



HEAR
ME | BRINGING
YOUTH AND
MUSEUMS
TOGETHER

MUSEUM MANUAL

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MUSEUM MANUAL

Project supported by the
Creative Europe - Culture sub-programme

Involved in HearMe Workshops:

4 Project partners, 20 Museum educators, 125 Schools, 7000 Youth,
700 Teachers, 150 University students, 100 Experts and specialists



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REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE



Republic of Serbia
Ministry of Culture and Information

[Today] people feel unheard, which makes them shout even louder, which further destroys conversation.

David Brooks, *The Governing Cancer of Our Time*,
New York Times, 26 February 2016




I thought that this would just be some kind of creativity development, but it turned out to be much more than that.

Participant of a Workshop at GMS



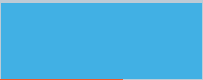
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The HearMe Project



Statement of the directors

Every museum, whether small or large, more or less known or recognised as a cultural and a tourist destination, strives to achieve as much communication as possible with the widest audience. Attracting young people to a museum or a gallery, offering them an attractive theme with tailored methodology was a challenge that brought together the Narodna galerija in Ljubljana, the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna and the Galerija Matice srpske in Novi Sad. Daniel Weiss helped us in finding the way with his BRICKme methodology, and our education departments successfully implemented the conceived programme in practice. We analysed the themes of the present moment that preoccupy young people on artworks from our collections. We presented them with works, listened to their thoughts and encouraged them to build, treasure and expose their attitudes through LEGO® bricks, all with the idea to show that the Museum is a place to ask questions, encourage thinking and offer the possible answers. We have shown that the artworks from the past can be inspiring, attractive and provocative in the present to young people.

Through the realisation of this project, we brought together our museums, intertwined the previous experience and knowledge of our experts, made a joint step forward in the programme activities of the educational departments and provided the opportunity for young people in Ljubljana, Vienna and Novi Sad for some new experiences through entertainment and dialogue in the museum. We present all this in the HearMe Museum Manual with the desire to encourage museum professionals throughout Europe and the world to explore new ways of thinking about their collections and their young audience.

Barbara Jaki, PhD, director of the Narodna galerija

Sabine Haag, PhD, general director of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien

Tijana Palkovljević Bugarski, PhD, director of the Galerija Matice srpske

About the project

Museums are by definition conservative, yet the world around them has changed dramatically in recent digital decades. Historically, protecting and studying heritage was the main purpose of the institution. For decades now, this task is seen as inseparable from engaging with diverse audiences. Museums cannot succeed in their original mission if the public does not see art, and all of emotions, perspectives, and stories that accompany it, as an essential part of the human condition.

Among the most demanding visitors to museums are teenagers, most of whom either do not have an opinion on museums or the opinion is negative.*

The HearMe project's main goal was to break away from this dynamic and to bring young people and museums closer.

HearMe, in essence, is a new methodology of working with teenagers in museums. Its main product is the HearMe workshop, a set of tools that can be adapted to different museum environments and collections, and specific cultural and social dynamics. It incorporates several approaches, including a derivation of BRICKme, open art dialogue, gamification and design thinking.

In the months that the partners were prototyping the workshops, the project engaged thousands of teenagers and hundreds of teachers. Through focus groups, test runs, museum-teacher workshops, surveys, and hundreds of workshops we were able to refine the tools presented in this manual. The words in it come from 5 coordinators and 15 museum educators, who had together spent more than 2000 hours in intense interaction with young people.

Adolescence is a period when a child inhabits an adult body. Life-long habits, opinions, and character, guided by experiences from early childhood, start to settle. The cacophonous pressures from school, friends, family, and first relationships seem to leave little room for museums and Big Questions (in our case, modern-day migrations). Each teenager lives in her/his own movie, where she/he is the main character. This is why the project was called HearMe, not HearUs. It was each student and her/his opinions and viewpoints that were at the centre of our workshops. And despite occasional boredom and non-cooperation from their part, we found that teenagers in three very different countries were the same: playful, open, and, most importantly, hopeful. If there were one message for those who will use this manual, it would be: Do not feel apprehensive about the task ahead of you. The kids are all right.

**The trends were catalogued in the internal Audience Insight Paper.*

Project leaders

Statements of the partners

Narodna galerija, Ljubljana (NGS)

For some time, the Gallery was thinking about how to deal with the stagnating number of young visitors, especially 14-19 year-olds. Although our museum welcomes more than 20.000 school children each year, this target group is largely underrepresented (only 6% of all visitors). When considering the reasons, many issues came to our mind. What is missing in our youth programming? Do we address boring subjects, or do we just present them in a dull way? Are we too fixed on achieving our guided tour goals, ticking off boxes in our busy minds, instead of being focused on the visitors' experience? Do the gallery guides lack a personal touch, or do we try to please our young public too much? Can we change the results within our Gallery alone, or should this challenge be addressed on a regional, national, European level?

Inside the Gallery, audience development has been steered by the Education Department since it was established in 1963, so we felt up to the challenge. We partnered with three organisations: the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien with its venerable tradition and expertise in museum engagement, the Galerija Matice srpske, with its respectable resourcefulness, and the SISE, an agile social entrepreneur company. Surely, together we can crack the nut of the »insta« generations. We decided: let's go to work!

Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien (KHM)

Around 1800 school classes per year participate in the education programmes of Kunsthistorisches Museum (median value between 2010 and 2016). We keep on asking ourselves if we're offering these ~33000 children and adolescents per year the right things. Even though we are constantly advancing our programmes - away from tours which are primarily based on the transfer of information and knowledge, towards studio programmes and offerings with proactive elements and discussions - we were still lacking a format quite like HearMe. That is: A workshop which focusses on the interactions and dynamics within groups, a workshop in which the artworks become mediums or catalysts of a process that enables unharmful exchange about individuality and diversity in the broadest sense. This open, emotional and intensive approach was a powerful experience for the participants and it let them perceive the museum as a place of self-reliant, reflective action. A more than welcome side-effect was the lack of reservation and inhibition in approaching the Old Master paintings.

The team of museum educators has taken away many motivating stimuli with the help of HearMe, both from the participating students, the exchange with the colleagues from Ljubljana (Narodna galerija) and Novi Sad (Galerija Matice srpske), and last but not least with Daniel Weiss (SISE). These stimuli will, beyond this new programme, continue to inspire our work!

Galerija Matice srpske, Novi Sad (GMS)

The Galerija Matice srpske has been developing museum educational programmes for different groups of audiences for years, with particular emphasis on the youngest. After having valuable experiences with children, the Gallery created several small programmes for the young people. The HearMe was a big step in creating a serious and sustainable programme for the youth aged 14 to 19. The newly designed workshops with an attractive methodology opened up new opportunities of bringing museums closer to young people. Thanks to a large number of workshops and participants, the whole museum and its staff had the opportunity to experience and deal with different challenges and become more professional.

During the entire implementation of the project, the Galerija Matice srpske encountered a difficulty - it was closed to the public for six months due to the reconstruction of the facade. This has led to the fact that the HearMe workshops were held in high school classrooms from January to May 2017. The unexpected situation added a special value to this project and showed that customised workshops have a new feature that was not predicted. Furthermore, it showed that the goals and results could still be achieved despite the fact the workshops were held in a non-museum space.

In the end, the project merged three museums and a civil organisation into a professional and friendly group of people with different experience and knowledge, who creatively designed and completed over 700 workshops, a manual in 4 languages, and a large conference for museum educators all around the world.

