



Translocal:  
MUSEUM  
as  
Toolbox

## THE PROJECT

### ***Translocal: Museum as Toolbox***

A cooperation project between Kunsthaus Graz (Austria), Kumu Art Museum in Tallinn (Estonia), MSU Zagreb (Croatia), Museion Bozen/Bolzano (Italy) and Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź (Poland)

## Kunsthaus Graz

Universalmuseum  
Joanneum

 EESTI KUNSTIMUUSEUM

# KUMU

**M** MUZEJ  
**SU** SUVREMENE  
UMJETNOSTI  
ZAGREB MUSEUM OF  
CONTEMPORARY ART  
[www.msu.hr](http://www.msu.hr)

 MUSEION

**ms**  
Muzeum Sztuki

## THE BOOK

Production editor: Mary-Ann Talvistu (Kumu Art Museum)

Language editor: Richard Adang

Designed by Tuuli Aule

Printed by Tallinna Raamatutrükikoda (Tallinn Book Printers, Estonia)

Published by the Art Museum of Estonia – Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn 2017

Copyrights remain the property of the authors of the texts and photos

ISBN 978-9949-485-62-8

## WITH THE SUPPORT OF

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Co-funded by the  
Creative Europe Programme  
of the European Union

## Contents

### MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

- 4 Museum as Toolbox:  
an Introduction  
*Katrin Bucher Trantow*
- 6 Toolbox Genesis  
*Katrin Bucher Trantow*
- 9 Survey Results  
*Alexandra Trost*
- 12 Symposium  
*Mary-Ann Talvistu*
- 15 Communication Tools  
*Sarah Greenwood*

### KUNSTHAUS GRAZ

- 20 Kunsthaus Graz in the  
*Museum as Toolbox* Project
- 26 Residency Report
- 38 Reflections on the  
Graz Youth Group

### KUMU ART MUSEUM

- 46 Kumu Art Museum in the  
*Museum as Toolbox* Project
- 52 Residency Report
- 54 Artist Interview:  
Luigi Coppola
- 62 Kumu Youth Group  
Experiences

### MUSEION

- 72 Museion in the *Museum  
as Toolbox* Project
- 78 Residency Report
- 84 Artist Interview:  
Marcin Polak and  
Ewelina Chmielewska
- 88 Museion Youth Group  
Experiences
- 92 A Journalist Reflection

### MUZEUM SZTUKI IN ŁÓDŹ

- 96 Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź in the  
*Museum as Toolbox* Project
- 102 Residency Report
- 108 Artist Interview:  
Aldo Giannotti
- 116 Residency Reflection

### MSU ZAGREB

- 122 MSU Zagreb in the  
*Museum as Toolbox* Project
- 128 Residency Report
- 134 Artist Interview:  
NGO Lasnaidee
- 140 MSU Zagreb Youth Group  
Experiences

**MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX: AN INTRODUCTION**

Katrin Bucher Trantow

In 2015, five museums and exhibition spaces for contemporary art in various peripheral locations in Europe joined forces in the *Translocal: Museum as Toolbox* networking project to explore new forms of art education and exchange. This collaboration between Kunsthaus Graz, Kumu Art Museum in Tallinn, MSU Zagreb, Museion Bozen/Bolzano and Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź aims to develop new ways for museums to contribute to the shaping and development of society.

The project is based on the *Translocal* museum network, which was initiated in 2011 by Kunsthaus Graz and its director at that time, Peter Pakesch, with the intention of combining the various strengths and practical experiences of medium-sized European museums of modern and contemporary art outside the major cities. The institutions involved (Morawska Galerija in Brno, Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Kumu Art Museum in Tallinn and MSU Zagreb) came together at networking meetings to share their expertise, thereby creating opportunities to compare similar objectives and joint initiatives. On this basis, an application was submitted to the EU's "Creative Europe" support programme in 2014. Funding was confirmed in 2015, providing the opportunity to promote internal and external education and communications in an experimental approach, and so to concentrate on a particularly challenging target group for museums: young adults aged 15 to 25. The same goals and the same objectives were shared by Museion Bozen/Bolzano, which was invited to join the original institutions involved in this project.

A common feature of all of the institutions participating in the *Museum as Toolbox* project is that they have over the last twenty years — long since shaped by institutional criticism, socially engaged art and a wide range of forms of artistic interaction — gained diverse experience in art and education as a motif of avant-garde art practices, and this has also flowed into the continuous development of education programmes. Another parallel characteristic of the partner museums is that they have recently acquired new buildings. Often these spectacular architectural designs are to be found in provincial cities seeking to position themselves globally. Whether we are talking about the dramatic Kunsthaus Graz, situated on the historically somewhat neglected right bank of the river Mur, or the old weaving plant in Łódź, converted into a museum and a part of a huge industrial complex turned into a shopping centre, local urban accents were employed to link directly with city life and also to allow for work in close contact with the (potential)

public. This aspiration is also reflected in an interactive and interdisciplinary approach in the programmatic, linguistic and visual education practised in all of the partner museums.

Working together with young people in the five geographically, linguistically and historically diverse urban locations, the *Museum as Toolbox* project develops useful “tools” that reveal a vision for a European museum of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in its immediate surroundings. Project work takes place in conjunction with other museums on three levels: education, curating and marketing. This began with a research phase, including online questionnaires, artist residencies, workshops, discussion forums, performances and a conceptual exchange between the institutions. Appropriate communication tools in the form of questionnaires, quality management tools, a process-oriented YouTube channel and a growing catalogue were developed and adapted for practical use.

Additionally, artists with interventionist works, as well as museum employees from various professional fields, have come together to work on the concept and design of a touring exhibition. This show in 2017 will be adapted at each venue to fit the history of its collection, building and location, meaning that it will be presented in a number of different versions. This idea led to the living vision of a “toolbox” that has also opened up an exciting scope for future forms of collaboration.

Our sincere thanks go to the artists who developed the interventions, to the youth group members who were, and still are, curious enough to return, as well as to all of the co-workers at the five partner museums for their seriousness, openness and trust in exploring our reflexive possibilities for communication.

This all is a demonstration, in the very best sense, that the museum is a place for constant shaping and exchanging of knowledge and can indeed become a toolbox for the development of society.

Katrin Bucher Trantow (Kunsthhaus Graz)  
and all of the participating museum directors:  
For Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn: Kadi Polli  
For Muzej suvremene umjetnosti, Zagreb: Snježana Pintarić  
For Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź: Jarosław Suchan  
For Museion, Bozen/Bolzano: Letizia Ragaglia

## TOOLBOX GENESIS

Katrin Bucher Trantow

*Museum as Toolbox* is engaged in building a strong network of knowledge production involving multiple museum departments, artists and young adults in various museums and exhibition centres of contemporary art throughout Europe. Its scope includes the search for an interactive, open toolbox that will forge a contemporary vision of the museum and its communication(s). Shaped by current developments, such as socially engaged art or relational aesthetics, the experience and mediation of art are explored in a direct exchange between equal partners inside and outside of the institutions.

Everything that is presented, collected and conveyed by a museum can in fact be seen as communication and seeks to enter into dialogue. This is the basis of the experiment *Museum as Toolbox*, which reads the museum and its different forms of communication in relational terms and in its entirety. It makes itself the site of examination, of discourse and of production, an artistic research trial running in parallel at various different museums.

It was sincere interest on the part of the museums that have been collaborating since 2012 in the formally loose *Translocal* project that gave rise in winter 2014 to *Museum as Toolbox*: a jointly planned, self-reflexive networking project on the theme of “museum and communication” within the framework of the “Creative Europe” EU programme. We all agreed that both internal and external communications should form the focus of our interest and that we were also particularly concerned that this project bring back together areas of activity that during the course of the professionalisation of the museums of recent decades had sometimes drifted far apart, such as marketing, education and curating. Both internally and externally, the intention was to open up new fields of communication for a particular target audience and to actively involve and interact with a contributing and decisive audience.

The group of five European partners combined forces because the issues they face in this context are related and their readiness to employ processual formability is high. The main factor, however, is that they all operate under similar basic conditions: each of the partner museums is the largest institution of contemporary art with an international orientation in its region. They are all based outside historic city centres and are run by relatively young teams who are constantly increasing their professionalism. Each has occupied a newly designed museum building for about 10 years, located in a yet to be developed urban situation. During this period, they have been under constant revi-

sion and/or it was assumed that they would grow according to capitalist logic. On this basis, all of the partner museums have a fundamental interest in networking, both with their environment and with international discourses.

In terms of the museum sector, contemporary art museums are a relatively young phenomenon, with just 50 to 100 years of rapid development behind them. Various stations and models have been adapted to suit particular eras, thus shaping contemporary galleries into versatile institutions. Unlike America, where most museums were founded by private individuals and interested patrons' associations, in Europe these museums mainly took the form of artists' societies, art associations and exhibition halls as experimental galleries and also nationalised private collections. This sometimes results in a chimerical approach that falls between intellectual discourse for a few and the widest possible discussion forums serving public social development.

Subsequently these "loose" structures became establishments dominated by different departments with specified, sometimes seemingly contradictory goals. Through growing programmes, exhibition spaces and a gradually increasing audience, relatively small teams tasked with handling all aspects became expanding departments that specialised in the development of content, its education and marketing, organisation and the assembly of exhibitions, etc. Consequently, the budgets of the exhibition venues also had to grow constantly. Financial subsidies sometimes resulted in dependencies on public scrutiny as well as raising internal questions regarding the fundamental, socially critical approach of the art museum as a legacy of a critical avant-garde.

Collections are, however, not just shaped by historical circumstances, but also by different personalities. In Graz, for example, there was Archduke Johann (1792–1859), the younger brother of Austrian Emperor Franz I. Strongly motivated by his progressive views, he facilitated the establishment of public educational institutions and also laid the foundations for today's Universalmuseum Joanneum. Starting with collections encompassing a range of disciplines originally focussed on natural history and applied geography, a picture gallery and art collection were also created at the Joanneum. In 1941 this was divided into the Neue and Alte Galleries. In 2003 the Kunsthaus Graz was added as a spectacular venue for contemporary art.

The site, and its political, economic, philosophical and artistic relevance always played an important role in development, including the connection with the public. Today, museums of contemporary art find themselves at unprecedented high points in the general attention they attract. Exhibition halls without collections are drawing crowds

that annually can make up more than 20% of the local population (see Kunsthaus Graz: 2014 c. 60,000 visitors with a city population of c. 300,000). Large, publicly funded budgets are also increasingly met with criticism and calls to make museums more and more efficient, customer-oriented and closer to civic society. Beyond capitalist spiral dynamics, in connection with the development of art — for instance, with regard to institutional critique (as mentioned at the beginning), to socially engaged art or to relational aesthetics — it is indeed relevant to ask to what extent the museum of today can be a site of active exchange, learning and education and how it can develop in an age when digital and global networking is at its highest level ever.

The transregional networking and exchange of knowledge that oscillates in the *Museum as Toolbox* project between artists, employees and the public, between openness and goal-orientation, is anchored both at the regional and institutional levels. A survey has revealed that although media education might be important for the target audience, physical experience still matters more; a symposium on the subject of contemporary education yielded similar results. These findings, together with a joint, growing exhibition and this catalogue, demonstrate broadly malleable process, open discourse and direct exchange with art as themes of the visionary museum.

In doing so, tools that could be ideal for exchange are drafted, trust is established and new questions are formulated. This ground-work allows museums related in terms of their content and concept and located in translocal and peripheral centres of Europe to continue their cooperation. This is, undoubtedly, an open experiential experiment for all!

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

*Alexandra Trost*

The beginning of the project was marked by an intense research phase that should provide a basis for all further project developments. Our aim was to find out more about the concrete needs and necessary support opportunities of a pre-defined target audience of 15- to 25-year-olds in our local context before developing, testing and measuring the impact of concrete communication tools.

### **Relevant target group**

The key objectives of the first project phase were to improve knowledge of the target group and their relations, interests, communications and interaction with the museum and its programmes, to identify new communication channels for better involvement of this “hard to reach” target group and to improve the relations and connectedness of the museum at the local level.

The purpose of the planned market research was to find out the spoken language of the target group in connection with (contemporary) art and to encourage the young participants to present their own ideas of a museum as a toolbox by using an integrative creative and qualitative research approach.

Fifty young people out of the youth group knowledge pools participated in the online forum. These fifty youngsters participated in our online survey for three weeks, completed various tasks and answered different questions three to four times a week. To get enough quantitative data, additional short questionnaires were distributed to the target group.

### **Survey criteria**

The online survey consisted of three main modules — tasks, a forum and a blog — designed to help us to get more information about the leisure behaviour and interests of our target group. It looked at their communication behaviour in general, as well as in regards to cultural topics, and at their understanding of the art museum, with the aim of revealing desires for the content, themes and ideas of a museum as a toolbox, along with requirements for a possible new museum App. The tasks had to be answered individually, in the forum various questions were discussed with other participants, and for the blog posts they wrote about their personal experience of visiting the respective local partner museum.

One major challenge we faced during the survey was that, although the target group has a strong penchant for digital tools, our adolescents are more interested in face-to-face actions.

### **Project-related results**

#### *Communication and free time*

Concerning leisure activities, our focus group indicated that the top priority should be friends, as a joint experience is very important to them. This also applied to museum visits. When we asked them with whom they normally visit museums, the majority answered “with friends”, followed by “with school/university”. Friends and family provide incentives to visit museums: in getting information about free-time activities they stated that they talk to friends first. Word of mouth and peers are important multipliers in the local context. Besides talking to peers, our young people use search engines, social media channels and websites as information sources. The most important channel for them, according to our survey, is YouTube, followed by Facebook and then WhatsApp and Instagram.

#### *Contemporary art*

Contemporary art is — again according to our survey — something that is relevant and discussed in our target group. For the participants, contemporary art is about leaving the comfort zone and rethinking and interpreting socially relevant issues and topics. It helps to reflect today's society, clarify issues and question everyday occurrences. On the other hand, modern art is often misperceived as being hermetic according to our participants. “If you don't understand something, you tend to not like it”. Art museums should therefore encourage different modes of participation in exhibitions by applying interactive concepts to a greater extent.

#### *Museum experience*

Regarding museum visits, our young participants are generally looking for more interaction and inclusion that would enable them to actively engage in the museum context. It is felt that interactive activities would prevent people from just rushing through the museum and would trigger reflection.

The overall museum experience is very important to them. A successful museum visit highly depends — among other things — on the guide and museum staff. A friendly, dedicated guide, as well as content presented in a committed way, motivates young people to come back. Other influencers, such as teachers, parents and again

friends, are seen as crucial for a positive perception of a museum visit.

Besides the actual exhibition content, the exhibition design, multimedia offers and again interactivity are highly important to these young people. Concerning the content of exhibitions, they seemed to have a special interest in photography and installations. Variations on “classic exhibitions”, i.e. heterogeneous exhibitions displaying paintings, sculptures, photos and installations in open spaces, are favoured. Our young participants have an interest in space, its possibilities and its interaction with their experience. For them, a successful exhibition involves “modernity” and hospitality, and is connected with the architecture of the museum.

Apart from interaction in the exhibition communication, our young people asked for more craft sessions and workshops, drawing classes and various side events, such as film screenings. When asked how they broaden their art experience, most of them mentioned events, followed by video and text. The survey revealed that self-representation is highly relevant to young people: by directly relating to their everyday experiences, a visit to the museum should be of help in understanding, finding and representing oneself in pictures, sound and videos.

Altogether, the survey results confirmed the anticipated outcomes, but in some cases, such as a definite desire to interact personally, also revealed some opinions that will reshape further activities, such as the exhibition, the actual catalogue and the YouTube channel.

*“It is important how a museum presents its own content. I believe few people enjoy receiving information by just simply listening or reading text. We tend to use all our senses: tactile, visual, olfactory, aural etc. to understand things. Therefore, if museum could enrich the methods in presenting the content, to provide a multi-sensory, inspiring and appealing visiting experience, I believe young people will start to love visiting museums as much as playing video games. :)” — F/23/AUT*

## SYMPOSIUM

Mary-Ann Talvistu

At the half-way mark of the project, the time was ripe to summarize and present our findings and to learn from other projects dealing with similar issues. The symposium was structured around three main topics: youth and art museums, socially-engaged art and artist interventions in art museums, and communication tools. Each of these sections also included a presentation of an example of active youth involvement in museums: the Kumu Youth Club, ULK Art Labs at Statens Museum for Kunst and the Palazzo Grassi Teens. To get a first-hand overview of their presentations, take a look at the YouTube channel of the *Museum as Toolbox* project.<sup>1</sup>

## Youth and art museums

First, Alexandra Trost from our team presented the findings of the market research survey that was implemented at the beginning of the project *Translocal: Museum as Toolbox*. The survey aimed to improve our understanding of the pre-defined target audience (15 to 25 years old) and their relationship to museums.

The survey was partly based on recent research (the results were published in May 2015) by the Network of European Museum Organisations' (NEMO) audience development project Young People in Museums.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, we invited NEMO's LEM Working Group member Sinéad Kathy Rice to briefly introduce the structure and key concepts of their report at the symposium. As an Education Manager at the National Gallery of Ireland, she also presented various ways in which the institution has put the findings of the NEMO project into practice.

She argued that youth projects should first establish a dialogue with those young people who are already coming to the gallery. This dialogue would provide deeper insight into how the museum can improve the interaction with youth in general. Rice recognized the difficulties in programming for an entity that is constantly evolving — when you are changing so quickly, how can a museum provide something for you when you don't always know yourself what you want next. Museums should find ways to connect their collections to contemporary practices using different media, social programming, artist workshops and youth contributions. Simultaneously making engaging

<sup>1</sup> All of the presentations of the symposium are uploaded and can be viewed on the YouTube channel: Museum as Toolbox

<sup>2</sup> You can view the published material here: [http://www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/topics/Audience\\_Development/Museums\\_and\\_Young\\_People\\_NEMO\\_LEMWG\\_study\\_2015.pdf](http://www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/topics/Audience_Development/Museums_and_Young_People_NEMO_LEMWG_study_2015.pdf), accessed August 27, 2016.

with the collection more consistent with current curriculum trends. She summed her presentation up by saying that it should all be about bringing people and art together onsite, offsite and online. Genuine engagement and honest conversation is the right way forward, as young people are eager to voice their opinions, contribute their ideas and get actively involved in the museum community.

### **Socially-engaged art and artist interventions**

The key-note speaker of the symposium was Professor Victoria Walsh from the Royal College of Arts, who has previously worked in different departments at Tate. Walsh offered a variety of approaches to the question: how can we diversify and develop sustainable audiences for the modern and contemporary art museum? She stressed that this could only be achieved by bringing together different departments (curating, education, marketing etc.) and trying to bridge those gaps which are quickly disappearing in the real world but perhaps not so fast inside the museum. The latter being one of the aims of the *Museum as Toolbox* project as well.

