

MUSEOTHERAPY





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MUSEOTHERAPY

How Does It Work?

Museum as a Place of Therapy

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary museums, apart from collecting, protecting and exhibiting works of art, fulfil various social functions, playing a significant role in building relationships with people, taking into account their experiences. The new roles of museums at the beginning of the 21st century lead to numerous practical solutions for the functioning of cultural institutions in society, preparing ground for social structures, e.g. facilitating interpersonal communication, helping us understand ourselves in the surrounding reality. Museums today constitute an interdisciplinary platform for exchanging ideas about the world, significantly influencing attitudes, worldviews and culture of their visitors. There is a visible transformation in the functioning of museums, aimed at using the emotional potential of museum collections, narrations, space and exhibitions, which, in turn, satisfies the needs of communities to build social capital, develop integration and therapeutic impact. This new, modern form of museum activity is called museotherapy. The monograph presents a collection of articles written by representatives of various scientific fields: museology, book science, psychology, psychiatry, art and artistic education. Its main aim is to define the phenomenon referred to as museotherapy and present the museum as an intermediary in strengthening social awareness and mentality of people, taking into account the difference between museotherapy and other therapeutic forms such as bibliotherapy, music therapy or art therapy.

Research on the impact of museum on societies conducted in many places around the world, e.g. in Canada, the USA, Australia, France and Great Britain as well as in Poland confirms that there are numerous areas influencing personal development, imagination, creativity, well-being and health as well as the treatment of civilization diseases. The studies prove that practicing

therapy in museums and art galleries can support patients' recovery and improve the quality of life in a broader sense. They show that museotherapy is effectively used to support the treatment of many diseases, both mental and somatic. Mood and memory disorders, cancer, hypertension, diabetes or Alzheimer disease can be treated by means of museotherapy, which uses the basic tools such as dialogue or the possibility to tell one's story through museum exhibits or museum space, referring to memory and artistic diversity.

The articles collected in the present volume are intended to start a discussion on museotherapy and to disseminate knowledge about this new form of activity conducted in various scientific communities. It is also one of the first publications of this type in Poland. The authors, apart from Polish scientists and practitioners, include the world's first art therapist, psychologist Stephen Legari from the Museum of Fine Arts in Montreal to which physicians have been experimentally referring their patients since 2018 thus confirming the new form of the museum's influence.

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MUSEOTHERAPY – HOW DOES IT WORK?

The museums of 21st century go beyond the traditional roles in favor of the social roles e.g. in the area of health improvement, which is confirmed by the research conducted in the past few years. The research indicates that activity dubbed as museotherapy is successfully and more and more often employed to support treating many illnesses with both mental and somatic grounds. For this purpose, basic tools such as dialogue, storytelling with the use of museum objects, museum space, reference to memory and artistic diversity are used. The article presents, on the basis of research reports and plethora of researchers' and museologists' opinions and findings, the therapeutic influence of museums and the significance of their activity in shaping health and wellbeing. To support this claims I will present examples of selected museums which use museotherapy.

Museotherapy is a relatively new term describing contemporary role of museums and their therapeutic influence on recipients in their struggle with civilizational issues, using space, exhibits, narrations and extensive experience of psychologists, pedagogues and physicians. An attempt to showcase this area of activity was made in National Museum in Kielce in 2018 and 2019 during conferences aimed at defining the phenomenon of Museotherapy. During the discussions every participant could create their own viewpoint on this notion. The most important description of this form of therapy is presenting museum as an intermediary in enhancing the social consciousness and mentality. The difference between museotherapy and other forms – bibliotherapy, art therapy and musicotherapy – was also discussed. The changes in the functioning of cultural heritage institutions were widely discussed –

how they complement the role of art for therapeutic purposes, to influence changes and growth by using the emotional potential of the collection, thus satisfying the needs of the environment in order to build social capital and social integration. A lot of attention has also been paid to meditation as a practice that allows people to integrate with their everyday life, for which the museum is an ideal place. The goal of this type of therapy was also discussed, indicating the diagnosis of needs: cognitive-developmental, emotional and manual, testing the increase in emotional-social, perceptual-cognitive abilities, reacting to internal tensions, failures, frustration and aggression, and the development of creative abilities¹. It is worth mentioning that this is not a contemporary discovery, but a reversion to the past and the beginnings of museums activity, when these institutions were places of creative and spiritual transformation. Nowadays, museums remain places where people can experience a change, create a community and enable social interaction between various groups of people².

Museums can be places of meditation and contemplation, within their architectural borders, diversity and specificity that distinguish them from the world beyond. They offer their guests a change in behavior, learning and experiencing emotions, significantly influencing their well-being. They are a safe space both for the objects stored inside and for the visiting people. All this contributes to a therapeutic influence on their recipients³.

This role of museums has been confirmed by the results of many years of research, as well as practices carried out in various places around the world, including Canada, the USA, Australia or Great Britain, indicating that practicing therapy in museums may improve the well-being of participants, support the recovery process, and broadly understood improvement in the quality of life.

Why is this happening, how does it work? This is the question that I pose in the title of my article and I try not so much to answer it as to initiate a discussion, presenting an array of opinions and findings of researchers, muse-

¹ R. Kotowski, *Museum as a Platform for Personal Development*, in: *Museums and Identities. Planning an Extended Museum*, ed. D. Folga-Januszewska, M. Lehmannova, J. Gaburova, E. Kellner, P. Jaskanis, Warszawa 2019, pp.107–112.

² T.K. Simpson, *The Museum as Grove of the Muses*, "The Journal of Museum Education" 2000, vol. 25, no. 1/2, pp. 28–31.

³ A. Salom, *The therapeutic potentials of a museum visit*, "International Journal of Transpersonal Studies" 2008, vol. 27(1), pp. 98–103.

ologists and organizations pointing to the therapeutic effect of museums. In this process, art, which is extremely useful in therapy due to the healing property of the creative process and a very positive effect on the brain, has a crucial significance. The scope of human experience can be expanded through the creative process because art can create equivalents of the experience itself – says Elinor Ulman, founder and editor of "The Bulletin of Art Therapy" (now "The American Journal of Art Therapy"), the first forum devoted exclusively to this topic. Moreover, she states, art is a realm where one can choose, vary or replicate an individual's experience. In thousands of creative acts, conflicts can be re-experienced, resolved and integrated. Throughout history, artists have been used to resolve the "eternal conflict" between the instinctive drives of the individual and the demands of society⁴. It has also been observed that the sublimation of art is a highly effective way to deal with basic human dilemmas. Museum objects are physical manifestations of the creative forces inherent in people. They are kind of symbols that are sometimes important enough to be commemorated. These are deliberate, thoughtful and autonomous products of a person that carry energy that is powerful, can definitely affect the psyche⁵. An interesting observation in this regard is that an artist's expression or message usually presents the human problems that artists relate to. Artistic creativity can reduce stress, improve health, have physical and mental benefits, and even contribute to a longer life span. Not only does art provide access to communication, problem solving, and imagination, it also limits consciousness and unconsciousness, and is therefore of exceptional value in treating mental health problems. To facilitate this, a therapist is needed who helps in shaping attitudes and actions that play a key role in the therapeutic process. In this sense, the activity of the museum becomes very close to therapy through art, i.e. art therapy.

This concept is also understood in different ways, as pointed out by Iwona Bugajska-Bigos. The British treat art therapy as a form of psychotherapy in which the artistic media is used as the primary means of expression and communication. In this sense, art becomes the main means of expressing emotions. On the other hand, the American association of art therapists

⁴ E. Ulman, *Art therapy: Problems of definition*, "American Journal of Art Therapy" 2001, vol. 40, p. 19.

⁵ A. Salom, *The therapeutic potentials...*, p. 101.

treats art therapy as a belief in the healing power of art and the possibility of improving life and gaining well-being through it⁶. One of the precursors of art therapy in Poland, Wita Szulc, the author of many studies in this area, defines art therapy as all forms and methods of therapeutic aid in which art is used, and more precisely its various fields: music, drawing, literature, dance, drama. The shortest definition is art therapy. It is a specialized, complementary psychotherapeutic form that uses artworks to improve the physical and mental condition of an individual, "it is a discipline focused on communication, health and personal development"⁷. Museotherapy refers to art therapy, but what distinguishes these two phenomena is the use of museum objects. According to Lois H. Silverman, an American museologist and museum educator, who based her observations on the opinions of many researchers – museum objects, natural or man-made exhibits, relating to the history of the world and people, provoke and embody human goals and experiences, encourage recipients to act in a way that can give them what they desire. Museum objects spark emotions, opinions, reflections and memories. They function as symbols of identity, as a reminder of the lived experience and as symbols of nature and society. This affects the transformation and development of a person, their relations in society, and the development of social capital⁸. In addition, each visitor comes to the museum with their experiences, which translate into individual interpretation of the exhibits and narratives⁹. This allows to better understand life, and thus may lead to better well-being. According to Silverman, object therapy is a kind of laboratory for understanding the relationship between things and people. Such therapy, as noted by Kinga Gajda, allows the exploration: first of the object and then of the museum message and relating it to one's own experience, and then to the interpretation of the values supported by the museum. It gives the opportunity to look at illness, loss and grief from different perspectives and helps in regaining the sense of dignity, respect and the sense of defining one's identity in a positive way¹⁰.

⁶ I. Bugajska-Bigos, *Arteterapia i sztuka w terapii*, "Eruditio et Ars" 2018, no. 1, p. 73.

⁷ W. Szulc, *Arteterapia. Narodziny idei, ewolucja teorii, rozwój praktyki*, Warszawa 2011, p. 65.

⁸ L. H. Silverman, *The Social Work of Museums*, Oxon and New York, Routledge 2010, p. 16.

⁹ Idem, *Visitor meaning-making in museums for a new age*, "Curator: The Museum Journal" 1995, vol. 38 (3), p. 161.

¹⁰ K.A. Gajda, *Edukacyjna rola muzeum*, Kraków 2019, p. 264.

Museums go beyond the traditional scientific or recreational role in favor of social roles, including the area of improving health, which was confirmed by the results of research conducted for several years. According to the research, museotherapy is successfully and more and more often used to support the treatment of many illnesses with both mental and somatic grounds: mood, memory, stress disorders, but also cancer, hypertension, diabetes or Alzheimer's, with the use of basic tools, which are dialogue, storytelling using museum objects, museum space, referring to memory and artistic diversity. A 2002 study by the University of Aberdeen on the impact of museums, archives and libraries on society in Great Britain confirms these trends, enumerating health and well-being among the areas of influence¹¹.

In 2011, the report of a study by the Psychosocial Research Unit at the University of Central Lancashire on the project: *Who Cares? Museums, Health and Well-being* was published. The study was carried out in six museums and aimed at showing how museum activities can affect health and well-being. The participating museums were part of the Study of the Renaissance North West Program, funded by the Council of Museums, Libraries and Archives. This report revealed the enormous potential of museum collections that can be made accessible to disadvantaged groups in ways that can effectively improve well-being. The study adopted a psychosocial framework that aims at understanding the importance of involvement in museum activities in many scopes: individual responses, interpersonal relationships, institutional and social contexts. The focus was on the importance and use of exhibits and works of art by individuals and the relationship between recipients and museum workers, including their use for cultural integration. As we read in the report, this is not only because the participants have new experiences and opportunities for social interaction, but also because of their interaction with the museum. In favorable conditions, museum facilities give people the opportunity to find new cultural forms to express their emotions and experiences. This project showed how museums can contribute to the general well-being, referring to the nature of their collections and their

¹¹ *Impact Evaluation of Museums, Archives and Libraries: Available Evidence Project. Information Management Aberdeen Business School the Robert Gordon University*, ed. C. Wavell, G. Baxter, I. Johnson, D. Williams, Aberdeen 2002, p. 78.

symbolic cultural significance, as well as the symbolic, personal meaning these collections have for individuals¹².

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) has added a new healthcare related purpose to its long list of museum functions. The 2013 report, based on the *Museums on the phone: How Museums Treat Health* program, identified 10 aspects of the healthcare field in which museums make a significant contribution: Alzheimer's, Autism, Disease Prevention, Health Skills, Hospital Assistance, Medical Training, Mental Health, Military and Veterans Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing, Vision Impairment. The director of AAM at that time Ford Bell noted: "For too long, museums have been viewed as commodities, not as basic community anchors". The report highlights that museums are places for interaction, learning and communication and are particularly well suited to the provision of health services and information¹³.

The following years brought a number of projects and studies, the results of which confirm the importance of museum activity in shaping well-being and beneficial effects on improving health. In November 2019, WHO published a report summarizing publicly available evidence confirming the significant role of art in improving health and well-being, with particular emphasis on the WHO European Region. The results of more than 3,000 studies have highlighted the important role of art in preventing deterioration of health, promoting health, and managing and treating disease throughout life. The report highlights that this beneficial influence of art can be further enhanced by recognizing and acting on a growing evidence base, promoting artistic engagement at individual, local and national levels, and fostering cross-sector collaboration. The report presents evidence from a wide variety of studies using different methodologies, proving that art has the potential to affect both mental and physical health. The results are grouped under two general themes: prevention and promotion, and management and treatment. Each of them covers a number of sub-topics. As part of prevention and promotion,

¹² *Who Cares? Museums, Health and Well-being Research Project A Study of the Renaissance North West Programme*, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264541260_Who_Cares_Museums_Health_and_Well-being (access 9.05.2020).

¹³ *Museums On Call: How Museums Are Addressing Health Issues*, <https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/museums-on-call.pdf> (access 2.10.2020); *Museotherapy*, <https://dvdidd.com/museotherapy/> (access 2.10.2020).

the results showed how art can: influence the social determinants of health, support a child's development, encourage pro-health behaviors, help prevent diseases, support care. In terms of management and treatment, the results showed how art can help people suffering from mental illnesses, support the care of people with acute diseases, participate in supporting people with neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders, and support care at the end of life. The report provides evidence of the potential value of art in promoting good health, alleviating or preventing a range of mental and physical conditions, and treating acute and chronic diseases that arise throughout life. The research involved a wide variety of arts activities and programs in number of different settings, from hospitals to primary care, to community and home. From these studies it can be concluded that there is ample evidence for the health benefits of art¹⁴.

In 2019, British researchers also reported on their long-term observations of thousands of people aged 50 and over for 14 years, found that those who only went to the museum once or twice a year were 14% less likely to die during this period than those who did not. A study published in *The British Medical Journal* confirmed that the chances of living longer increased the more people interacted with art. According to them, among people who go to a museum or theater once a month or even every few months, the risk of death during this period is reduced by 31%. This suggests that involvement in the art builds social capital, which improves people's access to knowledge and resources and can help with aging successfully. In addition, it has been shown that artistic involvement improves the sense of purpose in life, helps regulate emotions and thus improves coping, supports stress buffering and builds creativity, which improves people's ability to positively adapt to changing life circumstances. Taken together, this study suggests that receptive art may have independent, long-term protective links with longevity in the elderly. This relationship appears to be explained in part by differences in factors such as cognition, mental health, and physical activity among those who practice and do not practice art, but appear to be independent of these factors. This study did not compare the relative size of the art effect and other known mortality predictors, but other factors such as socioeconomic status,

¹⁴ D. Fancourt, S. Finn, *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review*, Copenhagen 2019, pp. 52–53.

physical health, and health behavior undoubtedly have a greater impact on mortality risk¹⁵.

The need to utilize the potential and impact of museums on health is also reflected in a guide for local governments, communities and museums developed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Council of Museums (ICOM). It included, among others, recommendations to create incentives and provide resources for museums to regularly attract audiences from groups at risk of social exclusion, people with disabilities, the elderly, people living in poverty, refugees. The authors of the study recommend local governments to encourage museums to establish dialogue with local health and social care as well as non-governmental organizations dealing with this area of activity. Creating funds for research programs, exhibitions disseminating knowledge about health and environmental issues. Supporting cultural activities, exhibitions, museum educational activities, workshops in health care facilities, prisons or social welfare institutions¹⁶.

The evidence shown in these exemplary research results is also confirmed by the observations of many practitioners, museum specialists, therapists, educators and authors of publications on the functions of modern museums. Museotherapy uses art workshops taking place at the exhibition, it can be an exhibition prepared explicitly for the needs of the therapy process, and the selection of museum objects for this can be treated as a statement addressed to the public. The participants of the therapy express themselves in this way, but at the same time create a kind of manifesto to the society, which Kinga Gajda points out when describing the therapeutic quality of museum education¹⁷. Museum workshops may end with a presentation of the final results of the participants, which in turn has a performative effect for the audience. An extremely important element in museotherapy is the very fact of going to the museum and participating in cultural life, which is a specific cultural stimulus, because communing with art activates creative

¹⁵ *BMJ* 2019; 367, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.l6377> (access 20.04.2020).

¹⁶ *Culture and Local Development: Maximising the Impact. Guide for Local Governments, Communities and Museums*, https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ICOM-OECD-GUIDE_EN_FINAL.pdf, p. 61 (access 20.04.2020).

¹⁷ K. A. Gajda, *Edukacyjna rola...*, p. 254.

behavior and a positive attitude towards the environment and people. This allows you to look at life from a different perspective, as more meaningful and varied, restoring its meaning, which is certainly of great importance in the treatment of mood disorders. This is due to the natural need for rest and the desire for free time to be valuable and give meaning to their lives. Participation in culture is an important contribution to their quality of life, which should become an integral part of public health policy. A human being must have a place where they can go out with loved ones. Museums provide such opportunities for spending free time, social interaction and communication, which contributes to a better well-being, stimulates positive psychological changes, supports pro-health education, and strengthens health care environments and institutions¹⁸.

As part of the communication enabled by museums, people become more socially open, and the museum space becomes a zone of engaged dialogue, which can have a therapeutic influence. Social relationships arise and recipients give the objects meaning, which has beneficial results. As Silverman notes, people can meet basic human needs: self-esteem and self-fulfillment, change, learning skills, value building and behavior; building and strengthening social ties and relations, including social capital. In addition, they help solve social problems, promote social justice and equality. They benefit individuals, groups and society as a whole. As a result, through museum communication, people create, share and change the key elements of culture that shape the very operation, quality and experience of social life. It includes not only ourselves, relationships, social issues and social structure, but also understanding, solutions and the broader vision that shapes our daily life as well as our individual and shared future, as well as our museums¹⁹.