Social Innovation - Social Entrepreneurship - (SISE)

The HearMe Project is an innovative change in the way museum and gallery collections are presented to the public. It represents an opportunity to generate a new value proposition for society. Museum halls hold paintings and artefacts, whose subject-matter makes them ready-made to contribute to social inclusion and problem-solving. For the first time, schools and participants are given a voice and the topics/themes of the works of art are analysed from a different angle. Beyond metrics, museums are starting to know who their visitors are, what they think about their works of art, and also realising that the museum experience is not about knowledge but about emotions. In this project, there are three journeys running in parallel: a museum who is developing a new business model, a museum educator making a personal journey, and a visitor, generating emotions and finding meaning in a museum visit.

On this journey, we have discovered many new opportunities, found unexpected results and visualised how to move forward to support other institutions with similar needs. Moreover, exporting the approach to other profiles of organisations, opened new perspectives.





Building Museum Emotions



BRICKme is an integrated methodology for a personal journey. The acronym stands for Building Resilience Innovation Co-creation Knowledge Methodology. It combines the best of different methodologies such as LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® open source, Design Thinking, Business Model You®, SCRUM, Agile and Systemic Constellations.

In the HearMe project, BRICKme is used to develop a new experience bringing youth and museums together. The HearMe project focused on the question:

“How can museums and galleries reach young audiences, and make them embrace empathy?”

The project's goals were:

1. Build deeper relationships between young people and partner museums/galleries.
2. Develop the skills of museum educators for open concept youth programming based on young people's participation, and upon their expectations, wishes, and needs.
3. Incorporate advanced methodologies into museum programming.

BRICKme in the HearMe Project implemented a six-step process:

1. Place four questions to museums and galleries

- What is your purpose in this project (art pieces connected to the project)?
- What would you like to change in your actual way of doing workshops?
- What do you think are your needs related to the project and your organisation?
- What would you like to be different after the workshop?

2. Ask museums/galleries to include a selection of works of art in the workshops

Each work of art has to enable reflection among many different topics, including essential skills needed for the modern world:

INGENUITY
CRITICAL THINKING
PROBLEM SOLVING
TEAMWORK
COMPETITIVENESS
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Throughout the process, the young people work on EU competencies:

COMMUNICATION IN THE MOTHER TONGUE
LEARNING TO LEARN
INTER-CULTURALISM
SENSE OF INITIATIVE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
CULTURAL AWARENESS AND EXPRESSION

3. Internal debate on the questions and themes that connect subject-matter and project goals

As an example:

complete lack of solidarity/empathy
terror, betrayal, envy
rules that are defined within a group, peer-pressure, group-dynamics
leader - ring leader - power
bullying (black sheep)
rape, question of responsibility
migration

4. Run five-day BRICKme training at Narodna galerija in Ljubljana

The training is a combination of the different methodologies. The first three days are about understanding the purpose of the different tools. In the last two days we develop the workshop prototypes, combining the works of art, the themes and the tools.

During training, around 12 different workshop prototypes were developed. Each museum/gallery presented their idea and used feedback to modify the prototype.

Understanding that these workshops would impact the organisation from different points of view, business models were designed to understand:

- the value proposition that makes the HearMe project unique
- the key activities to implement it properly
- the communication channels and the "what-is-the-message-to-deliver" to the target group
- the key competencies of the museum educator

The training workshop structure delivers a series of activities that focus on three main blocks:

- warm up the audience
- concentrate on the central theme
- reflect on the findings

What is critical is to put in find the right formula that includes a work of art, the theme, questions and a museum educator.

5. Prototyping the workshop museum educators developed in Slovenia

They tested the prototypes. The gain of new experiences starts, the ecosystem of museum educators is ready to get and provide feedback from participants, teachers, and themselves.

6. Shadowing, documenting the experience

The observation produced insights and gathered information and questions for reflection.

- talking to the museum educators involved in the workshop experience
- interviewing teachers and students
- attending the workshop sessions
- media content is based on 15 questions and with the idea in mind what a museum/gallery has to do to implement the HearMe methodology. How to approach the implementation, what they should take into account for a successful experience, what are the steps to follow? Understanding this is part of the audience development strategy needed to provide a successful experience

The Methodologies in practice

BRICKme has different exercises; museums/galleries can combine them in endless ways. This possibility lets them customise the experience for their audiences. The main methodologies selected for the prototypes were LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® open source, Design Thinking and Gamification.

LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® open source

There are a number of reasons why LEGO® bricks are particularly well-suited for this kind of process. The material makes it easy for participants to put together satisfying models which represent something that they wish to communicate. They do not need significant technical skills; the LEGO® System is familiar to many, and even if they have not used LEGO® bricks before, most people find it quite easy to build meaningful constructions.

LEGO® bricks come in many shapes and colours, and can often provide inspiration for metaphors through serendipity. They can be built into simple or complex forms, as suits the personality of the builder, and research has shown that people from all walks of life feel comfortable attaching diverse metaphorical meanings to LEGO® bricks.

The four steps of using the method are:

I pose a question; you build a model, you share, we reflect.

At every stage of the LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®, the process involves building with LEGO® bricks, utilising the 'hand-mind connection': there is never a point where participants merely sit back and write down, or chat about, the issues without building their response first.

Therefore, everything that is discussed comes out of the building process, where the hand and mind engage to give visual and metaphorical shape to meaningful things, emotions and relationships.

The process implemented looks straightforward but complex at the very same time, if you place the wrong question. This is why the first steps of BRICKme methodology are so important.

● DESIGN THINKING

What BRICKme methodology does is to demystify design thinking by translating it from abstract implementation to practical one.

In the training session, we use three primary tools of design thinking: the empathy map, diverging to funnelling concepts, and the bad and good experiences of the actual services.

One of the practical activities in Ljubljana training was about mapping the questions you will ask an immigrant. It generated a new set of concepts; we began to reverse the process by converging our answers progressively, narrowing it down to the most promising. The empathy map is a tool for team building, to understand who is who and what is her/his role in the team. In the case of the HearMe project, we use it to identify common touch points on expectations.

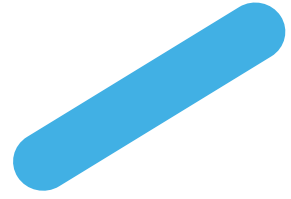
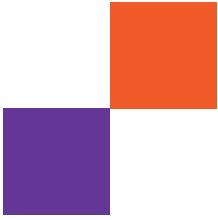
Originally designed with Polaroid photos, it was implemented in a very innovative way at the Narodna galerija, where the participants drew their self-portraits.

● GAMIFICATION

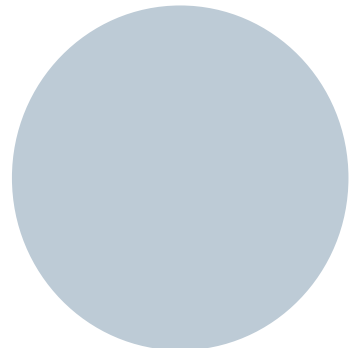
The HearMe project does not use leader-boards, points or physical rewards. It is a deeper use of this methodology that connects it to the essence of the project.

- It implements a learning process that develops player's first skills, e.g. creative thinking.
- A mission with concrete objectives leads to some emotional reward, e.g. understanding who you are.
- Working with other players towards a common purpose (build a tower).
- Rules that keep the system stable, e.g., everybody shares her/his model.
- A collaborative mechanic that increases P2P interaction, e.g. we reflect on the shared models.
- We can conclude by saying that the versatility of the BRICKme methodology enables bottom-up or top-down implementation. Multiple combinations are possible, and the HearMe Project proved it could be implemented successfully in different ways.





The Workshops



3 Museums - 3 different approaches

Three different museums collaborated on this project. The overarching ideas and the innovative methods are the most important uniting features of all workshops. Nevertheless, the prerequisites of the three partners differed: The collections, the artworks, locations and spatial situations, the audiences, the respective teams. Each museum has thus found highly differing solutions for their workshops. This sense of diversity was perceived as a special gain by the partners, and it served as a basis for exchange and mutual inspiration.

