



# Museum Education Seminar

Seminar Papers 2016



Vilna Gaon State  
Jewish Museum





# Museum Education Seminar

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Jewish Museum



## Introduction

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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 2016 edition that took place at the Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum (VGSJM) in Vilnius, Lithuania. This seminar was developed by the AEJM, in close cooperation with Kamile Rupeikaite, Deputy Director of the VGSJM, and Irina Pociene, head of the PR and Education Department and in consultation with the Museum Education Task Force, consisting of Lucja Koch (POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews), Elisabeth Schulte (previously Jewish Museum Munich), and Vidar Alne Paulsen (previously Oslo Jewish Museum).

These Seminar Papers do not only offer insight into the different sessions in Vilnius, 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.

The Museum Education Seminar 2016 in Vilnius is kindly supported by The David Berg Foundation, NY.

Eva Koppen  
AEJM Managing Director

*Editors: Eva Koppen and Anita Christensen*

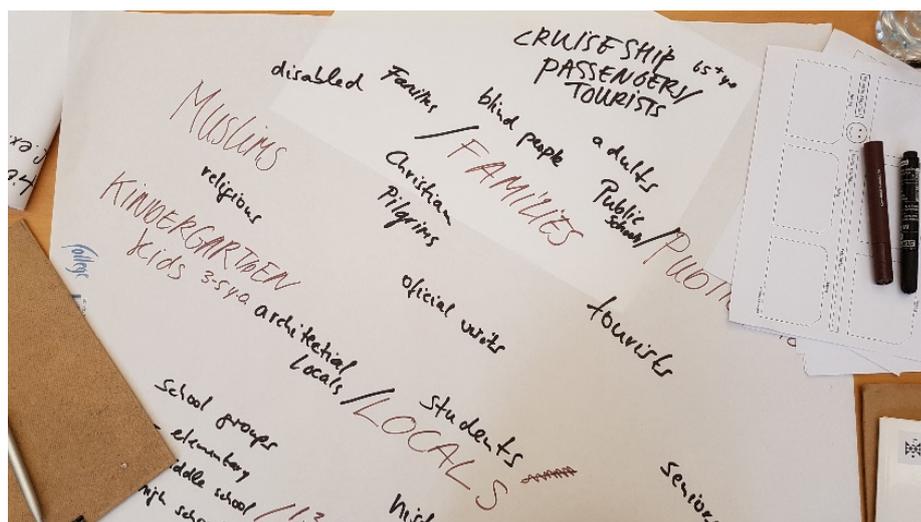
## How accessible are our educational activities?

### Topic & Goals

Everyone has the right to meaningful participation in the life and work of museums. As we know, each museum is different but all can find ways of maximising their social impact. This workshop aimed at reflecting on the accessibility of educational activities of the participating museums and offered a starting point to investigate how museums can reach more audiences and be more diverse and inclusive in their approaches.

### Discussion

Divided into 3 groups, the participants worked on two questions. Do you have concrete ideas to make your museum more accessible? Are you happy with the audiences you have today – or would you like to reach out to other audiences? Tali Krikler pointed out that there are always new audiences to reach. There are many audiences, who already visit the museums, but are not identified and are not made to feel welcome. The trick is to work on being more accessible and inclusive, to show them that we have already thought of them.



This was followed by practical work with the Empathy Map Tool. Tali Krikler pointed out that in order to engage with new audiences and to make them feel welcome, we must start by putting ourselves in their place. Attracting a new audience is an exercise in empathy. The groups were asked to pick a group and to fill out the Empathy Map Tool mapping the way they wanted the audience to think, feel, see, hear, do and say. The focus was the Lipchitz exhibition on current display at the Vilnius Tolerance Center.

## Outcomes and recommendations

- Group 1 chose to focus on children with autism – opting for a change in lighting, to work on making the space seem less intimidating and to prepare the visit with experts, parents and schools.
- Group 2 chose to focus on teenagers – opting for a Pokémon Go-technology and offering the museum as a space to gather, to explore and to relax in. By addressing the teenagers as adults and inviting them to be guides for other teenagers, the group hoped to create ambassadors within the audience group.
- Group 3 chose to focus on the local Vilnius citizens. The idea was to offer free entrance to the museum on a specific evening during the week, so that the locals could combine a visit with their busy daily life. Lipchitz was to be introduced as a famous local artist, who were Jewish. The exhibition was to be profiled as a unique time to see the works of one of Lithuania’s most famous artists in a local museum, instead of having to go to the large museums in France to see them.

Find the handout of Tali Krikler’s workshop The Inclusive Museum in the Educators Forum of the AEJM website. The Empathy Map Tool can be downloaded from the Project Exchange of the Educational section.