When analyzing the functions of the museum in the area of impact on the health of its recipients, one should take a look at the constantly growing list of projects, exhibitions and institutions that take this aspect into account in their activities. They are tailored to specific recipients and goals of therapy or its support, and clearly show how this type of approach has a positive effect on participants. This is confirmed by, among others activity of the Museum

¹⁸ L.H. Silverman, *The Social Work of Museums...*, p. 18.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

of Fine Arts in Montreal, which, thanks to the cooperation with the Association of French-speaking Doctors in Canada, makes its exhibitions available for therapeutic purposes. The potential medical benefits of dealing with works of art are not new, but the idea that doctors could prescribe a visit to an art museum was developed by Nathalie Bondil, director general and chief curator of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, who presented the idea of Médecins francophones du Canada as a cooperation proposal. The beneficial effects of cultural involvement on patients have been investigated before. "I am convinced that art has a biochemical effect on our emotional and physical health."²⁰ Doctors refer their patients to the museum. The originators believe that this will make people healthier, happier and more immune. Doctors write prescriptions for free visits to the museum. For the first time in history, arts and culture are designed to help patients recover. The originators hope the idea will spread all over Canada, and then all over the world. As Museum Director Nathalie Bondil says:

Cultural experiences will have a positive impact on health and well-being, as will sports. Skeptics will do well to remember that less than a hundred years ago it was believed that sport harms the body and threatens female fertility. Just as doctors recommend exercise to their wards, they will now prescribe a visit to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts²¹.

Stephen Legari is an art therapist at this museum, who uses the properties of art to treat anxiety and depression, trauma, eating disorders, and works with people with autism and cancer patients. "Just seeing art at a museum has real health benefits"²², says Dr Hélène Boyer, head of the family medicine group at CLSC St-Louis-du-Parc in Montreal and vice president of Médecins francophones du Canada. She estimated that

Sufferers, patients with high blood pressure, high cholesterol or shortness of breath, or those who simply feel so much stressed by hearing a doctor's

²⁰ D. Grant, *Can Going to a Museum Help Your Heart Condition? In a New Trial, Doctors Are Prescribing Art*, <https://observer.com/2018/11/doctors-prescribe-art-montreal-heart-condition-asthma-cancer/> (access 20.04.2020).

²¹ Ibidem.

²² Ibidem.

diagnosis that they cannot follow the doctor's instructions, all can benefit from a visit to an art museum²³.

In addition, she admitted that contact with art helps reduce pain or shortness of breath, slow down the heart rate and improve mobility. One of the widely identified reactions can be traced to cortisol and serotonin levels. Produced in the digestive tract, serotonin regulates mood, sleep and social behavior, and cortisol secreted from the adrenal glands helps to regulate blood pressure, soothe inflammation and increase energy²⁴.

MoMA has created a free program to benefit people with dementia and Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers through guided discussions about the artworks in the museum's collection and hands-on art projects. A study of this program at New York University confirmed significant benefits for both patients and their caregivers²⁵.

Viewing and discussing works of art gives an opportunity to build a personal connection with the artist's experience. The museum allows to look at life in a wider context and becomes a place where one can get their mind off of problems or find some inspiration. Telling stories based on museum objects allows not only to understand art, combine life with art, but also to solve individual difficulties. The therapeutic function is also played by the involvement of visitors and interactive sightseeing. The exhibits used in this process stimulate actions, thought processes and stimulate creativity, which is to serve the visitors in supporting their development. They enable emotional involvement, unlocking emotions and opening to a new view of oneself and the environment, and thus the interpretation of the world. This is confirmed by the authors such as Philippa Winn, educator of Australian Arts for Health, which is National Gallery-based therapeutic program aimed at helping people with chronic diseases, raising awareness of the relationship between lifestyle and health, and developing an appreciation of their strengths and resources through creative expression and learning²⁶.

²³ Ibidem.

²⁴ Ibidem.

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ https://www.ruralhealth.org.au/papers/6_G_6_2.pdf (access 20.04.2020).

The Louvre in Hospitals project, created on the basis of cooperation between the Musée du Louvre and Parisian hospitals with the Assistance Publique - Hôpitaux de Paris, is aimed at improving the lives of patients in hospitals, reducing social exclusion often caused by disease, helping to improve health services and strengthening the relationship between staff and patients. Louvre installs art reproductions in patient rooms and uses them to conduct interactive activities and guided tours. Evaluation of these activities showed a reduced level of anxiety in 80% of participants, signaling effective relief from hospital stress and depression. The introduction to the Louvre collection and the activities proposed by the museum are just some of the tools for personal, professional and social development that enable patients and hospital staff to actively participate in a cultural project. Each year a different hospital hosts a traveling art collection prepared by the Musée du Louvre, in which art reproductions (casts, 2D reproductions) are displayed in patients' rooms as in living quarters and on hospital grounds²⁷.

Yet another interesting and important example of museotherapy in the world is the activity of the Eskenazi Art Museum at the Indiana University Eskenazi Museum of Art. There was a pilot therapeutic program for children who suffered from results of neglect, violence or other traumatic experiences. Program leader and therapist Lauren King stated, "In my experience, art was a really good way for children to express themselves in ways that they might not be able to express in words"²⁸. In her opinion, this is not a traditionally understood form of art therapy, because using traditional creative art therapy, at the same time, children's museum spaces are shown, so it should be understood as a form of museotherapy. Creating art can help people express their emotions, and seeing works of art in a museum can remind people of personal experiences. Eskenazi Museum director David Brenneman, evaluating the program, said he hopes it will help participants feel comfortable and start healing. "We are not hospitals, we are not pretending to be hospitals. But we are a safe space."²⁹

²⁷ <https://www.louvre.fr/en/louvre-hospitals> (access 20.04.2020).

²⁸ E. Hine, *Eskenazi initiative provides art therapy for children*, <https://www.idsnews.com/article/2018/11/eskenazi-museum-initiative-provides-art-therapy-for-children> (access 20.04.2020).

²⁹ Ibidem.

Also in the Great Britain, where the British Association of Museum and Gallery Therapists operates, associating art therapists who are involved or interested in developing work in museums and galleries, the emotional potential of museum collections is used by complementing the role of art for therapeutic purposes to influence change and growth. As emphasized by museums, they are dedicated places where objects and artifacts are presented and preserved for the general public. They are a rich resource of artistry, stories and creativity, They offer inspiration and opportunities beyond the appreciation of art. Viewing and relationship are the central theme of their therapeutic work. On this basis, they create projects and programs with which they want to reach people who can benefit from them³⁰.

The activities undertaken as part of museotherapy bring results, more and more often there are evidence of the psychotherapeutic value of museums and descriptions of how to use the potential of museums as places conducive to social inclusion, accessible and inspiring, as well as a rich source of meetings with facilities and environments, which can engage introspection and creating meaning. The results of this research suggest that the museum setting helps participants reflect on feelings and experiences, facilitates interaction between group members, encourages independence, supports motivation and creativity, and helps them feel valued and connected to a world outside of mental health services. These evaluation results can certainly encourage art psychotherapists to consider employing the therapeutic benefits of this rich cultural resource of museums.

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³⁰ http://www.atmag.org/?page_id=41 (access 20.04.2020).

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MUSEOTHERAPY

Today, therapy in a museum seems to be an obvious process taking place wherever a museum plays the role not only of a meeting place, a meeting with the past, but above all, a place for the exchange of thoughts and emotions. In the context of constantly changing digital communication technologies universal immersion in VR (virtual reality i.e. potential reality) and the frequently blurred borders between reality and fiction, museums play a new role. They teach us to nurture imagination, to discover and define our identity and to recognize our preferences. During museum encounters with tangible and intangible values, the causes of many of our ailments are revealed. The reasons for the lack of motivation are recognized and treated and they become the therapy treating loneliness. The contemporary museum becomes a self-aware *emotiononeum* – a space to reflect, to imagine and to feel emotions. This is probably why museums, as the first cultural institutions at the beginning of the 21st century, have become areas dedicated to our health problems: the loss of sight can be soothed by projection of touch, deafness – by building a story with a "different language", whereas the challenges involved in moving one's own body are replaced by the dynamics of imagination and technology. Museum as an artificial (the word 'artificial' comes from 'art') reality talks about matters that evoke emotions. Emotions, in turn, build motivation and lead them further.

However, what we call museotherapy today is not a new phenomenon, it can be derived from the oldest Greek concept of *museion* / *μουσεῖον* and the Latin term *musaeum*. The museum as a therapeutic space and a form of expression gave life to a new civilization of ideas, half fictional, half real, which over time took the form of theater, literature and, finally, the institution.

A long history, partially forgotten and then rediscovered in the 21st century¹, is closely related to the history of education and the experience of enjoying new impressions. Contemporary museology links this history with the creation of the so-called "engaging museum", in which the individual predispositions of participants constitute the most important factor influencing the reception of the exhibitions, arrangements, educational routes and forms of meetings². Active education is a therapy in itself as it allows us to get to know not only the surrounding world but also to identify your own preferences and problems.

But let us go back to history. There are two interesting personalities in the history of the creation of the museum: Musaeus (Μουσαῖος), whose name appears in two distant moments in history: the ancient – mythical one and the historical one (5th century). Mythical Musaeus was associated with Orpheus³. Pausanias⁴ mentions the songs of Musaeus, emphasizing the strange and manifold skills of this inspired poet and musician. Apparently **he had the ability to heal with music** and was the inventor of the dactylic poem. We also learn from Pausanias that the poet and the musician were linked to the Hill of the Muses in Athens:

Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, having freed the Athenians from tyranny, did not hand over Piraeus to them immediately after Lachares fled, and, after taking over the city, he brought in a garrison and fortified it as a fortress called Museion. It is a hill inside the former city district, facing the acropolis. There, according to oral tradition, Musaeus was to sing and after his death was to be buried (I 22:7).

¹ This is discussed in more detail in D. Folga-Januszewska, *Muzeum i narracja: długa historia opowieści*, in: *Muzeum i zmiana. Losy muzeów narracyjnych*, ed. P. Kowal, K. Wolska-Pabian, Warszawa–Kraków 2019, pp. 13–30.

² See: G. Black, *Transforming Museums in the Twenty-First Century*, London 2012, pp. 143–148. Graham Black points to the way of conducting conversations around collections as a method engaging recipients up to subjecting oneself to the self-analysis of a reaction. More on the topic of shaping a museum and its visitors in: N. Thumim, *Self-representation in museums: therapy or democracy?*, "Critical Discourse Studies" 2010, vol. 7, pp. 291–304.

³ According to different versions Musaeus was his son, friend, disciple or master. Musaeus's mother was Selene. See: P. Grimal, *Słownik mitologii greckiej i rzymskiej*, ed. J. Łanowski, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1990, p. 241.

⁴ Pausanias, *Wędrówki po Helladzie*, vol. 1–7, translated and edited by J. Niemirska-Pliszczyńska; vol. 8–10, translated by J. Niemirska-Pliszczyńska, H. Podbielski, Wrocław 1968–1989, I 14.

The tradition of the Hill of Muses as a hill of poetry and a place of music-making survived for several centuries, in the meantime turning into a literary tradition. The name of Musaeus was also used by a Greek poet in the 5th century, the author of the most beautiful known poem entitled *Hero and Leander*, written in 340 hexameter verses, which was called *Musaeus Grammaticus*⁵, while the author's name was used in several modern languages in the Middle Ages⁶.

In the intervening period, over nearly eight centuries, between the 4th century BC and the 4th and 5th century AD, the performative and immaterial tradition of museas as festivals developed. This is how, over the centuries, the idea of therapy with music, singing, movement and the creation of visual forms, now called art therapy, was born. Contemporary research on the role of art therapy for brain development⁷ confirms that the process of civilization evolution would not have taken place without this form of active creativity and the applications of art therapy are thoroughly researched and used in clinical medicine⁸.

In Alexandria, during the reign of Ptolemy IV Philopator (246 or 238 – 204 BC), poetry and music competitions dedicated to Apollo⁹ were organized regularly. They were continued during the times of the Roman Empire. During the competitions the contestants were to live and dine in the rooms of the museion. Outside Alexandria, literary tradition was cultivated. The records and accounts on the converted Longinus refer to museion as a "travelling

⁵ *Musaeus Grammaticus, Hero and Leander: The Divine Poem of Musaeus: First of All Books Translated According to the Original*, George Chapman 1616 – the most popular English version reprinted several times in the 17th century.

⁶ Musaios, Musée, Musaeus, Mousaios, Muzajon, Muzeusz.

⁷ See also: V.B. Lusebrink, *Assessment and Therapeutic Application of the Expressive Therapies Continuum: Implications for Brain Structures and Functions*, "Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association" 2011, vol. 27(4), pp. 168–177.

⁸ The topic of art therapy for various ailments and disorders, from post-traumatic syndroms to cancer support was discussed in numerous articles, including N. Nainis et al., *Relieving Symptoms in Cancer: Innovative Use of Art Therapy*, "Journal of Pain and Symptom Management" 2006, vol. 31, pp. 162–169. "American Journal of Art Therapy", a journal devoted to the applications and types of art therapy, has been published in the USA since 1983.

⁹ M. El-Abadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, Paris 1992, p. 89.

library"¹⁰. The use of the term referring to a literary collection was known several centuries earlier. Alcimadas (4th century BC) called the collection of his stories *Musaeum*, which was later recalled by Nietzsche¹¹. This idea of "a travelling museum" returns today in the form of an extended museum or space where, just like in eco-museums, residents live and work, dedicating their activities to the visitors. It resembles the idea of an open book, "read" as a greeting.

Sebastiana Nervegna, referring to the transfer of the tradition of Greek theatre to the times of the Roman Empire, draws attention to the role of museia as festival. A well-preserved catalogue of musea, which was drawn up by the year 212, shows how important they were as a process for the then contemporary society¹²: they were known for their healing properties, they encouraged the so-called "common rhythm". The engaging museum was created based on the tradition of cooperation "towards achieving some improvement".

The museum and nature. Integrated therapy

Returning to the concept of musea as festivals taking place in the surrounding nature, we touch upon the important issue of the topography of Greek museions as picturesque hills or exceptional, hidden and secret places. According to Marcus Terentius Varro and Plinty the Elder, the concept of a classical museum was close to nature, the natural abode of the Muses. Hence, in his book entitled *Natural History*, Pliny the Elder spoke about a close relation between the places such as *grotto* and *musaeum*¹³. This relation was redis-

¹⁰ *Eun.VSp.456 B*, see H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0057%3Aentry%3D%2368883&redirect=true> (access 1.03.2014).

¹¹ See a discussion on Alcimadas in: F. Nietzsche, *Der Florentinische Tractat über Homer und Hesiod, ihr Geschlecht und ihren Wettkampf*, 1–2, "Rheinisches Museum für Philologie" 1870, no. 25, pp. 528–542; R. Mariss, *Alkidamas. Über diejenigen, die schriftliche Reden schreiben, oder über die Sophisten. Eine Sophistenrede aus dem 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr., eingeleitet und kommentiert*, Munster 2002.

¹² S. Nervegna, *Menander in Antiquity: The Contexts of Reception*, Cambridge 2013, p. 101.

¹³ P. Findlen, *The Museum. Its Classical Etymology and Renaissance Genealogy*, in: *Museum Studies. An Anthology of Contexts*, ed. B. Messias Carbonell, Chichester 2012, p. 25.

covered during the Renaissance period when artificial grottoes were created in gardens. They slowly became meeting places for scientists and artists as well as exhibition spaces for collection of sculptures, amazing natural objects or wall paintings. Paula Findlen stresses this particular role of the museum, which, by referring to ancient values, in the 16th century became "a conceptual system used by collectors to interpret and conquer the world they inhabit"¹⁴. The museum taught the construction of the world, healed ignorance and helped one's understand of the surrounding reality.

In contemporary museum research the link between museums and knowledge, arts, artistic process and nature shapes the image of these institutions; they integrate Greek, non-material experiences with Renaissance passion for interesting or beautiful objects, with the Enlightenment's aspiration to establish museums as "institutions" and with the modern concepts of museums as mediators between the past, the difficult present and different visions of the future¹⁵. Many of these traditions are combined in a common mission

¹⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁵ In the last quarter of a century changes have been taking place in parallel to another important process: the mass digitization of the collections of museums, libraries and archives. As a result of digitization, previously scattered texts, inscriptions and monuments have become widely available. Consequently, it is much easier to conduct research and look for sources in which the history of concepts, including the concepts of a museum and narration, have been recorded. In the process of returning to old meanings, the roots of the concept of a museum as a centre for transferring meaning and developing intellectual life have become more visible. This reflection has contributed to the broadening of the scope of research on intangible heritage and the movement to broaden knowledge about this tradition. The publication of the first issue of the "International Journal of Intangible Heritage" after the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was signed on April 21, 2006 by forty-seven countries, has been one of the signs of change. In the introduction of the first issue of the journal, attention was paid to the role of oral traditions, pointing to the need to protect languages whose role is to transfer this intangible heritage. In 2007, at the request of the ICOM Polish National Committee, the 1996 Act on Museums was amended, including a definition of the museum in line with the UNESCO convention. The definition of the museum from 2007 read: "The museum is a non-profit organizational unit, the purpose of which is to collect and permanently protect the natural and cultural heritage of a tangible and intangible nature, to inform about the values and contents of the collections, values of Polish and world history, science and culture, shaping cognitive and aesthetic sensitivity and enabling the use of the collected collections". The results of the amendment came shortly after numerous Polish museums recognized that restoring the role of the non-material context, including the role of a living story and

of modern museums, established in order to re-integrate the post-digital world. It is precisely that fear of the future that triggers the need for treatment – be it immersion in the past or the experience of the lasting. Contemporary museotherapy treats the fears of potential catastrophes and suggests salvage methods. The museum is gradually expanding, becoming a safe space and a home where thoughts are fostered. It is not only a physical space but also the potential director of a play about the future.

This tendency was expressed in the resolution adopted by the General Assembly of ICOM in Milan on July 9, 2016, entitled *Responsibility of Museums for the Landscape*, which initiated a new stage in shaping the role of the museum as a "host" of the cultural, social and natural landscape¹⁶.