Despite all the differences, there are a number of activities which we all share and which unite the workshops: The building exercises which serve as the introduction and activation of the participants, and the "Mentimeter" online polling tool. Next up is a short joint description of said activities, while later - in the workshop scripts of the individual museums - they will only be referenced in abbreviation.

.....

Toolbox

WARM UP THE PARTICIPANTS

- A preparatory task before SERIOUS PLAY

Like in sports, you need to warm your body before you perform. All participants build their own models, except in the Tower exercise.

When playing LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® you need to warm up the hands-mind connections. The creative process of making something with your hands prompts the brain to work differently, unlocking new knowledge.

A series of activities were designed to accompany the workshop. The reason was to bring participants into the flow or re-engage them after a break.

Some of these activities are powerful for explaining important concepts that when said differently do not have a large impact. Below we list some examples.

1. Build the Duck

Each participant gets the same set in the number of pieces, shape and colour and is asked to build a Duck. The result is always the same; all the Ducks are different. The primary goal is to allow participants to experience the diversity of interpretation, making it important to listen to each other.

The second reflection is: How do you communicate about something that is on your mind, but others may have a different interpretation? If you are chasing the same dreams, you need to take into account that they might come true in different ways.

2. Ten-brick model

The activity is meant to show one of the essential skills of storytelling for communication. Participants are asked to build a model using only ten bricks; then

the museum educator circulates five different words. The participants picked and chose one and described how their model explains the meaning of the word. It also confronts the participants with the need to be creative in real time. At the same time, they can see how others are able to formulate amazing stories. It helps with engagement and creates empathy bonds.

3. Minifigure

Assorted heads, bodies, hats, and small fancy complements are used to build the participants' Minifigure. The Minifigure enables a constructive reflection and dialogue about Who You Are. The question looks for emotions, likes, dislikes and is related to the self-awareness of the person, hoping she/he is willing to share it. The exercise is not about CVs. As a result, the human dimension of the group is put on the table. The Minifigure represents the first step towards understanding the identity of the group. It also generates new discoveries for the participants.

4. Your Superpower

The Superpower model is meant to nurture positive thinking and self-image, which is a sensitive, yet crucial topic for quickly developing young adults.

5. Build the tallest tower

Build the tallest tower is meant for team-building and to establish cooperation, which is largely overlooked in the school system nowadays. Also, this exercise enables fun, playfulness, laughter and gets everyone into high spirits.

6. Your worst nightmare

This is a powerful exercise that gives you a quick overview of what could be the participants' nightmares related to their personal life. An informative introduction to the nightmare concept by the museum educator is essential. Each participant writes three main words about the nightmare. Then, the museum educator tells them to move one seat to the right or left, so their nightmares are over, but they acquire a new one that needs to be explained using the three words.

7. Mentimeter tool

www.mentimeter.com

Mentimeter is fully web-based which means no downloads or installations are required. It can be started in seconds from any location using your own device: a smartphone, a computer or a tablet.

Being collaborative and interactive, the HearMe workshops used Mentimeter in workshops frequently to let students anonymously share their opinions on often controversial issues they might be reluctant to speak about in front of others.

WORKSHOP IN THE NGS

Delavnica PrisluhniMi

What it's about?

Ivana Kobilca (Ljubljana, 1861–1926)

Kobilca is considered one of the most successful Slovenian artists. She spent most of her creative period and adult life in European capitals (Vienna, Munich, Paris, Sarajevo, Berlin) and returned to Ljubljana only at the onset of the Great War. Her large oeuvre is marked by portrayals of her family members and children, portraits of members of middle-class society, genre scenes and especially flowers.



Ivana Kobilca,
Summer,
1889-1890



Jožef Petkovšek, *At Home*, 1889

Jožef Petkovšek (Verd 1861 – 1898 Ljubljana)

Petkovšek was hampered by a mental disorder (schizophrenia?) and his painting career lasted a single decade. He spent three years abroad (Munich, Paris, Venice), but was forced to return home as his health condition deteriorated. Many of his works did not survive - he overpainted a number of them and destroyed others in bouts of rage. He died in a mental health institution, mostly forgotten by his peers. Petkovšek's ideas and creations came to the forefront in the decades after his death, when he was discovered by a younger generation of artists.

Zoran Mušič (Bukovica near Gorica 1909 – 2005 Venice)

Mušič first became a refugee as a child during the Great War. During World War II, he was interned in the Dachau concentration camp; the experience left a crucial mark on his art. Stationed in Venice and Paris, he was the first Slovenian Modernist painter to win recognition in the West. He was awarded several prizes at the biennials in Venice.



Zoran Mušič, *Little Horses*, 1949

Themes and Topics

The workshops focused on the life and work of three Slovenian artists, whose formative years were spent abroad in three completely different circumstances.

The best-known works of art by Kobilca and Petkovšek, **Summer** and **At Home**, were painted in the same year, both depict the members of the artist's family after she/he returned home from abroad, yet their mood and look stand in stark contrast.

Comparison of Kobilca's *Summer* and Petkovšek's *At Home*:

bright - dark

optimism - pessimism

middle-class point of view - rural point of view

strong family relations - deteriorated family relations

characters emotionally close - characters emotionally distant

migration that family supports - migration that family opposes

painting immediately successful - painting overlooked for a long time

Themes discussed in Part 2:

- ambition
- ERASMUS programme
- How you can influence your family, friends, school, society?
- living in a non-Western country
- mental illness
- moving to different countries to pursue your dreams
- professions traditionally "improper" for men or women
- power relations between genders
- support of parents to achieve your goals
- What is possible when one is young vs. when one is older?
- When is the right time to move away from home?
- Who decides what is appropriate, modern, exciting, new?

An overview of the Permanent Collection of Zoran Mušič offers intimate, yet universal statements on love, life, war and remembrance.

Threads through the works of art by Zoran Mušič:

- art as a form of memory
- beauty and pain can coexist
- personal symbols in art and life
- the persistence of hope in dark times
- invisible violence leaving visible consequences
- witnessing history as it happens

Themes discussed in Part 3:

- ambassadors of countries (sportspeople, artists, musicians, scientists, models, etc.)
- Becoming true to yourself is a never-ending story?
- discrimination based on nationality
- finding your profession, how to achieve that, what you can do to be successful
- friendships in a new country
- How to cope with trauma?
- influence of one's environment
- losing your home at a young age
- political reasons for migration
- speaking out for others to prevent another tragedy
- violence is easy, compromise is difficult; what to do to survive in extreme circumstances

Workshop Schedule

Group size: 15 young people (on average)

Duration: 180 minutes (on average)

Part 1: Introduction

(30 minutes)

Polaroid Wall / Empathy Map
Build the Duck
Ten-brick model
Your Superpower
Your worst nightmare*
Reflection

Part 2: Ivana Kobilca and Jožef Petkovšek

(60 minutes)

1. Discussion on the two artists (see Themes)
 2. "Imagine how the story of one of the pictures could continue and write down its main points."
 3. "Divide into teams, based on the picture you chose."
 4. "Build a model of your alternative story."
 5. "Connect or combine individual stories and create a new, shared one."
 6. "Present your share-model / landscape to the rest of the group."
-

A Break

(15 minutes)

A Warm-up: Build the tallest tower

(2 minutes)

Part 3: Zoran Mušič

(60 minutes)

1. "How would you feel if you had to move into the unknown right this moment? Build a model of that feeling and describe it in three words."
 2. "Pair your model with whichever picture in the Permanent Collection of Zoran Mušič that reflects the feeling of your model."
 3. "Present your model to the group and explain your choice of the picture."
 4. Short break
 5. Discussion on the life of the artist (see Themes)
 6. "Connect the models and create a landscape of emotions."
-

Survey

(10 minutes)

**optional / occasionally*

How does it work?