*Authors: Christian Yssing (Copenhagen, DK) and Judith Whitlau (Amsterdam, NL)*

## Highlighting the Museum

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### Topic and goals

During the practical workshop “Highlighting the Museum” participants were divided into the several small groups. The workshop focused on the objects of the Tolerance Center's collection. Participants were asked to choose five of them and develop a ‘Top 5 must see’ tour. Each group created a tour tailored to an audience of a different age group. Important in the whole workshop was how we as educators select Judaica artefacts, what and how much information we include to ensure we offer a broad and coherent context for the museum and the history it tells.

### Discussion

In some cases, it was difficult to limit oneself to choosing just five objects and through those objects explore the base of Judaism (traditions, rituals, philosophy, history etc.). For some groups, it was very hard to choose good objects. At the end of the workshop, we had a chance to see and hear interesting and creative results of the groups and to give feedback on the ideas. The most popular discussion during the presentation was not about how to select 5 objects, but about the story to tell. Some groups decided to begin with the history of the building, others chose the history of Lithuanian Jews, others accentuated Jewish traditions.

### Outcomes and Recommendations

A very important question for all participants was how to begin the excursion. What should be told? Who are the Jews? What kind of museum is it? Which building is it located in? Why is it important to speak about tolerance in Lithuania? In fact, all answers were right. It is important to understand these core questions:

- Who are your visitors?
- What do they already know?
- What do they want to learn at this museum?

What we want from them is the second question. But it's impossible to create even a small excursion without any knowledge about the visitors and without a wish to give them answers to *their* questions – not your own.

It was interesting that most groups chose the wooden puppets as one of their “must see” objects. The workshop gave educators a total understanding that every excursion in every museum can be built on the same roots: 1. the history of the place and exhibition; 2. The main idea; 3. something special to show.

Further recommendations:

- Such a workshop seems to be very useful for training young guides. Usually they say that it's impossible to tell about the whole museum exhibition in 90 minutes. If you have to choose only 5 objects and tell about them in 15 minutes, you start thinking about the excursion in a more structured way.
- This workshop shows how different guides can tell about the same exhibition and even about the same objects. It's useful to share ideas and to understand that any exhibition is a great space for an educator.
- Be logical, explain to the group who you are, where you are and understand what they want.
- Keep in mind that people will always remember the beginning and the end better than what was in between.

*Authors: Elena Fomenko (Moscow, RU), Martin Zani (Bratislava, SK), Sara Pavoncello (Rome, IT)*

## Using Jewish Religious Objects as Educational Resources

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### Topic & Goals

Jewish museums have different approaches to using Jewish religious objects as educational resources. This workshop followed up on the topic discussed at previous MES-seminars. The session aimed to explore how we, as museum educators, ensure that we are using objects in a respectful and explanatory way, where the revered character the objects holds for the believers, is conveyed to the museum visitors in the most pedagogical way. For this purpose, we visited Church Heritage Museum to bring in the comparative dimension.

### Discussion

The workshop started off with a guided tour of the museum with Violeta Indriuniene (Head of Educational Dept. of the Church Heritage Museum). The Church Heritage Museum opened in 2009 and is located in the former Roman Catholic St Michael's Church from the 17th century. In the building one finds examples of art and religious artefacts from catholic Churches around Lithuania. Many are still in use by communities today.

The Church Heritage Museum offers a range of educational programmes. Violeta Indriuniene introduced the participants to one of the programmes, where the pupils can handle objects that have little historic value, and are still in use in ceremonies in Catholic churches today by all, not only the priests. She pointed out that it was important that one should not use objects that are used by priests, but by the general public.

Other educational programs that were mentioned were “Christian symbols”, where the pupils have direct interaction with cubes that have various motives which they then find in the exhibition. They first put together a picture and then look for the same motive in the museum. “Searching for treasures” is a historical educational programme where the pupils are to find treasures in church, working on a pad, through a game.



### *How to work with religious objects? - Group work*

The second part of the workshop, participants were divided into groups and were to pick two religious objects, one Roman Catholic and one Jewish. In groups, with the two chosen objects, the task was to plan a handling session for different visitor groups such as local visitors, various age groups and religious backgrounds. The aim for this part of the workshop was to get visitors engaged, how to handle religious objects, and general rules of object handling.

Questions that were raised were:

- How to be sensitive to religious traditions?
- How to get the optimal educational outcome of religious objects?
- Where to handle objects/what kind of visitor group, how to illuminate the object in the exhibition.
- What to do? How to handle objects? How do visitors engage? Is there a difference between museums vs. religious space?

### **Outcome & Recommendations**

The groups presented their handling session, and together there was made a list of Do's and Don'ts.