When talking about the future of museums, she quoted former Tate director Chris Dercon:

*“The museum of the future is going to be completely different from a place where people come to admire ... the museum of the future is going to be like a university, like a campus, where the art is one thing, but the fact that you have so many different encounters and that you can test your ideas out, that you can throw your questions out about gender, identity, about the world, about salaries .... this is the museum of the future.”<sup>3</sup>*

This idea of the art museum as a discursive environment that is composed of dynamic sets of spaces and that supports and encourages debate is rooted in the rise of public programming. Contemporary museums require socializing and networking which animate the values of public space and create communities of interest. She mentioned Tate’s pilot projects related to the practice of commissioning, as examples of achieving this goal. This topic resonated well with the artist’s residencies, which took place in the participating five institutions of the *Museum as Toolbox* project. The Tate’s projects showed that the changing roles of curators and audiences force museums to test what levels of risk they are prepared to take in working with artists (whether artist residencies, workshops or new commissions) and what level of interest these collaborations generate in new audiences. For example, in socially engaged practices we can see that often artists are now closer to audiences than they are to museums.

<sup>3</sup> “The Museum of the Future,” interview with Chris Dercon, Goethe Institute (October 2013), <http://www.goethe.de/ins/gb/lp/kul/dug/dop/dro/enindex.htm>, accessed August 27, 2016.

She concluded her talk with a reference to a recent project — Tate Exchange — which is aimed at building a dialogue around arts, society and the wider issues facing us all today. She argued that this type of programming shows how we have moved from the material work of art to more immaterial, non-object-based works that circulate in a network-distributed culture rather than as works to be installed in the museum. It will be interesting to see what these changes mean for curating and collecting.

### Communication tools

The round-table discussion that concluded the second panel concentrated on artist residencies held in each of the partner museums of the project. These discussions paved the way for presentations in the third panel, which focused on the role of communication tools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century museum. Somewhat surprisingly, the real change in this area has come from the audiences, who are no longer made up of passive consumers. Rather than targeting audiences in terms of cultural policy categories, it is more productive to attract and develop audiences through shared and collective interests and curiosities.

The impact of digital technology on cultures of the visual means that the experts in art museums now stand largely in the same position as the contemporary visitor and the spectator of the artwork. Saturated visual culture of the everyday changes the meaning and experience of the visual in the art museum.

One effective tool for establishing a closer relationship with the audience is through storytelling. The creator of the platform *Museum of the Future*, Jasper Visser, issued a call to action, saying that storytelling in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is everybody's responsibility. Museums have so many stories to tell, ranging from their collections to their brands. Storytelling is also a great tool for bridging the gap between technology and tradition.

For museums, it is a real challenge to keep up with the major trends in (digital) communication, whether instant messaging, interactivity, spontaneous content or live video. These trends change rapidly and this is why we need to combine them with more traditional approaches, such as storytelling. People are hooked the moment they can relate to the topic and through that develop a more profound relationship with museums.

Finally, Sarah Greenwood from our team summed up the symposium and the interim results of the *Museum as Toolbox* project by bringing out different audience development strategies and tools that we have implemented and tested out so far.

## COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Sarah Greenwood

Despite the different contexts of the partner museums in the project *Translocal: Museum as Toolbox*, and the different stages at which they find themselves regarding communication with and engagement of young people, in an initial summary of the communication tools tested so far, all partners cited very similar lessons learned. The project foresaw the preparation of a dissemination strategy for all museums. This top-down approach has been deemed ineffective, as each museum has its own context and existing tools that should be exploited where possible. Moreover, a top-down approach when working with youth groups has proven to be fatal. This issue will become clearer further on with regard to participation.

The aim of the project, to identify new and existing tools of communication with young people, above all gives rise to the question of what is meant by communication in a museum. Several things have become evident in response to this question.

Firstly, communication in a museum is not limited to the communication department. In a museum of contemporary art, the exhibitions, mediation and education programmes can also be considered tools of communication. Starting from the development of programmes, communication should be considered with regard to offering content that visitors can relate to, although this requires the right tools to enable them to relate to the content on their own terms and with means with which they are comfortable.

This revelation brings us to an important tool: **internal communication** is fundamental in the toolbox of the museum. Inter-departmental teams made up of a curator, an education professional and a communication manager are working on the project. This structure, which breaks away from the hierarchical, departmental structure adopted at most of the museums for all other activities, has proven to be very effective in communicating with young people from different angles, leading to the creation of other important tools.

A further tool that came to light, or in the case of some museums was confirmed, takes us back to the definition of communication: “the process in which information is exchanged...”. Communication is not a unilateral process but depends on information passing both ways. A most important tool identified, therefore, was **listening**, essential in order to discover expectations, inhibitions and motivation levers.

One particular tool that proved to be effective for all the participating museums was **collaboration with existing networks**. In order to

reach potentially interested young people, professionals in the region, and in particular professors and youth club leaders, were consulted. When communicating with a specific target group, it is essential both on- and off-line to contact them where they are (whether virtually or physically). It is not enough to presume that a published message has been received. By talking to them in their “territory”, the information the museums wished to pass on proved to be easier for them to find and was approached more favourably by them.

Once the youth groups had been formed, another tool became evident for all partners: **participation**. The groups made it clear from early on that being part of a passive audience was of little interest to them. They wanted to be creatively active, make a contribution and have learning experiences (for life education, not for academic purposes).

All partner members agree that one of the best tools to use, which involves intense participation on the part of youth, is the formation of a **youth group**. This body of young people can be involved at all levels of the museum’s activities. Giving the youth group a behind-the-scenes look at the museum has proven particularly motivating for them.

By observing the participation of the young people in the project, further conclusions regarding communication with them can be drawn: when people are involved in an activity and feel it is “theirs”, they are more likely to activate another very important communication tool: **sharing and recommendation**. These are possibly the most powerful tools of all with regard to this target group. The main ways of sharing and recommending among young people are word-of-mouth and on-line. A large proportion of young people in the target age-group (15 to 25 years old) use **social media**. They do not seek or appreciate receiving information through these channels, but use them to connect with friends and to share experiences, opinions, thoughts and general chit-chat. The target group responded well to Facebook and Instagram, but not to Twitter or to newer social media such as Snapchat. Reaction was good to social media posts only if the content was of high quality and, if possible, in the form of a short video. The youth groups wanted to be in charge of the social media channels selected for the communication. Likewise, it could be confirmed across the board that this age group is not interested in official websites and rarely use e-mail, therefore rendering newsletters an inefficient communication tool for them.

A further successful tool is the **event**. Youngsters gain confidence and feel important when organising events, and those attending them are able to “hang out”, an important activity for this target group. We are often led to believe that young people communicate and

socialise digitally, mainly via their smart phones, but this presumption has not been confirmed during the project. Whatsapp, Slack and Facebook groups have been used in various museums for organisational purposes, but the young people wished to **meet physically**. It is in these meetings that creative processes are activated and the project work is carried out.

Another key issue which arose was the question of pricing. Young people are scarcely if not completely unwilling to pay for cultural activities. During the residency, all activities were purposely offered free-of-charge. **Free for youth** is a further tool, therefore, to be considered and applied to events and activities with this target group.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it is impossible to discuss the tools of communication in a contemporary art museum without discussing the role of **art and artists** themselves. It is this which differentiates contemporary art museums from other activities and places that may be proposed to this target group. Interventions and actions by the artists are generally considered unique, “cool” and very attractive for young people. In the case of Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, for example, the artist in residency, Aldo Giannotti, developed and performed an action of gluing monumental letters to the facades of some buildings in the city, which spelt out some definitions of what the museum of the future could be like. The youth members brought a megaphone and shouted out the slogans to passers-by.

As the next phase of the project *Museum as Toolbox* approaches, what has been learned so far will be acted upon. New members will be recruited using the most effective tools discovered or confirmed in the initial phases and, together with current members and the museums’ staffs, will re-write the dissemination strategy for the *Museum as Toolbox* exhibition and catalogue. A final evaluation of the communication tools will be carried out subsequently.

Kunsthau  
Kunsthau  
Kunsthau  
Kunsthau  
Kunsthau  
Kunsthau  
Kunsthau  
Kunsthau  
Kunsthau  
Kunsthau

**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**  
**Graz Graz Graz**

MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# Kunsthhaus Graz in the *Museum* *as TOOLbOX* PrOject

Kunsthhaus Graz

MONIKA HOLZER-KERNBICHLER

A BEGINNING  
Katrin Bucher Trantow

In 2003, Kunsthaus Graz was built on the left side of the river Mur as a joint undertaking of the Province of Styria and the city of Graz. It is an exhibition centre of contemporary art that shows international developments in regular, changing exhibitions, placing these in both national and regional contexts. With the help of the biomorphous building designed by Peter Cook and Colin Fournier,



such solo exhibitions as John Baldessari's, Katharina Grosse's and Ai Wei Wei's, as well as exhibitions on such topics as landscape and kinetics, have positioned the

relatively young and relatively remote institution on the global map of influential art institutions. Nevertheless, questions of which direction to take and how to develop further into the urban, regional and (g)local structure were at the forefront when, on the initiative of the Kunsthaus, discussions with other, similar institutions in Europe started in 2011. The cooperation network *Translocal* – intended to strengthen the role and position of the participating museums – formed the ideas for *MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX* in 2014: a structured research project that aimed to find new tools to work with a new public, directly and interactively.

WHY  
THIS  
PARTICULAR  
PROJECT IS  
INTERESTING  
FOR THE  
KUNSTHAUS  
GRAZ

## Kunsthhaus Graz

Art and architecture education at the Kunsthhaus Graz focus on the exhibitions currently on display and on the building's extraordinary architecture. Its activities address the themes of the exhibitions while defining personnel and media methods and a range of potential artistic, art historical, social, historical, educational etc. approaches suitable for heterogeneous audiences (from local people to international tourists, from children to specialists). Services aimed at specific target groups create particular emphases intended to fulfil the Kunsthhaus Graz's educational mandate and to bring together diverse content into a discourse that encourages a critical and reflexive investigation of contemporary art and thus of social reality. Within this context, actual knowledge, created areas of experience and social values converge. Art education plays a moderating role in this process, opening up doors to potential approaches not just in contemporary art, but also involving social or contemporary historical phenomena. Continuous areas

**of activity arise from the building's architecture and museological subject areas. Cooperation efforts with various Graz institutions also play an important part in educational work at the Kunsthaus Graz.**

In light of these fundamental considerations, the **MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX** project is interesting for many reasons. Firstly, there is the target group of young people between 15 and 25 years, not just very heterogeneous in itself – probably more heterogeneous than any other target group – but which also, due to this key developmental stage of adolescence, presents us with huge challenges in terms of awakening their interest in art, museums and exhibitions. 15- to 18-year-olds are especially highly self-absorbed and usually still very occupied with their school education. However, in the case of the older ones, we have also often asked ourselves as a team what would motivate them to come to the Kunsthaus Graz, and what would stop them from coming? The **MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX** project provides us with the opportunity to consider the essence of this issue, and in particular to ask the target group themselves. A special digital questionnaire on selected subjects delivered some illuminating findings, involving above all practical work with respect to educational curation. The aim is to consolidate the museum as a social venue and to further stimulate this educational objective. Apart from the survey, working unusually intensively with young people in an everyday situation has proved interesting and enlightening. Twenty young people responded to our call, and they were interested in cooperating on the project's key issues. They concentrated on potential appropriate forms of communication for content inside and outside the museum. What means and options can promote meaningful communication of content with this target group?

What do the young people themselves like? How do they want to consume information: what is their favourite way of experiencing what is going on in the museum? What kind of presentation actually motivates them to make their way to the museum? And what do they ultimately want to experience there?

**I see communication of the content of exhibitions or themes within the building itself as a core task of art education. We have been using media forms such as audio, video and text types for blogs for some time now at the Kunsthaus Graz. Our work with young people has confirmed that these are indeed the channels most used by our focus group. Our media information services are also increasingly being consumed outside the Kunsthaus Graz via our website, gaining additional value as educational tools. Large-scale participatory projects, such as the Big Draw (at the Kunsthaus Graz since 2014), as well as spatially appealing and engaging exhibition designs, such as the Katharina Grosse installation, also met with affirmative responses.**

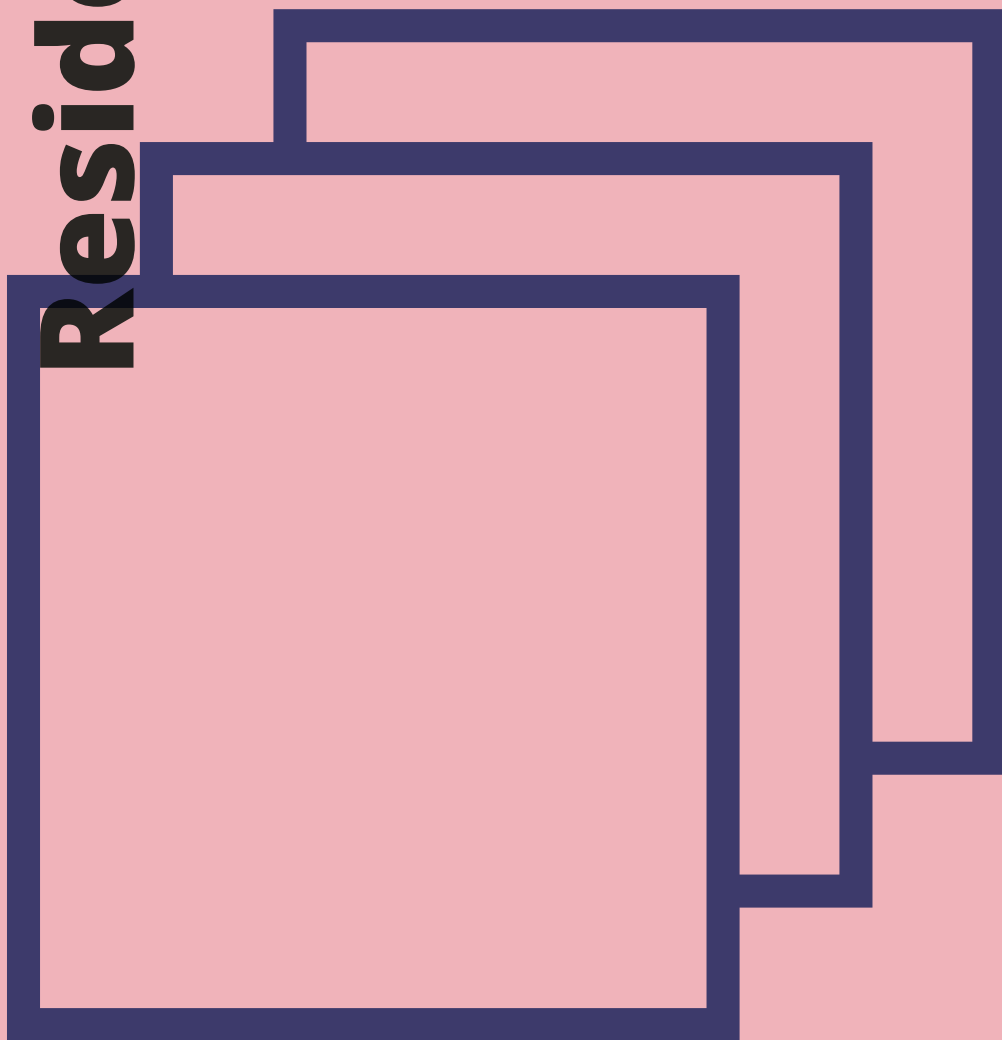
Another exciting aspect of the MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX project concerns work processes within the team, between the curator of the exhibition, and education and public relations personnel, which are strengthened further at an international level with the project partners. Since all of the people involved exchange views on the topic at an early stage, our usual work-flows are challenged. In addition to this comes the early involvement of the public in the exhibition project, which is time-consuming and demanding in terms of resources, and must therefore also be incorporated into work routines. A balancing act must be achieved between the exhibition concept, the artists' work (which in Graz also focuses reflexively on the communication forms of a museum of the

future), curatorial realisation and educational implementation, as well as the young people participating. In this sense, the opportunities offered by contemporary forms of communication are also investigated within the project. These diverse interrelations are producing better and better approaches in an increasingly tangible exhibition project. Work can now continue specifically in particular directions as roles and tasks are distributed. The project offers a unique opportunity not only to encourage and try out new ideas, but also to allow these to flow into everyday museum practice. This seems to me to be an important future objective of the **MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX**, and one that could also become a symbol of renewal through change. ■



Kunsthau Graz

# Residency



# Report

“It initially started with the museum in Zagreb selecting us as artists that they wanted to present to the other partner museums. So the initial willingness on our side to take part in this project was to work and research abroad and to work on topics we are interested in: education of the public that it’s not necessarily commercial.”



*Maja Kolar*

## Questions and potentials

In April 2016, the artist and design group *Oaza* from Zagreb came to the Kunsthaus Graz to develop a strategy, to formulate questions and to research possibilities of interaction with the contemporary “Kunsthalle” that we are. They came to work together with the whole institution — with aspects of marketing, education and curating as much as with its 12 years of history in the second largest city of Austria and its specifically iconic architecture — as well as with a group of young adults who were willing to interact and work together with all of us on a common vision of the future of communication in and through the museum institution. *Oaza* — from which Maša Poljanec and Maja Kolar were our local partners — had been chosen because of their interaction with local residents of Zagreb and their way of working speculatively with design processes throughout different forms of urban perception.



**A month before I had been sitting with the Vienna-based artist Aldo Giannotti on a bench in the foyer of the Kunsthaus Graz. I had recommended him for one of the “intervention residencies” in the partner institutions of the MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX project and we were discussing the forms his upcoming artistic intervention might take. The issue was the overall character of the project and what he was expected to achieve in terms of the concept: How can you actively include a target audience of young adults in museums of contemporary art? All of the partner museums had identified 15- to 25-year-olds as particularly difficult to reach, and yet they can be seen as seismographs for the future in terms of finding new forms of communication within and outside of the museum. I confirmed that the approach of our joint research and networking project was fundamentally experimental, open and applied to the institution as a whole. This soon led us to the question of the “ideal museum of contemporary art”: What role can it play in art production, in its current development and realisation and, last but not least, in changing a society that is increasingly focused on consumption?**

**"We really like the museum, the Kunsthaus Graz. And when I say museum, I mean the people who work there because they – being opened to our ideas, helpful and supportive during our residency – represented the museum to us as artists more than just the building."**

*Maša Poljanec*

MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

Verbal communication  
Nonverbal communication

Gestures    Body language    Facial expressions

Emotions    Colour    Sound    Light    Volume    Composition

Clothes    Surrounding    Eye contact    Touch    Taste

Smell    Intrapersonal communication    Self-talk

Thinking    Reading    Repeating what one hears    Copying text

Writing    Diary    Day-dreaming    Lucid dreaming

Making gestures while thinking    Sense-making

Interpreting (maps, signs, and symbols)

# COMMUNICATION

Communication between body parts

Interpersonal communication    Speech communication

Summarizing    Paraphrasing    Listening

Questioning

Direct communication    Indirect communication

Sub-conscious    Intuitive    Subliminal

Public communication    Mass communication

Informal communication

Formal communication

Multiple experiences  
Shared experiences  
Unique physical, sensory and  
non-digital social experiences  
Virtual Digital Inspiring Mystical  
Ritual  
On-demand Intimate  
Personalized / Customized / Individual

Surprising **EXPERIENCES** Emotional

Inner connection Liberating Fulfilling  
Empathy inducing Seductive Fun  
Authentic Meaningful Self-understanding  
Sensuous Aesthetic Pleasurable  
Enhancing sensory perception Calming Stimulating  
Coffee like: wakes you up & calms you down  
New

Kunsthhaus Graz

Educating

Agent of social change

Engages public discourse and policy-making

Revitalizing and forming communities

Central community life    Sharing information & knowledge

Making social involvement & impact

Forum for dialogue around the provocative issues of our time

Shaping the social future

# SOCIETY

Engageing and enabeling positive participation

Intersecting culture, arts, and activism

Acting in public spaces    Protecting public domain

Promoting social juistic    Rethinking society

Making connections

## A toolbox – indeed

We were drawn to the project title as the central, open question of our shared curiosity. Within the notion of a museum as a toolbox – taken to its logical end – there lies a hidden possible ideal: we regard the museum as a site of process, not only where an exchange of ideas and attitudes occurs but which, in conjunction with its whole being, becomes a medium for the public.