Part 1:

Introductory games warmed-up the participants:

Polaroid Wall was used if the youngsters did not know each other.

Build the Duck gently introduced the main guideline of the workshop: we all come with different perspectives on the issues, what's important is that we listen to each other.

Ten-Brick Model introduces the notion of instructions that are very specific and ambiguous at the same time. The game also sparks imagination.

Your Superpower makes youngsters think about themselves and how others perceive them. If the museum educator judged it to be suitable, she/he added an instruction not to use any figures, guiding participants towards more abstract thinking.

Your Worst Nightmare was used sparingly, when the participants showed the emotional capacity to handle the task constructively. Sometimes, the museum educator would put Your Superpower into Part 2 and Your worst Nightmare into Part 3 since they touch on the overall themes of these parts.



Part 2:

In this part, we aimed to foster empathy, imagination and cooperation and to make students think about coming to terms with different outcomes in life.

1. Open art dialogue allowed the students to get to know the artists and find connections with today's issues.

2. When the students were asked to come up with their own version of what followed the family gathering, they were motivated to **imagine** the effects and consequences of starkly different family relations.

3, 4, 5. Back at the creative studio, the students first built their own story and then combined it with the models of other students who were working on the same picture. Thus, they **created a succession of events** that was not always linear and could be logically inconsistent.

6. However, they were asked to present the landscape as one story, meaning they had to find **reasons and causes** for the changes.

Part 3:

In this part, we wanted to show students how to analyse one's own feelings, how to build an emotional connection with art, and how to become more comfortable with emotional ambiguity and contradictions that accompany us through life.

- 1.** The students were asked to examine their reactions if they had to leave home and express it in bricks. The question was ambiguous (the museum educator did not answer the students' questions like "Move to where?" and "Who will go with me?"), so the atmosphere usually became more thoughtful.
- 2, 3.** Then, the museum educator took them to the exhibition and without knowing anything about the artist, the students paired their models with a work of art. Each presented her/his model to the group.
- 4.** A short break was used to separate personal interpretations of students from more biographical discussion onwards. Museum educators emphasised that the two parts were not in competition and that we would not "correct" their interpretations, just provide a wider context.
- 5.** A chronological overview of the Collection and discussion on overall themes followed.
- 6.** Either in the Collection or in the Studio, the students matched positive and negative aspects of migration, thus creating a fuller range of human reactions to adversity.



In Ljubljana, museum educators took notes on interesting statements that the students made about works of art, especially in the Permanent Collection of Zoran Mušič. Some of the statements were recorded in "image macro", the most common design form of internet memes, where a picture is superimposed with text. These images are thus notes on students making an emotional connection with works of art most of them did not know even existed and knew nothing about beforehand.



WORKSHOPS IN THE KHM

Workshop 1

Sarcophagus of the Amazons / Samson and Delilah



Sarcophagus of the Amazons, Greek/Hellenistic, 2nd half of 4th c. BC



Anthony van Dyck, *Samson and Delilah*, about 1626-30

What it's about?

Both works deal with two clashing groups of opposing cultures. They both show moments of conflict.

The roles which women take on are highly contrasting however. On the *Sarcophagus*, the Amazons take on a male role by fighting in a war. In *Samson and Delilah* a classical female role identity is assigned to Delilah: The sly temptress.

Sarcophagus of the Amazons

- two foreign cultures / social groups at conflict
- gender roles, battle of the sexes
- taking on roles and behaviour models that are socially ascribed to others
- Foreign races, enemies - what do we perceive as foreign?
- the self and the other, defining oneself by distinction from the other
- fears, projections
- self-conscious woman, self-determined woman
- Winners - losers - who wins in a conflict?

van Dyck, *Samson and Delilah*

- moment of conflict between opposing nations, but also on a highly personal level
- loving couple from different cultures, opposing camps
- ambivalent feelings
- treachery, love, betrayal in love, seduction
- Who is seduced by whom or what?
- Who takes on which role? Culprit - victim - procuress, female role - female cliché
- opposing feelings: having done something with relish that hurt somebody, and feeling compassion with them at the same time, regretting the deed
- indulgent violence of those who finally gained the upper hand

Workshop schedule

Introduction (studio)

30 min

Group assignment (max. 15 persons per group) and introduction

Warm-up exercises: **Building the Duck / Minifigure / Your superpower**

Part 1: *Sarcophagus of the Amazons*

50 min

In the collection

c. 20 min

- **Mentimeter - Quiz „Who's winning?“** (Women/Men/Neither)
- **Your story! „What happened before?“**
(Independent work in small groups, joint discussion afterwards)

In the studio (Building models and presentation)

c. 30 min

- **„Imagine a conflict has just ended. How do you feel now?“** (5 min)
-

Break

20 min

Part 2: *Samson and Delilah*

60 min

In the studio (Building, short warm-up)

c. 15 min

- **Your worst nightmare**

In the collection

c. 15 min

- **Mentimeter - Quiz**
„How many feet do you see in this picture?“ (5 possibilities)
„Which of these objects cannot be found?“ (5 possibilities)
Wordcloud - „Which 3 words fit the mood in this picture?“

In the studio (Building models, in small groups of 2-4 students)

c. 10 min

- **„What's happening?“**
“Portray the roles, characteristics and relationships of the different figures in the painting.”

In the collection

c. 20 min

- **Model presentation and reconsideration of the artwork**

In the studio: **Final reflections, surveys**

10 min

How does it work? (see also workshop 2, p. 35)

Introductory building exercises*

- They serve to set the mood and as a “warm up”.
- transition from concrete to abstract tasks
- The last building exercise has a thematic connection with the upcoming parts and the overarching topic of the workshop.

No previous knowledge*

- At first there are no explanations given about the contents of the artwork.
- All participants should be able to form their own thoughts and opinions.
- unbiased approach to the artwork and the building exercises

Mentimeter - Quiz*

- Simple questions target very specific aspects of the artwork.
- It is a method which encourages (nearly) everybody to look closer and actively engage with the artwork.

Sarkophagus of the Amazons - Your story!

- The students are asked to form small groups, develop their own story about the causes of the conflict and then present them.
- Afterwards the artwork and its contents are explained while cross-referencing current social issues.

Time to build*

- While defining time limits is useful, they should be slightly adapted to match the individual groups.
- introductory exercises: 1-2 minutes
- tasks relating to the artworks and nightmare: Between 5-8 minutes

“How do you feel after a conflict?”

- The sole exercise which does not aim at the depiction of the artwork.
- It places the topic in a rather personal context.

“What’s happening?” (*Samson and Delilah*)

- This task aims at a better understanding of the picture’s contents, especially the relationships between the characters.
- Without knowing the exact topic, the students can develop their own versions of the story.

* applies to both workshop 1 and workshop 2

Workshop 2

Bacchanal / Diana and Callisto

What it's about?

This workshop deals with group dynamics, their rules and modes of inclusion. In both artworks there is a leader, but with differing goals and caught up in unequal scenarios.

Woutiers, *Bacchanal*

- Party! Running riot, breaking rules, breaking out, excess, making mistakes and owning up to them, ignoring conventions, messing up while in the company of friends, some look strange, solidarity, cohesion - including its negative sides (cling together, swing together!)
- self-expression and self-staging
- gender roles
- differing views and perceptions - cultural - gender specific - individual
Painted by a woman! Looking at who's fantasies (female, male)? Change of perspective?



