



Museum Education Seminar

Seminar Papers 2015





Museum Education Seminar

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Introduction

The AEJM Museum Education Seminar is a professional development programme that aims at enhancing and supporting professionalism in museum education at European Jewish museums. By offering Jewish museums' educators training and possibilities for networking and exchange, the AEJM also aims to foster innovation and new cooperation in the field of museum education projects, policies and strategies.

The MES Seminar Papers, with contributions by all participants, document the 2015 edition that took place at the Jewish Museum Vienna (JMW) in Austria. This seminar was developed by the AEJM, in close cooperation with Hannah Landsmann and Dan Fischman of the JMW's Education Department and in consultation with Elisabeth Schulte (Jewish Museum Munich), Vidar Alne Paulsen (Oslo Jewish Museum), Tali Krikler (Jewish Museum London), Maros Borsky and his education team of the Bratislava Jewish Community Museum and AEJM Community Manager Ardjuna Candotti.

These Seminar Papers do not only offer insight into the different sessions in Vienna, but also serve as a resource for educators at Jewish museums all over Europe. The documentation of each session contains outcomes of discussions, practical suggestions, or food for thought: question marks that can lead up to future discussions.

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Best Practice – The Animated Museum

Project overview

In August 2015 the Jewish Museum London piloted an innovative, hands-on, stop-motion film project using the Jewish Military Museum and Jewish Museum's exquisite collections and fascinating archives. The aim of the project was to achieve a more diverse voice within the Museum, specifically from the young teenage demographic, who are currently under-represented within our activities, challenging them to interpret an object using film.

Having recruited 17 young people we spent an intensive week and together created 4 two-minute animations. The young people involved developed a range of skills including museum research, investigating objects as witnesses to history, developing storyboards and stop-motion animation. For the museum staff, the project enabled much stronger cross-team work providing a fantastic platform for the learning team to think about and creatively work with under-represented audiences.

Aims and achievement

The overarching aim of The Animated Museum was to incorporate a more diverse voice, specifically from a young teenage audience, currently under-represented in the Museum. Working in small groups over a five-day period the intention was to produce a maximum of 5, two-minute animated films using the Jewish Museum and Jewish Military Museum collections to inspire a creative response.

At the end of this week-long project four, two-minute animated films were presented to an audience comprising of families, staff members and Museum trustees. The results of the project exceeded everyone's expectations and the learning team is planning to exhibit the films alongside the objects in the summer of 2016. This exhibition will be co-curated with the participants of The Animated Museum in partnership with the curatorial and learning teams at the Museum.



Why it worked

The project allowed young people to truly make a meaningful contribution to the Museum. The participants were from diverse backgrounds, religions and belief and the project enabled them to work together in a safe and supportive environment. Having explored the work of a museum, why objects are collected before being introduced to the selected artefacts, the young people were given creative control over the artistic project, from initial idea, through to delivery, production and presentation. They worked in small groups and developed both practical and behavioural skills including:

- Object interpretation
- Group working including compromise, leadership and teamwork
- Animation and digital skills
- Project management including planning, researching, delivery and presentation.

Using objects as a starting point for interpretation is a strong foundation for learning and ensured the activity was closely linked with the collection. This meant that the project remained rooted in the museum. Exploring the objects' histories and investigating stories provided the platform for participants to develop their skills and showcase their talent.

Feedback

The feedback from the participants, parents and museum team was so positive the Learning team is keen to build on the success of the pilot to create an inspiring, challenging and meaningful programme for young people. The long-term ambition is to develop a two to three year programme and we are currently scoping different ways in which we can use the permanent collection to inspire creative responses in young people. Using the Animated Museum as a springboard to brainstorm ideas for the future programme supported the Learning team to work with a diverse group of young people in an exciting and focused way. It also afforded the young people a glimpse into the work of museum staff offering them the opportunity to see how objects are stored and cared for.

All four animations along with a short 'behind the scenes' film can be seen on the Museum's [website](#).



Author: Tali Krikler (London, UK)

Best Practice – Teaching About Art

Topic & Goals

Jewish museums increasingly tend to organise and display exhibitions on modern and contemporary art. This session aimed to explore what we, as museum educators, can learn from art education and reflect on implementing in our practice. For this purpose we visited Essl Museum of Contemporary Art. We were welcomed by our hosts and introduced to the museum and its history. The Essl Museum of Contemporary Art was founded in 1998. It houses the private collection of Mr and Mrs Essen, passionate collectors of art. The collection holds approximately 7000 pieces. Art education is at the heart of the museum, which offers a broad and varied programme. The Essl's play an active role in the programme. The museum is located in Klosterneuburg, on the outskirts of Vienna. This is viewed as an important factor offering a more relaxed approach. Exhibitions have a participatory aspect and it is acknowledged that this allows the museum to push the boundaries of possibility and take risks. Being close to the art, having a personal experience with the artwork is at the core of the museum education's team mission. The museum's approach is visitor-centred and open-ended. Leaving with questions is seen as a success. Developing an emotional link with the art is equally as important.

Mela and Maria, both art educators for over 20 years and know the collection intimately, have developed various educational programmes in collaboration with the wider education team. Methods include art talks as well as workshops where students are encouraged to respond to the art creatively.

Art Talk Workshop

For our workshop, participants were divided into two groups and encouraged to explore German artworks from the 1960's on the walls either side of them. The artworks were used as springboards to begin to investigate the historic narrative as well as the personal story of the artists.

In pairs, participants were given a red 'friendship' ribbon to tie around partner's wrist. Following a brief explanation about the context and content of the artworks the group was invited to use the theme of friendship, a strong underlying concept that related the two diverse pieces, to explore the gallery. In pairs everyone was given a small piece of paper and envelope. The aim was for each person to write down a word that they associated with 'friendship'. Each read the others' word and then sealed the paper in the envelope. Together each pair was given the task of finding an artwork that most represented their word/s and lay the envelope in front of their chosen artwork.