According to the above resolution, museotherapy is a multi-stage activity and the heart of the museum's mission. Each treatment relies on the elimination of the disease, the weakening of "the evil" and the strengthening of one's immunity. Integrated therapy is an extended participation of a museum in the activities of local communities. The museum has to create barriers to prevent the depreciation of heritage even when its presence is distant both in time and in space. However, to protect does not mean to exclude. The area of therapeutic activity of a museum extends beyond its administrative boundaries and in this sense museotherapy becomes a form of support and assistance for the community whom creates it and for which this institution works.

a narrative of an exhibition form, and making museums important places for meetings and exchanging ideas, is the proper goal of these institutions.

¹⁶ The resolution is available at <http://icom.museum/the-governance/general-assembly/resolutions-adopted-by-icoms-general-assemblies-1946-to-date/milan-2016/>. The topic is discussed in detail in: *Extended Museum in Its Milieu*, ed. D. Folga-Januszewska, Kraków 2018, which summarizes the reflections presented during the international seminar ICOM Europe organized at the Museum of King Jan III's Palace in Wilanów in 2017.

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MUSEUM AS A THERAPEUTIC SPACE

High culture is an indispensable element of self-development. Museum as a place of high culture should accompany young people from the first years of their lives. The role of museums as therapeutic spaces is invaluable. Museotherapy constitutes one of the forms of psychotherapy and delivers good results when strengthened by good motivation and engagement of the patient. Museum can play a motivating role through its exhibition presentations, space arrangement, ways of guiding visitors and exhibition themes adapted to the needs of patients.

Contemporary museology puts emphasis on education in its broad sense. Different age and social groups, particularly mentally ill people or those with intellectual disabilities, require properly adapted education. For the latter, museums can become the most valuable element of therapy which takes them into a different world. This other world is not always healthy, however, the confrontation with artist's suffering can have a healing effect. Both active and passive contact with art opens up new possibilities of the patient's brain.

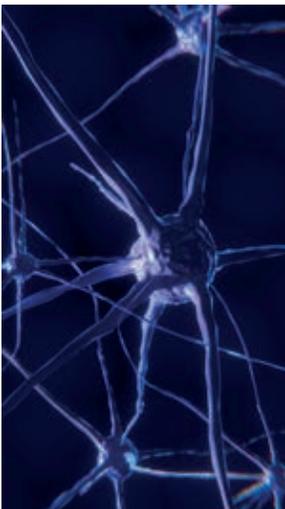
Museum is a specific space, different from the everyday surroundings of a sick person. It allows visitors to detach themselves from the threatening world of their thoughts and anxieties. Frequently, entering a museum may mean overcoming a great fear. A museum guide, who makes it easier to notice what is presented in paintings, may help identify and release emotions. A contact with a work of art may stimulate psychotherapy and inspire one's own creativity. It is worth mentioning that some artistic activities can produce the opposite effect than the one expected. Jerzy Nowosielski believes that all attempts at taking art beyond the space of the sacred lead to failure.

The interpretation of art as a tool for sublimation, symbolization or substitutive satisfaction assumes the dynamic nature of creative activity. Patients are prepared for encounters with art in different ways. There are those who have never been to a museum or had to visit one when they were at school and now they have mixed feelings about it. There are also those who hide behind the excuse that "they do not know" but as they look at paintings, drawings, sculptures or other museum objects they start to notice their beauty or ugliness and become interested in the content of images relating them to themselves. Educated people frequently rediscover the value of art which has been removed from their lives by the illness they suffer from. These people, especially those who are artistically educated, look at art differently, sometimes focusing on art techniques and artist's workshop. The most important thing, however, is the mystery and the metaphysical role of art. Paintings are only signs which in a symbolic way try to say something that is actually hidden behind art. This is the deepest meaning of therapy through art.

Contemporary knowledge allows us to understand through which channels perception takes place, how we learn, create and act. We know more and more about how our brain works.

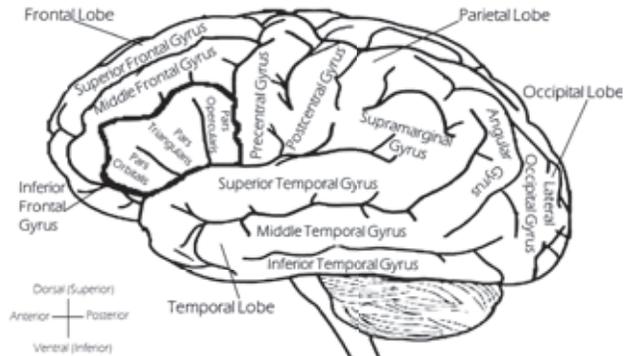
100 billion cells have enormous plasticity. One cell can connect to 40,000 other cells and process 100,000 pieces of information per second. Learning

new things creates new synaptic connections and it is important to strengthen them by repeating and remembering things. Electrical transmission of impulses is accompanied by chemical activity of neurotransmitters such as dopamine, serotonin, noradrenaline, acetylcholine and other taking place in the relevant regions of the brain. The knowledge on transmitting impulses, disseminated by Charles Sherrington, is 100 years old¹. In the 1940s Donald Oldigin Hebb formulated his principle and explained mathematically what happens in the synapses of nerve cells during the transmission of information. The introduction of functional magnetic resonance imaging was a quantum leap in understanding how our brain functions during various forms of activity. Thanks to fMRI research we



¹ C. Sherrington, *The integrative Action of the Nervous System*, New Haven 1947.

know which areas of the cortex are more creative. These are: right-sided pre-medial gyrus, straight frontal gyrus, a part of the cerebellum, left-sided fronto-orbital gyrus, middle frontal gyrus and inferior temporal gyrus. The limbic system located between the brain stem and hypothalamus



and the new cortex plays an important role. It controls the body's emotions and impulses, memory of movements and memory consolidation.

The last 20 years have made it possible to clarify this knowledge and confirm it with scientific research. The conceptual revolution was brought by epigenetics, proving that 90% of genes resonate with signals from the outside world. Experiments activate a large number of genes and our nature depends on how we enrich them². According to current knowledge, humans can change genes within a generation. Epigenetics refers to controlling genes by means of information from the external environment outside the cells. It stresses the fact that a change in human consciousness can cause physical changes to both the structure and the functioning of the human body³. Research on the neural basis of consciousness corresponds with the neuro-history of art⁴.

Simir Zeki states that since neuronal activity determines morality, law, religion and economy it can also determine art. The question remains, however, to what extent the neuronal activity of the recipient and the artist differs. The second question concerns the possible difference between the so-called healthy person and the person suffering from mental disorders. It has been

² See: J. Dispenza, *Efekt placebo*, Białystok 2014.

³ D. Church, *The Genie in Your The Genes. Epigenetic Medicine and the New Biology of Intention*, Santa Rosa 2009, p. 32.

⁴ See: D. Folga-Januszewska, *Muzeologia neuronalna. Inne spojrzenie na muzeum XXI wieku*, in: *Muzeum XXI wieku – teoria i praxis*, ed. E. Kowalska, E. Urbaniak, Gniezno 2010, pp. 29–35; J. Onians, *Neuroarthistory. From Aristotle and Pliny to Baxandall and Zeki*, New Haven–London 2007; V.S. Ramachandran, E.L. Altschuler, *The use of visual feedback, in particular mirror visual feedback, in restoring brain functions*, "Brain" 2009, vol. 132, pp. 1693–1710.



La Conscience by François-Nicolas Chiffart, 1885, https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran%C3%A7ois-Nicolas_Chiffart

assumed that both active and passive contact with art may have a healing effect and may affect our genes. It sounds incredible but it is testified by modern science. The role of art lies in eliminating or alleviating a state that pertains to the distorted personality of the individual⁵.

The ancients, without our modern knowledge, were very good at art therapy. Suffering of the body and soul has been present since the beginnings of history hence the link between *ars* and *therapeuein* is as old as the written word. This is confirmed in the myth of Orpheus of Thrace, the son of Apollo, a healer, and Calliope, the patron of epic poetry. This was the beginning of music and poetry therapy. In the 12th century

BC above the entrance to the library of Ramses II in Egyptian Thebes there was an inscription that in Greek read *syches jatreion* – healing of the soul. This is the beginning of bibliotherapy.

According to Professor Andrzej Szczeklik, medicine and art have the same root. They both originate from magic, a system based on the belief in the omnipotence of the word. The sense of harmony between the cosmic structure and rhythm and the rhythms of man have inspired philosophers and doctors for two millennia. The disease was a distortion of this harmony – breaking out of it and creating dissonance. Hippocrates referred to medicine as *art-techné*. Paracelsus believed that man is a microcosm made of the same elements as the macrocosm, i.e. the universe. Records on music treatment can be found in Egyptian papyri from the second millennium BC. Since the times of Plato

⁵ See: G. Kwiatkowska, *Arteterapia*, Lublin 1991.

and Aristotle the aesthetic experience has had to provide pleasure and serve understanding. The concept of catharsis, originally present in religious cults, was introduced into the language of philosophy by Aristotle in connection with poetry and theatre. "The purpose of theatre is to purify our feelings". Cult temples of Asclepius, the so-called *asklepeion*, were places where art was combined with therapy. Such a temple in Epidauros, established in the 4th century BC, was a place where therapy conducted in beautiful surroundings was combined with sea (thalassotherapy), forest (silvotherapy), prayer (contemplation) and herbs. There were also physical exercises and interpretations of dreams. This was a Greek holistic therapy which could and should be imitated by sanatoria where treatments might be combined with psychotherapy.

According to the World Health Organization "health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

For many centuries the mentally ill were treated as those who were possessed by evil spirits and therefore dangerous to other people and the surroundings. The path which started from Pinel ordering the removal of chains from patients in the Paris Asylum to therapy through art was long. In 1840 in Crichton, Scotland, William Browne encouraged mentally ill patients to express themselves through art. At first, there was a shelter for "sleepwalkers" opened by his wife. Browne used a variety of activities, from theatre, music and play to drawing and painting. He left behind a collection of art and the book entitled *Art in Madness*⁶ published in 1886. In 1921, Dr. Walter Morgenthaler published his book entitled *The Psychiatric Patient as an Artist* on Adolf Wölfli and Heinrich Anton Müller, two patients severely affected by mental illness who were saved by their artistic skills. In 1922, Hans Prinzhorn published *Bildnerei der Geisteskranken*. The book contains studies based on the work of mentally ill patients in various European institutions. In Heidelberg, Prinzhorn gathered a collection of paintings painted by the mentally ill and Emil Kraepelin, a German psychiatrist, started working there. The collection currently includes 5,000 works by 435 patients. Jean Dubuffet developed the concept of *Art brut*, which in fact does not mean the work of the mentally ill but many people suffering from mental illnesses joined this trend. Barbara Safarova dis-

⁶ G. Audinet, *La collection du Dr Browne*, [katalog wystawy *Folie en tete. Aux racines de l'art brut Maison de Victor Hugo*], Paryż 2017.

cusses it at length. Louis Wain (1860–1939) provides a good example of how art can be of therapeutic value. He had five younger sisters, neither of whom started a family on their own. He was born with a hare lip and did not start school until the age of ten. Wain made his first drawing of cats, *Cats' Christmas Eve Party*, in 1886. Then, he would make several hundreds of drawings every year. When he reached the age of 20 he started supporting his mother and sisters. Following his mother's death Wain's health deteriorated and from 1924, when he was diagnosed with schizophrenia, until his death he stayed in psychiatric hospitals.

In the second half of the twentieth century psychiatry was gradually moving away from institutions isolating patients and from repressive treatment methods. Significant progress in the development of pharmacology enabled patients to benefit from other forms of treatment. What is more, broadly understood psychological and social methods were applied, including therapy through art. Encounters with art became an indispensable element of the holistic model of medicine⁷ in which attention is paid to the patient's activity, social and family context supporting self-healing. The holistic model of treatment refers to the patient's education, experience and wisdom.

This model of medicine was the antidote to the analytical reductionism which until the twentieth century dominated medical sciences concentrating more on the outcomes of research than on the patient's problems, emotions and ailments. The holistic approach encompasses contemporary biological methods of treatment, taking into account dietary recommendations, physical exercises and culture-therapy.

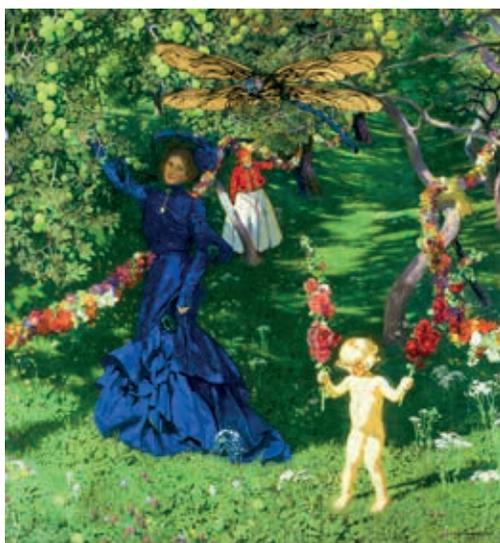


Kaleidoscope Cat by Louis Wain, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Wain

⁷ See: W. Szulc, *Sztuka w służbie medycyny: od antyku do postmodernizmu*, Poznań 2001; J.S. Gordon, *Holistic Medicine: Advances and Shortcomings*, "West. J. Med." 1982, no. 136(6), pp. 546–551.

Most modern psychiatric hospitals used various forms of psychotherapy, including therapy through art. Psychiatrists Antonii Kępiński and Jan Mitarski worked in Kraków, Magdalena Tyszkiewicz in Gdańsk. Maria Pałuba and members of Amici di Tworki Association organized an annual exhibition in Zapiecek Gallery in Warsaw under the supervision of Mirosława Arens. The exhibitions featured works of the mentally ill and some well-known artists, who agreed not to sign their works of art, leaving the assessment of their value to the gallery's visitors. Grażyna Borowik, Andrzej Kowal, Robert Bartel, Aleksandra Plaskota, Wanda Żuchowicz, Barbara Gawda, Zbigniew Chlewiński, Andrzej Araszkiwicz are just some of the physicians, professors, psychologists and therapists promoting the creativity of mentally ill people. In Denmark, an art museum for the mentally ill has opened at the psychiatric hospital in Aarhus.

The methods of therapy through art include both passive and active contact with painting, sculpture, music, literature, theatre and film. Psychodrama and theatre techniques⁸ are very difficult, yet, extremely effective form of therapy in which patients expresses themselves directly. Art is the source of aesthetic experience and a way to avoid boredom⁹. According to Schopenhauer's theory of contemplation, a person passively surrendering to an object of art and forgetting about their own personality experiences relief¹⁰. Many theories of art reception have been formulated. Among them the most convincing ones include: hedonistic theory, cognitive theory, contemplative theory and the theory of active nature of aesthetic experiences, related to the term



Strange Garden by Józef Mehoffer, 1903, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J%C3%B3zef_Mehoffer

⁸ See: A. Bielańska, *Teatr, który leczy*, Kraków 2002.

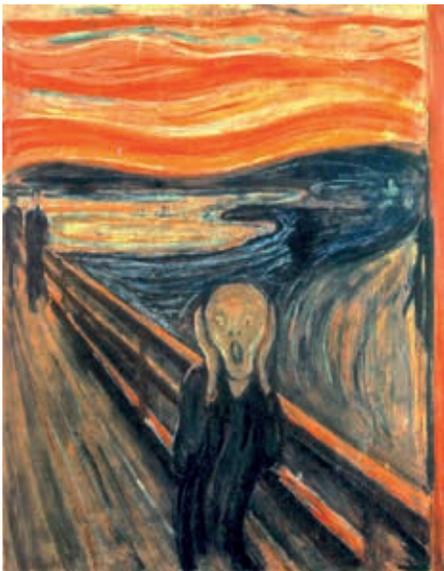
⁹ See: W. Tatarkiewicz, *Dzieje sześciu pojęć*, Warszawa 1975.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

Einführung (empathy). The discovery of mirror neurons and their impact on empathy makes it easier to understand why dealing with art affects emotions¹¹.

The involvement of feelings related to joy or sadness is an important element of survival. Referring to the patient's feelings and experiences art plays a cathartic role. According to Jerzy Nowosielski, art referring to the sacred, appeals easily to people with mental disorders.

Cultural therapy is connected with the way of assigning meanings or interpreting situations in which people find themselves. Over the last 50 years, modern cognitive psychology have developed effective methods of working with people who require psychological assistance¹². Processing information, assigning meanings or recognizing one's own system of meanings, understanding the way information is processed and modelling behaviour take place in the course of cognitive-behavioral therapy. The Socratic dialogue is another



The Scream by Edvard Munch, 1893, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Scream

reference to the ancient wisdom which is used as an element of cognitive-behavioral therapy. The Socratic dialogue aims to make the patient understand the relationship between thinking, emotions and behavior as well as formulate new alternative ways of thinking. Similarly, Socrates allowed his interlocutors to express doubts and to discover new meanings. The goal of psychotherapy is to reduce the level of anxiety, to facilitate the development of social relations and to develop positive habits which in turn improve the quality of life. The concept of the quality of life, which has become the criterion for effectiveness of psychotherapy, corresponds with the Aaron Antonovsky's research on salutogenesis. Antonovsky introduced the

so-called sense of coherence, which develops a person's ability to have control over one's life, to take care of one's health and as a result enables self-realization.

¹¹ V.S. Ramachandran, E.L. Altschuler, *The use of visual feedback...*

¹² A. Popiel, E. Prąglowska, *Psychoterapia poznawczo-behawioralna*, Warszawa 2008.

zation. Encounters with art, both passive and active, provide a person with knowledge about human behavior, emotions, and ways of solving problems similar to one's own.