Michaelina Woutiers, *Bacchanal*, about 1659

Titian, *Diana and Callisto*

- complete lack of solidarity / empathy
- terror, betrayal, jealousy
- group rules, peer pressure, group dynamics
- chief - ringleader - power
- bullying - black sheep
- How is cohesion created?
- How do you display or perform group affiliation?
- group hierarchy
- rape
- lesbian love



Titian, *Diana and Callisto*, about 1566

Workshop schedule

Introduction (studio)

30 min

Group assignment (max. 15 persons per group) and introduction

Warm-up exercises: **Building the Duck / Minifigure / Your superpower / „What’s a group to you?“**

Part 1: *Bacchanal*

50 min

In the collection

c. 20 min

- **Mentimeter - Quiz**

- **„How many human heads can you see on the picture?“** (5 possibilities)

- **„Which object can be found on the picture?“** (5 possibilities)

In the studio (Building models, in small groups of 2-4 students)

c. 10 min

- **„What’s happening? What are the relations between the characters?“**

In the collection

- **Model presentation and reconsideration of the artwork**

c. 20 min

Break

20 min

Part 2: *Diana and Callisto*

60 min

In the studio (Building, short warm-up)

c. 15 min

- **Your worst nightmare**

In the collection

c. 15 min

- **Mentimeter - wordcloud**

- **„Which 3 words fit the mood in this picture?“**

In the studio (Building models, in small groups of 2-4 students)

c. 10 min

- Group A **„What happened before?“**

- Group B **„What happened afterwards?“**

In the collection

- **Model presentation and reconsideration of the artwork**

c. 20 min

In the studio: **Final reflections, surveys**

10 min

How does it work? (see also workshop 1, page 31)

Introductory building exercises

- “What is a group, in your opinion?” is a direct preparation for the topics in both pictures, since they deal with group dynamics, rules and behaviours.
- If the selection of bricks does not contain parts like heads, bodies and certain accessories, the resulting models will likely be more abstract and more intriguing. This method has proved its worth with older adolescents.

Picture contents are not explained*

- Just as in workshop 1 there are no explanations given about the pictures (at first).

Mentimeter - word cloud*

- Emotions in the picture - emotions triggered within the spectator. An artwork affects everybody differently, plurality of opinions.
- Visual impressions are put into words by the participants (and not by the museum educators).
- Even though the word cloud was initially designated to be used in this workshop only, it was later also implemented in WS 1 (in relation to *Samson and Delilah*).

Why use these particular building tasks?*

- The questions are based on the fact that the participants don't know the stories of the artworks yet.
- They aim at comprehending the atmosphere, the events and the relationships of the characters.
- The students should develop their own stories. “What's happening here?” and “What happened before/What will happen afterwards?” seem to be appropriate questions for reflecting closely on the artwork, but they also leave enough room for subjective interpretations.
- The tasks don't always directly address the topics of the workshops, such as fighting and conflict, freedom and rights, group membership and exclusion. However, with the aid of their depiction in the artworks we deal with these topics in detail and in that way they form the essence of the individual workshops.

Presenting the models in front of the artworks*

- The models are presented in front of the artworks while drawing parallels between the two (where can this aspect be seen in the picture?). The pictures' background stories are only given away afterwards, while jointly discussing certain topics in the group. This is also a great moment to ask students whether their perceptions and interpretations have changed.

* applies to both workshop 1 and workshop 2

WORKSHOPS IN THE GMS



Bogdan Šuput,
*Carinska Street in
Novi Sad, 1937*



Bogdan Šuput, *City Court in Paris, 1938*



Bogdan Šuput, *A Bar in Paris/Boule blanche
- Bal nègre, 1939*

Why these topics?

The Galerija Matice srpske developed two workshops with more specific topics related to migration issues in the Serbian environment. The questions and problems we wanted young people to expose to, were:

1. What are the consequences of choices and decisions young people make by leaving the country in seeking a better life and education?
2. How can the media and visual media in particular influence opinions and views about the historical and contemporary issues of migration?

Workshop 1

The art of Bogdan Šuput

What it's about?

In the environment where they live, young people are increasingly choosing to study or live abroad, a process popularly referred to as "brain drain". Conscious of the situation in the country, unemployment and other problems, most of them posed a question of staying or leaving the country at some point. During high school, young people are actively thinking about leaving, but less about the consequences this brings along. Therefore, the workshop deals with individual migrations, i.e. desire of individuals to leave their country and encourages an exchange of views on this topic. Bogdan Šuput's artworks from the Galerija Matice srpske's collection should encourage a discussion on what home is to young people and what leaving to a new environment means to them.

Bogdan Šuput was a Serbian artist who created during the period between the First and the Second World War. He grew up and lived in Novi Sad and portrayed the security and warm sanctuary of his home in the painting *Carinska Street in Novi Sad*. As a young painter eager to learn and gain new experiences, he lived in Paris on several occasions, the centre of culture and art. There, in a completely different cultural milieu, he became acquainted with the artistic trends and new ideas of the time. He depicted Paris as a modern world in the painting *A Bar in Paris/Boule blanche - Bal nègre*, as a world that our artists did not get the opportunity to see in their homeland in the 1920s and 1930s. The painting portrays the artist enjoying a bar at Montmartre in the company of his friends, also Serbian artists. Nevertheless, the nightlife, the status of a bohemian artist, jazz music and the idea of a liberal society were only one face of Parisian life that Šuput experienced. The artist was tormented with the sense of loneliness in a big city, constant financial deprivation, his insufficient knowledge of French, and nostalgia for home, which is reflected in the *City Court in Paris* painting. The painting presents the view from his studio of the facades and windows of Parisian buildings, in the spirit of intimism, with a mild melancholy note.

Workshop schedule

.....

Group size: 15 young people (on average)

Duration: 100 minutes (on average)

.....

Introduction (Creative Studio)

20 min

Warm-up exercises: **Build the Duck**

Building a model: **"What is home to you?"**

In the collection

40 min

- **introduction about the three paintings of Bogdan Šuput**
- **Mentimeter: "Which of these three paintings reminds you of home?"**
- **a story about the life of Bogdan Šuput in Novi Sad and Paris**

In the Creative Studio

30 min

- **build a model: "How would you feel if you had a chance to leave your country?"**
- **write two, three feeling on the note**
- **sort notes with feelings on a flip chart**
- **reflection about positive and negative feelings**
- **discussion about the positive and negative effects of leaving the country**

Survey

10 min



How does it work?

After an introduction to the Gallery, the workshop participants are asked to build the Duck. To a large number of students, this is the first encounter with the Gallery and, therefore, this exercise allows them to relax at the very beginning and adapt to the environment. This is followed by the more complex task of building a model of home. When asked what home means to them, the participants should make a model of what home signifies for them. Although the question is quite personal, students are much more open and free, as if they are talking of a model and not of themselves.

The museum educator presents three paintings of Bogdan Šuput to the students and does not immediately reveal the key details; they come up with certain assumptions about the paintings together, through a discussion. With the help of Mentimeter with the question „Which of these three pictures reminds you of home?“ they associate the topic to the previous game, but also to the artist’s vision of home in the *Carinska Street in Novi Sad* painting. In most cases, although the artist lived a century ago, the participants form a connection with the artist as their fellow citizen.

By observing the paintings *A Bar in Paris/Boule blanche - Bal nègre* and the *City Court in Paris*, the conversation between the museum educator and the students continues in the direction of the artist’s aspirations towards Paris, as well as the problems he encountered during his stay. It is important to point out that the museum educator do not lead the students to any conclusions about Šuput’s choice, but only pose the problematic question of going abroad for school or for work. After the story of Bogdan Šuput, the students are guided to personally experience this issue. The young people build brick-models of their feelings, as an answer to the question of how would they feel if they were to leave their country and move indefinitely. Each student presents their model and defines a couple of feelings and writes them down. The entire group discusses and classifies models, i.e. written down to positive and negative ones – from terrified and sad when thinking of leaving to those seeing a new opportunity for themselves somewhere else.