- It is important to be sensitive;
- The educator should be clear what the purpose of using an object is. A proper explanation for example, if one cannot touch, be fragile or religious object, is important to convey to the visitors;
- Some of the participants meant there was a difference between handling in a museum vs. a religious space. Meaning it is ok for someone in the Jewish community to handle a religious object in a religious space, not in the same way in a museum;
- Adapting to age is important, such as the sensory aspect for children;
- Be aware what the educational potential of an object is;
- It is important to be aware of the dimensions of an object, this can be the historical dimension, but also objects can have various meanings within Judaism. Such as essential Judaism(orthodox) and anthropology (the diversity within Judaism);
- Engaging in an object;
- Suggestions such as if one cannot touch an object, one could use a tablet or for example a drawing.

It was clear that there are different practices within the museums. However, the most important is that the object handling is thought through. The various aspects and pitfalls should be discussed in the educational team, and then base choices on that.



*Authors: Zuzanana Pavlovska (Prague, CZ) and Lise Rebekka Paltiel (Trondheim, NO)*

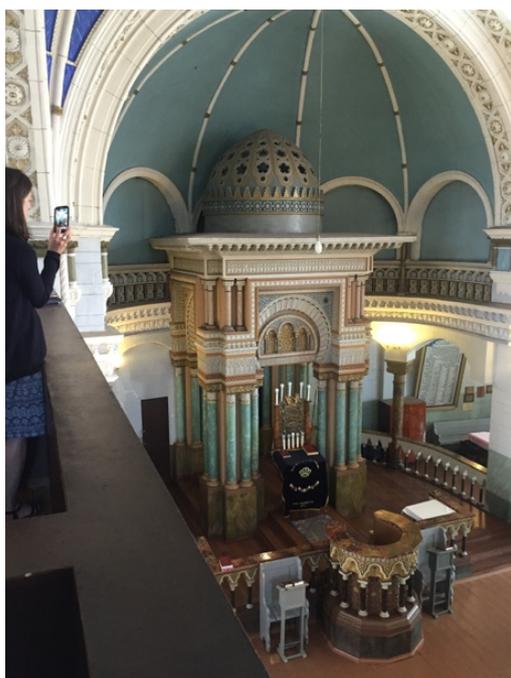
## Working with Communities & Synagogues

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### Topic & Goals

After a tour of the Choral Synagogue of the Jewish community in Vilnius, Tali Krikler led the workshop about how museum educators could interact with communities and active synagogues. Her input was that it is completely different to work with a synagogue as a heritage site compared to an active synagogue. The seminar participants already have some experience in working with Jewish communities and synagogues. They were divided into four groups, each group sitting together and working on selected key questions.

The goals of the workshop were to share on the one hand some experiences of educators that already worked with communities and active synagogues. On the other hand, it was interesting to discover about the problems but also the advantages, if museums and communities work together with their synagogues. Another goal of this session was to find out how museum educators could work in partnership with synagogues.



### Discussion

In this session, we gathered some ideas and recommendations. We found out about some possibilities and chances working together with an active synagogue and community.

*Share examples of what work you do or what work you have seen others do*

Jewish museums have been working together with the community and the synagogue in many different ways. They try to use some “experts” of a synagogue, such as the rabbi, religious women or the cantor. They used the space and setting for cultural events, for interfaith and Jewish women based lectures and for guided tours in combination with the Jewish Museum. In addition, some museums have experience partnering with various streams of Judaism and their synagogues, e. g. Reform, Liberal and Orthodox.

*What can we do when the building is closed? How do we work with volunteers who might not be used to working with children?*

When the synagogue is closed, a guide can work with photographs or organize a walking tour to important Jewish locations in the present or past. Volunteers that are not used to children can work with and learn from a professional educator or from trained members of the Jewish youth group.

*Having seen the Choral Synagogue of Vilnius, what ideas do you have if you were working with the synagogue or community?*

Some ideas can be taken from the first sheet. As in Vilnius locals usually have a lack of knowledge concerning Jewish life, they can be invited for a tour in the Choral Synagogue. There should be a range of tours, ranging from a less static to more experienced based tour or tours connected to rituals and objects, such as the matzah machine.

*What opportunities do synagogues and local communities offer that museums don't?*

Some locals, Christians, teachers and students might be interested in seeing a Shabbat service, how Jewish rituals are performed or other ways of Jewish life. Some communities do not mind showing a service to visitors when a member of the community accompanies them. But not every community wants to show to other faiths members how they pray. A museum is more open and easier to visit in this respect. A synagogue can help Jews to meet local Jewish people or discover their roots.

## **Outcomes and recommendations**

It can be useful, necessary and interesting that Jewish museums try to work together with the community. When visitors, Jews and non-Jews, experience Jewish life it can be an influential experience. Therefore, museums should try to get in contact with the synagogue or the community and tell them what they can offer. Lise Rebekka Paltiel showed us with the presentation of the Jewish Museum Trondheim an example of a successful cooperation between museum and community. As the tiny museum has not much information about the past of the community, they invited young and old community members and asked them questions about the past of their families and friends. These ‘detectives’ did not always feel comfortable to speak freely in a larger group. Some participants needed more privacy and time to think about it.