Having chosen our artwork, together we visited each red envelope and shared thoughts on our choice. The group was encouraged to ask questions as well as given the option to share 'words'. Discussion revolved around students asking questions, whether there was always an answer; the artist and his/her techniques; the artist as a creator of stories; how the selected artist works. Questions included how much should one tell the pupils about the intensions of the artwork and about the artist. The general consensus was that pupils' imaginative responses are fine, it is only necessary to answer direct

questions and ensure students leave with accurate knowledge.



The group also discussed how the methodology enabled the group to get to know one another, the teacher to get to know his/her class. It also engendered skills of art appreciation, participants getting to know each other as well as themselves. It also enables participants to articulate and express themselves. A further point of discussion was students not being able to touch the artwork with the suggestion of having a collection of materials relating to the work that could be touched whilst discussing the work. This could support visitors with additional needs.

In regular workshops the 'art talk' is followed by a practical session when students have the opportunity to create their own piece of art using friendship as the theme.

Other educational programs at the museum

'Family Days' were discussed. The children, together or alone, pick a piece of art. Then they lead their parents who have their eyes closed to the piece and the children have to describe the piece to their parents.

Another example was also that the pupils or others sit back-to-back one describes an object or a piece of art whilst the other draws it.

"The queen of colours" is an educational program for younger children. This program can be adapted for all exhibitions. The children's task is to find various colours in the exhibition.

Attracting Schools to the Museum

Since the Essl Museum of Contemporary Art is situated outside the centre of Vienna the team explained how they have tried to attract schools to their museum and ensure visits are repeated. They have

developed partnership schools which means the schools sign up to visiting three times per semester with a benefit of becoming familiar with the collection and paying a reduced admission fee. The children of these schools also get free entrance with their parents.

The team also talked about how, together with their colleagues, they plan for the following year, for the collection, the programme and personally. They make their decisions collectively and then each take responsibility for writing up their plans.



Authors: Lise Rebekka Paltiel (Trondheim, NO) and Tali Krikler (London, UK)

Discussion: Museums & Society

Topic & Goals

Due to the current refugee crisis in Europe, a discussion was planned around this topic. What are the political and social impacts on us as Jewish museums, since the (hi)story of migration plays an important role in our work? How do we deal with it in our educational and/or curatorial work? The main goal of this session was to share our experiences from the various institutions, and see the diversity of responses.

Discussion

Elisabeth Schulte from the Jewish Museum Munich led and opened the discussion with pointing out that for educators, this needs to be dealt with right now, whereas curators can put it on hold. She stated that a Jewish museum tells stories of migration, flight and identity, and therefore it is relevant for all of us. There are refugees, there is prejudice. Ergo we need to act. Many other museums agreed, and shared their specific ideas on what can be done.

It was clear from the discussion that there are many different opinions on the matter, and many different solutions to the issues that arise, all due to the different histories of the countries where the museums are located.

Outcomes & Recommendations

In some museums the staff is expected to become involved in the issue of the current migration/humanitarian crisis but from the discussion it seemed that such an involvement should be more of a personal decision rather than an institutional effort since this is not a direct mission of a museum and the staff itself lacks necessary training.

Other critical opinions were voiced too. In Frankfurt the opinion was expressed that it is too soon to react at all. Vienna somewhat agreed, and said it is not their job at all to react directly. It's more of a challenge to inspire visitors themselves to see the connections of the past with the present issues. In Poland however, it is viewed as necessary to deal with all that comes with a migrant wave, and they see themselves as an important part in working against public opinion, which is not in favour of immigration. In Latvia there is a similar attitude, as they work with teachers rather than children when it comes to this topic.

At the end of the discussion there seemed to be a (silent) consensus that museums should tackle the current migration crisis in ways, which are directly related to their mission statements. In other words

we should identify universal themes in our narratives and help visitors find connections with modern day challenges such as the immigration situation. At the same time we should recognize the needs of new audiences by adjusting the language of our communication and meeting their needs in general.

Authors: Maciek Zabierowski (Oswiecim, PL) and Yael Fried (Stockholm, SE)

Discussion: To Whom Belongs History and Who's Telling It?

Topic & Goals

What is the future of oral history without survivors? What is the impact of this on museum education? These two initial questions were supposed to guide the discussion with Dr Werner Dreier, CEO at [erinnern.at](#), Christian Dürr from the Mauthausen Memorial Archives and Hannah Landsmann from the Jewish Museum Vienna. The discussion was moderated by Dan Fischman, also from JMW. Following the self-introduction from panellists they went on to explain how each of the institutions is dealing with testimonies of the Holocaust survivors, by describing concrete projects.

Discussion

In case of the Jewish Museum Vienna it is not about a direct use of the testimonies, but talking about the Shoah through the artefacts, explored in a framework of a special tour about living in Vienna between 1938 and 1945. [Erinnern.at](#) still brings survivors into Austrian classrooms and is making an effort to videotape the testimonies for posterity. As far as education, they make sure that those testimonies are integrated in different learning contexts of textbooks, mobile exhibits and websites. A lot of attention is directed towards universal aspect of perpetration to see how individuals from different social strata were complicit in the Shoah as administrators, policemen, train drivers etc. Similarly the Mauthausen Memorial is shaping their educational programming toward universal questions. Their situation is different since their visitors are mostly drawn to space of the former concentration camp rather than the focus on people involved. Still in the framework of the dialogue-based 3-hour tour of the site, the main two guiding questions for visitors are "Why did it happen?" and "What does this have to do with me?". The next question discussed was focusing on the fact that now it is a transitional period in the history of Holocaust research, commemoration and education. The panellists were invited to reflect on whether there is change in the audience (teachers, students, general public) approaching and dealing with the topic of Shoah.



The panellists agree that this is the transitional period as before there were many survivors alive and their stories were heard quite a lot. Nowadays, we already feel the lack of the testimonials. Thus, with the time people need more authenticity. It is underlined that before visiting the memorial site or facing the testimonies, the preparation is needed. It is important to speak about not what the site was before – e.g. concentration camp, but also what the site is now – the memorial site.