A process, therefore, which uses art to question definitions of learning and education parallel to conditions of the public sphere and audience, of locality, architecture, history and collection together with the hidden structural functions.

A process that breaks open and uses all of these things, right through to the personnel and structural properties of the museum,

### **Time-line**

**10–20 April 2016**

**In residency Kunsthaus Graz**

**19 April 2016**

**Public presentation Graz**

**May–June**

**Concept development**

**10–12 June 2016**

**International Design Festival**

**Dan D Zagreb, Croatia**

**27 June 2016**

**Berlin meeting, project overview**

**October 2016**

**Material submission**

**February 2017**

**Touring exhibition**

***“Hopefully these platforms  
or toolboxes can be used like  
social media to help keep  
things more up to date.”***

– Maja Kolar –

playing through them with the medium of art.

During our first talk as much as during the residency with the *Oaza* collective in Graz, the continuously exciting and revolutionary aspect of the **MUSEUM AS TOOL - BOX** project lay in the potential to recognise the participating museums in their entirety – from their directors, curators, education and marketing to their architectural designs – not just as clients and discourse partners but also as a medium to be explored in its societal role, and to shape this in a visionary way through the artistic process.

What we were looking for were possible new ways of communicating challenges, the disciplines and roles of artists, curators and the institution of the museum, and the reach of their production. Within this context, an open process was initiated that linked individual action with the audience in a shared experience.

Oaza's research and discussion with the youth group on the possible developments of the future museum brought six design scenarios as sketches for speculative models for the exhibition. The Application model is a clever, interactive education tool. The Gadget model is a garment – enabling social activities, playing and role playing. The Therapy model consists of sessions conducted by professionals in the Museum Space. The Inner Museum model is an intimate room of introspection whereas the Expedition model leads to personal journeys in the museum experience. Finally, the Art Laboratory: the museum as multi-faceted space and community.

These sketches and the simple fact of them existing and remaining a model form a basis for the concept of the exhibition. ■

MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# Reflections on the Graz Youth Group

Kunsthaus Graz

MONIKA HOLZER-KERNBICHLER

When at the beginning of this year the formulation of the call was agreed to with our EU partners, discussed with young people and then finally set, we managed to attract about 20 people in the target group of 15- to 25-year-olds in Graz who were prepared to work on **MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX**. For the first meeting we invited everybody, not only to outline the general starting points on our part but also so that the group could get to know each other. In putting the group together, it was important to us



to include school students under 18, to find university students studying a range of subjects and ideally to attract people from completely

different occupations. In part we managed to achieve a good level of heterogeneity within the group with regard to their ages; however, it was noticeable that many more women than men were interested in taking part. We were also happy to have young people in the group who already had a basic interest in museums, since within the everyday context of the museum we very much wanted them to visit more often. Within the group there were students from a school specialising in cultural management, students of art history from Graz and Vienna, a Chinese student of museology, students of European ethnology and a graduate from a technical school.

## Kunsthhaus Graz

At the first meeting, we jointly established the framework conditions that had in part been announced in the call. The first point was to find 15 interested people who wished to take part in the online survey and in addition to determine how much time the individual participants had available for the project. In Graz we decided that work with the youth group should not be limited to the 10 days of the art group Oaza's residency, but should instead continue until the end of July, so that the young people also had the opportunity to cooperate in our project in the long term, alongside their everyday commitments, and to get to know the Kunsthhaus Graz better. Looking back, this arrangement elicited a very positive response from everyone, as did the resulting opportunity for voluntary work and, unsurprisingly, school internships. This contractual connection to the institution was important to us not just in order to introduce an element of obligation to the activities, but also to reflect in some way our recognition of their commitment.

Since the group was very big, we decided to divide it up into different areas of responsibility and also to provide different contact partners for them. Hence, two students entered the curatorial team and accompanied the curators from Tallinn and Poland during their stays in Graz. They also

conducted interviews with them and served as contact partners for Oaza during their research. Another group was devoted to audio and/or video production, participating intensively in the documentation of the project during the artists' residency. The subject of "text" was also given ample scope. Finally there was a group dedicated to analysing existing communication forms at the Vienna Museums.

Following the first introductory discussion with Alexandra Trost and myself, there was an initial, intensive input session with the artists. Over the course of the 10 days of their residency in Graz, they focused on the question of the museum of the future and encouraged the young people to think in this direction and to engage with the issue. The following questions formed the focus: What does it mean that the museum is a toolbox? How can museums become interactive toolboxes? If a museum is a toolbox, what is the future of the museum? What possibilities and ways of communication are there for museums? What does a museum have to do with present-day life? Why do young people go, or not go, to museums? What will museums of the future save/share/promote? What things could be tried out if money, gravity, space, etc. were not issues?

"For you with us – with you through us!" – Valerie, 23 –

Apart from these key issues for a museum, the theme of contemporary art played a role, as it did in the online survey that ran simultaneously. There was also an exploration of the key question of what art generally meant to them and what role art played in their lives.

The small teams then began to work around these issues. In the weeks that followed they visited various museums and events and discussed them amongst themselves. They became familiar with different areas of activity and occupations at the museum and tried out various video and audio production techniques. They thought about how the museum could be promoted better on social media and considered current educational formats. They made audio recordings in the studio and wrote texts for the blog. They did the documentation for Oaza's public presentation which took place at the end of the artists' residency at the Kunsthhaus Graz. Here they also presented their work generally and the *Museum as Toolbox* project.

After 10 more intensive days, the young people continued to work hard. There were regular work meetings, some of them worked very independently, and others – especially the younger ones – needed more support. This was also why these participants were invited to be actively involved in a workshop about communicating

“  
**The  
project  
made  
me  
realise  
that  
art  
is  
accessible  
to  
everyone**  
.”

– Anne, 19 –

with emoticons with young refugees from Syria and students at the FH Joanneum and also to try out what it means to communicate without a common language and to observe what apparently simple symbols can mean in different cultures. As was expected, the results were very heterogeneous, as were the vivid experiences of each participant. The older students in the group also organised a journey to Zagreb to visit Oaza in their studio there.

Although at the outset the project might have seemed diffuse to some, the experimental character of the first stage was positive for everyone. The tangible work on the exhibition project is now set to make the tasks to be distributed more concrete, while the visionary and perhaps utopian aspects of the initial research phase join the pool of opportunities that *Museum as Toolbox* can offer.

■

**“Making up a museum**

**of the future together**

**was a great experience!”**

– Anonymous, 16 –

Kunsthhaus Graz





The image consists of a solid orange background. Overlaid on this background are twelve rows of the word "Kumu". Each row contains two instances of the word, one on the left and one on the right, separated by a small gap. The word "Kumu" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif typeface. The repetition of the word across multiple rows creates a strong visual rhythm and texture.

**Art Museum**

**museum 𐌱𐌰𐌹𐌺𐌰**

**Art Museum**

**museum 𐌱𐌰𐌹𐌺𐌰**

**Art Museum**

**museum 𐌱𐌰𐌹𐌺𐌰**

**Art Museum**

**museum 𐌱𐌰𐌹𐌺𐌰**

**Art Museum**

**museum 𐌱𐌰𐌹𐌺𐌰**

**Art Museum**

**museum 𐌱𐌰𐌹𐌺𐌰**

MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# Kumu Art Museum in the *Museum* *as TOOLbox* Project

Kumu Art Museum

MAARIN EKTERMANN

## Kumu. Kumu! Kumu?

The Kumu Art Museum is the headquarters and the largest exhibition venue of the Art Museum of Estonia. With its opening in 2006, the Art Museum of Estonia, for the first time in its almost century-long history, obtained a building that specifically conformed to the needs of a contemporary museum. Besides exhibition halls, Kumu houses the largest collection of Estonian art (close to 60,000 works), an auditorium and an educational centre for art aficionados of every age. In 2008, Kumu was named the European Museum of the Year.

The first thing one notices when approaching Kumu is its charismatic architecture; an environment like this is hard to find anywhere else in Tallinn: stylistically angular but circular in form. The building is the result of an international architecture competition held in 1993–1994 and won by the Finnish architect Pekka Vapaavuori. He gave the building a monumental circular shape and tasteful look, using such materials as dolomite, wood and copper, which are related to local natural traditions. The building is positioned in the

limestone slope of Lasnamäe Hill and therefore, despite its size, sits quite comfortably on the urban borderline between the cute Kadriorg baroque park and the Lasnamäe neighbourhood, filled with panel buildings.



Photo: Kaido Haagen

And what does the name “Kumu” stand for? The public museum naming competition was held in spring 2004 and Kumu, derived from the Estonian compound word for art museum – kunstimuuseum – was declared the winner. “Kumu” also means “echo” or “hearsay” in Estonian.

## WHAT TO SEE IN KUMU

Being the biggest art institution, exhibition venue and art producer in Estonia, the Kumu exhibition programme has the responsibility of balancing various interests and offering something exciting to very different segments of the museum-going public. The lens is trained on the specific heritage of Estonian art and on broader associations with the regional art landscape.

**The exhibition halls take up just under 5,000 square meters of the building's floor space and show art from the 18<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries, from works by Baltic-Germans to contemporary art works often created especially for exhibitions in Kumu. Two floors are dedicated to permanent exhibitions of Estonian art, and temporary exhibition spaces on the third and fourth floors (the “B-halls”) introduce new aspects of Estonian art and seek parallels with international art. The fifth floor hosts exhibitions of contemporary Estonian and international art. In Kumu's great hall, large exhibitions of Estonian art, international travelling exhibitions and cooperative efforts with other museums and institutions take place. Kumu usually has six exhibitions running simultaneously. The international dimension has an important place in Kumu's activities: half of the temporary exhibitions (about 10–12 major exhibition projects are held each year) deal with Estonian art and the other half examine international art history and modern art.**

## **WHAT TO DO IN KUMU:**

### **OUR AGENDA FOR WORKING WITH OUR PUBLICS**

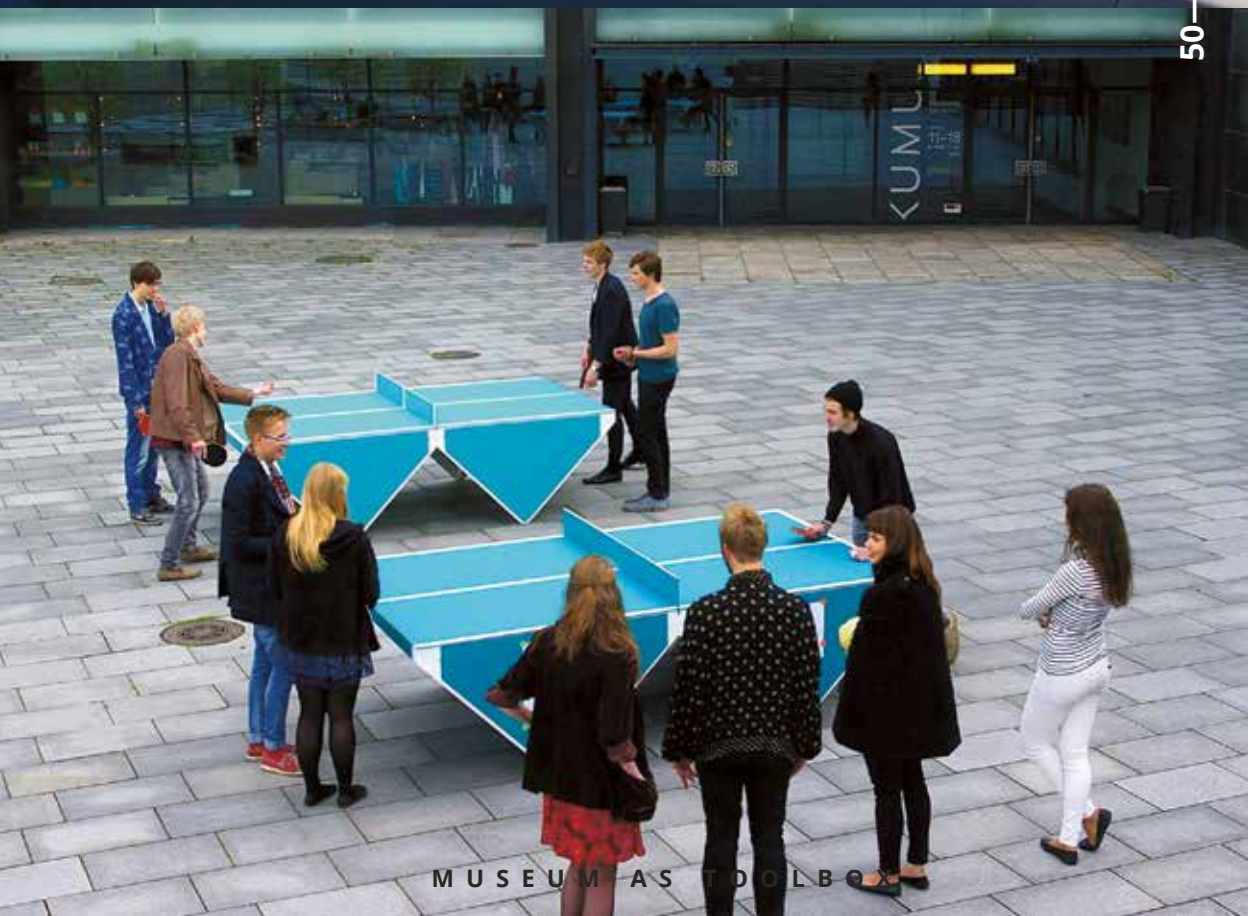
Discussions, artist talks, workshops, creative and art history courses, programmes for schools and kindergartens, a youth club, an art school for children, membership programmes, concerts, an open-door take-away library, table tennis, special events, birthday parties, guided tours, performances, screenings, seminars and symposiums... yes, we have it all, like any contemporary art museum. But how to make all those formats work in the local context, and how to keep the museum – a big and complicated institution – constantly experimenting, is a major challenge.

**Individual participation has played an increasingly important role during the last few years in non-formal education, which also includes the museum experience. In the learning and creative process, one type of knowledge is no more valuable than others, and it is not possible to “pour wisdom into people’s heads”. That means that a movement is under way to shift the focus from hierarchical pedagogy to a more democratic form of education: the “mediation of art”. Kumu is also increasingly working with various target groups: there is no “general public”, and we must think very flexibly. Thus, in the case of Kumu, it is important to focus attention on our closest neighbours: the residents of Kadriorg and the city centre and those who live in Lasnamäe, which has the largest population of any Tallinn district. Many of the educational and public programmes are conducted in Russian and special attention is paid to language immersion.**

It is important for Kumu to become a public space where there are lots of interesting things to do besides visiting the exhibitions. This includes exploring the contemporary

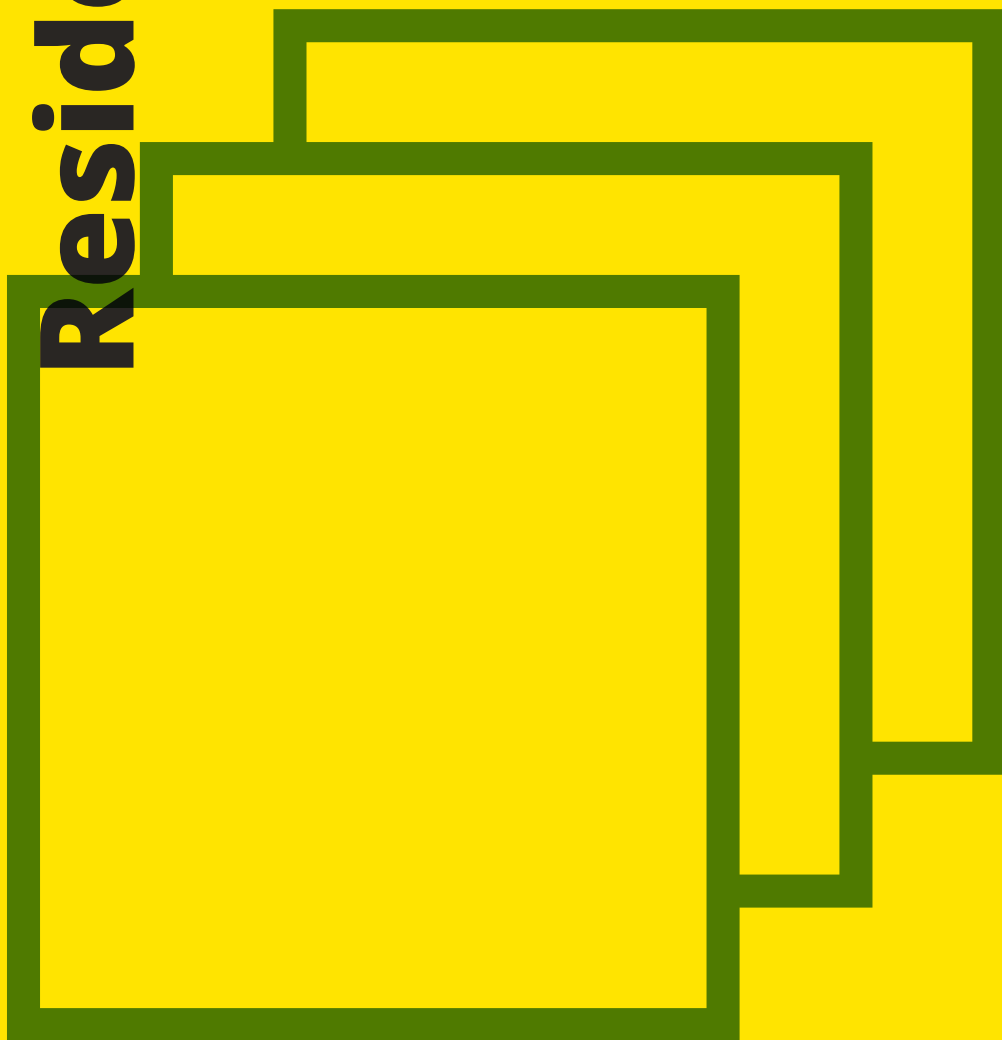
architecture and works of art that can be found throughout Kumu or, for instance, playing ping pong in the courtyard during the summer. In addition, all of the branches of the Art Museum of Estonia are accessible to disabled people. There are tours for people who are visually impaired, for the intellectually challenged and for many others.