Museum is a specific place, different from everyday surroundings of a sick person and from threatening or noisy environment. Looking at paintings directs people's attention to what is outside. It activates new areas of brain, distracting the viewer for a moment from the inner world full of fear, hopelessness and sometimes hallucinations. At times, a museum guide makes it easier for the patient to see what is in the painting, which stimulates the brain and activates its functions. The term spirituality has become popular in psychotherapy of people with emotional problems, especially addicts. The mentally ill, often overwhelmed by the vastness of suffering, are frequently rejected by families, employers or the community, which makes it difficult for them to break out of the patterns in which they function. Encounters with paintings, sculptures, films or theatre plays facilitate identification with works of art. For instance, patients could identify with Munch's *Cry* or Dürer's *Melancholy*. In therapy we also deal with people who focus exclusively on spirituality, forgetting about everyday life. They also require therapeutic help. Much has been written about the therapeutic role of inspiration through art, influence on the way of thinking or releasing one's own artistic creativity. Practicing art makes it possible for people to satisfy their desires, unfulfilled dreams and ambitions. It is often a bold confession revealing one's fantasies, dreams or the dark side of experiences. Edmund Monsiel survived war because he discovered inside himself an artistic form of expressing emotions¹³.



Melancholy I by Albrecht Dürer, 1514, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albrecht_D%C3%BCrer

¹³ A. Kępiński, *Schizofrenia*, Warszawa 1972; M. Tyszkiewicz, W. Żuchowicz, *Aktywność twórcza w leczeniu i rehabilitacji psychiatrycznej*, in: *Psychiatria i sztuka: oblicza psychiatrii: XLI Zjazd Psychiatrów Polskich, Warszawa 17–19 czerwiec 2004*, ed. A. Kowal, M. Pałuba, Kraków 2004; J. Białostocki, *Sztuka cenniejsza niż złoto*, Warszawa 1969.

The creativity of people suffering from mental illness is frequently a bold confession. It may express hidden dreams, desires, fantasies and at times one's "dark side". It is full of various feelings, experiences and sometimes incomprehensible aesthetics. It is a special set of thoughts and dreams which are sometimes difficult to accept. Aleksander Jackowski introduced non-professional art to a wide audience. The so-called naïve artists include both the mentally healthy and the mentally ill. Art therapy, especially bibliotherapy, affects memory, attention and emotions for which specific parts of brain are responsible. It is worth mentioning the so-called "Mozart effect" which has a positive impact on human cognitive functions. Music therapy has become a separate scientific discipline, which must be mentioned in the context of museotherapy as long as museums open their space for music performances and concerts. The space in which one listens to music is significant. According to the World Health Organization health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. It is difficult to image such a state without permanent and active participation of museums in our lives.

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ON MUSEOTHERAPY

"...it's my happiness, I don't want another in the world
and the moment I can't paint any more
I should stop living..."

Olga Boznanska

The preceding quote from Polish master Olga Boznanska is a dramatic testament to the wholeness of the art experience. With these few words she succinctly summarizes the elation and wonderment that can occur between artist and medium. But what her quote does not fully address is how these states may also be extended to the viewer and how our interactions with works of art, perhaps shared or alone, may positively impact our health. Such is the concern of museotherapy, an emerging concept that finds museums redefining themselves as milieus for well-being and centres for therapeutic activity.

Museotherapy was a topic we had been exploring for some time at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) and we had been working towards a cohesive definition, but a clear picture of what it included was still elusive. The question of whether museums could be considered therapeutic was not problematic. There have been a number of relevant texts written by museum educators, occupational therapists, art therapists, and allied health professionals on the use of the museum and its resources in the service of the public's well-being. The question of museotherapy, however, which takes the discussion further, was a concept that needed more thought and reflection.

Change Begins with Leadership

Many museums the world over have well-developed programs benefiting the more vulnerable members of their respective societies. While this movement has been documented and disseminated through both scientific literature and various media, there has also been resistance to the shift towards re-imagining museums as centres for well-being. Those working in the education departments of museums are often the stewards of programs that have informed and become what we may call museotherapy. These educational teams are acutely aware of the benefits these programs bring to their publics. However, the profile of museums as allies in health care, social inclusion, and agents of change is elevated when those directing the museum champion these programs and bring them onto the stage of public discussion. Such has been the case at the MMFA in both the previous and current directorship. This has allowed not only our programs in art therapy, well-being, social inclusion and diversity to continue but actually multiply, develop and contribute to best practices.

Museotherapy: History and Context at the MMFA

In February of 2020 the MMFA moved forward to define museotherapy for Quebec and Canadian society. The Quebec Office of the French Language (Office Québécoise de la langue française) has officially entered the definition of museotherapy into their dictionary of terminology. As an official government body, this helps to refine a common definition of museotherapy and bring not only the concept but the understanding of the practice into popular discussion. The definition in French reads:

Définition Méthode thérapeutique individuelle ou collective qui consiste en l'exploitation de l'environnement muséal à des fins de bien-être physique, psychologique et social.

Note Plus concrètement, il peut s'agir de la contemplation des œuvres d'art, de la création artistique en atelier ou de visites guidées en compagnie de médiateurs culturels. ("muséothérapie" n.d.).

To understand what we call museotherapy, we need to look at how we care for our visitors and participants. Museotherapy might be seen as a new concept for wellness through the arts but, the history of museums participating in the creative transformation of individuals and groups of people goes back centuries. At the MMFA, the formal initiative to use the resources of the museum for the well-being of the public goes back more than 20 years. At the time, the Department of Education and Social Engagement (soon to be renamed the Department of Education and Museotherapy) embarked on a social commitment to promote education, inclusion, accessibility and wellness in partnership with clinical institutions, social services, and those representing vulnerable people. By including our community and clinical partners in the design of museotherapy activities we ensure the benefit of collective expertise both in the museum and in health care. For museums who are still uncertain about how to move forward with their ambitions in health care, the partnership model provides a best-practice framework that supports the needs of participants and museum staff alike.

As the initial program grew, the number of different groups began to multiply and there arose a shift in how we invited the visitor into dialogue with the artwork. We moved from didactic to a more horizontal exchange, inviting the visitor to tell their own stories about what they were seeing and experiencing. In mobilizing the story for someone's healing we can see a connection to bibliotherapy, that is the practice of storytelling or the reading of specific texts with the purpose of healing. The use of the individual's relationship to the content of books and poetry as therapy can be reimagined in using the content of a museum. Within this dynamic, people's stories and their personal reflections on the work became as important as the historical information. What museum education expert Ray Williams calls honouring the personal response of the museum visitor¹. Another primary ingredient is the relationships the visitor builds with the museum, not only with the spaces, the artworks, but the facilitators, educators, and therapists whom they encounter.

Following a major evaluation of our programs, the following themes emerged as essential to our programs in well-being: projects are more mean-

¹ R. Williams, *Honoring the personal response: A strategy for serving the public hunger for connection*, "Journal of Museum Education" 2010, vol. 35(1), pp. 93–101.

ingful when they are co-created with the community partner, group-based activity can contribute to decreasing social isolation, the collections must always be involved, connections are made through participant's shared stories, and that creative activity enhances all of these. We continue to adhere to these fundamentals in all of our programming today.

Our therapeutic and well-being projects have become varied over the last 2 decades attesting to the potential for a single museum to serve a great number of different publics. Some of our groups have included: survivors of cancer, people with eating disorders, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or intellectual challenges; people suffering long term illness, language or sensory disorders, mental health issues, the elderly, and people who are socially isolated. We now have more than 450 different partnerships with organizations associated with schools, community groups and healthcare institutions. The following is a sample of those activities at the MMFA that can be conceived along a continuum of museotherapy.

Art Therapy

Museums-based art therapy is a specialized practice facilitated by a trained and qualified art therapist. The inclusion of a museum's collection into a clinically inspired protocol makes for dynamic therapy, one that has gained momentum and attention in several museums worldwide². The art therapy program at the MMFA was launched in 2017 as a unique, full-time and comprehensive program. It includes several therapy groups, an art therapist in residence, a train-

² D.J. Betts, J.S. Potash, J.J. Luke, M. Kelso, *An art therapy study of visitor reactions to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, "Museum Management and Curatorship" 2015, vol. 35(1), pp. 21–43; A. Coles, A. F. Harrison, *Tapping into museums for art psychotherapy: an evaluation of a pilot group for young adults*, "International Journal of Art Therapy" 2017, vol. 1(10), pp. 115–124; H. Jury, J. Landes, *Museums & Galleries, Re-Viewing Museums: Innovative Art Therapy Practice in Museums and Art Galleries*, "British Association of Art Therapy, Newsbriefing" 2015, pp. 26–28; A. Pantagoutsou, E. Ioannides, G. Vaslamatzis, *Exploring the Museum's Images – Exploring My Image (Exploration des images du musée, exploration de mon image)*, "Canadian Art Therapy Association Journal" 2017, vol. 30(2), pp. 69–77; A. Salom, *Reinventing the setting: Art therapy in museums*, "Arts in Psychotherapy" 2011, vol. 38, pp. 81–85.

ing program for art therapists pursuing their master's degree³, and research collaborations. Currently there are art therapy groups on an ongoing basis for people with chronic illness such as cancer, people who have experienced trauma, people who are grieving, adults with disabilities, young adults on the autism spectrum, and the program is committed to research and evaluation. Visits to the collections are included in each group on a specific theme related to their treatment goals, followed by art making and reflection.

The Art Hive

The Art Hive of the MMFA is a community open studio open to the public on a drop-in basis twice a week. It is premised on a theory and practice of arts-based social inclusion. It is a creative space where anyone can come and make art and be supported by the co-facilitation of an art therapist. It is facilitated by an art therapist and a museum educator and emphasizes the autonomy of each participant to discover their unique creative voice through a panoply of provided materials. The brain child of art therapy professor Janis-Timm Bottos, The Art Hive, as both method and movement, benefits from decades of engaged research in community settings⁴. Its repositioning inside a museum of fine arts has a mutually beneficial impact on both the museum and the Hive creating permeability between the world of the fine arts and community-based arts programming. It is also a destination for after care for those doing closed group experiences in other programs.

³ A. Henry, K. Parker, S. Legari, *(Re)collections: Art Therapy Training and Supervision at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts ((Re)visiter: formation en art-thérapie et supervision au Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal)*, "Canadian Art Therapy Association Journal" 2019, vol. 32(1), pp. 45–52.

⁴ J. Timm-Bottos, *ArtStreet: Joining Community through Art*, "Art Therapy" 1995, vol. 12(3), pp. 184–187; Idem, *Endangered threads: Socially committed community art action*, "Art Therapy" 2011, vol. 28(2), pp. 57–63; J. Timm-Bottos, R.C. Reilly, *Learning in Third Spaces: Community Art Studio as Storefront University Classroom*, "American Journal of Community Psychology" 2014, vol. 55(1–2), pp. 102–114.

Well-being and Social Connection

Museums can facilitate social connection and inclusion⁵. In a time where social isolation is on the rise, especially in our major cities, museums have been reconceived as hubs that allow for individuals, families, and communities to gather and develop or reinforce social bonds grounded in arts-based encounters. There are several projects at the MMFA that directly address social isolation, marginalization, and neurodiversity.

Museums can be an important destination for people Alzheimer's and dementia and their caregivers⁶ and their caregivers. Encounters with the museum's collection with the careful support of an educator and sometimes clinical staff or volunteers can inspire awe, wonder, comfort and connection for this population. Participants, along with their caregivers and invited to share spontaneous associations, memories, and preferences along different themed visits. Qualitative research supports that such activities can be positively impact the quality of life, social connection, self-esteem, and cognitive stimulation for both those living with cognitive disorders and their caregivers⁷.

The MMFA hosts a long-term weekly program for seniors called Beautiful Thursdays. Each week, more than 60 seniors are invited to create, move, and discuss through activities provided by our museum education staff be it through a guided visit to the galleries, an art class, or even art with yoga or dance. The program provides a valuable social resource for those that may be at risk of social isolation and its associated symptoms of depression and low self-esteem.

⁵ R. Sandell, *Museums as Agents of Social Inclusion*, "Museum Management and Curatorship" 1998, vol. 17(4), pp. 401–418; G. Thompson, *The Social Work of Museums*, "Art Therapy" 2012, vol. 29(1), pp. 46–47.

⁶ L. Rhoads, *Museums, Meaning Making, and Memories: The Need for Museum Programs for People with Dementia and Their Caregivers*, "Curator: The Museum Journal" 2009, vol. 52(3), pp. 229–240.

⁷ J.D. Flatt et al., *Subjective Experiences of an Art Museum Engagement Activity for Persons With Early-Stage Alzheimer's Disease and Their Family Caregivers*, "American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease & Other Dementias" 2015, vol. 30 (4), pp. 380–389; F. Rosenberg, *The MoMA Alzheimer's Project: Programming and resources for making art accessible to people with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers*, "Arts & Health" 2009, vol. 1(1), pp. 93–97.

For children and adults who are neuro atypical/autistic there are risks of loneliness, social isolation, being bullied, and anxiety⁸. Museums are well-suited to provide specialized programming to confront these social realities. Tailored activities for these participants can create opportunities for social connection, alternative communication through the arts, and skill-building that can improve the lives of neuro atypical people, their families, and neurotypicals alike⁹.

In 2015, the MMFA embarked upon an initiative to develop specialized programs for neuro atypical people. This began with a program for children on the autism spectrum and/or living with developmental disabilities. The program included creative activities and encounters with the museum collection and was developed in collaboration with parents, teachers, and specialists. Now more than five years later, the initiative includes a committee for neurodiversity, annual sensory days, a weekly art therapy program for young adults, and community exhibitions.

In 2017, neurobiological researcher Bruno Wicker launched a study at the MMFA using eye-tracking technology to better understand the centres of interest in adults with high-functioning autism and found important differences than in their neurotypical counterparts. The forthcoming publication will report on the findings to help better understand the different perceptual experience of adult with ASD and the emotional mechanisms that inform their experience (Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 2019). In 2019, the MMFA completed an international collaborative partnership with 2 other museums, one in the United States and the other in France, to produce a protocol for museum programming in neurodiversity.

⁸ E. Müller, A. Schuler, G.B. Yates, *Social Challenges and Supports from the Perspective of Individuals with Asperger Syndrome and Other Autism Spectrum Disabilities*, "Autism" 2008, vol. 12 (2), pp. 173–190; S. W. White, R. Roberson-Nay, *Anxiety, Social Deficits, and Loneliness in Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders*, "Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders" 2009, vol. 39(7), pp. 1006–1013.

⁹ L.A. Langa et al., *Improving the Museum Experiences of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Their Families: An Exploratory Examination of Their Motivations and Needs and Using Web-Based Resources to Meet Them*, "Curator: The Museum Journal" 2013, vol. 56 (3), pp. 323–335; S. Mulligan, P. Rais, J. Steele-Driscoll, S. Townsend, *Examination of a Museum Program for Children with Autism*, "Journal of Museum Education" 2013, vol. 38 (3), pp. 308–319.

The Museum Prescription

In partnership with a national association of francophone doctors (l'Association des Médecins francophone du Canada), the MMFA launched a program to allow participating physicians to prescribe the MMFA to their patients. Research into social prescribing is showing the benefits for well-being by including heritage and museum activities in a patient's treatment plan¹⁰. The prescription at the MMFA provides access for an individual to come alone, with a someone supporting them, or with their family. The prescription highlights the autonomy of the patient in choosing what kind of experience they would like to engage with, be it gallery visits, tours, the Art Hive, or activities for family or seniors. In its first year, more than 300 prescriptions were filled in under a year and there are initiatives underway to scale out the availability of the prescription to thousands of more doctors. The MMFA also hopes to be an inspiration to other museums and communities of physicians worldwide to undertake similar initiatives.

Research

The future of museum-based research in health care has an essential role in validating the wide-ranging benefits of museotherapy. In 2019, the World Health Organisation has published an important scoping review of the benefits of the arts on health in which museums are cited as positive contributors to well-being¹¹. At the MMFA we have undertaken several research projects that support the assertion that activities in museotherapy benefit people with a variety of problems. A recent study showed the benefits of art making and museum visits for seniors to decrease social isolation and improve

¹⁰ H.J. Chatterjee, P.M. Camic, *The health and well-being potential of museums and art galleries*, "Arts and Health" 2015, vol. 7(3), pp. 183–186; P.M. Camic, H.J. Chatterjee, *Museums and art galleries as partners for public health interventions*, "Perspectives in Public Health" 2013, vol. 133(1), pp. 66–71.

¹¹ D. Fancourt, F. Saoirse, *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review*, Copenhagen 2019.

mood¹². In museum-based art therapy, the MMFA has collaborated on research demonstrating the benefit of our programs for people living with eating disorders¹³, with epilepsy¹⁴, with breast cancer and, more recently, we have conducted a study for people who have experienced a stroke. Additionally, in 2019, International Council of Museums in collaboration with Organisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development highlighted the social roles of museums in supporting the health and well-being of our societies and cited a number of the initiatives at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts as examples of this humanistic and inclusive stance¹⁵. This form of validation benefits all museums embarked on this social mission.

Discussion

I believe that museotherapy can be of benefit through various kinds of experiences, whether with groups that emphasize social inclusion, through the sharing of one's story, though the connection to one's family in looking at art together or by the contemplative space that happens when is alone in a gallery on a Sunday afternoon. Museums can be therapeutic spaces. I think we can all agree on this. But it is the connection to something outside of ourselves within the museum that makes the therapy happen. The museum then, as I see it, it a modality of therapy, a conduit, and a holding space. And as we collectively move forward through our clinical research, our case studies, our understanding of what happens in the brain when we look at art, and our commitments to social inclusion and justice, museotherapy will grow out of its identification as a novel concept and into an accepted practice as something that may truly connect us and help us heal.

¹² O. Beauchet et al., *Participatory art-based activity, community-dwelling older adults and changes in health condition: Results from a pre–post intervention, single-arm, prospective and longitudinal study*, "Maturitas" 2020, vol. 134, pp. 8–14.

¹³ L. Thaler et al., *An adjunctive, museum-based art therapy experience in the treatment of women with severe eating disorders*, "The Arts in Psychotherapy" 2017, vol. 56, pp. 1–6.

¹⁴ E. Smallwood, *Group Art Therapy for Young-Mid Adults with Epilepsy: A Psychosocial Inquest into Multiple Ways of Knowing*, Concordia University 2019.

¹⁵ *Culture and Local Development: Maximising the Impact. Guide for Local Governments, Communities and Museums*, "LEED Papers" 2019, vol. 7.