The last question to the panellists was the following: who will speak about the Holocaust tragedy when there are no longer witnesses? The general answer is that it is our turn to speak about it, we have to speak. The main question that we can make to ourselves: what it has to do with us? We have to understand that it has to do with everybody. It is also important to understand what does it mean to be the descendants of the survivors, to research their identity related to the fate of their ancestors. The third generation feels the strong need to look for biographies. The main question that we have to ask ourselves and the public: what do we do to save the memories of the survivors?

There were a few of questions and the remarks from the public. One of the questions was how to deal with the narratives of bystanders. So far, it is hard to answer this question, as there was not a proper research done on the testimonials of this category of people. However, it is important to take into consideration that in Eastern Europe the experience of bystanders is different from the Western Europe.

Outcomes & Recommendations

Nowadays we find ourselves in the situation when very soon there will not be any witnesses of the Holocaust. It is the time to rethink the usual approaches of teaching about Holocaust and to find new ways, methods and approaches. They should be not only about what has happened but also about the present consequences of the Shoah and especially the awareness of the genocide being a potential development in the modernity. Lastly and in connection with the latter, the educational challenge is to become aware of the possibilities to act and enforcing this will to act against such developments.

Authors: Marina Gehta (Riga, LV) and Maciek Zabierowski (Oswiecim, PL)

Getting to know your school groups

Topic & Goals

Before the seminar every participant had the possibility to post a comment about the challenges of their work as museum educators on the Educators Forum of the AEJM website. During the Museum Focus IV session three of these challenges were discussed in small groups; every group had a chance to discuss all three topics. This session aimed at facilitating peer discussion with international colleagues who can draw on their own work experience at Jewish museums in Europe.

Vera Dancz from the Hungarian Jewish Museum & Archives in Budapest requested input on the question: How an educator can prepare him/herself for a workshop when he/she doesn't have any background information on the pupils?

Discussion

The participants agreed that getting information about the attending groups before the workshop is important for every museum educator. During small group discussions the participants could share their experiences, good practices and ideas about how educators can get more information about the pupils. It is always important to talk to the teacher before they arrive to the museum. Some participants shared ideas about how to find out more about the pupils during the workshop.

Outcomes & Recommendations

- At most of the museums colleagues use questions or questionnaires to get information from the teacher of the group before the visit. Some participants prefer to ask the questions by phone, but it depends on the country and the culture what would work better with the teachers.
- The questions for the teachers usually focus on the age group, the subject, the aims and motivation of the visit and also about the background knowledge of the pupils. After getting the answers from the teachers the educator can prepare for the workshop using the information he/she got.
- If the educator doesn't have enough information about the background knowledge of the group there could be some methods to find this out from the pupils during the workshop. Some educators start every workshop with a dialogue with the pupils. Other participant shared some exercises and games they use at the start of the workshop for getting information about the group.
- Sometimes it is useful if the educator prepares with two possible lesson plans to be able to change the first plan during the workshop when there is already enough information to decide what kind of exercises or games would work for the group.

- It is also important to inform the administration staff about the questions that the educators need to know about the group before the visit. There should be some meetings for all the colleagues who are involved in any part of the educational programs to discuss the questions.

Authors: Irina Pociene (Vilnius, LT) and Vera Dancz (Budapest, HU)

Matching your school groups with your guides and workshops

Topic & Goals

Before the seminar every participant had the possibility to post a comment about the challenges of their work as museum educators on the Educators Forum of the AEJM website. During the Museum Focus IV session three of these challenges were discussed in small groups; every group had a chance to discuss all three topics. This session aimed at facilitating peer discussion with international colleagues who can draw on their own work experience at Jewish museums in Europe.

Ardjuna Candotti from the AEJM and the Jewish Historical Museum Amsterdam requested input on the question of how to ensure the best match between a guide/educator and a workshop/exhibition and a school group.

Discussion

The participants shared the experience that the question of the “perfect match” arises in every museum after a new educational workshop or tour is developed. There are some guides or educators who are always very good and popular in certain tours or workshops or with specific schools. The bigger museums also have advantages and disadvantages with the freelancers. The small discussion groups proceeded with the question: How to ensure the equivalence within the staff members? The discussion also included methods used for ensuring the quality of the tours/workshops.

Outcomes & Recommendations

- More experienced colleagues suggested that newly developed educational workshops or tours in a special exhibition could have a profile with the detailed description about which skills and what kind of behaviour is needed for it. This profile of a new workshop or tour should be shared with the educators and/or guides and one may apply for it.
- An important part of the “perfect match“ is the group’s satisfaction with the visit. For this it’s necessary to pay attention to what are the expectations of the teachers or the groups. It could be done by questioning them at the beginning – what do you expect/want to see; what would you like to find out? Also, the educator/guide should be informed if the group has any special needs.
- The quality management of the guides is important within the subject of the topic. Depending on the situation and the size of the community, members could have: meetings once a month; the standards of the tours/workshops and prepared information with the links to additional

materials; seminars and trainings.

- Once in a while observation and evaluation of the given tour or presented workshop should be arranged.

Authors: Irina Pociene (Vilnius, LT) and Vera Dancz (Budapest, HU)

Using religious objects as educational resources

Topic & Goals

Tali Krikler (Jewish Museum London) and Vidar Paulsen (Oslo Jewish Museum) gave a short introduction to the topic and some input. Our guides stated that religious artefacts have, compared to regular museum objects, an additional dimension in respect of religious sensitivity. On the one hand children learn and understand better with a multisensory approach in a Jewish museum. On the other hand many religious artefacts are fragile and convey a certain holiness, which should be respected. The goal would be to find some recommendations regarding how to deal with this dilemma. In small groups we had to think of questions concerning museum objects and write each question on a piece of paper.