**One way to encourage an institution to move beyond secure and comfortable roads is to network with others, to learn from the best practices and from others' mistakes, to share experiences, tips and tricks. The *Translocal* project provides opportunities to figure out how other medium-sized museums in very different context would target typical problems art museums currently face, such as how to (re)connect with youth, how to function as democratic, non-elitist and engaging public venues, and how to work with local communities and draw them to art and museums. Although participation and cooperation are the mantras of today's pan-European projects, it is also a challenge to come together and to try to work with each other, negotiate under one umbrella, and to squeeze something good out of this. The nature of this "goodness" is up to every partner in this project to determine: for Kumu it is, among other things, a regularly operating youth club, whom we support through our means and know-how to encourage them to take the initiative and use Kumu as their space. ■**



Kumu Art Museum

# Residency



# Report

# A COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE

**11–21 April 2016**  
**ARTIST LUIGI COPPOLA**  
**IN RESIDENCY AT KUMU**

## RESEARCH PHASE

Art Museum of Estonia Library  
Bike tour to Lasnamäe and Kadriorg  
Centre for Contemporary Arts Estonia  
Estonian Architecture Museum  
Museum of Occupations  
Rundum artist-run space

Special thanks to: Maria Derlõš, Sander Jürisson, Egge Kulbok-Lattik, Kulla Laas, Carl-Dag Lige, Rebeka Põldsam and Airi Triisberg

**14–20 APRIL 2016**  
**ACCOMPANYING VISITS**  
**BY THE TRANSLOCAL NETWORK PARTNERS**

Ana Škegro: Assistant Curator / Curator of the MSU Zagreb  
Leszek Karczewski: Head of the Department of Education of the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź

## GETTING TO KNOW THE KUMU ART MUSEUM

Anu Allas, Kati Ilves, Eha Komissarov and Triin Tulgiste: Curators of the Kumu Art Museum  
Liisa Kaljula, Annika Räim: Head of the Painting Collection and Head of the Contemporary Art Collections of the Art Museum of Estonia

**14–21 APRIL 2016**  
**MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS**  
**WITH THE KUMU YOUTH GROUP**

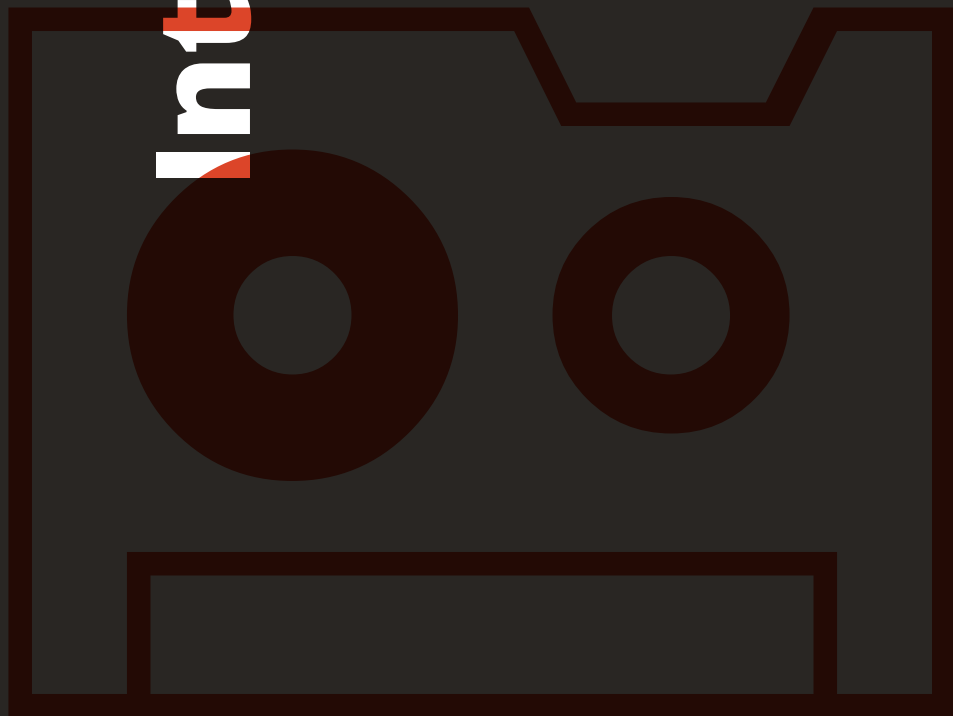
## GROUNDWORK / OUTFITS / CHOREOGRAPHY / PHOTOSHOOT / REFLECTION

Through the meetings and conversations, Luigi inspired the youngsters to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. He stressed that it is important to strengthen the connection between people and the places they share. Together we tried to find answers to the questions:

- How can we facilitate creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural and social identities that define a place and people who inhabit it?
- How can we find tools for a collaborative process that shapes our public realm in order to maximize shared values?

**17 APRIL 2016**  
**PUBLIC DISCUSSION HELD AT KUMU: "MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX.**  
**WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ON THE CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM?"**

# Artist Interview



**Luigi  
Coppola**

**As this is an interview about your working methods, background and previous projects, I wanted to first ask you about your professional background and whether you have specific working methods and -approaches?**

**Luigi Coppola (LC):** I don't have a very clear artistic background. I come from a rural village in southern Italy. My parents were farmers so I have a strong connection with agriculture. I studied environmental engineering. But when I was in Torino I started to study and do theatre. This changed my life.

With my first collective, when I was 24, we started art projects that inhabited specific spaces, such as factories that weren't used any more. From theatre, I moved on to performance art and public art. And now I am more and more working on public art projects, working with different communities and collectives and trying to create a group of interested people around projects. In this way, the projects analyse the spaces, social contexts and the political tissues surrounding each project. The theatrical background of the idea of building a group and creating togetherness inside the group is present in every work I do. The result could be a performance or an engagement in society, an attempt to change something or to develop something. It could be an activist action, or photography, or video or installation, but it is always based on this kind of participatory work.

**Participatory art or socially engaged art practice is quite trendy. Commissions to make something involving certain target groups instead of a more traditional work**

**are very common. Do you see this as a negative or positive trend?**

**LC:** I think that in a way it is indeed a trend, but it also is a necessity. It is not very well formulated from the institutional side; institutions simply try to follow the signals coming from society. They commission participatory art projects to create links between the institution and the society. I think that if we want to go deeper, institutions really need to have curators and people from other fields specialized in this kind of work. Also, education-wise we need to re-imagine the institutions that are preparing the artists who are working in this field.

**Who are the artists and what are the artworks that you personally admire?**

**LC:** For years, my references were philosophers, artists and writers of the Italian Neo-Avant-Garde from the 60s and 70s. I can say that, for example, Edoardo Sanguineti, Nanni Balistrini, Pier Paolo Pasolini and even Antonio Gramsci have been very important to me. Their work was rooted in the concern for the political context in Italy and, at the same time, in their deep interest in language. I have many sources of inspiration from theatre, especially Augusto Boal, and from Paulo Freire the model of radical education and the Theatre of the Oppressed.

I worked for many years with the Italian artist Michelangelo Pistoletto, mainly analysing and re-enacting some of the work from the end of the 60s and the beginning of the 70s. That was an important time, when artists decided to move out of the gallery and to become active in society. This was a break from the individualist idea of the artist, which

was really strong in the 50s. I think that Pistoletto, especially his work in the 60s and 70s, changed the role of the picture. The picture became a mirror and the mirror became society. From that he created one of the first institutions that was devoted to socially engaged practice, involved in transforming society. That was the end of the 90s.

**Let's move on to the *Translocal* project and the residency.**

**How well prepared did you feel when you arrived in Tallinn?**

**LC:** I had read some Wikipedia articles about Estonia, but the main experience was really to come here and be here. To be honest, 10 days of work are not enough to explore, understand and to go deep into the project. So you need to focus on certain specific things. During my first days here, I had to work as much as possible, talking, finding materials, reading, touring the city. Of course, some issues that I experienced aren't local, but processes that go on in every neoliberal system, e.g. the loss of communality. I was also interested in the new research on national identity and nationalism that is common for post-communist countries.

**Do you have your own rituals when arriving at a place you do not know? Where do you go when visiting a new place?**

**LC:** It has varied over the course of my life, but generally the first thing I want to see is how the public space works, where the people meet and create relations. It could be a bus-stop or a square, or it could be a park. I think it reveals a lot about the structure of the particular society.

**Do you work a lot as a nomadic artist, and what are the pros and cons of this type of practise?**

**LC:** My decision to live in Brussels is influenced by the necessity to travel a lot. This is a common practice in the art sphere. But even when visiting other places, I try to establish a kind of continuity. This situation is not ideal. Institutions need to do something new all the time, and commissioning long-term projects is difficult. This is unfortunate from the perspective of participatory and communicative projects; one of the main problems for this type of work is the time we reserve for the process.

**Have you done similar projects, where you have been transported to somewhere for a short period? What is your experience?**

**LC:** I have done projects similar to this one. This time it was not necessary for me to create a new group, as I started to work with a group that was already formed. For a better group dynamic, I proposed some stimulation on different levels and created a small academy. The youngsters were really shy at first and this was a difficult starting point. I felt it was going to be impossible, but then day-by-day they started to open up. Every time I'm surprised by this.

**Can you please describe the project that you did here? What did you try to do, what happened and how did things develop?**

**LC:** When I came here I was interested in the identity of people in a small country like Estonia. Considering the past, the idea of being dominated is very strong here, and as a reaction to this also the nationalistic



IMONAPOL

avatud iga päev

POL

56—57

frame of mind is rather present. In a way both nationalistic and individualistic reactions are understandable for a young nation like this.

On the other hand, there is the specific context of Kumu itself. I became interested in the museum building as it is new and a strong architectural symbol. The courtyard of the building is on the side of the Lasnamägi neighbourhood, with its Soviet-era concrete-slab housing blocks. The vast plateau of the museum is also mostly made of stone and when it is empty gives the impression of walking on the Moon. It is a zone that is in a way problematic but at the same time beautiful. Again this reminds me of the situation of Lasnamägi, where urban planners and city workers are thinking of ways to integrate it more into the urban fabric. These contradictions are very intriguing and interesting to work with.

The main goal I proposed for the workshops was to ask how to live in this space, how to embody the space with a relational dynamic that I installed in the youth group. This relational dynamic was created by exercises that come from practical pedagogy. At the same time, we discussed the history of Estonia and I led them to some texts that I had read about a particular moment in Estonia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when special community houses were founded, together with a grass-roots level of social activism.

Kumu is supposed to be a new cultural gathering place for people that also represents the national identity. So together with the youth group we worked on the question of what a modern cultural hub could be. I was very surprised how they took the ideas and transformed

them. It was an incredible process that just happened in a few days. This is the part that I am proudest of and I am happy that I am leaving this place with a feeling of satisfaction. I am pleased because everybody understood the ability of art to offer this kind of in-depth analysis.

**Topics such as nationalism, collectivism, institutions representing dominant values and so on – how did the youth group deal with these discussions? How were they able to participate in the conversations that you were interested in?**

**LC:** In the beginning it was more about me giving inspiration. We are, after all, talking about a very short-term process, only 10 days. But soon, in different ways, they started to express their capacity to embody this kind of complex discourse. At first, many of them said that they didn't have problems with topics such as nationalism, or with different communities, such as Estonians, Russians, refugees, LGBT activists etc., because they had been born in free Estonia. But then they understood that not only in Estonia but everywhere the sense of freedom is something that you have to work on every day and it is more of a utopia than reality, since conflicts within society are always present. Arriving together at this complete analysis was the core idea of the process. The first part of the project was more about thinking, but the second part was really about the embodiment of these ideas in a kind of performative experience, becoming conscious of one's own body and its presence in a group action.

**How would you describe the final outcome? How would you describe the performative aspect? What was it and what were you trying to achieve with it?**

**LC:** To be honest, I don't know yet. I concentrated on the process, thinking that this was the main focus. So I tried as much as possible not to impose direction. At the end, what we had as an outcome were photos of *tableau vivants* that looked like sculptural forms or living monuments. I hope these representations can create a bridge between different generations, connecting different moments in history, creating this sense of duration. Our experience of time runs through the body.

**What are your criteria for success or achievement in terms of this concrete project? Can you say that you are satisfied with this 10-day residency here?**

**LC:** It is important to have a goal from the beginning; otherwise, you will always be disappointed by the process. In this case, my main goal was to dedicate these 10 days to this group of people, young and beautiful individuals. For me, young people represent hope for the future. The main goal was to see if this stimulation could play a potential role in their lives, in their careers, in their futures. So I imagine this experience more like a stone thrown in a lake that creates concentric circles.

**What do you think the young people learned from this project? What will they take away with them and what did you learn?**

**LC:** I am sure that, in the end, it's depends on each individual person. You give the best stimulation and



energy you can and then let the other person take whatever they are experiencing and feeling at the moment. There is no one criterion for evaluating it. If they started to have doubts about how society is created and what their role in it is, then I hope they learned that their role is not to be passive, as they can actively take part in every field, even if they don't become artists. I think that through art you can shape society, and you can create a dialogue. I think artists can provide some practical tools that everyone needs.

What I learned is not to underestimate working with young people. You always think about yourself in the past and what you wanted back then – I think this doesn't work. When I was young, it was all about discovering. I was really thirsty for stimulation and new information, because I was coming from an environment where I didn't have any stimulation. The times have changed and the young people now are overstimulated. So you have to think about in which context you put the stimulation; you can't expect that every kind of stimulation will open up a new world for them.

### What is your impression of the Kumu Art Museum? What did you see here and what do you think of Kumu as an institution?

**LC:** I can only see with eyes that come from a Western country, and with the background I described earlier. I think I have never had such a complete impression of a museum as I do now of Kumu, because I really had the opportunity to see everything: walk around the building, meet a lot of people, understand the context around it, the history of the museum, etc. I have always been more interested in what is happening outside of museums, outside of big institutions. But this time I chose to work inside one. I was impressed by the historical collection. I usually jump directly to the more contemporary works, but in this case I was more interested in the historical collection since I understood how important it is for the research on the cultural narrative of Estonia. At Kumu, I saw people really trying to engage with the idea of reflecting and creating a lively context for art. What I feel is a bit missing is the idea of performing a museum, taking a step towards the idea of creating tools for performing.

### What do you mean by this?

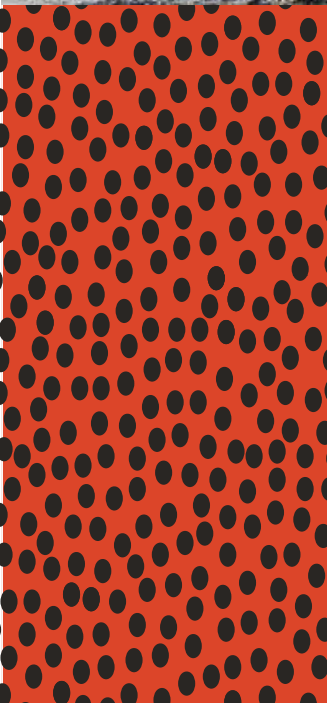
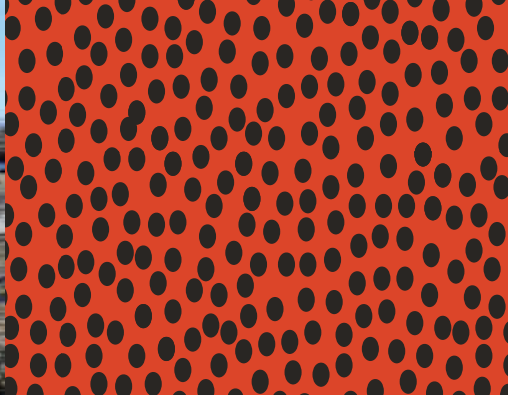
**LC:** Performing a museum can be different things: creating a space where the interaction is strong, where the audience is not passive, but they feel a part of it all. For example, I've been to a museum where the audience chose their own way of seeing the museum and the collection. It was like a game where the audience composed their own stories. It is so important to work on creating a narrative where the narrative is not one you are shown,

but where everyone can create their own. Another aspect of performing a museum is how you choose to use the space, for example, to create an environment where you can listen, where you can feel with many senses, not just vision, but feel with your body, your ears and so on. When I think about my experiences related to museums, the ones where this ritualistic part was present, the experience really felt unique.

### I also want to ask for your feedback on the organizational part of your residency, your experience with the *Translocal* project?

**LC:** I received the necessary information for the preparatory work before arriving here. As to my time spent here, I felt that the people who were engaged in this process were very open and dedicated. I saw that everybody was very busy doing many things at the same time. Generally, for financial reasons a museum can't hire more personnel, and it is hard to fulfil all the expectations when you are under-staffed. I personally felt overwhelmed by this project and by its schedule. It is sad that the idea that we should also take joy in the experience is so under-rated. There is not enough time to go deep, to work on a project without thinking about other projects we are working on simultaneously.





MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# Kumu Youth Group Experiences

Kumu Art Museum



All *Museum as Toolbox* residencies were carried out in English, which is not the participants' native language. The comments below were also written by participants in English and it seemed important to maintain the style of different voices and self-expressions.

In what follows the young participants summarise in their own words the process of the residency, using some of the phrases often used by Luigi as the narrative backbone.

**PARTICIPANTS FROM  
THE KUMU YOUTH GROUP:**

Anna Borissova  
Helen Birnbaum  
Lauren Grinberg  
Loora Kaubi  
Sofja Melikova  
Ramona Mägi  
Olivia Raudsik  
Gert Avar Reinumägi  
Simona Stenberg  
Ingrid Tamm  
Emel-Elizabeth Tuulik  
Katre Vahter  
Erik Heiki Veelmaa

## Feel the presence

Our project started off with us – a group of rather reserved kids – introducing ourselves. We had a few laughs, but it still felt like we weren't all opening up as much as Luigi probably would have wanted. He showed us some of his earlier works and explained his point of view for this particular project and art in general.

In order to make us feel the presence, Luigi taught us some exercises. We all stood in a circle and tried to understand where different sounds were coming from, combining our voices and our bodies. One exercise that worked particularly well was one where a person stood in the middle of the circle making motions with his/her hands. If that person turned to you, you had to imitate with your voice what he/she did with his/her hands. Although some felt really intimidated by this and didn't dare to be too loud, others went all out and earned everyone's respect with their boldness. The last exercise (perhaps the one that made us feel the presence most) consisted of us standing (yet again) in a circle, hand in hand and every time you felt the person beside you squeeze your hand, you had to make some sort of sound. The combination of having to react quickly, pay attention and of course laughing over the silly sounds all of us were making made us sense each other's presence more than anything else.

## Feel the togetherness

The whole concept of Luigi's project was built on working together and cooperating in different ways. Even though we were a really diverse group, we still had the same conditions, opportunities and final goal. This helped to create a bond among us and with the generations before us. It left us feeling as if we had come together to work for the same purpose.