This diversity of opinions shows that the museum educators are not suggestive during the conversation when referring to the question whether it is better to stay or to leave. At the end of the workshop, the participants of the workshop raise the awareness through a discussion and come to a conclusion about the issue on their own and find that any choice has its own bad and good sides.

Workshop 2

The art of Paja Jovanović



Paja Jovanović, *The Migration of Serbs*, 1896 (The collection of the Museum of Serbian Orthodox Church)



Lithographic copy of the painting: Paja Jovanović, *The Migration of Serbs*, 1896

What it's about?

In the period from the 14th to the 19th century, the territory of today's Serbia was divided into two large empires - the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empire. In 1690, the largest migration of the Serbian nation took place when people moved from the territory of the Ottoman to the Habsburg Empire, in the territory of the present-day Vojvodina. On that occasion, the Habsburg Emperor Leopold invited the Serbian Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević and provided his people special privileges. This event is known as the Great Migration of the Serbs and had an important place in the collective memory of the Serbian people later in the history. Especially in the 19th century, when a rise in national consciousness and the desire to highlight the events that contributed to the creation of the Serbian state took place, after the withdrawal of the Turks.

The Migration of the Serbs by Paja Jovanović was created at the end of the 19th century, as an order for an important historical event - the Millennium Exhibition in Budapest, which celebrated the 1000th anniversary of the Hungarian statehood. It is interesting to note that Jovanović made two versions of the painting. Since the patron did not like the artist's original idea, he had to change it. On the other hand, one of the traders really liked the original idea, and so Jovanović made another painting for them. The works of Paja Jovanović are the most famous artistic interpretations of this event. The workshop is based on both versions of Paja Jovanović's *Migration of the Serbs*, which portray the same event but with nuanced meanings.



Workshop schedule

.....

Group size: 15 young people (on average)

Duration: 100 minutes (on average)

.....

Introduction (Creative Studio)

30 min

Warm-up exercises: **Build the Duck**
Build the tallest tower

Building a model: **Your superpower**

Model of feelings - "The superhero lost his powers and got lost in the dark"

In the collection

40 min

- **reflection on the feelings of superhero and comparison with the people from the painting**
- **introduction about the two paintings of Paja Jovanović that represent the same historical event**
- **comparison of two paintings**

In the Creative Studio

20 min

- **discussion about how visual image and media itself can influence our opinions and attitudes towards migration**

Survey

10 min

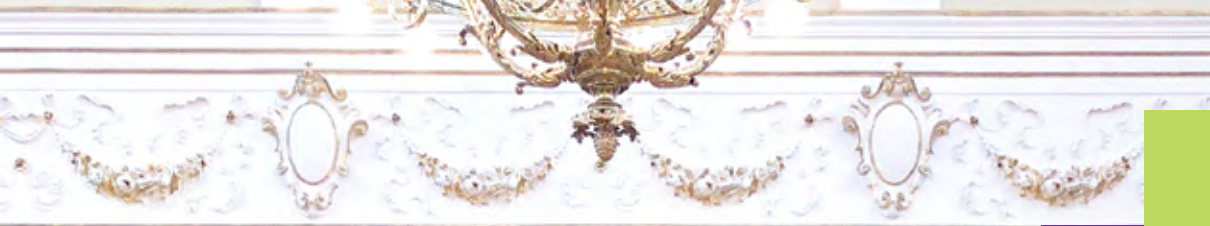


How does it work?

The workshop starts with a warm-up exercise of building a duck from given bricks. The idea of this exercise is that students see that their models are diverse, suggesting that the same concept can have a variety of forms and visions. As with the exercise of building a model of a duck from the previous workshop, the idea is for the students to see that their models are diverse, suggesting that the same concept can have a variety of forms and visions. Also, the museum educator uses another building exercise to encourage teamwork, dialogue and mutual respect. The participants are divided into several groups and have the task to build the tallest tower of bricks for a certain amount of time, and then to talk to each other and to the museum educator about the building process, the size and appearance of the tower. This exercise is sometimes used in the previous workshop.

After the introductory exercises, the participants of the workshop have the task of making their superhero out of bricks. Each participant presents their own figure and lists three of their superpowers. The participants initially identify the superhero with themselves and their desires of what they would like to be. Then, they are faced with a challenge: their superhero has lost their powers and got stranded, lost in the dark in the middle of the night, facing real problems. The task is to present the feelings their superhero has at that moment, while reflecting on the possible solutions by using the brick model. Bearing in mind their feelings, the participants are presented with the first and the second version of the *Migration of the Serbs* painting. By comparing the two paintings and through a discussion, the students discern differences between the two on their own and come to the conclusion about what the patron of the artwork strived to express. The two versions of the painting feature characters with different feelings - one portrays characters in fear and flight, and the other characters that are brave and proud. The participants talk about the people portrayed in the paintings and try to connect their expressive feelings to the feelings of their lost superhero from the previous exercise. In this way, they are placed in their position and discover which version of the paintings depicts this historical event more faithfully.

By comparing the paintings and brick models, we come to the conclusion that the two paintings can send two distinctive messages about a single historical event. Similar to the past, today's visual media often lead to the formation of different attitudes and perceptions of society on certain topics. At the end of the workshop, the students were encouraged to discuss how the media is handling the issue of migrants and their thoughts on the degree of influence the media has on fostering their thinking and to understanding this social problem.





Fine Tuning the Facilitation

NEW LESSONS LEARNED

Since this type of workshop was completely new to us, we didn't know what to expect. Were the questions which we had thought out suitable to build models? Have we chosen appropriate themes and questions to engage our young audience? It was a given from the very start that these workshops would demand and enable a much more personal experience. But which dynamic processes would be set into motion? Many of our concerns turned out to be baseless and the workshops functioned quite well from the start. Nevertheless, a few problems or difficult situations arose, which we will recapitulate now.

Non-random group division

When we abandoned strict rules about group division (leaving it to teachers or pupils themselves to break into groups), certain groups often consisted of pupils that teachers preferred, or regarded as more or less problematic. Initial division is very important for group dynamics and equality establishment, meaning we should always insist on making group selection random.

Group dynamics

Oftentimes, participants displayed sensitivity at workshops, which is typical of their age. It happened that some students constructed models that are very unconventional and have a disturbing character or content. In addition, groups from the same school class attended the workshops, which sometimes led for problems to occur among the students. Examples include open discussion, ridiculing and scorning during activities. The method at the base of our workshops taps much more into personal and emotional realms. It initiates strong individual and group-related processes. Thus, the museum educators were sometimes confronted with more difficult situations than in other workshops or guided tours.

Problematic comments

The adolescents are asked more explicitly to voice their own opinions, the setting is more informal and playful. The participants often used the freedom we offered them in their very own ways. Alienating, occasionally provocative statements appeared. Violence and



sexuality, both already present in the artworks, were singled out by the students in sometimes disturbing ways. Building their own thoughts and ideas as models and then presenting them publicly resulted, for some groups, in exaggerated displays of profiling. Simply accepting what appears and contesting overly absurd or aggressive statements seems to be the right mixture to deal with such situations. Furthermore, all statements should be contextualised: How does this relate to the artwork? This technique ensures that the discussion remains connected to the object and improper statements can thus be rectified.

Nonparticipating students

During some workshops, some of the students did not want to participate in the process of building a model. The most common reasons for this, according to the students, are their lack of creativity and artistic skills, or lack of interest. At the same time, this did not mean their exclusion from participating, because they were willing to participate through verbal communication.

