exceptional; museums have undergone significant changes since their beginning – according to Wolfgang Herrmann, 'ca. 1820 marked the transformation from private collections of the dukes to public national museums'1, which created the vision of a museum or a gallery as a sanctuary of art for many decades. The 1960s and 70s brought about a change of the format of practicing art, which in the effect provoked questions about the ideology behind galleries and museums2, but also about how a gallery could be formatted to contain new forms such as happenings, installations, media art, environment, site-specific arts or art in public spaces. New forms such as land art appeared, which are presentable only by documentation. Many of these questions bring creative turmoil into the contemporary museum and curatorial practices. The changes are not surprising, since – as Nelson Goodman writes – 'Works of art work by interacting with our experience and all cognitive processes taking place in the continuous process of understanding'3. The development of our understanding can concern a museum as an institution, which is well illustrated by the example below.

I would consider the artefact welcoming visitors to the Humboldt Box in Berlin to be a sign of the times. It is also interesting from a different perspective – as an announcement of the future edifice now being constructed - the Humboldt Forum (the course of its construction can be followed from a terrace). When you enter the building, whose futuristic and quite controversial shape attracts the attention of people walking in the Schloßplatz, the first thing we experience is the exhibition of an ethnographic

1 —— W. Herrmann, Deutsche Baukunst des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, Bd. 1, Breslau 1932, za: H. Sedlmayr, Muzeum, [in:] Muzeum sztuki. Antologia, ed. M. Popczyk, Kraków 2005, p. 47.
2 —— See. B. O'Doherty, Inside the White Cube. The Ideology of the Gallery Space, Santa Monica, San Francisco 1976.
3 —— N. Goodman, Koniec muzeum?, [in:] Muzeum sztuki..., p. 126.

museum. We begin the journey with a paradoxical story, as is certainly going to be the case in other institutions of this kind. It is a story of how one of the museum pieces returned to its primary owners... When in 2007 the institution was visited by William Wasden, a descendant of the Kwakiutl tribe and representative of the U'mista Cultural Society in Alert Bay, Canada, he found one of the masks which used to belong to his ancestors and which he was not even aware existed. It was obvious that the descendants of the tribe should have their say in what was happening with the exhibition in the Berlin museum – and thus the idea for a project of the digitalising the collection of the Northwest Coast emerged, giving rise to a joint study. Eventually, the mask returned to where it was originally taken from as an element of the 'primitive' peoples' lifestyles' documentation. The Humboldt Box displays a perfect replica and ... the documentation of the history of the artefact: how it was found, its return and the cooperation between the Berlin ethnographic museum and the Kwakiutls.

Globalisation does have some paradoxical sides to it – one of them being the process usually marginalised by the western researcher, i.e. the so-called 'vindication of ethnic identities'. Through it we can see the reverse side of the well known narrative about cultural imperialism, i.e. emanation of trends and tendencies from the Euro-Atlantic centre to areas often treated as 'peripheral' (this criticism is most frequently applied to the discussion about 'Americanisation'). It seems, however, that the process we are facing is much more complex and one of its elements is the fact that 'culture nowadays is also an intellectual property, expelled from a «museum» and removed from the scope of «anthropological» perspective'[4]. This means that local, indigenous or native communities – aware of the market mechanisms of developed capitalism in which so much depends on cultural meanings and a recognisable brand – are prone to creating their own narratives from the available cultural repertoire in order to take over the management of meanings constituted around them. Very often they take on the form of 'future ethno-investments'[5], i.e. the capitalisation of what is 'authentic' and 'indigenous' (it is tempting to add 'local' – in the Polish reality). It seems that it is worth taking a look at a museum's resources in the light of this paradoxical process (which often takes on the form of 'celebrating difference', i.e. creating a sort of cultural product out of anything that is different from universal global culture). We are unwilling to notice the empowerment of local communities and it seems to be the key to

4 —— J.L. Comaroff, J. Comaroff, Etniczność sp. z o.o., Kraków 2011, p. 9.
5 —— Ibidem

many contemporary debates – including the ones around intellectual property with a communal character (most often branded as 'traditional').