Walking together and making neutral outfits didn't make sense in the beginning but by the end of the project it all became clearer. It brought us closer and drew us out of our comfort zones. For every single person participating, the purpose and meaning were different, but Luigi somehow managed to tie it all together. The main thing was that, out of all these different thoughts and creations, we made something unique which could only be presented by pushing all of our differences together.





### It's not a uniform

Our task was to make original outfits that reflected our personalities, but also were in harmony with Luigi's idea. We were each given a large piece of white fabric. Luigi chose the colour because it represents purity and freedom. It was entirely up to us how to make these costumes, the only requirement was that they had to show our attitudes. Every outfit was a unique piece, but made from the same material. While sewing and cutting we held many discussions on topics such as "Does the way you dress define you? If yes, then how?", "What does your clothing represent?" and "What kind of a message do you give through your appearance?". It was eye-opening to hear so many differing opinions, and through our discussions we managed to find solidarity in the end.

<sup>1</sup> At the same time as the artist residency, Kumu was visited by Ana Škegro (Curator of the Zagreb Museum of Contemporary Art) and Leszek Karczewski (Department of Education of the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź)

### You understand, no?

Our piece owes its success to the fourth day of the workshop, when we had an open event at Kumu. Before that day, I mostly felt like we were not on the same page when it came to understanding the idea and the message behind what we were doing. After hearing the presentations by the visiting museums' representatives<sup>1</sup> about their institutions and their visions of a modern museum, Luigi gave his artist talk, which was followed by a round of discussion. The improvement that took place definitely went both ways. Members of our youth club, who hadn't really grasped the idea before, could voice their concerns and gain clarity, while Luigi got a clearer understanding of Estonian nationalism and what were our opinions regarding this topic.

Coming from such different cultural backgrounds, it isn't surprising that a sentence we often heard from Luigi while working together was "You understand, no?". Of course Italians and Estonians have had a very different past and we, as young people, are from a clearly different generation than Luigi, which led to communication "going over rocks and stumps" as Estonians say. Having to get through ideas in a language that isn't your mother tongue just added to the difficulty, but through vigorous discussion, many late nights and exercises of togetherness, we overcame those obstacles and arrived at a "You understand? Yes!"

## Use your body

In imagination everything always seems so easy to change, but to express our overflowing feelings is actually quite a puzzle. In the desire to awaken the empty space in Kumu's courtyard, we played with our environment. The cold concrete became our playground, eventually giving us the feeling of home, family and belonging. So, we used our bodies to push apart the thickest walls and lend helping hands to each other to overcome the hardest trials and climb over the tallest walls to reach the freedom we were seeking. Now, having gained it as a nation, we keep searching for it as individuals, claiming our rights to freedom by interacting with the space around us: by using our bodies.

## Take the position

The days we spent photographing were the high points. Luigi picked a place on Kumu's territory and one by one we had to go and take a powerful position for the photo. The next person always had to have even more strength in his/her pose. The outfits we wore played also a significant role.

In the days before, when we were asked to create different compositions, this seemed ridiculously easy to me, but today it's all different. I feel particularly anxious. I look at the camera and I have no idea which area it covers. It is really quite nice that Luigi is trying to help us with some directions, but he is so far away that it is not always possible to hear his words. After Luigi shows us which part of the yard is covered I am still confused and unsure. On previous days I knew perfectly what to do after Luigi said "take the position" but today I am quite hesitant and don't really know where to go or how I should hold my body. I don't feel the space and people around me.

While standing there in a quite uncomfortable way, I imagine myself as a graceful statue, but I guess the way the camera catches me is far from how I imagine myself.

Will all these positions and the composition tell the story to strangers in an art museum who see it? Will they understand? Even I don't understand fully what I am doing now. Or maybe they will understand it even better than we do, because they see the whole thing

whereas all we see is the process and I guess none of us really knows yet what will be the final result. Sometimes it is more important to catch the emotion.

The last day. I am not confused any more, like I was yesterday. Today there are quite a lot of us here, more than usual. We are ready to start. I am calm, now that I know what to do and feel that the others also know. We go through many situations for the photos. Sometimes Luigi tells us where to go, sometimes he tells what to do, and sometimes it's all up to us.

For one photo I have to stand on the edge of a wall. If I take one wrong step, I might fall. Then the artist asks us to change the position. We have to look at the sky and put our hands on our jaw to imitate a scream or singing. At this moment I feel like a daredevil. My long skirt catches the wind, making me lose my balance. I do all that I can to avoid falling. To take the position is not hard, but to hold it is a different story.

## **Everyone must have power**

During the seventh day we shot the actual photos. Therefore, we had to put everything we had learned in the previous days to use. Everyone had to have power in every picture, which meant that everyone had to be unique. All of us had to make ourselves interesting in these photos by using our bodies, the environment around us and our costumes. We went on the "stage" one by one and struck poses which we thought would work best, completely improvised. Luigi gave us different tasks, for example in one of the pictures we had to make it appear that we were destroying the place. But while completing these tasks we never forgot the idea of having and feeling the power. Because it's power that makes us noticeable, and makes each stand out from the rest. ■

**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**  
**Museion**

Museum  
Museum  
Museum  
Museum  
Museum  
Museum  
Museum  
Museum  
Museum  
Museum  
Museum  
Museum

MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# Museion in the *Museum* *as T©©/b©x* Pr©ject

Museion

LETIZIA RAGAGLIA



With its 100,000 inhabitants, Bolzano is the largest city in South Tyrol: an autonomous province in northern Italy situated in the Alps, with its own special status and a high standard of living. Like many border zones, Bolzano is a town with a complex and evolving cultural

and sociological situation. The region is characterised by the presence of three linguistic groups: Germans, Italians and a community of Ladin-speakers, testimony to the historical vicissitudes.

Museion  
© Museion. Photo: Ludwig Thalheimer

Museion Passage  
© Museion. Photo: Luca Meneghel



Museion, the museum of modern and contemporary art of Bolzano, was founded in 1985, and is governed by the Museion Foundation, which consists of the Museion Association and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano. In 2008 Museion opened its new venue, designed by the architecture firm KSV – Krüger, Schubert, Vandriks, Berlin. The building, in contrast to the rest of the town centre, has nothing traditional whatsoever about it. It is a cube with a transparent front and rear façades that forge a dialogue between the historic centre and the new city, with the grassy banks of the river Talvera. Together with its two bridges, with their parallel, oscillating curves, the museum is a physical and symbolic link between the two parts of the city. The space inside is characterised by fluidity and openness: the different areas – the exhibitions and events spaces (2,400 square meters are dedicated to exhibitions), educational workshops, the café and shop – are not strictly separated but in close communication.

Museion

A museum of modern and contemporary art these days is a place that favours cultural change and innovation and which is subject to decisively exploratory dynamic forces.

Museion has positioned itself as an institution characterised by continual fluidity, in which all of its activities (exhibitions, projects and events) offer new life-blood to the existing patrimony. The heart and distinctive mark of a museum is its collection, which is gradually enriched through the acquisition of new works that are often also produced in the museum for temporary exhibitions.

In recent years, Museion has consciously chosen to activate its collection in a number of thematic exhibitions, each one touching upon an important topic of art history. These exhibitions continually establish new dialogues between existing works and new entries into the collection.

Thanks to its collection, a museum is also implicitly the custodian of memory, and the contemporary art museum is ultimately a paradox, as it bestows the status of memory upon works of the present-day. Keeping alive a relationship between past and present, and constantly re-reading history through unedited



Museion Atelierhaus  
with laser animation  
M'illumino  
d'immenso (2005)  
by Mario Airò  
© Museion.  
Photo: Augustin  
Ochsenreiter

*Museo Museion*,  
curated by Francesco  
Vezzoli. Exhibition  
view, Museion  
Bozen/Bolzano,  
30.01.–06.11.2016  
© Museion. Photo:  
Luca Meneghel

74—75



MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

parameters of the present are further tasks that Museion feels are particularly pressing.

Furthermore, in the selection of exhibitions, which has also governed the works Museion has added to its collection, the



focus has been deliberately on female artists, and generational exchange has been encouraged by alternating artists of different ages and presenting artists who are models for younger generations. For example, in the last

few years, Museion has hosted numerous solo and group shows by such artists as Carl Andre, VALIE EXPORT, Monica Bonvicini, Rosemarie Trockel, Isa Genzken, Francesco Vezzoli and Judith Hopf. At the same time, space has always been dedicated to younger up-coming artists, such as Klara Lidén, Rossella Biscotti, Danh Vo and Korakrit Arunanondchai.

Museion, moreover, is pursuing its ambition of becoming a meeting point for the international art world and the local culture scene: over the last few years, it has entered into a number of collaborations with institutions from other countries and has promoted a selection of projects by South Tyrolean artists in order to offer them an additional instrument to help position themselves internationally. The creation of the Museion Prize in 2015, aimed at artists active in Italy, Austria and Switzerland below the age of 35 and involving an international jury, the showing of the



four finalists and the acquisition of the winning work underline Museion's efforts to support and value young artists.

It is of utmost importance for Museion to consider the needs and expectations of different publics: in the mediation of its programmes, which in fact takes place on a daily basis with passion and professionalism thanks to a team of experts that have developed over time, a variety of formats to "capture" different target groups, such as children, the elderly, disabled people and immigrants.

By participating in the project *Translocal – Museum as Toolbox*, Museion intends to expand its understanding not only of the role and the identity of an institution of contemporary art today but also of how the museum should be positioned in the future. To do so, the involvement of young people – a target group which so far has been under-represented at the museum – is essential. ■

Korakrit Arunanondchai  
*Painting with history 3 or  
two thousand five hundred  
and fifty nine years to figure  
stuff out*  
Exhibition view, Museion  
Bozen/Bolzano, 02.06.–  
11.09.2016  
© Museion. Photo: Augustin  
Ochsenreiter

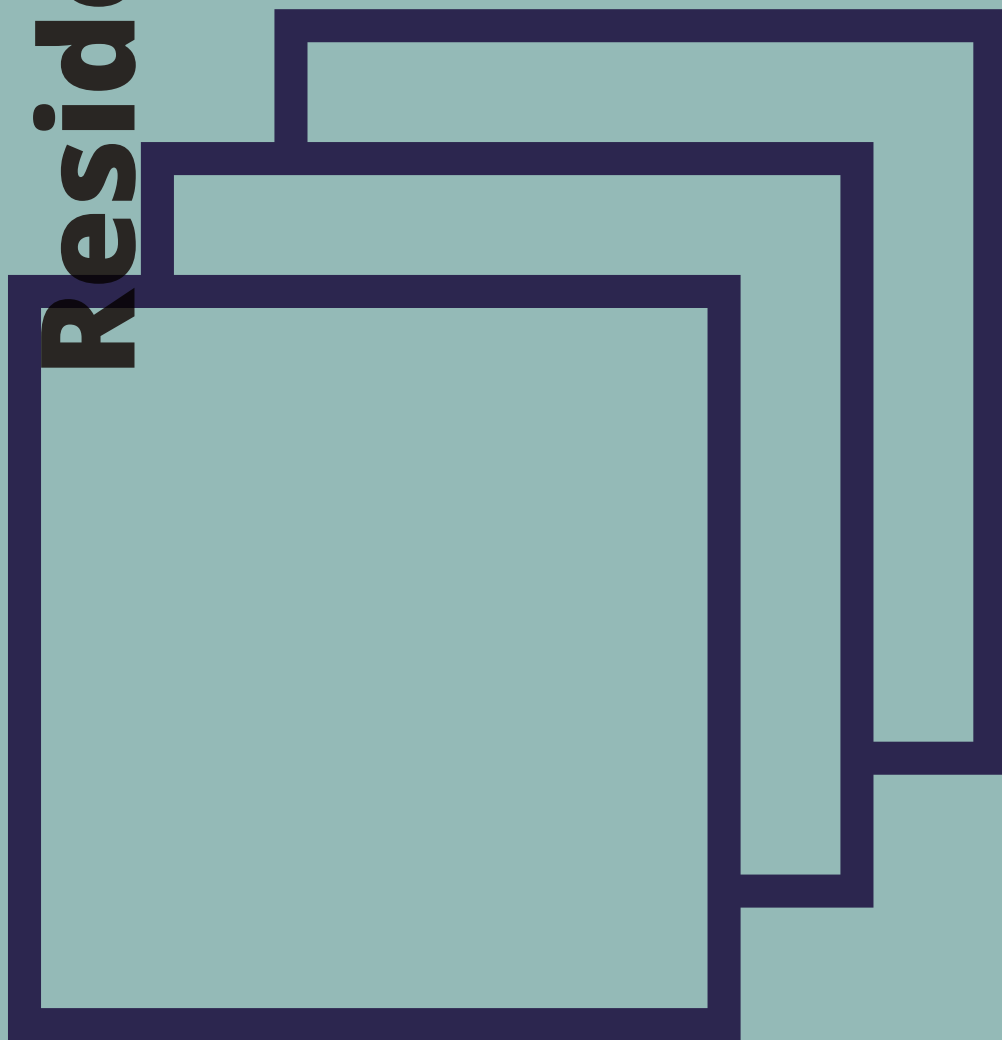
Summer Lab with the  
artist Maria Walcher  
Summer, 2015  
© Museion. Photo:  
Luca Meneghel

#musetoolbox  
© Museion



Museion

# Residency



# Report

BRITA KÖHLER, FRIDA CARAZZATO  
AND SARAH GREENWOOD

## AN ARTIST RESIDENCY AT MUSEION: THE STARTING POINT OF A NEW PROCESS

For the residency, Museion invited the Polish artist Marcin Polak from the partner city of Łódź. In his projects, Polak attempts to initiate dialogue among citizens, institutions and elites. His way of working is to subtly sabotage traditional dynamics and activate new ones, bringing into the processes of a project unexpected and non-conventional methods. He prefers working on urban interventions and projects of participation, involving himself in every-day processes and real-life situations.

The cultural manager, curator and artist Ewelina Chmielewska accompanied Marcin Polak on his trip to Bolzano. During the project in Bolzano, she acted as co-mediator during the various workshops and events held with the project team.



Fifteen participants recruited directly at the museum, from schools, the university, youth groups and a centre for housing asylum-seekers took part in the ten-day residency. Communication was in English, German, Italian, French, Polish and many other languages.



The fact that the group was so heterogeneous emphasized the topic of the workshop proposed by Marcin Polak, which was to reflect on individual and collective stories of migration – in the present and in the past – and on the role of the mass-media in influencing our opinions on these stories.

The group visited various historical and contemporary points of cultural interest, and ended up at one of the centres in the city called the “Hotel Alpi”, where a number of asylum seekers are currently housed and supported in connection with integration matters.



A further, important event during the residency was a meeting and interview with a local journalist to find out how and why issues presented in the media can become twisted or misrepresented. The event proved to be an eye-opening experience for the participants, and offered them the opportunity to see things from a new and different point of view. As described by one of the participants, it was a true learning experience.



The residency was rounded off with an event organized by the group and publicized via a flyer of their own creation. The whole of the ground floor of the museum, a space normally used for other purposes, was put at the disposal of the group. Texts, research articles, interviews, projections, drawings and videos were installed at Museion by the group for the public to view during the event. There was music, dancing, drinks and conversation. The group members welcomed and mixed with visitors, finding themselves in a role usually be played by Museion staff.



During this final event, the artist announced that his intention was to ask the group of young participants to carry out a second residency immediately following the

“official” one and it would be from this residency that the art work would emerge. His idea was to reverse roles, giving them the opportunity to be the artists, and even to receive, instead of the artist himself, part of the fee paid to him for the project. The role of the artist was to activate not only the participants but the institution itself, which found itself forced to interact with the participants in many ways. During the additional 10 days of residency, the participants created video footage related to the theme of the residency: migration and its representation in the mass media. Their results were delivered to the artist and will be used to create the final art work. Although this request by the artist was made with the specific objective of finalising the artwork, it turned out to be a motor for the process of engaging young people in the museum’s activities.



At the same time, the residency offered an opportunity for Museion to discover and test new and existing tools for communicating with and involving young people, and it became clear in the initial stages that not just “publicity and advertising” should be considered as tools, but that two-way communication between the target group and the various members of the museum’s staff is essential. Listening to the ideas and requests of the young people brought to light the importance they place on participation and on having the chance to create something, working alongside professionals from the museum and artists on issues they can relate to.



Photos taken by the participants.  
*Museum as Toolbox*, Museion,  
Bozen/Bolzano, 2016

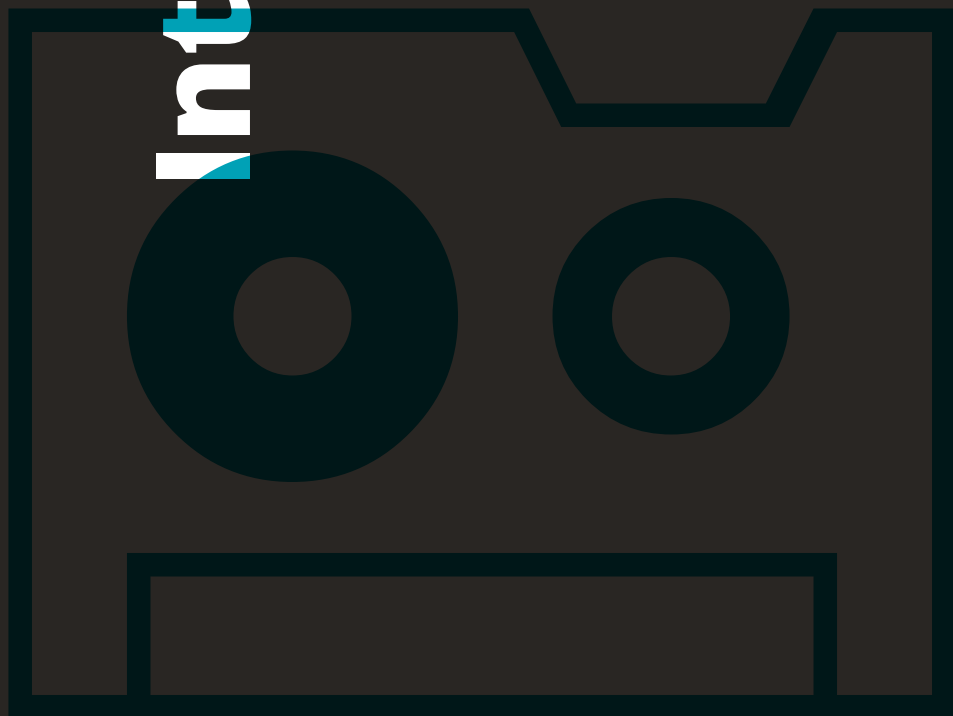


82—83



# Artist Interview

Museum



**Marcin Polak  
and Ewelina  
Chmielewska**



Photo taken by a participant. *Museum as Toolbox*, Museion, Bozen/Bolzano, 2016

**What do you think of projects that involve cultural institutions from different contexts? How well can one prepare for this beforehand and at a distance, and how much has to be re-thought once abroad?**

**Marcin Polak (MP):** The involvement of institutions is crucial, especially public ones, whose mission should be to educate, provoke thinking and engage audiences to participate. Thanks to the coalition of different institutions in one project, there's an opportunity for the exchange of experiences, which can be valuable for future projects.