Discussion

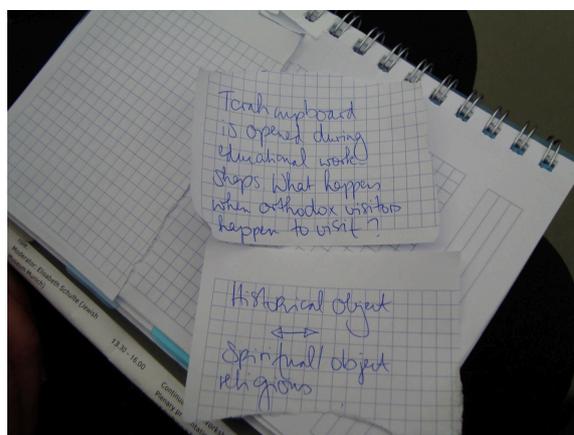
The discussion of the topic started already in our group. We thought of the objects in our museums and had the following questions:

- a. Can we open the Holy Ark with the Torah scrolls for non-Jews when we guide them through the synagogue?
- b. Can we use Jewish holy scrolls and exhibit them? Is it actually the object of the Museum?
- c. Diaries are often written for the person who wrote them. Is it all right that “everybody” can read them?
- d. An old synagogue can be empty for several, for example historical, reasons. Shall there be a small exhibition in a niche?

In the plenary discussion we could not answer all the questions. One aspect was that it could be very difficult for pupils and also for adults to understand a religious festival or ritual only by listening to a guide. At least a visual presentation of the objects would be an advantage. Even if the guide or educator uses appealing dialogue techniques, it is very often better and clearer if objects can be perceived by more than one sense. In addition blind people need the possibility of touching, for example a tallit, in order to understand what it is used for. Moreover the attention of a school class increases the more senses are involved.

In the case of Torah scrolls, the museum can use a Torah of plastic or a toy to show how it is used in the synagogue. In Basel we let children explore one sheet of the Torah that is not kosher anymore and placed in the synagogue. The children could estimate the skill and the concentration of the sofer by looking at the handwriting and knowing that the writer tried his best not to make a mistake. I think that the respect to religious artefacts is not reduced in that way, on the contrary, according to my experience respect increases.

Some objects can be also impractical to show in a Jewish museum. This is the fact with the Koran, the holy book of Moslems. Usually you should wash your hands before touching it. A Koran can therefore only be looked at, but not be touched.



Outcomes & Recommendations

- All in all we want to try to be as sensitive as possible and teach respect towards the Jewish religion. At the same time we want also that there will be the possibility of maximum of learning. And for sure the practices will vary in our museums, as Jewish museums can be very different.
- There are some Jewish objects that can be shown and maybe even touched: a small tallit for children, a kippa, candlesticks, a Kiddush cup of metal, a dreidl and so on. There can be a separate shelf with contemporary objects to touch in the exhibition.
- It is possible to use toys that replace the objects when a sensual approach is necessary, for example if young children are involved.
- Knowing about a foreign religion and understand a bit how it functions helps to be more familiar with it. It can be a possibility to do something against anti-Semitism.
- At least there should be the possibility to look at real religious objects or show photographs of these objects. If needed, it is not necessary to read from the Torah scroll itself – a regular book may be used for that.
- If there is a conflict whether an object should be exhibit or used for multi-sensory guided tours, there is always the possibility to consult a Rabbi.

Authors: Orli Herz (Basel, CH) and Irina Pociene (Vilnius, LT)

Using apps for outdoor learning

Topic & Goals

The background for developing the app *JMW Zwischen den Häusern* (Between the Houses) was to connect the two locations of the Jewish Museum Vienna when the core exhibition of the museum at Dorotheergasse was under construction and closed for a period. The thought behind the app was that it could be a good way to get the visitors to go between the two locations.

The app focuses on 18 locations between the museums, which include text/information, pictures and objects lined to the museum. The app is available in German and English. The target group for the app is tourists and Viennese people as they also can learn about the city, because the 18 locations include places that are not always known by the citizens of Vienna.

For this workshop the participants were to go from the museum located in Dorotheergasse and to the museum at Judenplatz, and explore the app on their way there. The participants were exploring the app in small groups. During the workshop there was not enough time to get to know all the 18 locations of the app, so the groups could choose some of the stops. The small groups had a chance during the walk to explore some locations and discuss their ideas and opinion about this app while using it.

Discussion

Before the discussion about the app and the experiences and ideas of the participants, Hannah Landsmann, the author of the app, told us about the process of creating this app from the idea until it was ready to use.

There was a discussion during the making of the app in Vienna of whether one also should have an audio-guide, but the museum found that it was too challenging, as for instance the question of how the visitors would deliver the audio-guide back was raised. The creators of the app told the participants that the goal of creating the app was not to teach about every possible topic during the walk, but let people be interested in the topics and encourage them to find out more information about the given topics on their own.

There is no educational programme for the app as the educators of the Jewish Museum do not want to involve this app in any educational program; although they recently experienced that school groups did use the app as when they are moving between the museums for educational programs.

The app is a good starting point for educational programs. Being outside is a great place to start discussions. The participants did find the app stimulating for discussion within the group and at the same time made them want to learn more.

Outcomes & Recommendations

Audiences

- An app could be a good way to include for instance disabled people.
- At the same time it also is a nice tool for those who live in this city but who are not familiar with Jewish history.
- The app could also be used from home, once someone downloaded the app, it is available from anywhere, so some users can just have a quick look on the locations and the museum object that connect to the location during the walk, and spend more time to learn about it home after the walk.
- Ask yourself the question in which languages should one offer to the visitors.

Production

- Challenges with creating an app: planning, changes, update the systems
- It is essential to work with a good production company/ educational marketing that understands the needs of a museum
- Running an app is tough in regard to the updates to new software on phones and tablets, and also the fact that an app is time-consuming also after it is made. What is the lifetime of the app?