We heard about different possibilities and examples how museums and communities can work together with synagogues. The handling is different and depends on what each museum is interested in. For a good partnership between museum and community both should cooperate and should have at least parts of the same goal.

*Authors: Orli Herz (Basle, CH), Michal Krasicki (Warsaw, PL) and Katja Oelschlaeger (Berlin, DE)*

## Creating a Theatre Workshop

### Topic & Goals

The King Solomon's Throne Puppet Theatre from the 1930s by Jewish folk artist Aaron Chait is one of the major treasures of the VGSJM and a centre piece in its permanent exhibition *The Lost World* at the Tolerance Center. Due to a vast number of missing pieces, the authentic dimension of the composition was impossible to restore, thus the extant parts of the masterpiece are exhibited on a wall in the museum. Today, only 15 puppets and scenery items survive out of the original hundreds created. They were found in a museum storage site in Kaunas by a PhD student who researched their story and history. The puppets clearly link to the well-known stories of King Solomon's throne and the story of the judgement he made on the baby claimed by two mothers.

The workshop was a participatory based session that asked all participants to look into creative ways of re-telling the story of King Solomon that would be age appropriate for 6 – 8 year olds. The task was to create a short session plan, and mini show-and-tell, for aged 6-8 year olds that brings the exhibition to life. Shlomit Tulgan, educator at the Jewish Museum Berlin, had created masks and paper puppets using high resolution images of the puppets that we could use to create a session workshop plan for children based either on the throne or baby story.

The participants were divided into groups and asked to create a lesson plan for either:

- The story of King Solomon's throne
- The story of King Solomon's judgement on the two women who claimed the same baby



### Discussion

The groups had 20 minutes to discuss the topic then another 20 minutes to create an idea for a possible workshop using the puppets to tell the stories and to prepare for the performance. After the discussions and preparations of the groups, each group presented the short performances to the others. After every

performance, there was a small reflective discussion.`

- Groups 1 and 2 - The story of King Solomon's throne
  - Both groups decided to use the paper puppets to help the children understand the importance the animals on King Solomon's throne had to bring him wisdom.
  - Ideas on using this method to teach ideas on friendship, moral values and how you become wise
  - Both groups created a puppet show that children could do themselves that uses part of the story as a script and included additional dialogue that the children could create to show a moral message to the story.
- Group 3 - The story of King Solomon's judgement on the two women who claimed the same baby
  - The group decided to use the paper puppets to retell the story of King Solomon's judgement and how he made that decision.
  - There was also a strong emphasis on moral messages.
  - The group decided to refer to the baby as a doll and to make the story more modern by having children fighting over the doll.
  - There was also an idea in the group to change a bit on the story: and show the bad mother not so bad but desperate and sad instead, or changing the story and put more action in it.
  - The group also had a discussion about the message of the story and what the workshop should concentrate on, what can we teach through the story?



## Outcomes & Recommendations

- Many participants preferred speaking about the baby as a doll as there was concern the story was too gruesome for 6-8 year olds. Using the idea of the doll made it more relatable.
- Participants were split when talking about whether to make the puppets represent a more modern and diverse story i.e. children fighting over a doll instead of two mothers fighting over a baby, because it changes slightly the message/authenticity of the story.
- Participants all enjoyed and recommended the use of moral messages for this age group.
- Participants all agreed that the session should allow time for the children to make the paper puppets themselves.
- Discussion was raised about whether children could create 'new' puppets that represented ones that were lost. Most participants agreed that it was.

- Recommendations to look into whether our own collections have items that could be used as puppet theatre in this same way.
- The idea came up that the stories of the Jewish holidays can also be a topic of workshops with puppets, and anyone can find some objects in the collection related to the holidays.
- Recommendation for using this workshop to teach older children about craftsmen skills or restoration skills.
- Recommendation for this type of creative workshop as a method to teach a complex story to a young age group.

Find an instruction of how to create puppets on the Educators Forum of the AEJM website. The “Empathy Map Tool” can be downloaded from the Project Exchange of the Educational section.

*Authors: Frances Jeens (London, UK) and Vera Dancz (Budapest, HU)*

## Educational Dimensions of the Green House

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### Topic & Goals

The main goal of this session was to explore educational dimensions of the Holocaust exhibition that is presented in museum's dislocated unit, the so-called Green House. The Holocaust exhibition is a very special permanent display in many regards; firstly, it was the first Holocaust exhibition that was erected in the area of the former Soviet Union; and secondly, it was created by Holocaust survivors.