I felt prepared because I work with youth every day, or maybe more with kids than youth. When it comes to the subject of immigration and refugees, I feel that no-one is really prepared for this

kind of work, from politicians and officials to artists. We live in a world of stereotypes, prejudice, disinformation and the lack of information. An interesting context is that in our country you can hear a lot about immigrants and refugees, mostly negative, but in reality there are none here.

**Ewelina Chmielewska (EC):**

I think that the exchange of different cultural and economic backgrounds always benefits the people involved and provides new perspectives. I personally didn't feel prepared at all. I have never before worked in such a big project with local community outside Poland. I read about the place, about the history and current events but until you actually meet and connect with the people you're going to work with, you can't feel prepared.

## What did you know about Italy and Bolzano before you were approached by *Translocal*?

**MP:** I'm not really a proponent of working in unknown places. I prefer to work in places I know and understand, because it helps me quickly get involved with the problems of local communities, which is a main subject of my work. I had visited Italy a few times, but Bolzano and the area is a little bit of Austria inside Italy. I was surprised by the number of shops and most of all cafes, restaurants and the fact that they were always full of people. I mostly like local venues, so I felt most comfortable in places recommended to us by the people from Bolzano, especially those remote ones, such as Il Macello, a young culture and art space. Even after work we were looking for places connected to culture.

**EC:** South Tyrol is like a different country in many aspects, most of all economically, but also the language is different. Coming to Bolzano I read quite a bit about the history, finding out how much it's linked to the subject of immigration, refugees, people's fight for a land and preservation of their cultural heritage. I also tried to get up to date with the current events concerning immigration, especially asylum seekers' centres. As it turned out, that part was much harder and what I found on the internet wasn't exactly true: no surprise there. Going to different places I always try to experience the places most important to the people I work with or surround myself with.

## Starting with your first proposal, how did the residency and consequently the project develop, and why did you decide to develop it in that way?

**MP:** During our stay we focused on work with the young audiences of the museum, among which there were also immigrants from Mali, Gambia and Senegal. The topic of our workshop was mainly disinformation in the media on the subject of immigration. We analysed how the media explain the reasons for their immigration, the most repeated stereotypes and false portrayals, and also the mechanism of putting fear into society with the main purpose of selling more newspapers.

The effect of our work was an event where we showed some concrete examples, to which the audience could respond, including examples of the immigrants and the refugees that visit the museum (most of the time for the free Wi-Fi).

Aware of being privileged compared to the people we were working with, we decided to switch the roles in our project. For the second part we invited the immigrants we were working with to become the artists, and under the same conditions as us (including financial) to undergo residencies in the Museion.

A group of five young men, with the help of the young people working on our project and us created a work telling their story and the stories of other men (staying in Bolzano for a year now waiting for changes in their status). Through

this, we achieved our most important goal: the immigrants went outside the centre, where they had been pretty much isolated. They got involved in activities with same-age Italians. They “touched” Western culture. Let’s hope this won’t be just an episode in their lives but the start of something solid.

### How was your relationship with the youth group?

**MP:** Our relations were completely friendly; we tried to avoid artist/curator-to-audience situations. Maybe because of this approach we were able to engage these young people in action and most importantly in integration. Working with the group gave us hope for the possibility of integration, even though it’s hard on both sides.

**EC:** I find our relationship with the youth group was relaxed and friendly, as it should be, though this didn’t happen from the start. In the beginning, the young people from Bolzano were more open and curious and the guys from the “Hotel Alpi” were more guarded, but that all changed during our work. Open talks and different activities together all helped to build trust and get everybody engaged. I personally learned from the whole group that the younger you are the less prejudice you carry and it’s much easier to simply accept differences in others. It was really refreshing.



### How would you describe Museion, its activities and its relation with the city?

**MP:** Most of all it was shocking for us that so few people are working in such a big institution. In Poland it happens, that the large cultural institutions employ a huge number of people. The architecture of the museum is very interesting and the fact that it’s integrated with buildings on one side whilst the other side connects with the pedestrian and bicycle trail makes it very open to audiences.

**EC:** I found Museion to be a very modern institution, very open and progressively managed. I really liked the use of architecture, which is not very easy to take in at first sight. The passage on the ground floor, open to all and connecting the centre of the city with the green, more laid back part is a great idea. Also using the exterior, quite cold glass walls as a media facade, to screen videos at night, is fantastic. I loved the idea of inviting one artist or curator a year to curate the Museion Collection. And let us not forget about the staff: wonderful people.

# Museion Youth Group Experiences

**All *Museum as Toolbox* residencies were carried out in English, which is not the participants' native language. The comments below were also written by participants in English and it seemed important to maintain the style of different voices and self-expressions.**



### ... and how was it for you?

On 21 April 2016 a small group of us went on a tour of the city of Bolzano. Our first stop was Binario 1 of the railway station, where immigrants who are passing through are given shelter, care and first aid. After that we entered a corridor whose walls were covered on both sides with drawings done by children. These pictures had a deep impact on all of us. We could see that a lot of effort had been put into making the main room as nice as possible for children, with tables and chairs etc. Nevertheless, there was something sad about the place, because you could feel the fear and exhaustion of the fleeing refugees who arrive here day after day. We were in awe of the volunteers there, who are doing their best to help these disorientated refugees.

On the way to the Hotel Alpi, the next place we wanted to visit, we slowly began to start conversing with our African team-mates in a strange mix-

ture of languages. German, Italian, English, French and even Polish were all thrown into the conversations. This was really interesting for us. It was also strange to see faces before us that the Europe media have been presenting to us daily, and to hear the stories first-hand of what these people had been through. One of the refugees with whom I spoke a lot on this day told me, for example, that he had fled from Senegal and that it had taken three months to cross the

Sahara Desert and wait in Libya for a boat to take him to Italy. He is no longer in contact with his family and I admire him for not giving up, even though the journey was very frightening for him.

The other members of the group and I learnt an awful lot on this day and we enjoyed being with the guys as much as they enjoyed being with us. There will definitely be other get-togethers between us in the future.

*Valentin Rosanelli*



◆  
In Bolzano it's not very easy to enter into contact with refugees, but thanks to this project we had this opportunity. On 1 April the potential project group, made up mainly of high school and a few university students, met at the museum. There were also a good number of refugees present.

During the residency, we managed to get to know the

guys from Africa quickly and well. Right from the start any cultural barriers there might have been were overcome. The guys were open and shared with us their stories, experiences and perceptions. We were all around the same age and although we came from different backgrounds and spoke different languages, we were fundamentally looking for the same thing: to spend time together, get to know new people and have an interesting experience.

The theme Marcin Polak had chosen was miscommunication on the immigration issue in the media. In order to assess the immigration situation in Bolzano, Marcin and Ewelina needed to get to know us all and the city and hear our stories.

On the first day we went to visit some historical sites in the city and the Hotel Alpi, where a number of asylum seekers (including members of the project group) are housed. I would never have imagined that I would have ever have been allowed to enter the Hotel Alpi. From outside it is inscrutable: a place in the centre of Bolzano that these guys

call home and that locals consider a ghetto. The hotel visit was an eye-opener. The joy of the guys at being able to welcome us and show us around was immense, and the looks in their eyes moved us all.

We spent ten days together, filled with events and meetings, and even met a journalist and interviewed him. We also listened to the presentation of a project (called *Europadreaming*) by this journalist on the theme of immigration at the University of Bolzano.

The day of our presentation event at Museion we were all nervous. We didn't know how many people to expect nor whether they would appreciate our work. The museum gave us the whole of the ground floor for our event and we had to arrange it in a way that was stimulating for the visitors, and would provoke reflection.

The installation involved writings and videos from YouTube of the politicians Salvini, Trump and Waszczykowski that we showed on screens. A whole area was dedicated to showing what we considered to

be misleading newspaper articles on the theme of immigration and beside these, hung on the wall, were huge drawings done by some of the guys from the Hotel Alpi.

We also had a DJ-set and a concert by our Gambian friend and project member Halie. The party went on in the atelier house even after the museum had closed.

That same day Marcin had told us and the Museion staff that he had decided what shape and form the work of art would have. He wanted the residency to be repeated but led this time by the project members themselves. They were to spend ten days collecting video footage and meeting regularly at the atelier house and for this they would receive the economic compensation that had been budgeted for the artist. In this way, as in many others, Marcin proved himself to be a very unconventional artist.  
*Ilenia Sannicolò*



This is our boat from Libya the boat left in Libya April 11 2015 around 5 am we run for the all day but at the end the boat have a accident at





the international sea so the boat was Lord about 700 peoples only 130 peoples was escapes from that accidents and all the rest of the peoples have dead very sad an am sorry for them even me am part of them who have escape from the accident I was with my best friends since we was young in Gambia same life they have dead from that accidents is very sad an am sorry for them too this is how we escapes our life to reach in Italy an now we thank God for helping us to reach here in Italy.

After we came to Bolzano. First we came to Via Macello and now I live in Hotel Alpi. During the day we are sitting and watching TV. We sleep. We cannot do more because we have no documents or papers, we are waiting for documents. I did some language course in an Italian Language School of Bolzano. They informed us about the project of toolbox. We were very happy about this to know people to participate and to know about the museum. During the project I see different things and go to different places. I know the city now very well. I go out with new friends. Santiago, one participant of the

project, can visit me in Hotel Alpi. We do a video project together. This project is good for us because we can enlarge our experiences in the museum. Always when I come here I feel happy. People welcome us they smile and stay with us. We are definitely happy about toolbox. We have good experiences and good friends there."

*Saiku Jagne Jagne*



After ten days of residency, Marcin and Ewelina went back to Poland, leaving the group with the freedom to be creative and collect whatever footage they considered would be of use in producing the final video work of art.

Ideas began to be passed around right from the start and with our meagre resources we set about filming our experiences in an amateur way, attempting to capture moments and emotions in the time we spent together.

It was very important for the group that the film portray the different points of view of its members. In order to achieve this goal, all members were invited to freely film any footage they wanted, using their cell phones.

In this way, a rich collection of footage was soon built up, like a sort of diary that contained input from each one of us and fragments of the time we spent together. It included images, voices and

music to tell parts of stories, in a rather chaotic way, but nevertheless representative of what we had experienced.

It would not have been possible to create the video without spending time together as a group, as well. Thanks to knowledge of and an exchange about different cultures, we were able to create a group that didn't stop at the simple production of a video but concentrated on spending quality time together.

*Santiago Torresagasti and Gaia Donadel*

**Photos taken by the participants. Museum as Toolbox, Museion, Bozen/ Bolzano, 2016**

MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# A Journalist Reflection

Museion



As part of the residency activities, the communication team of Museion invited a local journalist, Massimiliano Boschi, to comment on the flyer the youth group had produced entitled “Stop Miscommunication and Think”, which cited a local newspaper article with the title “too many beautiful blondes in our region, a risk for immigrants’ hormones...”, a comment originally made by an Italian politician.

On the basis of this article, the youth group members and the head of marketing at Museion interviewed the journalist in order to find out why such titles are used and how immigration is currently being “played with” in the Italian press.

The text below is an extract of the interview.

Sarah Greenwood (SG): **What do you think of the title that the group has chosen for the flyer to promote their event (‘too many beautiful blondes in our region, a risk for immigrants’ hormones’)?**

Massimiliano Boschi (MB): **It is a racist headline because the phrase used is racist. It gives the impression that only immigrants have hormones and only blondes are beautiful.**

Veronica Tonidadel (VT): **There was an article recently published in a local newspaper that really struck me. It was about the protest against closing the border between Italy and Austria at the Brenner Pass on 23 April. It made me ask why, for example, they chose to show large images of smoke bombs, which give the impression of violence and chaos, when in fact at the protest there were mainly families with children present, and it was very peaceful with the exception of one or two small incidents.**

MB: **A peaceful protest does not make a good story. If the journalist had reported a peaceful protest, the article would have been given very little space. Violence attracts attention.**

SG: **Why would a journalist do this? To make more money?**

MB: **No, just because he wants to make the story more interesting. Why tell of a peaceful protest? That would be boring.**

Gaia Donadel: **But the news does not reflect the truth. How is that possible?**

MB: **This is how it is: journalism is not about giving accounts of normality. A human biting a dog, rather than a dog biting a human, is news. It is the exceptions that make the news. It’s up to the reader to decide whether or not he believes what he reads in the papers. Recently, a large percentage of the articles published contain the word “fear”. Fear helps to sell newspapers.**

SG: **Do newspaper in our region give a lot of attention to the immigration situation?**

MB: **Yes, I think locally there is a significant amount of attention dedicated to this issue in the media. There is confusion as to what constitutes an immigrant, a refugee and people resident here awaiting papers. Another problem in general here locally is that we don’t have enough journalists. So press releases are taken and copied without filters. Journalists here are not doing a service to the public.**

VT: **Do journalists have a conscience?**

MB: **It depends. But in any case, it is the readers that need to apply critical thinking and make a selection, refusing to take everything they read as the truth. Readers need to be very critical.**

VT: **Isn’t it somewhat utopian to think that readers will ever be capable of doing that?**

MB: **Sure, it will never happen. But what can we do about it? The newspaper is there to make money.**

Muzeum  
Sztuki  
muzeum  
sztuki  
Muzeum  
Sztuki  
muzeum  
sztuki  
Muzeum  
Sztuki  
muzeum  
sztuki

**muzeum  
Sztuki  
Muzeum  
Sztuki  
muzeum  
Sztuki  
Muzeum  
Sztuki  
muzeum  
Sztuki  
Muzeum  
Sztuki**

MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź in the *Museum* *as T O O l b O x* Pr O j e c t

Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź

ŁUKASZ ZAREMBA

The Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź is One of the Oldest modern art museums in the world. As such, it challenges the common sense geographies Of modern art history: situated in between the SOviet UniOn's avant-garde and Western centres Of modern art, such as Paris and New YOrk, the Muzeum Sztuki has been a place Of a radical and surprising cOmbinatiOn Of avant-garde art and the museum institutiOn in times when the two seemed radically different and at Odds with one another. The museum's cOnnectiOns with the avant-garde date back tO the turn Of the 1920s and 1930s, when a grOuP Of radical artists from the "a.r." grOuP began gathering wOrks Of the most impOrtant artists Of the day. The action generated great interest within the EurOpean



avant-garde, and many Outstanding artists, such as Fernand Leger, Max Ernst, Hans Arp and Kurt Schwitters, dOnated their wOrks tO the cOllectiOn.

The "a.r." grOuP cOllectiOn came tO be seen as a unique symbOl Of solidarity and cOOperatiOn Of the avant-garde mOvement.

The International Modern Art Collection of the “a.r.” group was opened to the public on 15 February 1931 and became the core of the collection of Łódź’s main art museum. The collection has since been consistently expanded by including international modern and contemporary artworks. The Muzeum Sztuki is now the only museum in Poland with such an extensive collection of world art of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

**One of the primary reasons behind the Muzeum Sztuki's participation in the**

**TRANSLOCAL: MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX project – a network of museums exchanging experiences, knowledge and potentially elements of their collections – was the desire to further develop reflection on its collection. The *Trans-local* project facilitates the process of examining our collection anew and sharing our knowledge of working with the collection in different spatial, historical and cultural conditions, as well as in different dimensions, in the spheres of communication, education, research and curatorial work. In Łódź, the collection is what gives the museum its unique character, a point to which we constantly return and with which we have to grapple: sometimes a burden, but mostly an inexhaustible source which we actualize not only through curatorial practices, but also through the acquisition of new, contemporary artworks, which both continue and expand the spirit of the avant-garde.**

The creation of the Łódź collection was a worldwide phenomenon for several reasons. Firstly, it was initiated by artists themselves. Their activities and contacts, stretching from Moscow to Paris, made it possible to create an outstanding international collection of contemporary art. Secondly, the collection included the works of the most progressive representatives of European avant-garde of the day, whose names would only later be included in the modern art canon. Finally, the attitude of the then-authorities of Łódź was surprisingly positive. In spite of certain misgivings, the authorities decided to allow the revolutionary collection to be exhibited at the Julian and

Kazimierz Bartoszewicz Museum of History and Art, located at 1 Liberty Square, which opened in 1930. The Muzeum Sztuki continued the tradition of gifts and donations after the war, receiving numerous works from collectors and artists (the most famous being Joseph Beuys's *Polentransport* 1981 action).

**In 1948, the museum was relocated to one of the Poznański family palaces at 36 Więckowskiego Street, which is still one of its locations. It is here that the Neoplastic Room is housed, designed in 1948 by Władysław Strzemiński as a space to present the activities of the "a.r." group and Constructivist artists. Today the Neoplastic Room is a point of departure for new projects closely connected with its concept, created by such artists as Daniel Buren and Liam Gillick.**

**As a result, the avant-garde tradition remains the subject of discussions and new interpretations, and thus is still alive. In 1950 the museum, taken over by the state, was renamed the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, the name under which it still operates. The location at 36 Więckowskiego Street has since been renamed ms<sup>1</sup>; the collection is now housed at ms<sup>2</sup>, in a modernized former 19<sup>th</sup> century weaving plant.**

**ms<sup>2</sup> was opened to the public on 20 November 2008. Since then, the Muzeum Sztuki has presented its collection in a completely new way.**

The exhibition *Atlas of Modernity* is a story about modernity, inevitably fragmented, discontinuous and full of contradictions. The story is told through artworks from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the

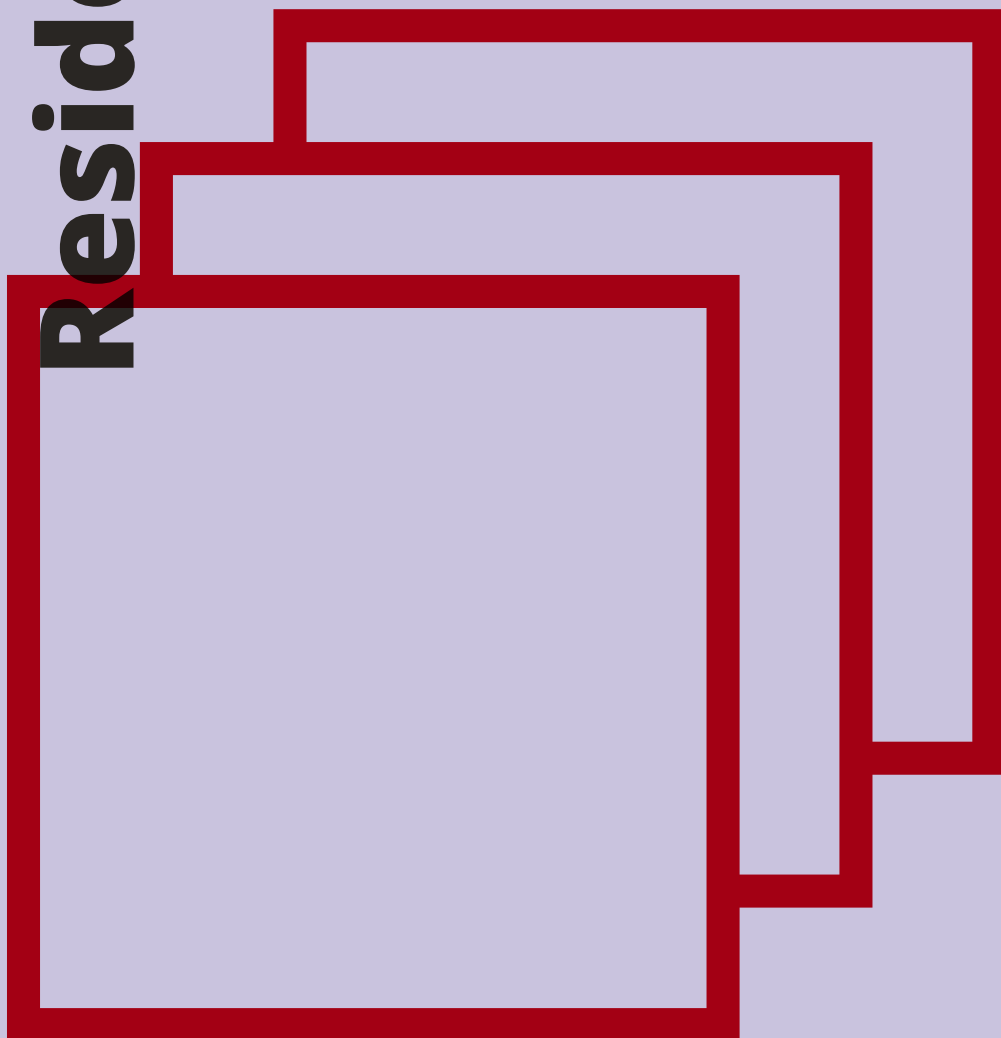
21<sup>st</sup> century, and it is divided into fourteen fields – from Autonomy, through Emancipation, to Revolution and Tradition – whose borders are fluid.