Participating teachers

On one hand, the teachers are obliged to be familiar with the topics of workshops and to follow its course, while on the other hand their absence would mean greater freedom of expression for students, which we wanted to encourage. When teachers participated at the workshops by commenting on the pupils' answers or wanted to present their own models, they essentially sabotaged the workshop. For this reason, we believe that the presence of teachers is fine as long as their participation is limited and students are given priority and enough space to express themselves.



#No Social Media Impact

The use of mobile phones was not just tolerated, but encouraged! The initial thought behind this incentive was for youth to take pictures of their brick models and works of art, share them on social media platforms using the project's hashtag and initiate debate around the topics we talked about in the workshops. Smartphones were used alright, but mostly not to the effect we hoped for.

Too long, late, young

In the workshops at KHM and NGS, the educators spent long periods of time with the participants. Keeping everybody's interest high over the whole duration was not an easy feat, but it was aided by the diversity of activities and their dramaturgic use in the workshop structure. Still, for some groups or some individuals, the allotted workshop time was too long. Especially the groups who came in the afternoon showed signs of tiring more quickly. In some classes there were 13 year-old students who proved to be too young for this program. It was much more difficult to discuss the selected topics with the demand to create links between the artworks and the building exercises. Especially the workshop "*Bacchanal - Callisto*" in the KHM dealt with group interactions and sexuality, thus proving problematic for younger students. We preferably carried it out with older students (16-18 year-olds).



WHAT ENHANCED THE EXPERIENCE

Love at first sight

The reactions of the young people to the venue where the workshops took place were very positive from the very first encounter. Students were very glad when they realised they will play with the bricks and they often spontaneously took the bricks and stacked them. They have caused a positive effect on young people primarily because of the memories of previous experiences from their childhood. Also, students usually upgraded their models during the entire duration of the workshops, which did not interfere with taking part in the workshops, especially in the second part of the workshop in the GMS that was more focused on verbal communication.

Warming up

Even though some students initially had trouble with what and how to build, the problem oftentimes solved itself over the course of the workshop, meaning that they developed quite interesting models and became satisfied with them, too. Especially fruitful moments were in workshops in which greatly varying models emerged and the students discovered similarities on the one hand, but on the other hand were inspired to discuss by the multitude of interpretations.

Conversation piece: A great work of art makes all the difference

The first impulse to include famous and well-known artists in the workshop was strategic: we wanted both teachers and pupils to be drawn to the workshops. But the pictures' status and the well-rehearsed way of speaking about them also meant that any new perspectives had more effect. We were not just introducing pupils to the artists and their works, we changed the way they are perceived. Women's empowerment, self-initiative, resourcefulness, family role, studying abroad, migrations, conflict, war, being homeless are themes that are usually left unaddressed or unreflected upon when talking about these works, making the HearMe discussions much more profound.





Connect with relevant topics

Three museums approached the main topic of the workshops from the perspective of students. Museum educators asked themselves what is relevant to teenagers, having in mind that they have to connect contemporary social issues and visual arts. They chose topics which are crucial for their age and they stimulated young people to talk more about their own life and opinions. As a result, every workshop was unique in its own way.

Length of workshops: As long as necessary, as short as possible

During the project, we tested workshops that were as short as 90 minutes and ran up to 240 minutes. As our facilitators became more acquainted with the dynamics of groups, they could adapt to the needs and expectations of groups that also varied in size. While we cannot say with certainty if any workshop was too short, 4 hour workshops were abandoned and rearranged to fit into a 180-minute time frame.

Mentimeter exercises

Mentimeter proved to be a real asset of the programme. The youth were surprised that they were allowed to use their mobile phones (unlike in the classroom and in traditional museum education programmes). Because of the tool, everybody had to deal with questions regarding the artwork on their own and find answers independently. The wordclouds ("Which words fit the mood in this picture?") created beautiful results, and in many cases, almost all aspects of the atmosphere that could be mentioned were included by the groups. In this

way, the multitude of opinions and emotions which the artworks can trigger in individuals were visualised. Some of the teachers used this as an inspiration to include Mentimeter in their classroom lessons, and some of the workshops even included final reflection using the wordcloud feature.

Making of a special place

The museum space in a different arrangement of settings and roles contributed to a more relaxed atmosphere where students felt more comfortable and less intimidated. The advantage is reflected in the fact that students realise additional opportunities that the museum offers through workshops, i.e. that the museum is not only a place with displayed works of art but much more. During the workshop, students could also get also a snack. Through the workshops, the museum succeeded for a moment to be a platform of exchanging opinions, knowledge and creativity. The museum became something else, a special place.

Let them talk it out

A significant segment of the workshops were discussions during which the students expressed their thoughts with each other. Museum educators encouraged these discussions with questions that made students think about certain issues that came up during analysis of the works of art. The importance of these discussions was observed through questionnaires, in which the students said they acquired a new angle of observing certain topics, as well as the satisfaction of being able to hear other people's thoughts. In this part of the workshop in the GMS, the museum educators are perhaps least involved, as their role in this place is to coordinate the discussion in order for it to not spread out too broadly, but to remain within the main topic of the workshop.



HEAR ME

BRINGING
YOUTH AND
MUSEUMS
TOGETHER

РАДИОНИЦЕ ЗА МЛАДЕ
у оквиру пројекта Креативне Европе

1. децембар 2016. – 30. октобар 2017.
Галерија Матице српске





Experiences — Emotions

THE PARTICIPANTS

One of the participating adolescents said during the closing discussion round

“What you did with us today was psychology, wasn’t it? But it was totally awesome!”

Even though there occasionally were participants who could hardly or not at all be motivated, a large number of the students left with the experience that a museum visit can be thrilling. Important aspects which appeared in the feedback sheets time and time again were sheer enjoyment, the possibility to be proactive and to form and voice one’s own opinion. Exchange with other participants and hearing their thoughts and interpretations were also important to many. The playful dimension of the method, the building of models, was an indispensable catalyst in these processes.

“Because it wasn’t like in a typical museum.”

The playful atmosphere, the variety, the differentness of the workshops, which didn’t meet what the students would usually expect in a museum, were among the most positive notes given. They valued giving their own unique interpretations of the topics and artworks, building emotions and thoughts, and then discussing them, without them being called right or wrong straight away.

In many cases prolific discussions arose towards the end of the workshops and the students opened themselves up to the artworks and to each other. Ideally, they took away positive stimuli for their lives.

“Discovering how other people think”

“Self-perception”

The fact that talks about visual stimuli were not only held at the level of words provided exceptionally positive feedback. The models enabled reinterpretation of the work of art through visual language. This way of getting to know a work of art is innovative, both for students and for museum educators. Through the HearMe workshops, new and different layers of the meaning of works of art have been discovered. Based on the aforementioned experiences and on previous practice in working with the youth, the HearMe workshops have been an important and interesting way for young people to learn about

cultural heritage, as well as to experience the museum as something close and accessible to them.

Many students indicated in their feedback sheets that they would like to come back to learn more, see more, and look at the artworks more closely. Even though one could assume that this resolution will remain unrealised for a typical teenager, they will at least have taken away a positive experience, which could lead to a later motivation to visit, because they associate the museum with a positive memory and a personal experience. In the words of some of the students:

"I would like to come back, but probably not right away."

"Maybe in a few years."

"When I'm older."

"Because you see the pictures differently at varying ages"

Unlike other museum visitors, teenagers bring a special energy and with their enthusiasm, they can contribute on their own to a new understanding of the art and institutions that nurture it. For that reason, we perceive them as active participants in designing future programs of the museum and as organisers of certain events, not just the end users and the recipients of the cultural content of the museum.