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THE THERAPEUTIC OPTIONS OF LIBRARIES, MUSEUMS AND THE COLLECTIONS AND THEIR IMPACT ON SOCIAL CAPITAL

Dynamic transformations related to social and cultural changes that have taken place in recent years have a significant impact on cultural heritage institutions which, in order to survive and to remain effective in their activities, must adapt to people's requirements and their changing needs. As Katarzyna Segiet notes, we are all participating in this evolution, both as witnesses and as active participants, and the effects of the changes have an impact on our behaviour, thinking and living conditions¹.

Cultural heritage institutions, including libraries and museums, are the main public organizations operating in the social environment. Their primary duty is to create, disseminate and protect the heritage entrusted to them, both nationally and locally. They play an important role in enabling people to experience, discover and interpret the world around them through information, traditional and unconventional documents or art. Through their activities, they support non-institutional education, and the functioning of various institutions so they can jointly develop social cohesion among all residents and particularly among the disadvantaged, who for various reasons remain excluded from the use of museums' resources and services.

¹ K. Segiet, *Pedagogika społeczna i refleksja nad książką jako ważnym elementem rozwoju*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka – w poszukiwaniu (u)traconej wartości*, ed. K. Segiet, K. Słupska, Poznań 2017, p. 24.

This requires the introduction of multiple organizational solutions and the development of the performed, traditional educational, information, cultural and aesthetic functions through new integration, pro-social and self-development tasks². This is related to the implementation of pro-active and pro-development activities so that the individual participating in them is best prepared to use the acquired knowledge to effectively cope with reality³, to enjoy recreational and entertainment activities and to engage in processes that affect political and material life. The more active and pragmatic the activities, the better the quality of society⁴.

The changes taking place in cultural institutions mean that the centers have real impact on their immediate and distant environment through the shaping and strengthening of various social ties and social capital "regarded as an essential element of the socio-economic development of the country"⁵.

The new concept of the library emphasizes the fact that it should be not only a centre of various resources, an access point, a place for learning, for meeting others and sharing one's knowledge, but also an important space for creative activities, in which new social relations are shaped and informal opportunities to learn, experiment and satisfy one's curiosity are offered. It is to be an inspiring and supporting space for its users so that they are better informed and prepared to participate in everyday life⁶.

Many views about libraries also apply to museums which are recognized as "ennobling" institutions, nurturing and disseminating cultural values. Additionally, they also have an important civilization and civic mission to fulfill through shaping the required civic attitudes⁷. Hence, in recent years there has been a visible expansion of museum activity, which is now not limited to performing the obvious functions related to the protection and conser-

² A. Sobańska, *Czy współczesna biblioteka to wyłącznie księżnica*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, p. 256.

³ A. Cybał-Michalska, *Edukacja przez dzieło literackie jako recepcja doświadczeń społecznych*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, p. 31.

⁴ E.B. Zybert, *Pomysły na biblioteki publiczne XXI wieku*, in: *Instytucje kultury jako ośrodki życia społecznego*, ed. A. Mierzecka, E.B. Zybert, Warszawa 2017, p. 16.

⁵ M. Murzyn-Kupisz, *Instytucje muzealne z perspektywy ekonomii kultury*, Kraków 2016, p. 309.

⁶ E.B. Zybert, *Pomysły na biblioteki publiczne...*, p. 17.

⁷ M. Murzyn-Kupisz, *Instytucje muzealne...*, p. 357.

vation of cultural heritage objects, but also focuses on the education and activation of citizens, providing various services aimed at museum visitors and local communities that stimulate them to think critically, cooperate and develop creativity⁸.

More and more often, museums play the role of a meeting place, a space for cooperation with non-governmental organizations, where cultural identity is built and local cultural heritage is created and maintained. Paweł Jaskanis points out the fact that "a museum (...) constitutes a social complement to family and school (...) always remaining a repository of things, memories and symbols. It plays a strongly encoded servient role with respect to the generations which have created it and maintain it"⁹. What is more, by enabling the acquisition of social competence, museums can participate in addressing various threats "by means of rehabilitation, reducing frustration or strengthening so-called social cohesion"¹⁰.

Hence, libraries and museums take up and develop numerous functions related to building social capital and social integration¹¹. The functions make it possible to use acquired information and knowledge for rational interpretation of personal and social events¹².

Taking into account the common application and effectiveness of numerous therapeutic methods outside of a medical environment, it is worth adding another function played by museums and libraries, namely their therapeutic impact on social capital.

In the case of cultural heritage institutions, the purpose of the activity carried out by them through relevant tools is to improve cognitive functions, restore internal balance and improve the quality of life of their users and the entire community. It may also contribute to the elimination or reduction of situations which are undesirable from a social point of view. It is also to strengthen the efficiency of activities conducted by other institutions by introducing formalized education or social assistance programs.

⁸ Ibidem, pp. 350, 357.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 311.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 347.

¹² E.B. Zybert, *Pomysły na biblioteki publiczne...*, p. 44.

Activities conducted in a library or a museum are aimed at creating positive relations between the visitor and collections during joyful activities and ensuring a positive emotional charge as well as a sense of satisfaction from establishing relations with other participants. They may also help overcome fears, stimulate the development of senses and perception, acquire knowledge and consequently create friendly conditions for work and play.

The areas that cultural institutions impact their surroundings and local residents include:

- Support of people in dealing with social and emotional difficulties connected with disability, illness or old age; in situations of trauma and experiences of loss;
- Participation in social prevention programs and in working with people at risk of social exclusion;
- Integration into employment,
- Building tolerance and understanding of minority groups (ethnic, national, cultural, religious or sexual).

The "healing" impacts of cultural institutions on social capital may occur in many ways, including processes referring to psychotherapy and various psychotherapeutic techniques. Among them, a special role is played by art therapy, which uses verbal and non-verbal forms: drawing, painting, graphics, sculpture, applied art, theater, music, dance and books, or more broadly, library materials. Through art therapy, information and problems difficult to express by means of other tools may be more easily conveyed to the community or an individual recipient¹³.

These various products of art used in either an active (creating one's works of art) or passive (listening, reading, watching) way facilitate the satisfaction of one's physical, mental, social and cultural needs.

They take into account the reception and co-creation of culture, developing habits and cultural interests as well as imagination and knowledge; they shape emotional bonds and encourage motivation to act. They allow us to understand the world and the laws that govern it, to properly perceive various phenomena as well as to understand ourselves, our emotions, feel-

¹³ J. A. Sienkiewicz-Wilowska, *Dziecko rysuje, maluje, rzeźbi. Jak wspomagać rozwój dzieci i młodzieży*, Gdańsk 2011, p. 23.

ings, reactions and behaviour¹⁴. Encounters with art evoke positive emotions, shapes aesthetic experiences, trigger strong commitment and distract us from negative emotions, pain, physical and mental suffering¹⁵.

The use of the results of human creativity contributes to the development of creative and abstract thinking, strengthens individualism and leads to better self-expression. Thus, because of the transfer of specific content it becomes an important communication tool¹⁶ and may lead to a better adaptation to reality by improving communication skills and deepening relations with others or shaping socially required attitudes and behaviour¹⁷.

Art can be used to develop social relations because certain situations and social relations are recreated through the creative acts of an individual. Consequently, an individual may recognize the relations he/she establishes with others – both with family members and other adults and peers. A direct contact with works of art makes it possible to learn about their authors and their attitudes to people and various phenomena. As a consequence an observer, reader or listener may recognize different perspectives of perceiving the world and its phenomena and get to know the emotions and thoughts of artists¹⁸.

In the case of actively using such tools as literature or visual arts, it should be emphasized that creating literary or visual works, i.e. free artistic expression, allows the release of accumulated negative emotions. It also helps to deal with one's fears and difficult situations and is beneficial in treating attention disorders¹⁹. People who find it difficult to express their feelings through words or in indirect interpersonal communication can express them in a non-verbal way (drawing, painting, sculpture) and verbally by writing poetry, stories, memoirs, blogs or letters to real or imaginary friends. All this is conducive to gaining insight into their emotions and past experiences, which are the cause of their abnormal functioning²⁰. What is more, exploiting art

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 19.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 24.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 23.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 172.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 16.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 14.

²⁰ W. Sikorski, *Werbalne i niewerbalne oddziaływania w psychoterapii*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 81–82.

can trigger the expression of dramatic emotions in a socially acceptable way. Sienkiewicz-Wilowska proposes the following solution: "When you are angry, instead of shouting draw – you can even make a hole in a piece of paper"²¹.

The use of art in its projective aspect can be useful in diagnosing problems in the participants of the therapeutic process because while performing some artistic work they may, unconsciously, reveal hidden experiences and emotions²².

Creative rehabilitation may be useful in the work of cultural and educational institutions in that it may help discover and develop potential talents of people. Marek Konopczyński stresses its potential for stimulating self-development as well as the cognitive and creative structures of individuals, equipping them with new individual and social competencies. As a result, through using various methods of creative rehabilitation (theatre, sports, drama, visual art or music), it is possible to transform a specific individual through forging different parameters of their identity, determining the quality of interpersonal relations²³. Although originally this method of work was used in relation to the socially maladjusted, it seems that it can also be useful for other groups, e.g. to improve the image of people excluded for various reasons from their communities or from society. By enabling an individual to develop their skills and talents and by showing them to a wider audience, for instance during exhibitions or theatre plays, they can present themselves not as someone behaving differently than it is commonly accepted but as a person worthy of interest and attention.

Bibliotherapy and museotherapy as different forms influencing social capital

Cultural heritage institutions can influence social capital on various levels: as places of meetings and spending leisure time, as spaces for strengthening and building identity and local pride or for facilitating social inclusion and

²¹ J.A. Sienkiewicz-Wilowska, *Dziecko rysuje, maluje...*, pp. 23–24.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 23.

²³ M. Konopczyński, *Metody twórczej resocjalizacji*, Warszawa 2006, p. 13.

democratization as regards access to culture. They are places which prevent intolerance and aggression, help solve everyday problems and inspire individual creativity and the activity of various institutions which make up institutional, social capital.

Taking into account the above-mentioned functions that can be performed by books and museum collections, it is worth considering the possibility of carrying out bibliotherapy and museotherapy in cultural heritage institutions. However, in order for them to develop a therapeutic character that can lead to the desired changes, they must first meet certain conditions because not every form of creative activity and expression is therapeutic. A therapeutic activity must be an intentional, systematic and planned activity which aims at improving the psychosocial functioning of an individual. It must have specific goals and tasks and the progress achieved should be documented, assessed and measurable. It is important for such a therapeutic activity to be conducted by a professional.

Bibliotherapy

Bibliotherapy is an impact process aimed at providing therapeutic help or counseling as regards solving personal problems. It uses appropriately selected reading materials and/or directed reading. It is of an interdisciplinary nature and refers to theoretical foundations borrowed from other disciplines: education science, psychology, library science, literature, medicine and social rehabilitation. It is a conscious and intentional action, carried out for the purposes of revalidation, social rehabilitation, prevention or achievement of general self-development goals as well as insight into normal development or making changes in emotionally disturbed behaviour²⁴.

Initially, bibliotherapy was used as a therapeutic aid for a very small group of people, mainly the mentally ill as well as convicts. At present, bibliotherapy is useful for all people – children and the elderly, the disabled, people chronically or temporarily suffering from various somatic and mental disorders,

²⁴ E.B. Zybert, *Terapia poprzez książkę i inne materiały biblioteczne*, in: *Vademecum bibliotekarza*, Warszawa 2004, p. 1.

those who experience difficult moments in their lives (e.g. related to the death of a loved one, suffering or divorce), who feel lonely or rejected or who have to face adversaries²⁵. The aim of bibliotherapy is to strengthen and enrich the personal resources (knowledge, skills, positive experiences) of the therapy participant and to help him/her to find themselves in a new, difficult situation, to motivate themselves when they experience a sense of loss, harm or other destructive emotions²⁶. Although a book or reading materials (library materials including documents of social life or photographs) cannot solve every problem, they may calm the participants down and reduce their fears, thereby helping them to properly perceive the surrounding reality and finding their own place in it²⁷.

There are several types of bibliotherapy:

- Classical therapy²⁸, also referred to as developmental or educational-humanistic²⁹. It is intended for people who do not experience any psychosomatic disorders, who function in an open community and are associated with various social, educational and cultural institutions. Classes are conducted in order to stimulate the participants' development, self-fulfillment and support them in solving life-related problems³⁰.
- Clinical bibliotherapy, used in psychotherapy, the aim of which is to inspire the patient to gain insight into their feelings and experiences, which in turn is to lead to the understanding of the causes of disorders and a change their psychological situation³¹.
- Institutional bibliotherapy, which uses the content of books to inform the patient about his/her disease and to provide relaxation³².

In cultural institutions, classical bibliotherapy proves most useful.

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ I. Borecka, S. Wontorowska-Roter, *Biblioterapia w edukacji dziecka niepełnosprawnego intelektualnie*, Wałbrzych 2003, pp. 47–48.

²⁷ E.B. Zybert, *Terapia poprzez książkę i inne materiały biblioteczne...*, p. 2.

²⁸ W. Sikorski, *Wербalne i niewerbalne...*, p. 113.

²⁹ E. Tomasiak, *Czytelnictwo i biblioterapia. Podstawowe pojęcia (Przegląd literatury)*, in: *Czytelnictwo i biblioterapia w pedagogice specjalnej*, ed. E. Tomasiak, Warszawa 1994, p. 13.

³⁰ Ibidem.

³¹ Ibidem.

³² W. Sikorski, *Wербalne i niewerbalne...*, p. 113.

A bibliotherapy program can be developed around any problem that occurs in a given community/environment and can be connected with numerous issues faced by groups and individuals functioning in society.

Bibliotherapy can be regarded as the influence of books if:

- It is a process whose primary goal is a therapeutic impact (serving revalidation, rehabilitation or helping achieve general development goals) enabling insight into normal development or making changes in emotionally disturbed behaviour, leading to the proper functioning of a person whose needs may be disturbed or limited as a result of any disability or difficulty in everyday functioning³³,
- It is a conscious, intentional, systematic and planned action³⁴ with a foreseeable end result, which makes it possible to make the most reliable forecast of the effectiveness of impacts³⁵,
- It uses library materials (not only books but also other documents which supplement the book content) carefully and consciously selected in order to produce a therapeutic value,
- It is conducted by a therapist who guides the participant through this process. This interpersonal contact, established in order to discuss issues related to the participant's problems, is indispensable.

Participation in bibliotherapy must be voluntary. Moreover, contrary to reading, direct contact with reading materials is not necessary and their content can be told or read out and in some extreme cases a person undergoing to bibliotherapy can even be illiterate.

Sometimes, the terms 'bibliotherapy' and 'reading of people with special needs/the sick' are used interchangeably, although their meanings differ. At times, it is difficult to draw the line between well-conducted and well-planned reading and bibliotherapy. The therapeutic objectives may also be present in reading programs and a proper selection of books suitable for readers thus making discussion not limited to bibliotherapy³⁶.

³³ E.B. Zybert, *Terapia poprzez książkę i inne materiały biblioteczne...*, p. 1.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 2.

³⁵ W. Sikorski, *Wербalne i niewербalne...*, p. 83.

³⁶ E.B. Zybert, *Terapia poprzez książkę i inne materiały biblioteczne...*, pp. 1–2.

The bibliotherapy procedure developed by Caroline Shrodes, Mary Howie and Rhea J. Rubin was popularized in Poland by Ewa Tomasiak³⁷. The first stage of all bibliotherapy activities involves the diagnosis of the problems and needs of people subjected to therapeutic interventions. On their basis, the work with a given person/persons is designed, outlining the goals and tasks of the therapy, selecting both the materials and working methods to achieve the assumed goals³⁸. The very process of bibliotherapy consists of the stage of **identification** with characters appearing in literary works, during which the participant of bibliotherapy may identify with the values conveyed in the selected text³⁹ or discover some similarities to the characters of the book and then "talk about their feelings while pretending to be talking about the main character of the book"⁴⁰. This stage of therapy where the participant lives through the experiences of people/characters he/she identifies with is a way to prepare him/her for real experiences.

The next stage involves **projection** which happens in relation to the characters appearing in the selected books/materials. The protagonists' motives and the relations between them are interpreted and then conclusions are drawn. As a result, the therapist can discover the cause of the participant's irrational behaviour and consequently "the unconscious is replaced with what is the conscious"⁴¹. During this stage, the values contained in a book are translated into one's own experiences and problems⁴². The next stage is conducted to **relieve tension and experience a form of catharsis** (i.e. relief resulting from the emotional acceptance of problems, a verbal response to one's emotions felt towards the protagonist or the author)⁴³. The **insight stage** offers a fresh look at one's own problems, which can be achieved by understanding the message contained in the analyzed work and incor-

³⁷ E. Tomasiak, *Czytelnictwo i biblioterapia...*, pp. 17–18.

³⁸ B. Woźniczka-Paruzel, *Biblioterapia w środowisku współzależniionych z grup rodzinnych Al.-Anon*, Toruń 2002, p. 25.

³⁹ Ibidem, p. 27.

⁴⁰ E. Tomasiak, *Czytelnictwo i biblioterapia...*, p. 17.

⁴¹ Ibidem, p.18.

⁴² B. Woźniczka-Paruzel, *Biblioterapia w środowisku współzależniionych...*, p. 27.

⁴³ E. Tomasiak, *Czytelnictwo i biblioterapia...*, p. 18.

porating it into the personal value system. This is the beginning of changes in one's life⁴⁴.

It is worth quoting a simplified model of bibliotherapy formulated by George D. Spache according to which its participant begins with the following statement: "He is just like me" or "I am just like him" (identification). Then, going through to the next stage "I feel just the same as he does" (projection) and "I can do it the way he did it" and/or "I can also do it" (catharsis), eventually reaching the stage of insight "Look, I have done it"⁴⁵.

Museotherapy

In museotherapy, any museum object (paintings, photographs, films, objects of nature, ethnographic and archeological items, military objects and books) may be used for therapeutic interactions. Thus, in many aspects museotherapy is similar to bibliotherapy. The process of its implementation is analogous to that in bibliography (diagnosis, identification, projection, reaction and catharsis, insight). For many people visiting a museum, contact with museum collections facilitates the performance of the above-mentioned functions (aesthetic, educational, information, cognitive or recreational). Sometimes it also gives an opportunity to look inside oneself and one's emotions and may lead to re-thinking and correcting current views and to formulating a different perception of the surrounding reality.