Promotion

- The app has been downloaded by around 500 people. Perhaps there should be more information in both the museums, especially if there are visitors who are going to the other museum.
- Another suggestion was that it should be more visible on the website, and perhaps a pamphlet with the audio guide printed, in the reception area.
- Additionally, one could also inform teachers who come to the museum about the app. Even though the JMW offers their own guided tours, it might be an option to use the app for those who are not able to see both of the museums, or for those who have time to use it when they go from one museum to another.

Practical suggestions

- Sound: one challenge the participants found when using the app was that is fairly cold during our trip. It therefore would have been nice with an audio guide, and since both of the museums now are open again in Vienna, this is an option to think about in the future.
- Texts: It was also observed that there was a high level of text and language.
- Some participants mentioned the fact there were names that are unfamiliar to those who don't know Viennese history very well. We would have liked to know who these people are when standing next to a specific building. One can of course search on the Internet, however it is better to have more information in the app. The question is of course then how much should one present.

Authors: Vera Dancz (Budapest, HU) and Lise Rebekka Paltiel (Trondheim, NO)

Developing Educational Programmes

Topic & Goals

Before the seminar every participant had the possibility to post a comment about the challenges of their work as museum educators on the Educators Forum of the AEJM website. During the Museum Focus IV session three of these challenges were discussed in small groups; every group had a chance to discuss all three topics. This session aimed at facilitating peer discussion with international colleagues who can draw on their own work experience at Jewish museums in Europe.

Sonia Ruszkowska from the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw requested input on the question: What is the best way to develop an educational programme and who should be involved in the process?

Discussion

The process of developing each new educational workshop starts with different circumstances. Sometimes the educators have the possibility to work along with the curators of the exhibition from the beginning; sometimes the educational workshops have to be developed after the exhibition is already presented. Depending on the size of the museum and the number of the visitors the situation varies – in some museums there are members of the team who only create the workshops; in others educators create the workshops and present it themselves.

Outcomes & Recommendations

- It is always recommended to have the possibility to work with the curators from the beginning of the creation of the exhibition.
- It is recommended to have monthly meetings with the whole team of educators to share ideas and to examine them within the team.
- The educational team is an asset in itself and it is recommended to implement a pedagogical method that every team member has to know (common goals and values)
- The educational workshops may be based on the lesson plans of the secondary schools, universities, even the schedule of the nurseries.
- It's good to offer extended workshops. In some places the full day program (4 hours) with various experiences became a very attractive option for the schools.
- Getting feedback from the participants and evaluation of the workshops are needed.
- Sometimes less is better than a lot.

Authors: Irina Pociene (Vilnius, LT) and Vera Dancz (Budapest, HU)

Developing lesson plans: Medieval History

Topic & Goals

The aim of the Workshop III was to develop lesson plans on the core exhibition at Museum Judenplatz. The museum is located in the former medieval Jewish quarter; correspondingly it presents the medieval history of Viennese Jews. In the framework of the museum, visitors can see also the remnants of the medieval synagogue, which was destroyed during the devastating pogrom of 1420/21 – the so-called “Wiener Gesera”. The latter marked the end of once blooming medieval Jewish community in Vienna. The participants of the seminar split in smaller groups in order to design pedagogical programmes accompanying the core exhibition at Museum Judenplatz for a specific age group of schoolchildren. The two groups had to prepare programmes for 6- to 10-year-olds and 11- to 14-year-olds focusing on the topic “Teaching the Past – Medieval History”.

Discussion

The workshop proved to be quite challenging as each formed group has had only about an hour and a half to develop a specific lesson plan, while bearing in mind that almost all participants have visited the core exhibition at Museum Judenplatz for the first time. Correspondingly, our knowledge on the history of Jews in Vienna was poor or non-existing. What’s even more, we all have had very different experiences in pedagogical work and approaches. Therefore, an intense debate started in each individual group, and later continued even in the common discussion.

The main points of the discussion were how to determine the objectives of educational programme for a specific targeted group, how to attract the group’s attention, what kind of pedagogical approach we should use, which exhibited artefacts we should incorporate in the programme and how many of them.

The experiences of the museum pedagogical workers prove that there is no unified answer to all discussed questions as the implementation of the pedagogical programmes is subjected to many different variables, such as to the interaction between the groups or school classes and the educators, to the involvement and engagement of the teachers, to the size of the groups, to skills of the educators etc. Therefore, the museum educators have to take into consideration that the developed lesson plans provide only the platform, while the execution of each pedagogical activity has to be adjusted to the specificity of each participating group of schoolchildren.

At the end of the workshop the participants agreed that the pedagogical programme should begin with an introduction on a specific topic, while it should continue in interactive manner. Visiting the museum and taking part in its pedagogical programme should offer the children a multisensory experience. Only in this way will we be able to attract children’s attention and forward to them the knowledge of our

common past and present.

Outcomes & Recommendations

EXAMPLE 1: PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR 6- TO 10-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

The group, assigned to develop a lesson plan for the children between 6 and 10 years of age, proposed a 90-minutes pedagogical programme on Jewish life in the Middle Ages, that should address the topics such as the leisure time, clothing and trading. The programme would be based on activities while providing the participating children a multisensory experience.

The starting point of the programme would be a model of medieval Vienna and its Jewish quarter, which should be used for the introduction to the topic and corresponding pedagogical programme. The following point of interest would be the map, where the children would be asked to pick some goods from a wagon, i.e. spices, silk etc., in order to connect them with the places marked on the map. The programme would then continue at the image of the Emperor and his subordinates. Each child would be asked to pick one hat from a box. Then they would have to put the hats on their heads and re-create a scene expressing the hierarchy of the society. In this activity special attention should be put on the differences between the social status of the medieval people, which is on the image of the Emperor expressed by the size of the figures (big – small), their diverse colours of skin, clothes etc. As the proposed programme was designed as experimental experience, it would be very important to implement such programme with smaller groups. If the group would be bigger, all participants would start together, but eventually they would have to split in at least three groups. On the other hand, each smaller group would be able to work individually, while at the last 15 minutes of the programme they would come together and exchange their experiences. For execution of such programme at least three educators would be needed.