THE MUSEUM EDUCATORS

Before the realisation of the project museum educators sometimes have had difficulties in communication with young visitors in museums. Running hundreds of workshops, museum educators became more relaxed, more open to young people and overcame their own mental barriers. Working with high school students at workshops provided educators a better knowledge of the needs of the audience.

During several months of the implementation of the workshops, the museum educators faced different challenges related to the participants' discussion and conclusions to which they came. They had to contextualise their views and sometimes change the structure and activities of the workshop to meet the target. In this sense, the experience and skills of the museum educators were of crucial importance. Although trained in the methodology and familiar with the ways in which it is applied, some moments required additional skills for them in communicating with young people.



Talk to them: Workshop facilitators

Museum education is among the busiest departments at any museum, and often there is little time to shadow other facilitators. This is a mistake and is not beneficent in the long run. Observing other tour guides at work should not be limited to the training period but should exist as an integral part of the continuous growth and development of the education programmes and of the staff's competencies.

The deep examination of the objects and the discussions with the students also brought much gain for the museum educators - about details in the pictures which were previously undiscovered, differing opinions and interpretations, but also about the ideas and mental concepts of the adolescents.

A much more close and personal relationship between the museum educators and the students emerged and barriers were deconstructed. This could sometimes lead to taxing moments, but in the best cases it caused the teenagers to be engaged, to ask questions, and to react to information in a way that isn't easily created in conventional modes of museum education. The noticeable effects on the groups made the educators' work palpable to themselves.

“Among the benefits of this workshop were being confronted with novel, difficult, but also especially positive situations, to experience that the adolescents are beginning to open up to the artworks, to discuss topics which especially moved them during the workshop and even in the breaks and last but not least the suggestions and varying perspectives which we've taken away in the duration.”

“The museum experiences an increase in topical and emotional range through these workshops and becomes a place of action.”





HearMe
—
Talk To Me



ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION

The use of the BRICKme methodology with special emphasis on the use of LEGO® has had a truly positive impact on the artistic expression and the release of creativity with students. The advantage of this method is that it does not require special skills nor “artistic talent” of the users themselves. This way, the expression of art is facilitated, which allows for a better understanding of visual language. Students are beginning to realise how much visual language is incorporated in daily communication and life, and how they consciously or unconsciously use visual language themselves.

Another advantage is the possibility of individual and group work through playing. Often, alternation of various exercises and tasks of building models of bricks, influenced the dynamics of the HearMe workshops. Thanks to all of the above, the students actively participated in the workshops, and the communication took place at several levels: between the museum educator and participants of the workshop, within a group of students, and all the students among themselves.

Building models of bricks facilitated and encouraged the personal expression of students, both visually and verbally. Such activity influenced a better connection between students in a group or class and more liberal responses and discussions.

Working with high school students at workshops provided museum educators a better knowledge of the needs of the audience, their way of thinking, and helped them acquire better communication skills.

In terms of the reaction of students, the need to express their views was noted, which led to heated debates among students at the workshops at times. In this field, the museum educator played an important role in providing space for each word and in achieving an atmosphere of mutual respect, as well as staying within the main topic of the workshop.

Open art conversation

The workshop provided museum educators the ability to remain longer in front of a work of art in a new way and to encourage young people to reflect on it in multi-faceted ways. An important factor is that the paintings interpreted during the workshops are present from the very outset so that their understanding of them can develop gradually.

The BRICKme methodology enabled a more natural and an easier way of communication with high school students at workshops about predefined topics and their connection with art. Incidentally, high school students became aware for the first time of the many layers a work of art can possess. At the same time, the young people were clearly shown how the knowledge of culture can contribute to a better understanding of the environment and the society in which we live, by using the works of art to better understand and deepen the issues we deal with.

Bearing in mind that, nowadays, visual communication is present all over and that we are overwhelmed by information received through different media in everyday

life, that knowing visual culture is of utmost importance. In this sense, it is necessary to build critical attitude towards messages expressed through visual language.

Social Media / going viral

One of the essential elements of our workshops was to stimulate students to transfer some of the content they were introduced to during the workshop to social networks, where they would continue the dialogue. The general belief of high school students as primary consumers of social networks has led us to think that their engagement on these platforms is almost unquestionable. However, this assessment was premature. Since day one, we asked students whether they are interested in sharing any content related to the workshops on their social media profiles. The answer was the same for all groups, a categorical negative. Although social networks are an integral part of their everyday life, publishing content related to education is not acceptable to them and not interesting enough. Although the students took pictures of their models and might have published them on their profiles, we did not have the access to such content, as they did not use the hashtag. Students were interested in mutually discussing issues they dealt with during the workshops, but at no time did they show the need to move this discussion to social networks.

Communication with schools/teachers

Every museum had different approaches of reaching schools and teachers. While KHM sent only newsletters to teachers and schools and workshops were booked without teachers knowing in advance exactly what to expect, NGS and GMS organised Teacher - museum educator workshops and invited them through official letters as well as newsletters. In the workshop they had a chance to try out the workshop for students first hand and give us advices on its content and structure. After months of implementation of workshops museums received highly positive feedback from the teachers. They emphasised the fact that they acquired better awareness of the thinking of their students, which they did not have the opportunity to grasp before that.

Communication to a broader audience

Beside the standard ways of dissemination - the use of social media, flyers or badges, we distributed knowledge and methods gained through workshops by visiting different happenings and institutions. From Faculties to festivals, we were giving presentations about our experience with practical examples of some of the workshop exercises.

“Art that leaves you indifferent has no right to exist.”

- Giovanni Segantini, 1899

QUOTES BY PARTICIPANTS

"What will I contribute to the workshop? Mainly sarcasm."

- Eva, 16

"No one ever has asked me about this."

Comment of a participant about the building question
"How do you feel after a conflict?"

"I got few instructions about life...not bad"

- Anonymous

"I thought that tis would just be some kind of creativity development, but it turned out to be much more than that."

- Anonymous

"Interesting and deep."

- Fanika, 17

"I appreciated a different look at the paintings."

- Peter, 14

"We did not just listen to the guide, we learned about art through games and creativity."

- Ria, 16

"I was able to feel, think and create and got to know not just the artists, but also myself."

- Anonymous

Was hat dir am besten gefallen?

Lego im Kunst einwickeln

What did you like the most? - Wrapping LEGO into art

QUOTES FROM MUSEUM EDUCATORS

“Most important, HearMe helped me to better understand young people and their view of the world and if I ever become an educator, the knowledge I gained will definitely be a good basis for interesting and quality exchange with the young.”

- Andreja

“I learned to be more tolerant towards students. You get a feeling that there are two completely different people inside one body - one adult, the other still a small child.”

- Kristina

“HearMe gave me an opportunity for a more personal connection with the students, something that is lacking in our ordinary tours.”

- Ajda

“Respecting differences, encouraging conversation, and listening were crucial elements of the workshops that in the age of Twitter culture contributed to critical thought and offered a precious opportunity to take the initiative and to stand for peace and nonviolence.”

- Jaka

HearMe Workshop in the KHM Mentimeter - Word Cloud - students feedback



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Project partners: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Galerija Matice srpske, Innovación Social Emprendedores Sociales

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projecthearme.org

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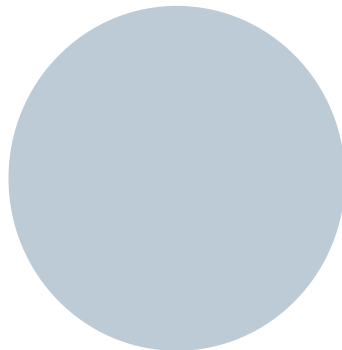
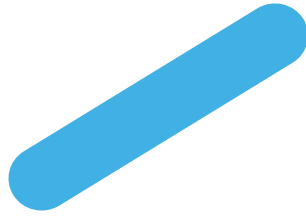


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