However, in order for a museum visit to not only be a form of spending leisure time (even in a very profitable way) but a therapeutic experience, it should be an intentionally planned activity, which assumes certain effects that are to be achieved. It should also be conducted by a person aware of the therapeutic goals assigned to the program. Similarly, just like reading is not always bibliotherapy, not every museum activity which involves lessons, film screenings, workshops, lectures, meetings, sessions, scientific seminars, concerts, outdoor events or competitions will be regarded as museotherapy, even though it may provide emotional experiences and develop the basic

⁴⁴ B. Woźniczka-Paruzel, *Biblioterapia w środowisku współzależnionych...*, p. 27.

⁴⁵ E. Tomasiak, *Czytelnictwo i biblioterapia...*, p. 18.

function of the museum (which consists of presenting collections and exhibitions as part of individual and guided exhibition tours).

Since museums very often organize various educational programs which use active forms and methods of working with people but which do not meet the above-mentioned criteria, it seems necessary to develop a new name for these activities, different from museotherapy, for example museum creation, museum communications, reading museums or experiencing museums.

In the case of museotherapy, the institution itself, its space which makes it possible to learn about specific works of art created in different places and historical periods and representing different styles, seems to play a greater role than in the case of bibliotherapy. It is a place that maintains the existing relations (bonding social capital) and establishes new ones (bridging social capital)⁴⁶. Moreover, in so-called art museums, the aforementioned roles played by art (fostering the development of cultural competence, getting to know the world, principles governing culture, society, nations, regions, communities and social groups) constitute an additional asset. It greatly influences the understanding of history and culture of a given nation as well as social problems, whereas the ability to recognize and interpret symbols facilitates better functioning in the world⁴⁷.

Bibliotherapy and museotherapy programs

Libraries and museums together with other community organizations, e.g. prevention and social education centres, can conduct therapeutic programs (bibliotherapy, museotherapy) in order to achieve the desired results. The information carriers (verbal and non-verbal) developed in the programs will be mutually supportive and complementary. As a result, it will be possible to achieve social goals, be exposed to general human culture, acquire patterns and models that change the way we are, define codes of conduct and shape feelings. They provide solutions to the problems of individuals and of social

⁴⁶ M. Murzyn-Kupisz, *Instytucje muzealne...*, p. 315.

⁴⁷ J.A. Sienkiewicz-Wilowska, *Dziecko rysuje, maluje...*, pp. 174–175.

groups as well as alleviate pain, decrease boredom and make everyday life more attractive.

Bibliotherapy and museotherapy programs which use words, visuals or other tools can be useful for talking about difficult issues, breaking taboos, asking questions about life and its meaning, love, good and evil or death⁴⁸ and for suggesting ways of solving problems. They can be used in situations where a person divorces and separates, lives in a patchwork family, experiences violence, human rights violation, intolerance, prejudice or aggression. Another context where one can refer to the assistance of these therapeutic methods is connected with situations in which one's relatives are imprisoned, there are some long trips to be taken or one experiences fear of old age⁴⁹, as well as different addictions to intoxicants⁵⁰ or alcohol⁵¹. These therapeutic methods can be useful in the prevention of addiction by performing an ideological/awareness function which allows one to experience feelings that are usually hidden in the unconscious⁵². They can additionally motivate a patient to start drug addiction treatment and support individuals and their families during such a rehabilitation procedure⁵³. Finally, therapeutic methods can teach assertiveness, provide knowledge about interpersonal communication⁵⁴ and enable finding a socially acceptable place in the community.

In the academic literature, attention is paid to the usefulness of different forms of bibliotherapy as well as methods that use other message carriers, e.g. museum collections in preventive activities. The forms may be used in preventive interventions among adolescents using psychoactive substances in order to improve their social and professional competences, motivating them to become more independent and make brave decisions about their life. These programs, which are corrective and supportive in nature, can also

⁴⁸ H. Krauze-Sikorska, *Stereotypy i trudne tematy, czyli o przełamywaniu tabu w literaturze dla dzieci*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, pp. 93–124.

⁴⁹ A. Tokaj, *Inspirować literaturę... Książka jako wsparcie młodych dorosłych w zdobywaniu wiedzy o starości*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, pp. 271–281.

⁵⁰ E. Włodarczyk, *Książka jako narzędzie konfrontacji kobiet z własnym uzależnieniem od alkoholu*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, pp. 283–298.

⁵¹ B. Woźniczka-Paruzel, *Biblioterapia w środowisku współzależnych...*

⁵² W. Sikorski, *Werbalne i niewerbalne...*, p. 115.

⁵³ B. Woźniczka-Paruzel, *Biblioterapia w środowisku współzależnych...*

⁵⁴ E.B. Zybent, *Terapia poprzez książkę i inne materiały biblioteczne...*, p. 2.

be useful for people staying in care and educational institutions⁵⁵, prisons or after they leave penitentiary institutions.

One can see the usefulness of bibliotherapy and museotherapy activities in stimulating the development of personal resources (knowledge and self-knowledge of individuals) because they contribute to a better understanding of one's emotions and thoughts, provide intellectual insight and make it possible for participants to compare themselves to others. In the case of literature, which discusses universal needs, motives, conflicts or fears, each reader can find their problems and consciously experience them⁵⁶. Contact with a book or a museum collection can also have a sedative effect by soothing undesirable emotional states creating a form of "mental silence" that allows participants to isolate themselves from the surrounding environment and from the burdensome, often intrusive, presence of other people⁵⁷. It may also compensate for various limitations by providing substitute concepts, showing distant places and artifacts from near and distant places.

By providing exhibition space for the presentation of their users' collections, museums and libraries contribute to promoting the users' passions, which may serve as an example and encourage others to develop their interests and to support therapeutic activities carried out in a given facility. Increasing participation in the cultural activities organized in these institutions not only contributes to open access to art and culture, but also creates conditions for the users and other visitors to participate in therapeutic programs intentionally developed for given groups. Libraries and museums may also, through the implementation of programs related to cultural activity, protection and dissemination of cultural heritage, serve the employment support programs for the unemployed⁵⁸.

These therapeutic interactions can be directed to reduce various educational problems, learning difficulties and the inability to meet teachers'

⁵⁵ T. Kruszewski, *Biblioterapia w działaniach placówek opiekuńczo-wychowawczych*, Toruń 2006.

⁵⁶ M. Molicka, *Biblioterapia i bajkoterapia. Rola literatury w procesie zmiany rozumienia świata społecznego i siebie*, Poznań 2013, p. 125.

⁵⁷ E.B. Zybert, *Biblioterapeutyczne funkcje biblioteki i książki wobec mniejszości narodowych*, in: *Dziedzictwo kulturowe. Informacja. Mniejszości etniczne*, ed. A. Skrzypczak, Warszawa 1996, p. 117.

⁵⁸ E.B. Zybert, *Terapia poprzez książkę i inne materiały biblioteczne...*, p. 2.

requirements or parents' expectations⁵⁹. They can counteract anti-social, rebellious and aggressive attitudes and behavior as well as minimize emotional disturbances (e.g. inferiority complexes, social withdrawal, shyness, embarrassment, fear, sadness⁶⁰) which affect the quality of one's social functioning. The possibility of using bibliotherapy and museotherapy in educational activities should not be overlooked. Library and museum collections, as well as the activities conducted by these institutions, contribute to strengthening the identification of local community members, while drawing attention to its cultural uniqueness. As they perform a recreational and relaxation function, they are a good place for the elderly, families with children as well as teenagers⁶¹ to spend their free time and take part in therapeutic activities.

As regards the disabled, these two forms of therapy can contribute to their social inclusion, connecting people through culture regardless of their age, type of disability, origin or views. They can also enable them to have a better contact with art and literature. A good example may be programs such as *Dotknij kultury* [Touch culture] or *Poznawaj swoje miasto wszystkimi zmysłami* [Explore your city with all your senses] implemented by museums in Kraków, which use sign language programs, touch adaptations for the blind, screenings of films with audio-description or activities adapted to the needs of people with intellectual disabilities, hearing or vision impairments⁶². The disabled, suffering from various mental or somatic disorders, the socially maladjusted or addicts may, by participating in various therapeutic programs, e.g. those focusing on creating expression, gaining self-respect, approval and praise⁶³ especially when their works are exhibited and made available to a wider audience. In this case, books not only develop their intellect but also influence their emotions. It shows people's attitude towards each other, develops positive feelings (such as kindness, love or sacrifice⁶⁴), helps break away from persistent thoughts about the disease, prevents states of doubt and emotional lability,

⁵⁹ Ibidem.

⁶⁰ T. Herman, *Znaczenie biblioterapii w pracy z dzieckiem niedostosowanym społecznie*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, p. 339.

⁶¹ M. Murzyn-Kupisz, *Instytucje muzealne...*, p. 313.

⁶² Ibidem, p. 327.

⁶³ W. Sikorski, *Wербalne i niewerbalne...*, p. 83.

⁶⁴ K. Segiet, K. Słupska, *Wstęp*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, p. 15.

brings hope of recovery and also facilitates reflections regarding oneself, one's behavior or experiencing the disease⁶⁵.

As regards people at risk of social exclusion, museums prepare projects that contribute to the improvement of their social and economic situation through social rehabilitation of housing estates and districts. A good example of this kind of activity is the project entitled *Rakowicka 10* [10 Rakowicka Street] co-designed by children and young people who become involved in building playgrounds where they can spend their free time. Another interesting example is the program of museum workshops *W odwiedzinach do muzeum* [Visiting the museum] aimed at teenagers from socially excluded families and those under the special care of social therapy centers or orphanages⁶⁶. There is also a program addressed to less affluent people who take advantage of social welfare support, streetworking or activities carried out together with the Ethnographic Museum in Kraków⁶⁷.

For seniors participating in library programs, books can be a source of stimulation that maintains their mental performance and daily activity. It provides patterns of behavior, as well as new information and knowledge. Reading the right books as well as contact with old photographs or press clippings may strengthen the meaning of life and sense of optimism as well as help in looking at one's life from a different perspective, recalling memories from childhood or youth (reminiscence bibliotherapy, providing joy and sense of security⁶⁸).

The assistance of cultural heritage institutions for the elderly and the lonely involves providing them with substantive support and space for recreation, meetings, developing intergenerational relations or self-acceptance⁶⁹. There are programs in which children and teenagers collect information about local crafts and farming traditions developed in the times when their grandparents lived and read books by authors less known today but popular in the past, such as Kornel Makuszyński⁷⁰.

⁶⁵ E.B. Zybert, *Terapia poprzez książkę i inne materiały biblioteczne...*, p. 1.

⁶⁶ M. Murzyn-Kupisz, *Instytucje muzealne...*, p. 328.

⁶⁷ Ibidem.

⁶⁸ E.B. Zybert, *Terapia poprzez książkę i inne materiały biblioteczne...*, p. 2.

⁶⁹ M. Murzyn-Kupisz, *Instytucje muzealne...*, pp. 327–328.

⁷⁰ Ibidem, p. 328.

As regards ethnic, national and religious minorities as well as multiculturalism, therapeutic activities may focus on their inclusion into the museum narrative in the form of permanent or temporary exhibitions (exhibitions of a historical nature or those including early works using motives and references to a cultural minority), educational or publishing activities as well as the organization of cultural events (festivals, concerts, competitions), conservation of historic buildings and collections related to minorities and offering up museum space to minority organizations⁷¹.

One example could be the activity of the District Museum in Tarnów related to the culture and cultural heritage of the Roma and Jews (exhibitions entitled *Romowie – historia, kultura* [Roma – history and culture], poetry contests "O Złote Pióro Papuszy" [The Golden Pen of Papusza] or "Tu był tarnowski Sztetl" [Here was the Tarnów shtetl])⁷². The culture and history of the Jewish community in Chrzanów are presented by the city museum during the days of Jewish Culture – Chrzanów Shtetl⁷³. "Some museums not only develop an offer for specific groups at risk of social exclusion but also stimulate discussions on important, contemporary issues, on the perception and use of minority heritage or on how minorities still living in a given area function"⁷⁴. Both exhibitions and books "about the history of one's state, nation, its culture, tradition and language shape national and social identity. They also teach respect for all people, regardless of race, religion or nationality"⁷⁵. They preserve and transmit the cultural identity of an ethnic group, such as Lemkos⁷⁶. Through intercultural education they can be a tool in the process of communication (also intergenerational), in building and shaping cultural identity on the basis of cultural heritage⁷⁷.

⁷¹ Ibidem, p. 329.

⁷² Ibidem, p. 330.

⁷³ Ibidem.

⁷⁴ Ibidem.

⁷⁵ B. Matyjas, *Dzieciństwo aktywne kulturalnie w teorii i praktyce pedagogicznej Janusza Korczaka*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, p. 48.

⁷⁶ B.A. Orłowska, *Książka po łemkowsku – tracona czy utracona wartość...*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, pp. 125–138.

⁷⁷ M. Sobocki, *Miejsce książki i literatury w kształtowaniu tożsamości kulturowej w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej. Perspektywa edukacji międzykulturowej*, in: *Książka w życiu człowieka...*, p. 63.

Museotherapy and bibliotherapy programs which focus on multicultural education may be helpful in building proper relations between neighbors and nations "stimulating reflection, recognizing mutual relations in the surrounding reality as well as reaching borderland by avoiding centrism, schematism and generalization"⁷⁸. As emphasized by Mirosław Sobiecki, "knowledge, at least elementary, of the cultural heritage of our neighbors may contribute to building proper relations between nations... It is also an important element in accepting the cultural "Other", which is one of the basic factors of social intercultural communication"⁷⁹. "For an underdeveloped personality the Other often means undesirable, unwanted, worthless, inferior"⁸⁰. They can also develop attitudes of tolerance towards others, create conditions for the process of adaptation and learning about one's worth, accepting one's individuality or otherness. They can significantly contribute to the acculturation of minorities as well as modification of behavior of various ethnic and cultural groups⁸¹.

Therapeutic activities and the tools, library materials and museum collections used in them can help in disseminating objective information about various social, ethnic or national groups that are not well understood. They can be instrumental in shaping and developing tolerance and acceptance towards other nations and cultures. Getting to know them can not only contribute to mutual respect, weakening social ignorance about minorities and reducing social distance, but also develop our knowledge and personality. "Misunderstanding, ignorance and fear are the enemies of good relations"⁸².

Also in the local context, therapeutic activities aimed at ethnic, national, religious and cultural minorities can contribute to a greater understanding of the history of the city or district, their residents and their needs as well as creating a friendly, multicultural space for working and living.

⁷⁸ Ibidem.

⁷⁹ Ibidem, p. 61.

⁸⁰ E.B. Zybert, *Biblioterapeutyczne funkcje biblioteki i książki wobec mniejszości narodowych...*, p. 118.

⁸¹ Eadem, *Terapia poprzez książkę i inne materiały biblioteczne...*, p. 3.

⁸² Eadem, *Biblioterapeutyczne funkcje biblioteki i książki wobec mniejszości narodowych...*, p. 122.

Bibliotherapy and museotherapy programs can be used to popularize pro-social and pro-ecological principles (e.g. 3R principle – Reduce – Reuse – Recycle – avoid buying unnecessary things, use again, recycle) or pro-health attitudes by providing knowledge about civilization diseases and developing appropriate eating habits, which will contribute to improving one's quality of life, feeling safe and minimizing psychosomatic ailments.

Conclusions

Building and developing social capital and meeting the various needs of the community are an increasingly common requirement to be fulfilled by cultural heritage institutions. In recent years, changes in the functioning of these institutions have become more visible. In terms of their activities, they go beyond their traditional responsibilities related to the collection, development and presentation of their collections and undertake activities contributing to the social integration of the community in which they operate.

Libraries and librarians, museums and museologists, bibliotherapy and museotherapy contribute to the consolidation and transfer of significant cultural and identity values. They shape civic attitudes, creativity, the ability to co-exist with others, develop human competence in solving individual and social problems, prevent marginalization of social groups by providing them with the opportunity to participate in social life. Thus, their nature and scope of influence as well as their role in influencing social capital are significant. Consequently, they can be perceived as highly effective institutions, responding to the needs of the community, which also legitimizes the need to continue maintaining and supporting them from public funds.

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The District Museum in Toruń

THERAPEUTIC ASPECTS OF ART – MUSEOTHERAPY WORKSHOPS

In the most intuitive sense, museotherapy is associated with conducting therapeutic activities in a museum institution using art. Certainly, this way of reasoning is correct, however, it seems insufficient as regards the well-known and widely applied art therapy¹. Due to the complexity of this issue, no coherent definition of art therapy has been developed so far. One of the first analytical publications on art therapy was a collection of articles entitled *Art therapy. In Theory and Practice*² edited by Elinor Ulman and Penny Dachinger. The book includes many useful articles, not only written by the editors, but also by pioneers of this discipline, Edith Kramer and Margaret Naumburg, whose concepts are still valid today. In the article *Art therapy: problem and definition*³ Ulman attempts to outline the most important features of this "subtle discipline", which in her opinion clearly differs from occupational therapy and cannot be simply referred to as artistic education⁴. The author indicates several elements constitutive of art therapy, including, inter alia, its relationship with symbolic speech. According to the interpretation indicated by Naumburg, a person undergoing this type of therapy through spontaneous artistic expression creates a "new" non-verbal language, thanks to which one can "directly express dreams, fantasies, and other experiences

¹ The most well-known institutions involved in art therapy include: American Art Therapy Association, British Association of Art Therapists, CATA/ACAT Canadian Art Therapy Association, Polskie Stowarzyszenie Terapii Przez Sztukę, etc.

² E. Ulman, P. Dachinger, *Art therapy. In Theory and Practice*, New York 1975.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 3–13.

⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 3–4.

(...) escaping censorship and limitations of verbal expression"⁵. The second essential element involves the "healing properties of the creative process". In this case, Ulman refers to Kramer, who argued that "art has helped people over the centuries to resolve the conflict between the instinctive urges of the individual and the demands of society"⁶. This change was supposed to have taken place thanks to creative processes.