The exhibition was opened in early ninetens, but it was only in 2010 when some modifications were introduced to it. Honouring the original authors and their input in the creation of this exhibition, the museum workers tried to preserve the exhibition's authenticity by keeping its basic concept. Accordingly, the texts were partially reorganized and translated, and a special room – Malína, presenting a reconstructed hideout in the attic, was built anew.

The exhibition spans through seven rooms, whereat each of them is dedicated to a certain topic from the Holocaust history of Lithuania. However, the relatively smallness of the exhibition rooms and richness of the presented materials originate distinctive issues that are challenging especially for the museum's educational workers. The latter are at designing and implementing of the pedagogical activities often faced not only with the technical limitations of the exhibit venue but also with the fact that most of the organized school groups will limit their visit to an about 45-minute one time experience.

In order to provide suggestions for educational activities that would attract even more, in particular local visitors, were the participants of the seminar given the task to go through the exhibition and prepare pedagogical programmes for different age groups, i.e. for the group of 12 - 15-year olds, group of 16 - 18-year olds and local adults (including students).

### Discussion

Through the presentations of possible educational activities, some very important issues were exposed, such as how should we use available sources (objects and texts presented at certain exposition); to what extent should we use modern technology (use of smart phones, iPad, etc.); and how should we use personal diaries.

A special dilemma arose also regarding the question whether it is ethical to create a story/biography of an imaginary victim even if it is for the Holocaust educational purposes. Should we use the "drama" techniques and make teenagers play roles of victims (role-playing) to make them understand better the fate of victims? There were two different opinions: against and for this very specific educational technique. Is it ethical to imagine how the victims or survivors felt? We will never know how they felt. From the other perspective sometimes, you need to create the emotions to have the educational impact on teenagers, make them sensible, that they feel emotionally close to that people, and identify with them. Suggestion: maybe it is better to ask question about the biography of a person (i. e. Could you

imagine how he/she felt? What happened next to him/her? ...) instead of playing the roles? Maybe we should think that the original documents are strong enough and we do not have to fictionalise them.

At the very end of the session, after all presented programmes, another very interesting discussion focusing on the inclusion of re-created hideout in the pedagogical programmes found place. In fact, none of the suggested programmes that were designed in the scope of this session included Malína in their educational activities. It was due to the smallness of the room and the dynamics of the audio-video presentation in it, which obviated the usage of Malína in pedagogical programmes.

The discussion provided many different opinions on individual issues; nonetheless, the participants agreed that the preparation of Holocaust educational programmes dictates very thoughtful approach. Eventually, the pedagogical programmes should be designed in a way to stimulate sensitization of the visitors for the Holocaust topic through interactive and, in particular emotional activities.

## Outcomes & Recommendations

### *EXAMPLE 1: 12-15-year old pupils*

The proposed activity is based on the smartphone activity. There is additional information about a person presented in the exhibition (Fania) that should be found on the web (it is difficult to find them in the exhibition place and the "app" gives the opportunity to download pictures, information). Teenagers are divided in 5 groups. They will have a small introduction in each room, that they can understand the main message. Then they should look for the photo of Fania, they will find some information under the picture. Each group work with the timeline and prepare a presentation about a fragment of the biography of Fania.

### *EXAMPLE 2: 12-15-year old pupils*

The activity is about working with the diary of survivor, with the personal story of Yitzak. Pupils are divided in 6 groups. They get small pieces of text from the diary (copies of the original one in Yiddish and in Lithuanian - the museum should translate it from English). They work with the different parts of the diary and the whole text gives an overview what happened during the Holocaust. They can go to the exhibition and see what happened to the Jews of Lithuania, when the text was written. They can also work with the material that they will understand and "feel" (like the love letter presented on the exhibition). It is a good tool to use a diary describing a teenager's life during the time of the Holocaust in the educational activity. The dilemma: Can we use a personal diary which was a teenager's secret? Answer: It was published; they maybe wanted that we hear their voice today. Another dilemma: Not everything that teenagers write, even during the war, is really "true".

### *EXAMPLE 3: 16-18-year-old pupils*

This example is about the emotional impact that a workshop can have. It starts with an introduction about Jewish life in Vilnius and how Jewish life started to change with the start of WWII (10-15 minutes). The educator divide teens in 5 different groups. Each group receives a picture of a real person with a short bio (name, some information - maximum 3 lines). During 10 minutes, teenagers talk and imagine what happened to the person and how he/she survived. Then the educator go to the room "resistance"

and continue the story. Teenagers are telling the stories from the pictures (they are acting as the persons from the pictures: "I was..., I did ..."). After speaking about the spirit of resistance, and listening to teenagers, the educator tells the real story of people from pictures/ the educator completes the story. The activity is a starting point and after the workshop, maybe participants would like to learn more and come back to the museum in the future. The educator makes the connection with the past and the present world of the teenagers by creating the stories about the people presented on the pictures.