PEDAGOGICAL PROGRAMME OF THE JMW “THE RABBI ON THE ROAD”

The pedagogical programme “Rabbi on the road” is designed as spontaneous theatre play based on the story of Rabbi Isserlein who has to hurry to Krems, where he is about to marry the beautiful Blimel. On the road to Krems many things can happen; besides, planning a Jewish wedding is not a simple task. Accordingly, the participating children are asked to use the core exhibition and the exhibited artefacts in order to prepare a plot for the pantomimic play, expressing how the Rabbi Isserlein could make his fastest way to his bride, which they have to perform at the end of the programme. The programme takes about two school hours. Due to the fact that the children need extra help to prepare such a play, it is more appropriate for smaller groups.

EXAMPLE 2: PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR 11- TO 14-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

The next group presented the pedagogical programme for 11- to 14-year-olds, appropriate especially for the local primary schools. The main objectives of this proposed programme would address questions such as: What is a community? What is a Jewish community? Who am I? Who is the other? What does a community mean? What defines a community?

The programme would start with an interactive game next to the model of medieval Vienna by giving the participating children sheets with inscriptions of famous public spots of contemporary Vienna. Then, the children would be asked to put each sheet on the spot, where these famous buildings stand today. One card would be white and without any inscription though. By comparing the card with the model of the city, the children would quickly discover that it corresponds to a certain part of Vienna, which is coloured in white and marks the former medieval Jewish quarter.

At this point of the programme, an introduction to the history of Viennese Jews would follow. The programme would continue with a guided tour of the core exhibition, while the emphasis of the explanation would be on the aspects of Jewish everyday life. For this reason, stops would be made at the artefacts that present the selected topic in most evident way. For example: at the relics of the synagogue, where the function of the religion in Judaism could be explained; at the images of Jewish wedding scenes or the ketubah, which could be used for the explanation about the role of the family; at coins, which are related to medieval trade and Jewish stores; at fragments of the tombstones where the description of Jewish burials and cemeteries would be provided; at image of the teacher punishing children, which could be used as a starting point for the discussion about education and learning, etc.

The pedagogical programme would conclude with activities and creative workshops, encompassing clay, glue and other art work, interactive games by using the multimedia (e.g. touch screens), developing plays by asking the children to write and perform short dialogues on the topic of Jewish wedding or about the course of an ordinary day in the Jewish quarter, on how medieval people interacted with each other, etc.

PEDAGOGICAL PROGRAMME OF THE JMW "ADVENTURE ARCHEOLOGY"

The Jewish Museum Vienna has developed the pedagogical programme "Adventure archaeology" that is appropriate for the groups of 6- to 10-year-olds as well as 11- to 14-year-olds. The programme is based on the activity of the participating children; where different toys (i.e. a horse, a snail etc.) and objects (e.g. pieces of blue ceramics) are used in order to form a kind of a new collection. The children are asked to pick the toys and then to place them during the guided tour on the parts of the core exhibition, where specific topics are explained and which could be at the same time sensibly illustrated also by the selected toys. As the programme is designed for two different age groups, its ductus – i. e. the way in which we talk to the children – should be adjusted to the specific group. The programme last about 90 minutes, it is easy to perform and cheap. However, it should be done with smaller groups.

Author: Marjetka Bedrac (Maribor, SI)

Developing lesson plans: the Holocaust

Topic & Goals

After a short introduction made by Hannah Landsmann and Dan Fischman, the group was divided into smaller groups. The task of two groups was to create a scenario of workshops for a specific age group on the topic of *A Jewish Museum Does Not Have A Choice* – Holocaust Education Programme for the JMW core exhibition at Dorotheergasse without using the gallery dedicated to the Holocaust. The working groups had three hours for developing a programme. Afterwards, the concepts were presented and discussed in a plenary session.

Discussion

The group had a lot of time to share experiences and to discuss our ideas. Participants found it interesting to see what methods are being used in the educational programmes in different museums, and to see that there are different approaches and specific favourite methods. However it was difficult and challenging to invent a workshop in an exhibition that the group doesn't know well and about the topic that is new for the group – the history of Austrian Jews.

- How do you handle strong emotions during a workshop about Holocaust?
- How to teach about Holocaust?
- Is it ok to have someone's object in an exhibition? Museums display many objects that have ended up there without the owner's knowledge.
- How to understand an object?
- Is it ok to reconstruct someone's stories without the permission of the person?

Outcomes & Recommendations

EXAMPLE 1: PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS (10 YEAR OLDS)

The pupils would be gathered in a room and asked to sketch an object they have at home. Afterwards they would choose three objects from Lilly Bial's suitcase (object from the JMW collection) and draw them. The pupils would go on to explain their choice.

Other questions that could be explored during the program:

- What would you take with you for a short journey?
- What would you take with you for long journey?

- What would you take with you if you don't know when you can come back?
- What "things" are you taking with you that you cannot put in a suitcase? (e.g. memories, tradition, skills)

EXAMPLE 2: PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR TEENAGERS (11-14 YEAR OLDS)

The pupils would choose an item from selected objects from the exhibition – but not from the showcases on the Holocaust. They would have to find out the relation of the object with the Holocaust by researching the object itself and "light" reference materials (e.g. photos, small archival materials). Guided by the workshop leader the pupils should present their findings to their peers and explain how the chosen objects reflect the Holocaust. The focus was not only to teach about the Holocaust, but by also to tell a wider story through objects, such as the story of return, reconstruction of communities, memories and so on. In addition, they would also learn generic skills such as closely looking at objects and studying historical sources.

Authors: Vidar Alne Paulsen (Oslo, NO) and Sonia Ruszkowska (Warsaw, PL)

Developing lesson plans: an outdoor Holocaust memorial

Topic & Goals

On the square above the remnants, next to the entrance of the Museum Judenplatz, there is a Holocaust memorial that supplements the core exhibition of the museum. The participants of the seminar split in smaller groups in order to design pedagogical programmes for 15- to 18-year-olds and university students with special emphasis on the topic “Seeing the Present – Post-war History at Judenplatz”.