**Our participation in TRANSLOCAL: MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX gives us the chance to rethink ways of communicating such a difficult exhibition, as well as the complex history of the institution, to diverse audiences, including young audiences. The project also forces us to rethink the way we understand the public, reminding us that there is never a single public, but always multiple publics. The existence of multiple publics brings with it the possibility of multiple ways of experiencing exhibitions, especially such complex and multilayered ones as the *Atlas of Modernity*.**

Muzeum Sztuki thus joined the *Translocal* project in order to get to know its public better and learn about modes of communication used by other museums which encounter similar challenges. Our goal is to acquire new knowledge, even though this process mainly involves raising doubts and asking uncertain questions. The project is also a chance for us to exchange knowledge and experiences – from the curatorial, educational and communication fields – with institutions that occupy a similar position on the map of European art institutions. ■

Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź

# Residency



# Report

## Back

## to

## the

## ABCs

*How often does a particular letter occur in the English language? You will probably find it silly that the frequency of letters was a crucial question at the beginning of the Toolbox project at the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź. And we can only thank Wikipedia activists for the fact that we did not have to waste the first days of the project on trying to establish the frequency of specific letters (Where would we even begin counting? On the web? In classical literature?). A, I, O: these three letters have an almost 30% usage rate combined. On the other hand Z, Q, J: not even 1%. Having this information we were able to print out the alphabet.*

The task of the project was to reflect on the communication process in a museum of modern and contemporary art, and to propose a way to both describe how a museum communicates with its publics today and anticipate how it will communicate in the future. Aldo Giannotti, an Italian artist based in Austria, whose work could be summarized as opening eyes to the apparently transparent organization of everyday life, disturbing it with the simplest but most incisive questions, began his work with the idea of returning to the basics of communication: the alphabet. Then, with a group of incredibly creative young inhabitants of Łódź, we started working on an uncanny task: to employ the alphabet in a different way than people are used to.

### Museum as a puzzle

There are multiple models of communication. For example, media theory provides us with both a classic, linear definition of a communication model (establishing the sender, message, channel and receiver) and a less intuitive one, based on the feedback loop. The model we worked with seemed elementary at first sight: giant posters – each exhibiting one letter – were supposed to be glued to a wall in a public space in order to create sentences. To draw on the first model of communication mentioned above: the role of the sender was occupied by a group of youngsters from Łódź, speaking at least partly in the name of the museum; the channels used were street art, posters and a giant alphabet; the landscape of a post-industrial city created some of what media theorists call “noise”; and finally the place of the receivers could potentially be taken by everyone present in Łódź.

But nothing is as simple as it might first seem. First, the letters: in the project, we used an avant-garde font based on the project by Władysław Strzemiński, the foundational figure for the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź and Polish avant-garde visual arts. As a result, the project corresponded with the ideas of “functional print” and “new typography” of pre-war avant-garde art. According to its theoreticians, visual language actively shapes ways of seeing and understanding real-

ity. At the same time, visual language is supposed to aim at changing the reality outside of the art world.

Next, the idea of the letters-posters invited visitors to create their own sentences. This was probably the most controversial part of the project, as well as the most unpredictable. We had to ask ourselves whether the sentences would end up being revolutionary, tactical or subversive. Maybe conservative, vulgar and aggressive? Or absurd, strange, personal and gibberish?

Thirdly, and most importantly, the message was just not there. Not where you're used to looking for it. In our opinion the task of the museum – the reason why it communicates – is not to give information, move one piece of knowledge or data (a fact, an opinion or an interpretation) from one person/institution to another. Rather the distinctive way that a museum of contemporary art can communicate lies in disturbing the transparency of communication itself. Working together with the artist Aldo Giannotti and our educational staff, our youth group came up either with a puzzle, a crossword, a question without an answer, or a code to be encrypted. In any case, we did not generate a simple statement. We had to confront a mystery, enigma, puzzle. We had to start thinking about the process of communication itself. The project suddenly rendered communication visible.

## **Alphabet of art institution**

The next step in the project is to shift to the languages that are intrinsic to the institution of the museum. To turn to such modes of communication as the collection, curatorial tools and exhibition space and see them as an alphabet. Again, our goal is to talk about communication, by challenging dominant modes of speaking and showing, and posing questions about dominant models and forms of communicating between art institutions and their publics, especially young publics. However, this time the “alphabet” we will be using – works of art – will be much less disciplined and much more autonomous than letters. It may happen that the language will “outspeak” the speaker...



# THE MUSEUM AS A TOOLBOX

THINK OF SOMETHING YOU WANT  
TO COMMUNICATE

①

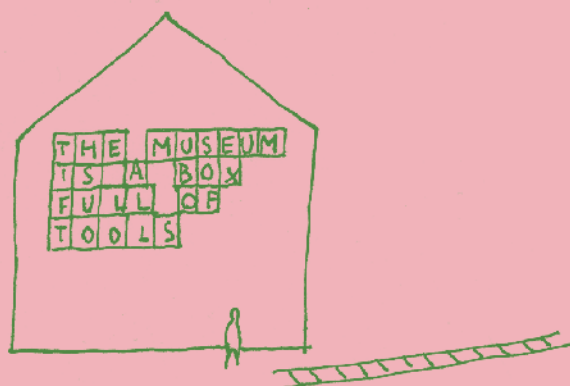


②



SELECT THE LETTERS IN YOUR SENTENCE  
AND TAKE THE CORRESPONDING POSTERS

③ APPLY WHEREVER YOU WANT



MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# Artist Interview



**Aldo  
Giannotti**

### **Artistic practice (description, the area of art)**

Aldo Giannotti was born in 1977 in Genova, Italy. He has lived and worked in Vienna, Austria since 2000. He is a founding member of the association Kforumvienna [www.kforumvienna.com](http://www.kforumvienna.com), and a member of the dance & performance company Liquid Loft (visual concept). He studied in 1995–2002 at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Carrara, Italy and took a master class in painting with Professor Omar Galliani in 1998 at the Academy of Fine Arts in Wimbledon, England, with a specialisation in video. In 1999 he studied at the Akademie der bildenden Kunst in Munich, with a specialisation in photography. In 2002 he received the diploma *Lebt und Arbeitet in Wien* in culture politics in Austria related to contemporary art. He focussed on people in the public space: how they feel, react and co-operate according to the situation. Aldo Giannotti prepares and organizes a situation and invites the public to join in. Sometimes only the plan is prepared as an instructional sketch. He has become very interested in using drawings to investigate space, with all its social and political implications.

### **Reasons and motivations for cooperation with the museum in the project (why, who engaged him/her, time, etc.)**

Aldo Giannotti was invited by Kunsthaus Graz to the *Translocal: Museum as a Toolbox* project. Then, as a member of the project team, he was chosen by the Muzeum

Sztuki w Łodzi to become a resident artist in Łódź in May 2016. Aldo Giannotti was interested in the project, because it provided an opportunity to work in a flexible process, open to extensive participation. In that sense, the Toolbox project is a participatory process which includes the institution, audience and the artist. Ideas become real instructions and can be activated, or remain “visions” that can help in questioning a given space: the museum, the street or the city.

### **Work as part of the project – artistic residency (action, activity, art, commitment)**

Aldo's idea of the artwork in Łódź was connected with the topic of communication tools. The artist prepares the sketch of the poster, which should inform the public about the rules of using that tool. The tool becomes a number of posters of the size 50 × 70 cm, each with a single letter. Aldo envisioned an XXL – size Scrabble game. He wanted very much to find an available place in the Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi to leave the posters for the public, so that they could take as many letters as they needed to communicate. The posters could be joined to make words and sentences and placed – pinned or glued – in chosen places.

### **Audiences (knowledge about them, their needs, attitudes to audiences, relationships)**

The audience of Aldo's work is the city of Łódź: visitors who take the posters from the Muzeum Sztuki,



but also everyone who reads the sentences in the public space. The artist is not responsible for the content of the message. The artist only provides the tools for communication. Everybody is invited to participate in a performative action, and participation becomes unavoidable.

The words and letters on the walls of Łódź are an inspiration for Aldo Giannotti because they are still present in the public space. Football team names, nicknames and professions of love in spray paint are located between advertising posters and infor-

mation boards. On the façade of the Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi there is also a message. One of the founders of the Muzeum Sztuki, Władysław Strzemiński, was a typographer. The name of the Muzeum in Strzemiński's fonts is placed on the windows of the building.

### **Evaluation of the work on the project (evaluation of the work of the museum, difficulties, successes, opportunities, threats)**

The artist residency in the *Toolbox* project lasted 10 days. That wasn't

enough time to work with a youth group, generate interesting sentences, produce a huge number of posters and get permission from the municipal authorities to use the public space. So Aldo's work in Łódź became a kind of prototype. The Muzeum Sztuki during a 10-day residence was able to produce a small number of posters. Working with the youth club led to creating some sentences, which in a metaphorical way answered the question "What will the museum of art be in the future?" The youth club concentrated on the "Art Museum in 2050". According to an agreement with the municipal culture centre Prexer, the final action was placed on Pomorska street, in the Prexer courtyard. So, the final action was a result of agreements, cooperation and participation.

Youth club students were creative partners of the artist; they were open-minded and clever. They participated in workshops with energy and enthusiasm.

### **Assessment of emerging communication products in the project from the perspective of the artist (discuss each one: opinions are important)**

There are visible and invisible rules that come with space. The artistic message can be missing in the public space, and it always differs from the words and sentences conveyed in strict information. The artistic message – a drawing or sentence – is metaphorical and symbolic, very often with a sense of humour. The name of a street or an institution provides one proper

answer. The artistic intervention is open, unfinished and provokes a question. There is tension between a public space and the word(s) placed in it.

### **Knowledge of the art audience (target groups, personal knowledge after the project)**

The Toolbox project in Łódź was dedicated to more than the art audience in the classic sense. The prototypical artwork was the result of workshops with the youth club and it was put up in the public space. The message was produced by students and the artist, but the society of Łódź became the real audience, because of the artwork's location. Even passengers on public transport were able to read the message as they waited in traffic. The next step in the project is to create an opportunity for the inhabitants of Łódź to join the action. The continuation of Aldo's idea will be a huge number of posters with letters in marked places and in the free entrance space in the Muzeum Sztuki, with instructions on using these communication tools.

*Transcription by  
Agnieszka Wojciechowska Sej*



ów  
nych przez  
b lub  
t Łódzki







MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# Residency Reflection

Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź

BRITA KÖHLER

# THE 2050 ART MUSEUM

"Czcionka". I bring this Polish word with me back to Italy. It means "font" and refers to the artist residency I was invited to assist in, as part of the European project **MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX**. The Italian artist Aldo Giannotti, sent from Graz to Museum Sztuki in Łódź, Poland, worked with a group of 14 ambitious youngsters around 15 years old and the highly engaged educational and curatorial team of the museum on the issue the "Museum of the Future". Together, they discussed the role of the institution of contemporary culture and raised questions about their future desires in regard to what art meant to them and to society:

**"Where will the place be that contemporary art can become history?"**

**"Where will you see something that surprises you?"**

**"Where will the place be that we will be able to touch?"**

**"Where will the place be that people hang up art and look for inspiration?"**

**The answer to all these questions could be:  
"in the Art Museum of 2050"!**

As with every partner museum of this EU project, whether in Zagreb, Graz, Tallinn or Bozen, the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź tried to figure out how the museum could support contributions and exciting visions coming from its young visitors. What are or could be the right communication tools? How can the museum include the proposals of the younger generation in its ongoing activities and bring them out into the local cultural scene?

As many different urban and sub-cultural forms of expression and communication tools used by the youngsters do, Aldo Giannotti's and his workshop team's art project referred to the source of inspiration represented by graffiti, tags or scratching, among other things.

Together they decided to bring their messages out of the institution into the public space, using the "czcionka", the font taken from the

visual identity of the museum. Six thousand singular, black letters on big, white paper sheets arrived from the printers. They were used to put together an enormous word game, fixed on the façade of another, less institutionalised open space for contemporary culture in Łódź.

The words “FIND ART” were written in big print on the wall, beside a huge composition of codified letters. Only those who passed by and took the time to decipher what was written on the wall could share the future messages of the young participants in the project. One almost had the feeling of being addressed by the group with the message:

**The most important tool that will put you in touch with contemporary art is your own engagement!**

*Brita Köhler is the Head of visitor services /  
educational projects, Museion Bozen/Bolzano, Italy*

**MSU MSU MSU**

**U2M U2M U2M**

**MSU MSU MSU**

**U2M U2M U2M**

**MSU MSU MSU**

**U2M U2M U2M**

**MSU MSU MSU**

**U2M U2M U2M**

**MSU MSU MSU**

**U2M U2M U2M**

**MSU MSU MSU**

**U2M U2M U2M**

Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb  
Zagreb Zagreb

MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# MSU Zagreb in the *Museum* *as TOOlbox* PrOject

MSU Zagreb

SNJEŽANA PINTARIĆ

The Zagreb Museum of Contemporary Art is a living venue for the creation, presentation, interpretation and preservation of contemporary art in all its forms. Its objective is to encourage and nurture the comprehension of contemporary art through the innovative and imaginative use of exhibitions and collections, allowing the most diverse range of visitor groups to learn through recreation. The emphasis is more on developing the working process with artists and the public than on the presentation of a finished exhibition product.



**This is the most straightforward description of the mission we have been carrying out in our new building, at an institution that has 62 years of collecting and promoting contemporary art behind it. The museum was established on 7 December 1954 with the founding of the Municipal Gallery of Contemporary Art. Collections and departments have been created and modified alongside the museum's growth and development and now, after all the institutional changes, the various collections encompass over 12,000 works by Croatian and foreign artists. The works of art that have been collected, whether purchased or donated, date from 1950 to the present day. Noteworthy is the fact that the collection overall includes the work of some nine hundred artists, of which 60% are foreign and 40% are Croatian. Since its inception, the museum has showcased new artistic phenomena and figures: artists who pose questions, react to events in society, and explore and introduce new practices to art.**

It is this frame of mind that has lent itself to the creation of an overall museum collection that constitutes a significant departure from other collections of contemporary art at Croatian museums, primarily as a result of the museum's specific and exhaustive treatment of individual themes and stylistic complexes and of its international scope. Especially prominent is the constructivist and kinetic art represented in the work of proponents of the principles of geometric abstraction that were later, in the 1960s and 1970s, joined by other Croatian figures of the international New Tendencies movement. Thanks to intensive collaboration with artists of the New Tendencies movement, our museum is home to one of the most complete European collections of this form of art.

**Certainly worth mentioning as a prominent aspect is the collection of works by members of the proto-conceptual Gorgona group, as is a group of works united in the 1970s under the moniker *New Art Practice*. It was precisely during those years that our museum recognised the significance of the new artistic production emerging in our milieu parallel with international trends. With the purchase of works for the collection of conceptual art, film and video, the museum joined a handful of European institutions that reacted with timely prescience**





**to new, emerging phenomena. The artists whose works we hold have achieved notable international acclaim: such artists as Sanja Iveković, Dalibor Martinis, Mladen Stilinović, Marina Abramović, Goran Trbuljak, Braco Dimitrijević, Tomislav Gotovac, Vlasta Delimar and Vlado Martek.**

Parallel to the museum's history — the emergence and formation of its collections and the branching out of its activities — we should also mention the lengthy process of identifying suitable premises to house the museum or a new building to be its proper home. The new MSU building, designed by the Croatian architect Igor Franić, opened its doors in December 2009.

**Opting for a location in Novi Zagreb, the museum took a bold step in crossing the Sava River as the first major culture institution to move to a part of the city that emerged entirely in the post-World War II era — during the period of Socialist-inspired design — a part of Zagreb that reluctantly bore the epithet “the city's bedroom”.**

Franić's restrained architectural expression has created the ideal framework for our activity within the present zeitgeist. Its openness and non-dogmatic approach leaves sufficient freedom to embrace new technologies and the new museological imperatives we encounter every day.

**From its very inception, the MSU has endeavoured to promote a new and different art and has, parallel to this, also promoted new museological practices. As an art institution active in a dynamic societal milieu, we place the emphasis of our work on education and on establishing an even broader and more agile network of international collaboration.**

It is in this respect that our involvement in the *Translocal: Museum as Toolbox* project is important, given that the project's goal is to bring about quality experiences and new forms of work with youth and the local community inhabiting Novi Zagreb, a neighbourhood with which the museum wishes to establish the firmest possible connection. Our work with international curators and artists through residencies in the framework of this project is a further source of encouragement for all of us at the museum. ■





MSU Zagreb

# Residency

# Report

A blue-tinted photograph of a museum workshop. Several people are visible, some sitting at tables and others standing, working on various projects. The scene is busy and collaborative, with people focused on their tasks. The lighting is soft, and the overall atmosphere is one of creative activity.

All you need to know:  
Who? What? When?  
Where? Why? How?

MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

## Who?

Maria Derlōš and Jekaterina Kljutšnik, two members of the Lasnaidee association from Tallinn, Estonia, undertook a residency at the Zagreb Museum of Contemporary Art and created and held workshops with the newly founded MSU Young Experts' Club. The members of the youth club who took part in the workshops were: **Lorena Arnautović, Sara Čavar, Luka Čubrić, Klasja Habjan, Anna Kovačević, Ozana Masnec, Klara Miholić, Marta Mršić, Lucia Sršen, Larisa Šmitran and Ema Vata.** They were selected to participate through an open invitation to young people between the ages of 15 and 25.