*EXAMPLE 4: The fourth suggested programme was designed for school groups who are visiting the Holocaust exhibition for the first time, while their visit is limited to about 45 – 60 minutes*

The programme should start with the message of a survivor; afterwards the individual school group should be divided in three separate groups. Each of these three groups should go through the exhibition autonomously to investigate certain given topics: Jewish life before, during (including day-to-day life in the ghettos, resistance, etc.) and after the WWII. Each group should pick one photograph, one art object and/or one written part that present the given topic in most addressing way. At the end of the programme, all three groups meet again and present their discoveries with the help of selected objects and parts of the exhibition. The programme should provide its user a positive experience thus it should conclude whether by presenting the story of a survivor and his/her life now, or even by organizing a meeting with him/her, whether with the invitation to visit the museum again and participate in its continuation programme.

*EXAMPLE 5: local adult visitors*

On the contrary to other suggested programmes, this programme was not designed as an activity; rather it tries to attract the participants to listen to the narration of the exhibition's first creators – the Holocaust survivors. The programme, based on the presumption about how the survivors would like us to tell the story, consists of a guided tour to exhibit rooms. However, during this guidance some very appealing questions could be evoked, such as 'Who were the people who created this exhibition', or 'How was this exhibition created', 'Why does this museum looks like this', etc. In order to be able to answer such questions, visitors would be intrigued to learn more about Holocaust survivors and their life experiences.

*EXAMPLE 6: local adult visitors, who are already acquainted with the subject*

The main aim of this programme should be not only to reaffirm the knowledge on Holocaust history of Lithuania and Vilnius, but also to encourage the local residents to perceive Holocaust as 'our story' and not merely as 'their story'. The presented programme is based on mapping activity: the visitors would receive maps, and then they would be asked to go through the exhibition and search for the locations from Holocaust history of Vilnius that are at the same time closest to the part of the town where an individual visitor lives. It is highly recommended that prior to beginning of this activity the educator interacts with the group by finding out about their knowledge and thinking on the topic.

*Authors: Zodia Mioduszevska (Warsaw, PL) and Marjetka Bedrač (Maribor, SI)*

## Peer-to-peer education

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### Topic & Goals

Before the start of 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 3 of these challenges were discussed in small groups; every group had a chance to discuss all 3 topics. This session aimed at facilitating peer discussion with international colleagues who can draw on their own work experience at Jewish museums in Europe.

Lise Rebekka Paltiel from the Jewish Museum Trondheim (NO) requested best practice examples and input on peer-to-peer education as part of museum education.

### Discussion

Peer-to-peer education is a method more and more used in museums. However, it can be challenging. How should an educator prepare for this kind of educational programme and what are the best practices in other museums? Additionally, how should the educator facilitate such an educational method and is this a truly effective tool for learning?

### Outcomes & Recommendations

- Forming groups: speak to a teacher beforehand. He/she can either help you out with forming groups or form the groups him/herself
- Be clear. It is important that the pupils know what they should do, what their tasks are and what is expected from them.
- Make the pupils understand that they together give the whole picture, like a puzzle.
- How to tell a story, how to engage and make it interesting: go through this together with the pupils.
- The educator could make predesigned presentations to make it easier for the groups.
- The educator should repeat the most important message after each group has presented.

*Author: Lise Rebekka Paltiel (Trondheim, NO)*

## How could pupils reflect on their learning experience?

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### Topic & Goals

Before the start of 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 3 of these challenges were discussed in small groups; every group had a chance to discuss all 3 topics. This session aimed at facilitating peer discussion with international colleagues who can draw on their own work experience at Jewish museum in Europe.

Judith Whitlau from the Jewish Cultural Quarter Amsterdam (NL) requested input on the question of in what form pupils could reflect on what they have learned at the end of an educational programme.

### Discussion

The education department of the Jewish Historical Quarter (JCK) in Amsterdam is developing a new educational programme for the Dutch Theatre, the former deportation centre of Jews during the occupation. On the opposite side of the street the nursery was located where Jewish children until 12 years old resided. The children were reunited with their parents when the families were ordered to leave for transportation to the camps. About 600 children were saved from deportation thanks to the collaborative efforts of the head of the neighbouring pedagogical academy, the head of the nursery and the head of the Jewish council of the Dutch Theatre. In the building of the former academy, nowadays the new National Holocaust Museum is located and thus is accessible for educational programmes.