The success of therapy depends on a therapist, who aims at "supporting the process of sublimation⁷, the act of integration and synthesis (...), and is the source of a strange fusion between the reality and fantasy, the conscious and the unconscious"⁸. It is sublimation, or rather "replacing instinctive social behaviour, (...) the victory of the ego"⁹ that Ulman regarded as the greatest potential of art therapy. She also indicated, which is essential for our further discussion, two approaches to analytically oriented art therapy. In the first approach, sublimation takes place by achieving a significant artistic effect, which requires the therapist to combine therapeutic, artistic and teaching competences. Naumberg approached this issue differently, advocating spontaneous creativity. She believed that giving the patient unambiguous, clear instructions, limited their creative potential and, consequently, hindered the development of the therapeutic process. Ulman concluded her introduction to the definition of art therapy "unsatisfied" as she was unable to provide a broad enough context for the discipline. In her summary, the researcher defined the therapeutic procedures as "designed to support beneficial changes in personality or way of life that will also be present after the therapeutic session"¹⁰. She also formulated the position regarding the understanding of artistic creativity, which is still valid today:

⁵ Ibidem, p. 7.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 6.

⁷ "In classical psychoanalysis, the process whereby the primal, libidinal drives are directed differently and remodeled into new learned »non-instinctive« behaviors. The use of the term is usually associated with the belief that learned behaviors are socially accepted as opposed to deep, primal urges; classical theory considered creative and artistic tendencies as a manifestation of sublimation" – A.S. Reber, E.S. Reber, *Słownik psychologiczny*, translated by J. Kowalczevska, G. Mizera, ed. I. Kurcz, K. Skarżyńska, Warszawa 2015.

⁸ E. Kramer, *Art Therapy in a Children's Community*, Springfield 1958, pp. 6–23.

⁹ E. Ulman, P. Dachinger, *Art therapy...*, p. 6.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 12.

Its driving force comes from personality; it is the way to bring order out of chaos – chaotic feelings and impulses inside, a dizzying mass of sensations. It is a way to discover oneself and the world, and to establish a relationship between them. Throughout the entire creative process, internal and external realities are mixed into a new being¹¹.

The achievements of Ulman and her predecessors constitute the foundation of art therapy developed by successive generations¹².

One of the most interesting concepts of art therapy, also related to the issues regarding museums, was developed by Elisabeth Ioannides¹³. She clearly defined museum as a space conducive to therapeutic activities:

Art therapy is a clinical intervention based on the belief that the creative process is related to creating art. It has healing properties and can help individuals develop self-awareness, deal with stressful and traumatic experiences, and learn about themselves¹⁴.

Similarly to Vija B. Lusebrink, she also emphasised positive effects of art therapy in the following areas of life: "i. rehabilitation of physical weakness, ii. mental and emotional support, iii. development of cognitive and emotional skills"¹⁵. According to Ioannides, therapy implemented in the museum space can be particularly beneficial for the following groups:

People with mental health problems or career difficulties; people working in a stressful work environment; adults in the course of medical training; people with visual impairments; people suffering from traumatic experiences, such as soldiers or refugees; young people facing studying challenges; people struggling with problems related to cancer, AIDS, depression, bereavement, social anxiety, autism, Alzheimer's disease, addiction or harassment¹⁶.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 13.

¹² See: D. Edwards, *Art Therapy*, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi 2004.

¹³ E. Ioannides, *Museums as Therapeutic Environments and the Contribution of Art Therapy*, "Museum International" 2017, vol. 68, no. 271–272, pp. 98–109.

¹⁴ Ibidem, pp. 98–99.

¹⁵ V.B. Lusebrink, *Art Therapy and the Brain: An Attempt to Understand the Underlying Processes of Art Expression in Therapy*, "Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association" 2004, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 125–135.

¹⁶ E. Ioannides, *Museums as Therapeutic Environments...*, p. 101.

According to the author, individuals who belong to these groups are suitable for therapy in spaces that will allow them to "free themselves from the feeling of isolation" by sharing impressions and emotions with others. A study commissioned by the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries¹⁷ showed that being in museum space helps reduce the level of stress. This effect increased if the therapeutic process included a historical-artistic component and critical analysis. Thanks to this combination, "individuals developed self-esteem, self-awareness, social skills, introspection and creativity"¹⁸.

Let us review the above-mentioned reflections to give them an appropriate context. The starting point in our discussion was museotherapy, which is currently interpreted as "therapy using art", conducted in exhibition space of a museum. This art therapy is a kind of codified (in some countries confirmed by professional examination) method of therapy, a "sub-discipline" based on psychoanalysis. The pioneers of this approach included artists and therapists, Elinor Ulman, Edith Kramer and Margater Naumburg. Scientific publications from the 1950s and 1960s, as well as current ones, refer to the three essential elements of art therapy. The first is the creative nature of such an activity that helps patients shape their ego. In other words, creativity related to artistic activity supports the sublimation process. The second element is the non-verbal nature of artistic activity. It offers wider possibilities of expression than the spoken word and therefore it allows the participants of therapy to express themselves in a more direct and emotional way. Researchers agree that if conducted properly, therapy may develop a "new" symbolic and metaphorical language, which is the third important element of art therapy.

All these components form a "conceptual model of expression and interaction with the media at different levels that make up the *Expressive Therapies Continuum* (ECT)"¹⁹. This concept is a useful tool not only for art therapists but also for people involved in the broadly understood educational activity in the field of art. The model is divided into four stages of development:

¹⁷ J. Dodd, C. Jones, *Mind, Body, Spirit: How Museums Impact Health and Wellbeing*, <https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/rcmg/publications/mind-body-spirit-report> (access 29.01.2020).

¹⁸ E. Ioannides, *Museums as Therapeutic Environments...*, p. 103.

¹⁹ See: S.L. Kagin, V.B. Lusebrink, *The expressive therapies continuum*, "Art Psychotherapy" 1978, vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 171–180; L.D. Hinz, *A framework for using art in therapy*, New York, London 2009.

kinaesthetic/sensory (K/S), perceptual/affective (P/A), cognitive/symbolic (C/Sy) and *creative (CR)*. The first is related to "preverbal experiences, the release of energy through the expression of the body". This stage is compared to the way children "process information by physical manipulation of materials"²⁰. In the second stage, the patient consciously manipulates the medium in order to reach a specific result. During therapy, the patient's main task is to focus on the form and the way of how to express emotions "properly". The C/Sy stage is the most conscious stage of therapy that involves verbalizing, understanding and creating one's own symbols. At this level, there is sublimation of some "basic urges for culturally acceptable expression". The last stage, creative one, can be observed in all previous stages or can constitute their outcome. During this level, the patient experiences absolute sublimation and joy of creative act²¹.

The above theoretical introduction has two aims: to legitimize the author, who is not a certified art therapist, and to introduce the reader to the issues related to art therapy in order to help them freely analyse the two workshop scenarios²² described below. The workshop participants developed new skills regarding eye-tracking research, biofeedback and recognition of optical illusions.

The first workshop²³ concentrated on emotions observable in the work of art. It consisted of two stages: theoretical (lectures) and practical (group work). Classes began with welcoming the participants and presenting the workshop agenda. Then, the workshop leader presented a few quotes from the founders of art history, such as Heinrich Wölfflin or Alois Riegl²⁴, who

²⁰ M.-A. Nguyen, *Art Therapy – A Review of Methodology*, "Dubna Psychological Journal" 2015, no. 4, p. 35.

²¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 34–37.

²² The article is an account of the workshops carried out at the National Museum in Kielce on November 27, 2019.

²³ Detailed workshop scenarios are available at https://www.academia.edu/42299915/Konspekty_warsztat%C3%B3w_Sztuka_patrzania_ (access 29.01.2020).

²⁴ Example quote: "The stimulus does not come from a technique but from a specific artistic impulse. First comes the desire to create a nature-like thing in a non-animate material, then comes the choice of an appropriate creation technique. It had to be a constant artistic drive, alert and restless, in constant movement. Humanity had this drive long before the invention of woven protective clothing. A. Riegl, *Problem of Style*:

understood art as a primal drive, inherently inscribed in the human condition. This reflection was an introduction to a discussion about visual art as a form of expression which perhaps allows one to express more freely than the written or spoken word. The next step involved reading the emotions, or more importantly, noticing various ways in which they were represented in the stylistically different works²⁵.

The discussion was aimed at sensitizing the participants to the "emotionality" of the visual arts and highlighting the regularity recurring in the history of imaging. This principle manifests itself in a fluctuating level of realism, and thus in the emotional charge conveyed by the artistic object. This relationship was particularly visible when the participants compared the brutal, youthful creations of Marina Abramović²⁶ with her most famous work, *The artist is present* (2010). The mechanism became better understood also thanks to the juxtaposition of selected *Positives* by Zbigniew Libera with their prototypes. The next stage of the workshop, still theoretical, involved discussion about the basic types of biofeedback and describing the principles of operation and use of the MindWave Mobile 2 device²⁷. It is a tool that allows the user

Foundations for a History of Ornament, Princeton 1992, s. 15; "Primordial human instinct – a source of mythological imagination (...) which will never die [because] it would be the death of art". H. Wölfflin, *Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur*, München 1886, p. 21.

²⁵ The following works of art were presented during the workshops: Alexander of Rhodos, *Lakoon and His Sons*, 2/1 BC (?), marble; Rogier van der Weyden, *The Descent from The Cross*, approximately 1435, oil on board, Prado Museum in Madrid; Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*, 1595–1596, oil on canvas, Gallery of Paintings, Sanssouci; Władysław Podkowiński, *Szał uniesień*, 1894, oil on canvas, National Museum in Kraków; Władysław Strzemiński, *Śladem istnienia* from publishing series *Moim przyjaciółom Żydom*, 1945, mixed media, National Museum in Kraków; Marina Abramović, *Rythm 10*, 1973; *Rythm 0*, 1974; *Imponderabilia*, 1977; *The Lovers: The Great Wall Walk*, 1988; *Artist is present*, 2010; Krzysztof Wodiczko, *The Tijuana Projection*, 2001; Zbigniew Libera, *Mieszkańcy*, 2002–2003, black and white photograph; Prisoners of Auschwitz Birkenau Death Camp after its liberation, 1945. Still from the documentary entitled *Kronika Wyzwolenia KL Auschwitz*, made by the Soviet film company, Archives of the National Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oświęcim.

²⁶ Exhibition record available at https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/marina-abramovic-marina-abramovic-the-artist-is-present-2010/ (access 29.01.2020).

²⁷ Manual of the device available at <https://store.neurosky.com/pages/mindwave> (access 29.01.2020).

to carry out a simplified registration of EEG signal, operated by a smartphone. The application provides access to information about the level of relaxation, concentration and the so-called blink strength of the examined person²⁸. This equipment is widely used for educational purposes²⁹. Two workshop participants (who played the roles of the operator and the subject), instructed by the leader, participated in this presentation. Next, the whole group learned how to use the application installed on smartphones prepared for the participants. Following that part, participants formed groups of 3–5 people whose task was to view selected works presented at the exhibition entitled *Fear*³⁰ for 30 seconds and note the maximum levels of relaxation and concentration. The roles in the group changed depending on who was watching the work at a given moment. The tasks assigned to the participants included: measuring the time of looking at the work, observing the results in real time, recording the highest values of relaxation and concentration (using worksheets). The participants were given about 30 minutes to complete the entire task. The duration of this part was determined by the total time devoted to the workshop and emerging problems with the operation of the device, e.g. signal fading, etc. After the task was completed, individual groups presented their results, compared and discussed them. The participants achieving best results had the opportunity to play the game called *NeuroFun*³¹.

The goal of the workshops designed and conducted in this way was to increase the competences of the participants in the fields of interpreting works of art, biofeedback and the knowledge about the works of Polish artists.

²⁸ Blink strength is a parameter that determines the frequency with which the examined person blinks. This action creates an electric potential on the skin of the face, which disrupts the signal registration process. The device deletes blink data as it is considered unreliable.

²⁹ The manufacturer of the device, NeuroSky, gives access to the application Effective Learner with Study Trainer, which can be used in the learning process widely, available at <https://store.neurosky.com/products/effective-learner> (access 29.01.2020); Mind Wave is used in more advanced studies, e.g. A. Sezer, Y. İnel, A.C. Seçkin, U. Uluçınar, *An Investigation of University Students' Attention Levels in Real Classroom Settings with NeuroSky's MindWave Mobile (EEG) Device*, Conference: International Educational Technology Conference–IETC 2015, At Istanbul, Turkey, pp. 88–101.

³⁰ Information on the exhibition available at https://mnki.pl/pl/dla_zwiedzajacych/zapowiedzi_wystaw/strach (access 29.01.2020).

³¹ The game is available at <https://store.neurosky.com/products/neurofun> (access 29.01.2020).

Although the workshops were not designed as a form of art therapy, they seem to implement its main assumptions. In the first part, the participants could improve their ability to "correctly" recognize emotions. During this activity, they had the opportunity to experience the universal means of expression – that is art. These elements obviously fit into the objectives of art therapy, because already at the initial stage of the classes the participant had to deal with symbolization and translating visual language into specific emotions and then into words. The use of a simplified version of the EEG recorder was a certain innovation compared to the "traditional" art therapy. This procedure might have contributed to the deepening of the described processes, as the participants could confront the obtained results with their own feelings and the content of the works they looked at. Many people (not only during the workshops discussed here³²) expressed their surprise at the results achieved and the fact that a particular work of art contributed to greater concentration or relaxation. It should be emphasized that the results obtained by the participants were of an illustrative nature, mainly due to the conditions of the recording. However, the aim of the workshop was to familiarize the group with the method rather than to conduct a professional experiment. Despite the fact that the participants did not create artistic objects, their activity can be related to the ETC model. This type of workshop involving various age groups, from primary school pupils to the university of the third age students, was conducted by the author of the present paper. Although the groups differed regarding both the course of the workshop, and the conclusions obtained, they all seem to fit in the second and third stages of the ETC model. Moreover, they are also related to the creative process. As the course progressed, the following stages were identified: expressing emotions, verbalizing, and creating symbols. The content of the exhibition presented at the museum was a key element of these processes. Perhaps it is this unusual mixture of recipients, works of art, critical thinking and technology that can be referred to as museotherapy?

The second workshop was also divided into theoretical and practical part. Its aim was to increase the competences of participants in the field of perceiving optical illusions and understanding their mechanisms. This

³² Materials from the workshop entitled *Sztuka patrzenia, czyli o oczach i emocjach artysty* are available at <http://sztukapatrzania.com.pl/> (access 29.01.2020).

time, an eye tracker³³ was used to better understand a given illusion. During the theoretical part, the workshop leader presented the most recognizable optical illusions³⁴, explaining the principle of their operation. The next step involved recognizing the illusions described above in the selected works of art³⁵. The last stage of the theoretical part included a brief overview of the operation of the eye tracker, which was then developed during a practical exercise showing the way we look at a work of art in a stressful situation. The exercise began with taking one of the participants outside the workshop space. The others had to find a hidden figure in the photographs created by the Chinese artist Liu Bolin³⁶. After the completion of this task, the leader invited the person waiting outside back to the room, and then placed an eye tracker on their head. At the same time, a close-up of the subject's pupils and a recording of the scene taking place in front of them were shown on the projected image. This allowed the rest of the participants to see where the subject was looking in real time. Their task was to find Bolin in the photograph showing the artist against the background of a destroyed studio. By observing the efforts of the subject, the group gained knowledge about

³³ A device for precisely determining the place at which the examined person looks, based on the recorded eye movements. An original eye tracker was used during the workshops, its description is available at <http://www.lukaszkedziora.com/2019/02/22/elementy-do-domowego-okulografu-juz-gotowe/> (access 29.01.2020). See: Ł. Kędziora, *Jak wykorzystywać okulografię w muzeum – przyczynek do dyskusji*, "Sztuka i Kultura" 2017, vol. 4, pp. 313–340; P. Francuz, *Imagia. W kierunku neurokognitywnej teorii obrazu*, Kraków 2013; E. Bachta, R. J. Stein, S. Filippini-Fantoni, T. Leaso, *Evaluating the Practical Applications of Eye Tracking in Museums*, Museum and the Web 2012 Conference, https://www.museumsandtheweb.com/mw2012/papers/evaluating_the_practical_applications_of_eye_t (access 29.01.2020); R. Rosenberg, C. Klein, *The moving eye of the beholder: Eye tracking and the perception of paintings*, in: *Art, Aesthetics, and the Brain*, ed. J.P. Huston et al., Oxford Scholarship Online 2015, pp. 79–103.

³⁴ During the workshops, such illusions as: Herman's net, Rubin's vase, Necker's cube, W.E. Hill's composition, *My wife and my mother-in-law* from 1915, the Kanizs triangle, etc. were shown.

³⁵ Octavio Ocampo, *The General's Family*; Pere Borrell del Caso, *Escaping criticism*, 1874; Salvador Dali, *Swans Reflecting Elephants*, 1937; M. C. Escher, *Metamorphosis*, 1953.

³⁶ L. Bolin, *Bird's Nest*, 2009; *Made in China*, 2012. More information about the artist available at <https://liubolinstudio.com> (access 29.01.2020). See: D. Curti, B. Benedetti, N. Ricciardi, *Liu Bolin HIDING IN ITALY* (catalogue), Milan 2010; *Ultracontemporary art books directed by Massimo Tantardini, skip_intro.06 Liu Bolin* (catalog), Brescia 2008.

how we view images and what fixations and saccades are³⁷. The practical part of the workshop began with dividing the participants into groups. Each of them was to find one or more of the previously described optical illusions in the works presented at the exhibition. The participants had 20–25 minutes to complete the task, after which each group presented their findings to the rest of the participants. Depending on the lighting conditions, the projects were subject to eye-tracking verification.