Discussion

In addition to the general points of the discussion (how to determine the objectives of educational programme for a specific targeted group, how to attract the group’s attention and what kind of pedagogical approach should we use, which exhibited artefacts should we incorporate in the programme and how many of them), two very interesting issues were raised in the discussion. Should Holocaust education necessarily encompass also guided visits to KZs, Holocaust memorials or Yad Vashem and how to start a proper dialogue in the group after the conclusion of a Holocaust educational programme? Can the museum educators rely on the help of the teachers? Are they adequately prepared for such programmes? If not, the success of the Holocaust education in particular relies on the personal contacts and knowledge of the teachers' methods.

Outcomes & Recommendations

EXAMPLE 1: PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR 15- TO 18-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

Due to the absence of appropriate museum artefacts, as well as any specific knowledge on Jewish history in Vienna, this group developed the proposed lesson plan by taking a very interesting approach. The group members interviewed anonymous pupils, who they met at Judenplatz, on the Jewish history of the city. In addition, they asked the pupils to list at least two concentration camps and to depict a certain monument on Judenplatz that is related to the Holocaust.

After addressing the pupils, the group broke down several questions: What is remembering? Why do we remember? How do we remember? What do we forget? Who do we remember? Can art be used against oblivion? Why is the Shoah monument here and why are so many other monuments positioned next to each other on the same spot? Why are the remains of the destroyed medieval synagogue not more reflected on the square’s surface? Such questions led the group to the conclusion that there are many layers of commemoration that can be addressed through the pedagogical programmes.

Consequently, the group developed a programme incorporating the idea of 'talking monuments' and 'commemoration in space'. In this programme pupils would be challenged to express their response to questions such as: If there are too many monuments presented on the same place, why are there so many monuments and how do the monuments interact with each other? Moreover, the participants of the programme would be asked to read for example the anti-Semitic inscription on the Jordan house and then to think about the possible dialogue between the mentioned house and the house of the archdiocese, which stands vis-à-vis the first one. In that way, the pupils would be intrigued to rethink also the open expressions of anti-Semitism in society in the past and the present.

PEDAGOGICAL PROGRAMME OF THE JMW

The pedagogical programme of the JMW for this specific age group is designed on the 'Museum research' principle while it combines the past with the present. In this programme, the museum educators use the photographs of objects and fragments that are present in the museum or at the Judenplatz square. These photographs are then given to the pupils with the task to find the objects in the photographs and to form one or two sentences related to the objects. After completing their task, the pupils return to the group where they discuss the objects and the corresponding personal responses to them.

EXAMPLE 2: PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

The last proposed programme was the pedagogical programme for university students, where the group designed two possible lessons. The first one would start with the initiative given to the student, to look around and observe the surroundings, while at the same time they would have to consider questions, such as: Why is this monument here?, What is commemoration?, How do the monuments reflect it?, How do we respond to that?, etc.

Afterwards, the programme would continue with the discussion inside the group. In it some further questions would be addressed, i.e. Does a monument 'fit' in the Judenplatz? Is this the right place for the specific monument? If the student would be given a map of Vienna, where, why and in what extent would they place the Shoah monument?

The second lesson could be more practical as it could involve taking the photographs or filming of the Shoah memorial in order to prepare an exhibition or a film on the topic. The main objective of both lessons would be to urge the discussion with the students by addressing questions, such as: What do people do with the memorials?, What do people feel when seeing a memorial?, Who were the architects of the memorials?, Should monuments have names and why? In that way, students would be encouraged, among others things, to do research on Jewish - non-Jewish relations and to give a presentation on corresponding topic or to prepare an exhibition at the university.

PEDAGOGICAL PROGRAMME OF THE JMW "WRITE TO YOU"

The programme of the JMW "Write to you" is developed on the idea of writing a letter or a postcard to yourself. Students who come to visit the memorial, get some details on it, e.g. some words, while nothing in particular about the memorial is explained to them. Next, they are asked to write a postcard/letter to

themselves by using the words, which they were given at the beginning of the programme.

Afterwards, the museum educator collects the postcards/letter and gives them to the teacher, who continues the lesson in their classroom. There the teacher gives the postcards/letters back to students and asks to read the writings out loud. The lessons conclude with discussion. This programme is applicable also for the group of 15- to 18-year-olds. For the successful completion of the programme, a harmonized cooperation between the museum educators and the teachers is of utmost importance.

Author: Marjetka Bedrac (Maribor, SI)

Developing lesson plans: Post-War History

Topic & Goals

After a short introduction made by Hannah Landsmann and Dan Fischman, the group was divided into smaller groups. The task of two groups was to create a scenario of workshops for specific age groups on the topic of *All Memories Are Contemporary – From Post-war until the Present*. The working groups had three hours for developing a programme. Afterwards, the concepts were presented and discussed in a plenary session.

Discussion

The group had a lot of time to share experiences and to discuss our ideas. Participants found it interesting to see what methods are being used in the educational programmes in different museums, and to see that there are different approaches and specific favourite methods. However it was difficult and challenging to invent a workshop in an exhibition that the group doesn't know well and about the topic that is new for the group – the history of Austrian Jews.

- How to show contemporary Jewish life in Vienna using exhibitions in Jewish Museum Vienna?
- What kind of historical facts create our identity?
- How much freedom do we want to give to pupils?
- What do pupils expect to find in Jewish museum?
- What skill do we want children to learn?

Outcomes & Recommendations

EXAMPLE 1: PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR 15- TO 18-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

The most important thing is to show diversity – e.g. the diversity in the way Jews are celebrating Shabbat. This program would show a film where young Austrian Jews talk about their Shabbat celebrations nowadays. If you wanted to let the pupils work with objects from the exhibition, you could ask the pupils to find an object (e.g. a Chanukiah), and try to connect that object to persons displayed on photos in the exhibition – that makes the objects more personal.