In the course of the residency, the museum was also visited by the curator Frida Carazzato of the Museion in Bolzano, Italy and the museum educator Monika Holzer-Kernblicher of the Kunsthaus in Graz, Austria. They took part in several workshops as observers and as active advisers and expert interlocutors in a number of discussions. The museum's team taking part in the project and collaborating with the guests and the youth club in the course of the residency consisted of the MSU director and project curator Snježana Pintarić, the project museum educator Ana Škegro, the public relations expert Sonja Barbarić and the MSU trainee Ana Bedenko.

### **What?**

Maria and Jekaterina held workshops for members of the MSU Young Experts' Club, the objective of which was to develop the best possible communication and connections between the museum and the local community and residents of the Novi Zagreb neighbourhood, the site of the new building that the MSU moved into in 2009. Most of the workshops consisted of open format discussions, idea and opinion sharing and teamwork that led to possible solutions to close the gap between the MSU and the residents of Novi Zagreb and, eventually, to draw a large number of these residents to the museum. In order to achieve their objectives, the Lasnaidee group and the youth club decided to create additional content for visitors on the plateau facing the museum and undertake interventions in the public areas of Novi Zagreb that would inform the local residents about the museum and about contemporary art in general. Given the limited time available for the residency, they focused from the start on the plateau area facing the main entrance to the museum.

### **When?**

The residency was 6–15 May 2016, with workshops held every day from 4 to 7 o'clock in the afternoon.

### **Where?**

Most of the workshops took place at the MSU or in front of it. Maria and Jekaterina took an urban walk with the youth club members through the various Novi Zagreb districts in the course of the first workshop to get to know better the neighbourhood in which the museum is situated. Some of the youth club members had never visited many of the Novi Zagreb districts and the urban walk was very welcome in terms of preparing them for the challenging task they faced.

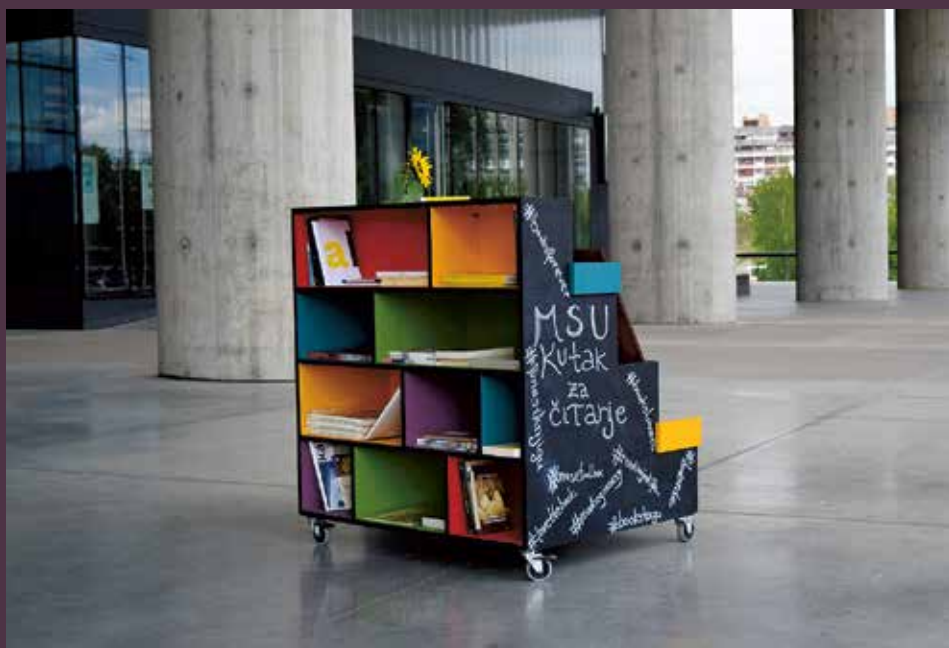
## Why?

Given that the *Translocal: Museum as Toolbox* project aims to establish better communication between the museum and the public at large, especially with young people between the ages of 15 and 25, the chief objectives of the residency was to collaborate with the MSU Young Experts' Club, to hear their thoughts and adopt their ideas that might increase the museum's openness and it's connection with the broader public. During these intensive workshops and other meetings related to the project, the participants from the youth club succeeded in getting to know one another better, opened up to each other in conversation, shared their thoughts with others and saw some of their ideas adopted.

## How?

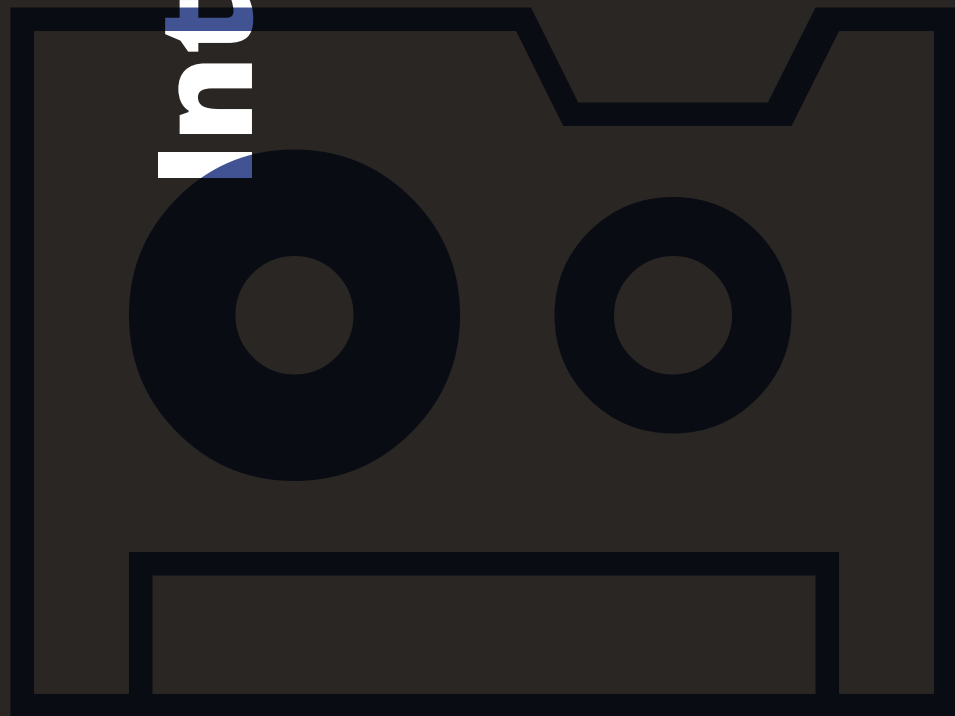
After many constructive discussions, the Lasnaidee group and the youth club decided to create additional entertainment and educational content for museum visitors during the residency that could be used on a daily basis on the plateau facing the MSU. They created original versions of templates based on popular board games (such as Ludo and chess) and painted panels that can be placed on the benches in front of the main entrance of the museum. They also sanded and painted various transport pallets, creating additional seating areas on the plateau. They even managed to build a mobile bookshelf for book exchanges from which visitors can take a book under the condition that – in return – they leave one of their own books they no longer need on the shelf. The purpose of all these elements is to encourage visitors to interact and actively participate, even if this participation is limited to playing board games with friends. In order to succeed in this goal, it was necessary that content be created that will make visitors feel welcome and want to remain in the museum area or around it.





MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

MSU Zagreb



# Artist Interview

**NGO**  
**Lasnaidee**

**Maria & Jekaterina, could you tell us more about your professional backgrounds, and the background of the NGO Lasnaidee?**

**Maria Derlõš (MD):** We both work in the field of architecture and urban planning. I studied landscape architecture and urbanism; currently I work at the Estonian Urban Lab, where in different projects I deal with participatory planning and the promotion of local-specific and sustainable approaches in city planning.

**Jekaterina Kljutšnik (JK):** I have a bachelor's degree in interior design and architecture. At the moment, I work in an architectural bureau in Tallinn, Estonia.

**MD:** Lasnaidee is a group of Lasnamäe residents who are trying to make their neighbourhood a more youthful, active and pleasant place to live. What I do at Lasnaidee I consider to be my passion and a part of my lifestyle rather than work. Together we are about ten people who have become good friends. So far we have organised several public events (e.g. a street festival, an open-air cinema and a flea market) to provide more activities in the public space, to raise people's awareness of some issues we have in the neighbourhood, and to introduce the concept of the residents' responsibility for the place in which they live.

**JK:** Now that we have the attention of the public, we are focused this year more on establishing strong collaboration with the municipality and – based on a Lasnaidee initia-

tion – the goal is to encourage the development of a new public park. We are still organising one event this year, but we prefer to focus our energy on more long-term goals rather than just events.

**Which artists and what practices tackling the issues you are involved in do you find interesting?**

**MD:** We collaborate with other NGOs that are focused on neighbourhood development in Estonia. They are usually focused on small-scale wooden housing districts and are called neighbourhood associations. Because NGO Lasnaidee deals with large-scale panel housing areas built during the socialist period – and thus the typology of the environment differs a lot – we have different approaches to what we do, but similar general goals. We can, therefore, share a lot of experiences and knowledge with each other.

**JK:** We are also very inspired by other initiatives that deal with socialist-period mass housing areas, based, for example, on Moscow *Partizaning* activists.

**How well prepared did you feel when arriving in Zagreb for the residency? How well can one prepare from a distance and how much did you have to reconsider once you got here?**

**MD:** We considered it a blank slate. We did research as much as we could from a distance: looking around using Google Street View, trying to familiarise ourselves with the names of the districts and plac-

es, and reading about the development and history of Novi Zagreb.

**JK:** Well, we did have some initial or roughly sketched-out ideas when preparing for this work. But when we arrived, we saw that our mentality differed from that of the local residents, so some of our ideas could not be accepted with the same understanding or enthusiasm. So we had to get to know the local people and local life better. Can one be well prepared from a distance? It really depends on the task. In this case: only partially.

**What did you know about Croatia and Zagreb before you were approached by *Translocal*? What are your rituals in getting to know your next work location?**

**MD:** I knew I had to bring some *kulen* and *štrukli* back home. We knew Croatia mainly as a holiday destination and not much about the contemporary art scene. To get to know a new place I like to start with Google Maps, to see how the city is structured and located. I usually read some basic texts and one or two more in-depth articles, but in general I prefer to keep my mind open and absorb most of the information on the spot by discovering the city itself. While there, I try to avoid touristic suggestions (although they can be useful), and while walking try to decide which is the next direction or street to take. In that way the city can take you to very unexpected and interesting places.

**JK:** To tell the truth, I had no ideas or knowledge about Croatia and Zagreb at all. It just happens that in my life I have not had any connections with this region. This is also my first experience working abroad. First of all I checked Google Maps and then read some basic information about the country and the city of Zagreb. I agree with Maria on keeping one's mind open and not having any preconceptions before starting the work, because when working in an urban space you have to just be there and see it with your own eyes. The conditions can be different even depending on the weather, so it is always better to start making observations on the spot.

**Do you work abroad a lot? What are the best things related to working abroad and what are the biggest challenges?**

**MD:** This is the first time we have been invited to an art residency. We don't consider ourselves artists, but in this specific context our knowledge was of use to the project because it deals with strategic planning, public space and a collaborative approach with local people. The challenge was to clearly determine the goal, to narrow it down and decide what we could do in one week that would really matter and be useful to the museum. The best thing was to have an intense experience of a similar and yet very different context. We totally fell in love with Novi Zagreb, its potential and environment. It was truly inspiring.

**JK:** For me too it was the first time working abroad. I found it interesting to test myself: do I have enough knowledge? Can I give this project what it really needs? It was fascinating to do a lot of really deep and complicated things in a short period of time: to get to know the place and people better, to learn how it all functions and to find a practical solution based on gathered information. And of course it was also interesting to observe how the local people use their space, to compare it with my city. It was good for pushing the limits of my mind.

### **What are the criteria of success for you in terms of this particular project?**

**MD:** The motivation of the youth club is very important. They are the ones who should move forward the ideas and initiatives formed during the residency. The aspect of continuation is crucial given that a change in mind-set is something that takes time and a lot of patience. Therefore the museum also has to be very supportive and consistent in its activities. The project really has long-term ambitions and may even extend beyond the project time-line itself.

### **How was your relationship with the youth group? How did you manage to engage them?**

#### **What did you learn from them?**

**MD:** We were very impressed by the youth club, how sophisticated they were. We hoped to have more in-depth discussions with them, but we are grateful for the experience we were given.

In the beginning we had some workshops and discussions where we tried to understand the main problematic issues the members of the youth club found important by asking leading questions and encouraging them to generate solutions for themselves. For us it was important to help them form arguments and debate their ideas, and to be critical of well-known assumptions and stereotypes. All the discussions were open. We tried to be as objective as possible and act more as mediators of the process. We have not had much experience working with youth, so for us everything was exciting. To learn from people of a different culture and background is always very challenging and inspiring.

### **What is your evaluation of your work on the project?**

**JK:** There was some apprehension about whether we could deliver our thoughts and knowledge at an understandable and practical level. We wanted to be sure that the youth group understood what we were looking for when we gave them certain assignments; we wanted to show them how even the smallest things can influence people and the environment. Eventually we had success in involving these young people in practical activities.

**MD:** The work process of the youth club was a bit too flexible (because of bad timing related to their school exams, etc.) which resulted in poor attendance among the members of the club. But, all in all, the flexibility created space for a redefinition of the process. The staff of the

museum was super helpful and gave constructive feedback, which helped us a lot in those late after-workshop hours.

### What is your assessment, as an artist, of emerging communication products in the project?

**MD:** A very interesting format was developed in this project. It was intriguing to participate and try it out. Forming a youth club is a good way to engage the immediate focus group and get the needed knowledge from a first-hand source. In this way, you get instant feedback and more in-depth communication. Of course this format is limited, since it is a very specific group of people that participate in a youth club and thus you still get somewhat one-sided opinions. In some cases, however, this is enough. In terms of the outcomes – the outdoor furniture and the ideas – still-on-paper about the benches – I believe that they are good paths for indirect communication. In these methods there is more contemplation and the process itself has many possible directions. The way different people perceive and understand the meaning of the benches, board games and outdoor library, and how they use them, can vary. It is interesting because this leaves room for self-defining and unexpected outcomes.

### What are the means of communication with the public and how are they changing?

**MD:** For young people social media appear to be the most popular means of communication. But in

this specific project communication on the spot was most important: the communications that occurred in the public space. To me personally, it seems that people crave more immediate and first-hand interaction, especially if you work with local people in very site-specific situations. In this case just speaking with people on the streets and at meeting places was more suitable and provided more in terms of informing people. Also, you learn more about the audience, the target group. We can say that it was qualitative communication, rather than quantitative.

### How would you describe the Zagreb Museum of Contemporary Art in general (its collections, openness to the public, the building)?

**JK:** The building itself is very monumental and impressive. In my opinion, however, it is quite “cold” and really not very welcoming, both outside and inside. Due to the lack of time I could not evaluate the logistics of the museum’s everyday operations, but I got an impression as a regular visitor. Being a project designer, I can assure you that the first impression plays a huge role in the perception of the whole space. The main hall, unfortunately, is empty and faceless; it is not very comfortable. Important social points, such as the shop and café, are situated at a significant distance from the main areas. Because of this, they are at times “invisible” to visitors.

**MD:** There is a lot of great potential in the museum, but it is not yet

user-friendly. This is a big challenge to the museum, which needs a comprehensive approach and a readiness to make changes.

**What are your reasons and motivations for cooperating with the museum on the project?**

**JK:** Using my knowledge and experience in new and unknown spaces and getting to know a new and totally different urban space were the main reasons for cooperation. It was also useful to practice our skills in organizing and leading workshops.



MUSEUM AS TOOLBOX

# MSU Zagreb Youth Group Experiences

MSU Zagreb



# Time-line of the Lasnaidee residency at the Zagreb Museum of Contemporary Art

*Diary by Luka Čubrić*

**Friday,  
6 May 2016**

On the first day, the youth club was introduced to the Tallinn residents Maria Derlōš and Jekaterina Kljutšnik, members of NGO Lasnaidee. We exchanged a few brief details about each other, and then went for an urban walk in the Novi Zagreb neighbourhood. We were instructed to give feedback on anything peculiar we noticed during the walk. We made a tour of Zapruđe, Utrine, Travno and Dugave, and stopped in Slobodština to discuss what our thoughts had been during the walk. The conclusion was that the entire Novi Zagreb area lacks content.

**Saturday,  
7 May 2016**

We were instructed by Maria and Katja to draw mental maps of our tour from the prior workshop. The purpose of the task was to see if there were any similar patterns that could be used in our interventions. All the maps were exhibited and we could see that each of us had a different memory of the whole tour. While discussing our potential goal, we concluded that our target group should be young people interested in different activities. We decided to stage interventions of sorts in the Novi Zagreb neighbourhoods and one intervention at the museum, inviting the residents of Novi Zagreb to close the gap between themselves and the museum.

## MSU Zagreb

**Monday,  
9 May 2016**

We were divided into two groups of four. The goal was to brainstorm as many ideas as we could for the interventions, in order to generate concepts for the practical part of the workshop. The ideas varied, from concerts and poetry nights to small interventions on the plateau of the museum that would make it more approachable.

**Tuesday,  
10 May 2016**

Maria and Katja gave a public presentation in which they presented themselves and their work with the Lasnaidee organisation. Having had experience in making a public space functional again in Tallinn, they said they would like to have the same impact on Novi Zagreb. The youth club continued the discussion outside the museum, where residents presented three possible paths for our further work during this residency. The first of these involved small-scale urban interventions on the plateau, the second one involved informative urban interventions in Novi Zagreb that would include public benches, and the last one was an abstract map of Novi Zagreb that would be created by residents of the neighbourhoods inside the museum.

**Wednesday,  
11 May 2016**

In the end we decided to go with the interventions on the museum plateau and the urban interventions on benches in Novi Zagreb as sites of extra information on the museum for local residents. We started making plans for both interventions through three stages: (1) researching the information to be displayed on Novi Zagreb benches, (2) creating a prototype for interventions on benches and on the museum plateau, and (3) “hands on” building. There were quite a few ideas for both interventions, such as displaying quotes from Croatian artists, creating spatial interventions on benches, using slang and even posing questions.

**Thursday,  
12 May 2016**

Katja and Maria presented us with the idea of creating various board games that could be brought to the museum plateau, encouraging visitors to stay on the plateau longer than they usually would. We opted for games such as Ludo, chess and even a completely made-up game and started making our original sketches.

**Friday and Saturday,  
13–14 May 2016**

With the help of the MSU staff we were able to build several board games, two sitting areas made of transport pallets and a mobile book exchange library. Using different colours and patterns we enhanced the appearance of the wooden surfaces.

**Sunday,  
15 May 2016**

During the last day of the residency we put the finishing touches on our board games and other interventions. As a farewell we were given a sunflower from the residents as a symbol of growth, with hopes that our small group and our project would expand. In the continuation stage of the project, we will continue working with the MSU staff on further developing the idea of interventions on Novi Zagreb benches.