### Outcomes & Recommendations

Judith Whitlau collected several recommendations from her European colleagues and brought back home to Amsterdam one specific suggestion. Let the pupils make posters about the power of standing up for each other. These posters could be showed at the display case of the tram stop between the two buildings. The tram played an important role in saving the Jewish children. In this way, the pupils will reflect upon what they have learned during the programme and at the same time tell people in the street about what happened behind the facades of the buildings.

Judith indicated that at present this idea is practically too difficult to realize, but that it could work out in the future. The core idea is to let pupils tell the outside world know what happened behind the facades of the buildings by using small poetic texts. The focus of these little phrases would not be the tragic of what happened, but the power of daring to stand up for each other.

*Author: Judith Whitlau (Amsterdam, NL)*

## How to motivate yourself?

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### Topic & Goals

Before the start of 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 3 of these challenges were discussed in small groups; every group had a chance to discuss all 3 topics. This session aimed at facilitating peer discussion with international colleagues who can draw on their own work experience at Jewish museum in Europe.

Vidar Alne Paulsen from the Museum Education Task Force started a discussion on the topic of how to keep your enthusiasm while having to do the same educational programme for a long period of time.

### Discussion

The problem of motivation was a familiar one for the educators. The obvious solution, presented by several of the participants, was to change the programme or the educator. Other suggested that what you are dealing with, is a problem of human nature. The same activity in the same place over a long period of time will eventually evoke the feeling of boredom.

### Outcomes & Recommendations

- If a programme is successful but it is impossible – for economic or practical reasons – to bring in extra staff to alleviate the situation, it was suggested to bring in experts to give tips and suggestions for how to change the scenario, but keep to the subject.
- If you can't do anything with the educational program, can you do something with yourself and your outlook? Several of the educators shared their pre-guiding routines:
  - Meditation and try to centre thoughts before doing a guided tour;
  - Shadowboxing in order to prepare the whole body for the performance of guiding;
  - Reading poetry or a book about something completely different;
  - Bring a personal object from home to distract the mind;
  - Get enough fresh air ahead of a guided tour;

*Author: Vidar Alne Paulsen (Oslo, NO)*

## Participants MES 2016 Vilnius

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### **Marjetka Bedrac**

*Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor (SL) – Acting Director  
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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**

*Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives (HU) – Educator  
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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.

### **Elena Fomenko**

*Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center (RU) – Educator  
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Elena (Alena) Fomenko is Deputy Head of the Reception and Tour Departments and senior guide at the Moscow Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center. She started working at the museum some 3 years after working as university lecturer. Projects: school for touring guides, joint museum school for teenagers, training and certification programmes for travel agency guides etc. Main working interests: methods of working with different groups of visitors, adaptation of the materials and discussions according to visitors backgrounds.

## **Orli Herz**

*Jewish Museum of Switzerland (CH) – Educator  
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Orli Herz studied German and English Literature as well as History to be a teacher in secondary schools. She worked in different schools, and later as a mother in the Jewish Kindergarten in Basel. Since 2000 she is an educator in the Jewish Museum of Switzerland, taking all her ideas and experience with different ages to be a guide for school classes and adults. Recently she decided to study again, Art History and Religious Studies.

## **Frances Jeens**

*Jewish Museum London (UK) – Head of Learning  
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Frances Jeens' background is in both curatorial and education work within museums. She started working in museums in curatorial and archival roles in 2006 and completed her Museum Studies Master's degree in 2009. Frances joined the Jewish Museum London Learning Team in 2013 and has a particular interest in public interaction with collections, disability access to learning services and the use of beneficial technology within museums.

## **Michał Krasicki**

*Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute (PL) – Dept. Head of the Art Department  
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Michał Krasicki works in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw as co-organizer of its exhibitions, co-editor of the exhibition catalogues and the exhibition guide. He is also responsible for the first complete inventorying of the JHI museum collections, their digitization and creation of collection computer database. He edited and partly wrote the JHI guide. As a curator he prepares now a renewal of the permanent exhibition presenting synagogue space.

## **Dagmara Manka-Wizor**

*POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews (PL) – Educator and Project Coordinator  
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Dagmara Manka-Wizor has been engaged with and around Jewish topics for years, in community and in various NGOs. Since 5 years she has been working in the new Museum of the

History of Polish Jews POLIN in Warsaw, first in communications, now in the educational department. She is focusing there on teaching “general public” about Jewish tradition, history, Polish-Jewish heritage, and intercultural issues. She also coordinates and facilitates courses and every-day work of guides, antidiscrimination trainings for professionals and cooperation of the Museum with International March of the Living. Dagmara is alumni of One Year Program and Paradigm Programme in Paideia – European Institute for Jewish Studies in Stockholm.