EXAMPLE 2: PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR STUDENTS

At the beginning of the workshop you show the students a box with different objects. The students try to reconstruct the identity of four different persons – each one with a story connected to the post-war period in Austria. Then the students try to find an object in the exhibition for each person (for example for the one who left Austria and moved to Israel, it would be a plane).

Authors: Vidar Alne Paulsen (Oslo, NO) and Sonia Ruskowska (Warsaw, PL)

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Marjetka Bedrač, B.A. art historian, museum documentation specialist. Since 2006 she is employed in the Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor, where she works as project coordinator and, currently, attends also the duty of acting director. Furthermore, she functions as the Center's main educator and guide, as well as is the author of many introductory texts for the exhibition catalogues and brochures. She is a guest member of the Slovenian delegation to IHRA.

Vera Dancz

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Vera Dancz works in the Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives as Educator and Archivist. She has studied Pedagogy and Cultural Management. During her studies Dancz focused on informal education. In the Museum & Archives she is responsible for the Educational programme. She has created two educational workshops and edited two booklets for children about the Archives and archival material. Dancz is planning to create new workshops for the new exhibitions of the museum.

Yael Fried

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Yael Fried was born in Stockholm, Sweden. She has both a BA (Lund university, Sweden) and an MA (Hebrew university, Israel) in Jewish studies. Since 2008 she has worked at the Jewish museum in Stockholm, where she is project manager and information officer. Occasionally she meets with school groups to answer their many questions, something she sees as the highlight of her workday.

Marina Gehta

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Marina Gehta has a master's degree in Jewish Civilizations from the joint programme of Paideia – European Jewish Institute and the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien, Heidelberg. Since 2011 she has been working at the museum "Jews in Latvia", where she is responsible for the management of different projects, including educational projects. Gehta manages the museum's educational programmes for teachers and educators, as well as for tourist guides, and works on the elaboration of educational programmes for schools.

Orli Herz

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Orli Herz, studied German and English Literature as well as History to be a teacher in secondary schools. As a mother she worked in the Jewish Kindergarten in Basel and experienced that children learn better when they are involved. Since 2000 she worked in the Jewish Museum of Switzerland taking all her ideas and experience with different ages to be a guide for school classes and adults. She also instructs new guides.

Grit Keller

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Grit Keller is an historian and works at the education department of the Jewish Museum Berlin. She is responsible for the further training of teachers and the quality management of the tour guides of the museum. For over 3 years Keller worked as a tour guide herself and guided visitors through permanent and special exhibitions – in the Jewish Museum and the so-called Holocaust Memorial in the very heart of Berlin.

Tali Krikler

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Tali Krikler joined the Jewish Museum in January 2010 and has undertaken a variety of roles including Family Learning coordinator and managing a challenging Arts Council England project before taking over as Head of Learning in April 2013. Tali spent 10 years as a primary school teacher in inner city schools focusing on Early Years education before leaving to do an MA in Museums and Galleries in Education at the University of London. Tali moved to her new role of Head of Informal Learning earlier this year where the focus of her work is on diversifying audiences, embedding a vibrant family, children and young people's programme and enabling access for visitors with additional needs.

Manfred Levy

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Manfred Levy studied English and Political Science. 1985-2000 teacher/principal at the Jewish School in Frankfurt. 2000-2010 teacher /principal at a comprehensive school in a deprived area in Frankfurt. In 2010 delegated by the Minister of Education in Hesse to the Pedagogical Centre of the Jewish Museum and the Fritz Bauer Institute. Focus on Jewish Religion, Jewish life today, Judaism and Islam, Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, intercultural learning. Training guides and creating new programmes for the new permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum Frankfurt.

Lise Rebekka Paltiel

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Lise Rebekka Paltiel's background is in teaching primary and secondary schools and she also studied "Peace and Conflict studies" in India. Paltiel joined the Jewish Museum Trondheim in 2008 and is in charge of the day-to-day operations of the museum. However, working as a museum educator is her main task.

Vidar Alne Paulsen

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Vidar Alne Paulsen has a background in history. He received his master's degree in medieval studies at the University of Bergen in 2006, and worked at the city museum there from 2004 till 2011. He started working at Oslo Jewish Museum in 2011 as an educator. In addition to teaching children of all age groups about Judaism and Norwegian-Jewish history, he has been involved in developing educational programmes for the museum – most recently a programme targeting 6- to 9-year-olds, called «Shabbat shalom».

Irina Pociene

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After her studies of social anthropology and history of culture, Irina Pociene started her work in the Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum in 2008 as a guide in the Tolerance centre (Judaica. History. Art). From 2015 the Department of Public Relations and Education was established and Pociene was entrusted to lead it. Her experience as educator is minimal and she is very interested in discovering the world of educators of Jewish museums of Europe.

Sonia Ruszkowska

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Sonia Ruszkowska has been working at the education department of the POLIN museum since November 2013. She is the co-creator of an educational programme for schools, she leads youth workshops, and anti-discrimination workshops for adults. Sonia has a PhD in philosophy; her thesis was about philosophical aspects of the Holocaust. She is the School For Youth Trainers graduate, a member of The Anti-discrimination Education Association and an associate of Forum for Dialogue. Her favourite education methods are: working with testimonies, drama, Nonviolent Communication.

Elisabeth Schulte

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After having studied in Heidelberg, Jerusalem, London and Gothenburg, Schulte received a BA in Hebrew and Study of Religions and an MA in International Museum Studies. She was based at the St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art as the Curator of World Religions for Glasgow Museums before she came to work as the education officer at the Jewish Museum Munich in 2011.

Maciek Zabierowski

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Head of Learning at the Auschwitz Jewish Center (AJC) in Oświęcim, Poland. Zabierowski has been involved as educator at the AJC's Jewish Museum since 2007. He has designed different workshops on local Jewish history and Judaism for Polish and international students of different ages. He was also project manager for the app: Oshpitzin. The history of Jewish Oświęcim for iPhone and Android smartphones and tablets.