As we know, the history of anthropology and ethnological museum exhibitions has its ambivalent side: on the one hand the connection with the history of the conquest of the non-western world (the creation of the first French historical museum in Louvre was connected with Napoleon's looted art which added significantly to the increase of the presented collection), and on the other hand – the attitude of respect for lifestyles and cultures different from the forms known to the Euro-Atlantic world. Often both these streams ran in tandem, as creating knowledge of 'exotic peoples' was at the same time a form of management of both human populations and the natural resources found in territories belonging to them. When at the break of the 1960s and 70s a renaissance of ethnic identities became globally noticeable6, it became clear that the formula of an anthropological collection and its suggested narrative also needed to be revised. Debates and controversies surrounding the manner of presenting the life and culture of the Sami in Swedish museums can serve as an example. When in 1981 a new Sami exhibition was opened at the Nordiska Museet in Stokholm it became obvious that it would become a bone of contention between the Sami Association and the museum in Stockholm. The Sami claimed that the suggested exhibition did not present their contemporary ways of life enough and that it depicted them as a sort of cultural fossil. After the heavy criticism of such narratives the first museum was opened in 1989 in which the Sami decided themselves on the way of presentation - Âjtte, Svenskt fjàll- och samemuseum presents their point of view and is also an important research centre7. Local museum collections can therefore be a form - at the same time a practice – of very useful narrations which often have quite an influential nature and surpass traditional museum functions. They recreate identities which then become an empowering tool for groups who want to fight for their piece of attention and affection in the economy which is more and more based on emotions, associations and sensations.

6 —— The American experience is convincingly described by M. Novak in his semi-autobiographical book - see. M. Novak, Przebudzenie etnicznej Ameryki, Warszawa 1985. The movement of identity renaissance of the Sami is a European example, which I described further in: A. Nacher, M. Styczyński, Vaggi Varri. W tundrze Samów, Kraków 2013.

7 —— See. A. Nacher, M. Styczyński, after: E. Silven, Lapps and Sami - Narrative and Display at the Nordiska Museet, [in:] K. Andersson, L'Image du Sapmi, „Humanistica Oerebroensia. Artes et linguae" 2008, 15, OrebroUniversity.

The Exhibition Dynamics Team

Łucja Piekarska-Duraj (1975) – deals with the theory and practice of social anthropology. Łucja is particularly interested in the connections between heritage, memory and identity. Łucja is associated with the Jagiellonian University where she is a researcher (this is where she defended her doctoral thesis on the metaphors of European heritage); also with the Małopolska Institute of Culture, where she collaborates with the Exhibition Dynamics team, co-creates muzeoblog.org and participates in educational programmes (Treasures of Małopolska). Łucja co-created projects such as the exhibitions At the Allotment *(dzieło-działka)* and Karol Wojtyła's Wadowice *(Wadowice Karola Wojtyły)*, the social-art project (nowa_huta.rtf), and the film Hallelujah! And go for it! *(Alleluja i do przodu!)*. She runs trainings in support of the creative processes in institutions of the creative sector. A collector of stories and experiences.

Joanna Hajduk (1974) – coordinator of the Exhibition Dynamics program at the Małopolska Institute of Culture. Joanna is interested in creating and presenting tools that facilitate a conscious reception of reality, both historical and contemporary, lately also interested in process-oriented psychology. Joanna co-created a series of workshops for museum professionals, many museum exhibitions such as Raslila: Liberation Through Dance (*Raslila. Taneczne wyzwolenie*), Karol Wojtyła's Wadowice *(Wadowice Karola Wojtyły)*, The Saints of the East and West *(Święci Wschodu i Zachodu)*, Interconnections *(Powiązania)* and educational trails (Schindler's Factory, Wieliczka Salt Mine) also the *Muzeobranie* project. Joanna is also co-author of the concept and implementation of Małopolska's Virtual Museums portal (muzea.malopolska.pl). Joanna has been previously associated with institutions such as the Polish Humanitarian Action organisation where she coordinated national and international aid projects. She believes in striking a happy medium.

Sebastian Wacięga (1978) – has a degree in economics and European studies. Sebastian collaborates with museums within projects by the Małopolska Institute of Culture: *Muzeobranie* (2004-2009); Exhibition Dynamics. From mission to receiver, he participated in the creation of the concept and implementation of exhibitions, events, educational workshops, training, and museum operations. Sebastian cooperates with cultural institutions on strategic planning (creating plans for team development of organisations). Sebastian co-authored the simulation game 'A Peasant School of Business' *Chłopska Szkoła Biznesu* – an educational tool inspired by local heritage. Sebastian believes that locality is becoming more important in the globalised world. Admirer of traditional music and urban folklore.

Piotr Idziak (1981) – has collaborated with the Exhibition Dynamics program since 2007. Piotr is involved in the creation of exhibitions, educational trails, workshop plans, and field and board games. He is involved in creating tourist products based on cultural heritage, also a trainer and moderator of team creative processes. In light of the challenges of the present day, Piotr is interested in attributing heritage with various forms of new meanings.

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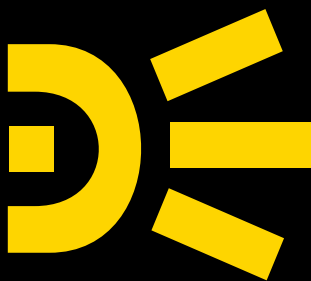
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(Exhibition Dynamics)