### **Zofia Mioduszevska**

*POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews (PL) – Educator*  
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Zofia Mioduszevska graduated from the Interdepartmental Studies in the Humanities at the University of Warsaw, specializing in culture studies and currently is a Ph.D. candidate at the Institute of Polish Culture, University of Warsaw. Her work at POLIN started in 2007, when the department of education was established. Zofia works in the youth section of the education department. Her responsibilities include planning educational activities for young people, designing lesson plans, running workshops. At the moment she is the manager of one of the Museum’s projects, which gives young people a chance to meet Holocaust survivors.

### **Judith Niederklopfers-Würtinger**

*Jewish Museum Hohenems (AT) – Educator*  
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Judith Niederklopfers-Würtinger graduated in Archaeology and Roman Studies/Italian. She worked as an archaeologist in Liechtenstein with short periods in Switzerland, Italy and Austria, and then in the auction house Zeller in Lindau, Germany. While working as a secretary in a primary school she started to do free-lance guided tours in the vorarlberg museum, in art exhibitions in Lindau and since 2012 in the Jewish Museum Hohenems. Today Judith is part of the educational department together with two teammates in part time.

### **Katja Oelschläger**

*Jewish Museum Berlin (DE) – Educator*  
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Katja Oelschläger works at the Jewish Museum Berlin in the department “Educational

Outreach” since 2007. She developed and initiated the mobile exhibition named on.tour. Ever since Katja coordinates and organizes tours with this mobile exhibition to secondary schools throughout Germany as well as presentations at fairs, festivals and other events. Furthermore, she led a peer to peer project in 2015/16. Katja is also responsible for educational projects for refugees. She studied and worked in the tourism sector before.

### **Lise Rebekka Paltiel**

*Jewish Museum Trondheim (NO) – Educator  
kontor@dmf.trondheim.no*

Lise Rebekka Paltiel is educated as a primary and secondary school in Norway and Scotland. 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. Developing educational programmes & workshops and working as a museum educator is her main task.

### **Sara Pavoncello**

*Jewish Museum of Rome (IT) - Guide  
sarapavoncello88@gmail.com*

Sara Pavoncello studied at Jewish schools and afterwards finished two degrees in Political Sciences and International Relations. She was an educator for the Youth Department of the Italian Jewish Communities for three years during which she attended several educational and communication seminars. In 2010 Sara became a tour guide at the Jewish Museum of Rome. This job combines her previous working experiences and her passion for Politics, Jewish Studies, History and Educational activities.

### **Zuzana Pavlovska**

*Jewish Museum in Prague (CZ) – Head of the Department for Education & Culture  
zuzana.pavlovska@jewishmuseum.cz*

Zuzana Pavlovská studied Jewish Studies together with Theology, Psychosocial Sciences and Ethics. Currently, she is about to complete her PhD in the Department of Jewish Studies at Charles University. Zuzana is Head of the Department for Education and Culture of the Jewish Museum in Prague. The main goal of the department is development of educational and cultural activities in Prague and, since 2006, also in Brno. She also represents the Czech Republic at

IHRA (The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) and is involved in the educational working group.

## **Giulia Rubin**

*Jewish Museum of Rome (IT) – Guide*  
*giulia\_rubin@hotmail.it*

Giulia Rubin graduated in languages at the University Sapienza of Rome in 2012. She has been working at the Jewish Museum of Rome as a guide for 3 years. Giulia adores travelling and seeing the world and has been very fortunate to have the opportunity to do so. She loves her job because it has always given her the possibility to broaden her knowledge and it allowed her to improve her communication skills.

## **Judith Whitlau**

*Jewish Cultural Quarter Amsterdam (NL) - Educator*  
*judith.whitlau@jck.nl*

Judith Whitlau graduated from the art academy and as teacher of the philosophy of life. For many years she supervised educational programmes for institutes as the Anne Frank Foundation and she was a guest teacher on Jewish culture and religion. Since 2006 Judith works in the Education Dept. of the Jewish Cultural Quarter where among other things she helped to develop I ASK, a method for museum guides.

## **Christian Yssing**

*Danish Jewish Museum (DK) – Curator, Communication*  
*cy@jewmus.dk*

Christian Juul Yssing has a Masters degree in Art History from the University of Copenhagen. His career has been in communications and PR, working primarily as Senior Advisor in a leading PR agency and as Head of PR and Marketing at The Blue Planet, National Aquarium Denmark. With little more than half a year at The Danish Jewish Museum, Christian is striving to develop his insights about Jewish museums and the field of museum education.

## **Martin Zani**

*Bratislava Jewish Community Museum (SK) - Educator  
kontor@dmt.trondheim.no*

Martin Zani is a child psychologist and has been involved in the Jewish Community Museum in Bratislava as an educator since 2013. He is a tour guide on the history of the synagogue and its architecture and an educator for school programmes. He teaches pupils about the Jewish community of Bratislava, traditions, culture, religion and its history, and teaches students from secondary schools about the Holocaust.