Similarly to the workshop discussed earlier, this one was not developed as a form of therapy. Its aim was to provide specific knowledge about the mechanisms of perception of works of art. Moreover, it was supposed to arouse interest in various types of visual message and teach participants how to "effectively" – and at the same time creatively – look at art. If we put the workshop goals described above and the criteria regarding art therapy together, they will turn out quite similar. Without much difficulty, common points between the characteristics of art therapy and the workshops conducted can be identified. The first part of the workshops required the participants to express a lot of creativity and proper understanding of the work of art. An important element was the need to verbalize and describe individual illusions and identify the emotions associated with them. Through these illusions, the idea of creating an intermediate message between verbal and symbolic communication almost literally came true. The use of the eye tracker made the participants aware of the relationship between the way the eyeballs move and the emotions experienced by the examined person at a given moment. The last important element was a close contact of the participants with the work of art, a special kind of immersion, thanks to which the sublimation process was accelerated.

As a summary, we must refer to the introduction in which the question was asked about what museotherapy was. It is difficult to give a straight answer, unless we concentrate on another issue, namely whether the described workshops fit in the trend of therapy in the museum, and therefore also in art therapy. The author of the present paper, as a person without therapeutic

³⁷ The fixation "movement" of the eye consists in focusing individual points of gaze on a small area of the viewed scene. Thanks to it, we can identify the fragments of the analyzed scene that attracted the most attention. Saccades of the eye are used to rapidly shift eyesight from one object to another. Their registration allows to determine the order of looking at particular fragments of the image.

qualifications, leaves the answer to these questions to the readers. However, it is worth pointing to another interesting and somewhat paradoxical relationship. The question is whether the foundations of art therapy are so universal that they fit into the content of randomly selected workshops or maybe every "organized" contact with art can have a positive, therapeutic impact.

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Izabela Karlińska

The National Museum in Kielce

MUSEUM PRACTICE OR EDUCATION FOR EVERYBODY

Museum education, carried out in all museums in Poland, is a set of activities undertaken as part of cultural heritage. What is more, it is also an example of a change in thinking about museology. In one of his papers on museum education¹ George E. Hein wrote that at the beginning of the nineteenth century museums were or became places of education. Despite the fact that the term "museum education" was not defined, the potential of a museum as a place of education was recognized intuitively. People searched for "ways" allowing visitors to see and fully experience exhibitions in a manner that would facilitate gaining the broadest possible knowledge. Thus, the museum educator, whose predispositions changed over the years, intuitively undertook activities based primarily on social observation of museum visitors and people participating in classes and workshops.

Broadly understood educational activities conducted at the National Museum in Kielce consist of classes and workshops as well as promotional and educational events, lectures and projects implemented in all branches of the Museum. Longstanding practice and experience of the Museum's Department of Education show how multidimensional the museum institution is and how it addresses various educational challenges. We try to develop attitudes open to new ideas, through which museums are seen as places for self-development, as well as emotional, motor and psychophysical development. Education through art, in various aspects, teaches visitors how to look at the surrounding world from many different perspectives

¹ G.E. Hein, *Edukacja muzealna*, in: *Edukacja muzealna. Antologia tłumaczeń*, ed. M. Szelaąg, J. Skutnik, Poznań 2010, pp. 59–81.

basing on one's knowledge, empirical experience and needs as well as using museum exhibits.

Educational programs, adapted to each branch of the Museum and closely related to the exhibition activities of a given place, allow for the development of museum education in many areas. The Museum's branches, such as the Stefan Żeromski School Years Museum and the Henryk Sienkiewicz Manor, associated with the writers, literature and history of the region, attract visitors of specific interests. They also reach schools, constituting an unconventional addition to the school curriculum.

The classes and workshops held at the Archaeological Museum in Wiślica refer to the history of the town and its medieval monuments. The history of Poland is taught through permanent exhibitions of the Museum.

Another branch, Museum for Intercultural Dialogue, is a place that combines many educational aspects and touches upon many issues. Permanent exhibitions entitled *From Diversity to Dialogue*, *History of Automotive Industry in Miniature*, *Prehistory and Early Middle Ages of the Region of Ponidzie and Wiślica*, *From the Sacred to the Profane. Painting and Sculpture in Folk Art* allow for conducting classes and workshops on history, art history, folk art and modelling.

In the former Palace of Kraków Bishops in Kielce, in addition to its historic, Baroque interiors, there is a Gallery of Polish Painting and European Decorative Art. The branch offers educational activities focusing on Baroque era, history of Poland, history of art as well as painting, sculpture and ceramics.

Workshops conducted by educators in the Museum's branches are adapted to the age of the participants, their needs as well as the school curriculum. Trying to meet the needs of the museum visitors, workshops take the form of a lecture with a multimedia presentation as well as a dialogue with children or young people, allowing them to put forward their own conclusions and hypotheses.

Teaching materials are an indispensable educational element allowing for any given workshop to become a coherent whole. Similarly, the medium used during a museum lesson is related to museum exhibitions, the place where the workshops are conducted or specific activities in which museum visitors take part.

The demand for museum education connected with school curriculum and teacher's intentions allows for new, "custom-made" lessons sometimes developed in cooperation with museum educators and school counsellors and psychologists. Lessons conducted in foreign languages, which focus on the museum's collection of painting, are a good example. In turn, the lessons conducted in Polish include some handouts in English and German so as the students may provide answers in two languages on the basis on a previously presented talk about a given artist or a topic. Classes of this type allow for cooperation not only with visual artists but also show how thanks to joint efforts a new platform of language and museum education can be created.

In addition to regular activities, the museum implements projects such as the one entitled *Museum Closer to Us*. The project is aimed at the disabled and each lesson is adapted to the needs of a given group. Over the years, more than 40 institutions involved in assisting or educating people with disabilities have participated in the project. This shows how significant the demand for this type of activity is. During classes and workshops selected museum exhibits and multimedia presentations are used and the participants develop their manual and cognitive skills. The number of those who take advantage of the educational offer of the museum is increasing year by year which shows that a museum can be a space for multi-dimensional development. A museum exhibit can be not only a piece of history or art history but also the starting point for finding out about new art techniques, concepts or people. The educators are not distant and anonymous – they establish a relation with the participants so as they feel safe and at ease in the museum space.

The OAPs constitute another target group of the museum educational offer. The cooperation with the University of the Third Age consists in the organization of photography workshops, which have been conducted for the past few years. During two-week workshops, old-age pensioners learn the basic principles of photography composition and they take pictures related to a given topic which are then discussed during museum meetings. At the same time, they also learn about the most interesting photographers. Photographs taken during outdoor classes or as homework assignments are presented at workshop exhibitions organized in Kielce and in the region. During classes, it is not only learning that is important for the participants. They also value talks and discussions during and after classes when some

personal experiences and thoughts, sometimes difficult, are shared. In this way, the museum is no longer just an institution but becomes an intimate place where one can talk with friends.

The changing world and the changing needs of the broadly understood recipient create space for new and often not so obvious educational activities. They contribute to the image of a museum as a friendly space with its therapeutic and developmental possibilities. Museum is becoming a place where the modern recipient may and should find a starting point for their development. It is also becoming a platform for solving different types of difficult life situations. Hatred, hate speech, intolerance and discrimination trigger the discussion about difficult relations between teenagers and "young" adults. Educational activities chosen by teachers as the so-called homeroom show that classes conducted at a museum do not necessarily have to focus on exhibits or cultural heritage. Instead, they can encourage talks which build relations and integrate a given group, showing young people that museums have "something more" to offer to them and that their original purpose takes on a different dimension. Exercises performed by young people concentrate on their personal attitudes, interests and beliefs as well as their views, fears and expectations. Often during museum classes, they discuss their own needs, instinctively trying to solve a problem or to deal with a given situation.

Various topics of museum classes, frequently referring to current social problems, are discussed using different educational methods and media. Traditional workshop methods known from regular art classes conducted at school are not the only ways to reach a young recipient. As Gottfried Boehm put it:

the younger generation is getting used to images as products of electronic programming, which can be generated under the guise of reality².

The use of smartphones during classes when students perform exercises related to a collection or museum exhibition coincides with the predispositions of a young audience. Activities of this type also testify to the readiness of museum as an institution to expand educational opportunities. On the

² G. Boehm, *O obrazach i widzeniu. Antologia tekstów*, ed. D. Kołacka, Kraków 2014, p. 99.

other hand, focusing on the description of the educational project entitled *Ja i świat. Ja i sztuka* implemented by Marcin Szelaąg and Anna Rospenk-Spychała, we can see a broader aspect of education into which a sociological element is introduced:

the museum educational community confirms the hypothesis that learning often takes place in contact with other participants in a given experience. Cognitive conceptualization of the educational goal triggers reflection and research on learning and teaching priorities. The experiment was based on individualization and subjective treatment of students, which meant accepting individual features of each participant, including mental agility, emotional changeability and unusual amounts of energy³.

It is also a fact that when working with young people from a given school or a housing estate we are dealing with a local community and consequently we can learn about the differences between specific needs of children and young people.

At the same time, trying to reach recipients with different predispositions, the museum engages in projects which combine two types of spaces, i.e. spaces for children with and without disabilities. The activities developed on the basis of such a relationship make it possible to show, at least to a minimum extent, how the sign language can be used or how the world is perceived by the visually-impaired. The activities of this type, intended for the youngest, are designed to teach attitudes and reactions to certain social phenomena.

Workshops, classes, outdoor activities organized under the program of museum education show how both the demand for museum education and the modern participant are changing and how broad the spectrum of education can be. Museum education creates space for everyone, regardless of age and personal features or predispositions. John Dewey wrote that art arises "out of social rituals that embody emotions and beliefs of the community. As a result of such an aesthetic experience, art has the power to create interpersonal relationships and is a carrier of meaning for the entire community. Art as a product of collective life embodies social values because it is born out

³ A. Rospenk-Spychała, M. Szelaąg, *Ja i świat. Ja i sztuka*, Poznań 2016, p. 108.

of the vital needs of a community"⁴. Art as the basis of educational activities allows you to build relationships, teaches aesthetics, makes it possible to look inside oneself, creating a space for development in all aspects of life.

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I CAN, I AM ABLE TO, I UNDERSTAND – CREATIVE EDUCATION IN MUSEUMS

Introduction

"Art should be the basis of education", predicted Herbert Read, "because only a society with a highly developed aesthetic sensitivity can show sensitivity to great ideas. Only art and genuine emotions can introduce a person to the world of great ideas"¹. In the mid-twentieth century, art theorist Jerzy Ludwiński stated that art in the post-artistic era would become an "adhesive" binding all areas of life². Today it is clear that art is becoming such an adhesive in the field of education. It is one method of learning and exploring the truths about the world. In the 21st century, learning is not so much collecting and remembering information but connecting to a knowledge network (connectivism)³ and then using the acquired information creatively. In this sense, creativity takes on a new meaning. It is not only a material object/product but an attitude of full, permanent openness to the process of perceiving and producing "the new" – regardless of the field. Art is becoming a way of learning and exploring the truths about the world.

¹ I. Wojnar, *Wstęp*, in: H. Read, *Wychowanie przez sztukę*, translated by H. Tarnowska, Wrocław 1976, p. 14.

² J. Ludwiński, *Estetyka kleju*, in: *Sztuka w epoce postartystycznej i inne teksty*, ed. J. Kozłowski, Poznań–Wrocław 2011, p. 346.

³ Centrum Nauki Kopernik, www.kopernik.org.pl/projekty-specjalne/konferencja-pokazac-przekazac/pokazac-przekazac-2017/ (access 10.11.2019).

Today, numerous scientists (Claude Clero, Maurice Debesse, Robert Gloton, Geoff Lewis, Krzysztof Nęcka, Stanisław Popek) agree as to the main causative factor that stimulates human development. It is a creative activity determined by genetics. However, human development and dynamics depend not only on genetics but also on environmental factors (education, educational environment, nurturing talents, the spontaneous stimulation of development). In this context, choices referring to "nature or culture" are meaningless as "both these factors, although to a different degree, participate in the creative and reconstructive activity"⁴. Consequently, "there is a division into two extreme theoretical positions regarding ability: elitism and egalitarianism, or into some continuous values: from the lack of creative abilities to brilliance"⁵. The first position is related to pancreationism, which assumes that every person is, at least to some extent, capable of creative activity. "We are all born artists", Pablo Picasso used to say, "it is important not to lose this ability while growing up"⁶. Putting this theoretical assumption into practice, I have been involved in education through art in cooperation with cultural and educational institutions aimed at various groups of recipients, in order to cultivate their creative attitudes and to lead them to holistic development based on innate resources. The present paper concentrates on these experiences and the views and thoughts related to them.

Contemporary museum education

In response to modern educational trends such as constructivism (J. Dewey 1938, J. Piaget 1966, L. Wygotzky 1978, J. Bruner 1987, E. von Glasersfeld 1995), constructionism (S. Papert 1996) or connectivism (G. Siemens, S. Downes 2005), museum education started to involve creative methods, combining various disciplines, fields and levels of reflection on the basis of original works of art displayed at exhibitions. Despite the development of civilization and the new

⁴ S. Popek, *Mechanizmy aktywności twórczej człowieka w świetle interakcyjnej teorii psychologicznej*, "Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska" 2016, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 9–10.

⁵ Ibidem.

⁶ M. Minchberg, *Edukacja przez sztukę: artysta w szkole*, "Edukacyjna Analiza Transakcyjna" 2018, no. 7, pp. 221–232.

media, nothing can replace the value of direct contact with an original work of art or a real artifact. Modern education in museums builds bridges, creates new, non-obvious narratives, uses original works and active methods and stimulates thinking and acting. It uses the language of art, which, due to its power of thorough experience, is an effective tool for efficient learning, regardless of the age of the participants involved in educational activities. Museum education complements school education, often taking on the role of an obligatory classes in teaching culture and art. It not only applies to the current education system but also responds to insufficient adult education in the past in the field of so-called emotional subjects. Artistic activities have become a path through which other educational content and tasks are developed and implemented, leading to one's self-improvement, e.g. shaping civic attitudes or attitudes towards ecology. The educational idea of "through art to art" is today giving way to the idea of "learning through art".

Nowadays, aesthetic education is carried out by broadly understood art, which, by making it easier for people to orient themselves in the surrounding reality, highlighting creative activity and harmonizing human experiences, goes beyond the function of shaping human aesthetic sensitivity to beauty or art and aims to justify its purposefulness and usefulness in holistic development⁷.

In this context, museum education, which not only teaches art but teaches through art, often using new forms of media and digital technology, has an important role to play. According to the theory of connectivism, it has tools that successfully promote broadly understood science through the connections and relations between theories and ideas. Institutional space is intertwined with the space of recipients on various levels. Undeniably, culture today is, even if sometimes only declaratively, at the centre of attention for people – and not only those associated with it. It is no longer an elite way of spending free time. There is social importance ascribed to it, related to the educational and mentoring role of culture. It is believed to contribute to a better quality of life. It activates various communities. "We are talking today about partici-

⁷ M. Olczak, *Trening twórczości – współczesna i efektywna forma wychowania przez sztukę*, Kraków 2010, p. 9.

pation as a specific, universal social practice, inscribed in decentralized and difficult to access cultural life"⁸.

"Does participation in culture equal one's lifestyle, customs, rituals and critical activity? Does it stem from pure interest? Maybe participation in culture is an exchange, processing and using the cultural context", asks Marek Krajewski⁹. Perhaps by focusing on the original meaning of culture, it becomes a way to seek out the truth and a means of gaining knowledge about the world, people and ourselves equal to other sciences? It is difficult to find an unambiguous answer to these questions due to numerous ideas and phenomena and their goals exogenous to culture, however, the important role of museum education should be recognized. Young people and teenagers who are still at school play an important role in this context as they are the main development engine of culture. Recent grassroots, non-institutional activities gain significance, developing their forms in an uncontrolled way. All these activities are a response to the need for broad social self-improvement; art serves here as a link between many areas and human activities according to the popular saying that one can not understand today's world without understanding art, especially contemporary art. Moreover, it is difficult to deny the positive impact of art on our health, especially in the context of a study conducted in 2016 by Enzo Grossi from the University of Bologna in which he proved that 60% of respondents reported a decrease in cortisol levels as a result of passive contact with art¹⁰.

The mission of the modern museum is education. The intricate development of experience in the face of an exhibition triggers the process of educating the recipient, which is deepened by emotions. Nowadays, one can observe a new trend in museum studies, commonly known as *slow*, i.e. the organization of special, multi-threaded exhibitions without the need to organize many of them every year. Instead, the focus is on the quality of the product and contact with the visitor. The duration of such exhibitions allows for multiple visits and multi-level reception while building multi-threaded

⁸ A. Bachórz, B. Stachura, *W poszukiwaniu punktów stycznych. Rekonstrukcja dyskursu o problemach (nie)uczestnictwa w kulturze*, Gdańsk 2015, p. 29.

⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁰ *Włochy: Naukowcy: kontakt ze sztuką korzystnie wpływa na zdrowie*, www.gazetaprawna.pl/artykuly/938461,wlochy-naukowcy-kontakt-ze-sztuka-korzystnie-wplywa-na-zdrowie (access 10.01.2019).

narratives for/by various recipients. "Cultural participation is one of the most discussed phenomenon in relation to culture, its current condition and possible future development"¹¹. This statement leads us to think about holistic education which is conducted not only at schools but also other places, such as cultural institutions or urban spaces.

Creative museum education in practice

In cultural activities, as in art education, it is not only the final result that counts, but also the process that is triggered. Mindfulness focused on the process translates into a subjective, individual approach to participants and partners of activities, as well as into continuous learning that can start at an exhibition and end in front of a computer at home. In this open educational process, it is important to experiment and seek one's own solutions. The educators conduct creative activities with various groups based on museum resources. The lesson/workshop/meeting scenario is usually developed in response to the needs of recipients and takes into account their individual potential, abilities and interests. The existing skills and knowledge of the participants are developed to reach another level of information through personal experience and effective creative activity. They are also strengthened by emotional experience as a result of contact with an original work of art. Satisfaction with one's own creation is experienced by all participants of the meeting because it is the main factor leading to development.

Constructivists repeat after Piaget: "Knowledge is a consequence of experience!". The idea of constructivism in museum education is based on an experiment, which is a creative process leading to a better understanding of things and the world through the independent search for solutions. The educator suggests tools but it is the event participant who decides which one to choose, for what purpose and how to transform it. Motivation is key to self-learning. We must be interested in what we do. An unconventional relation between the phenomenon and the participant triggers creative

¹¹ J. Skutnik, *Uczestnictwo w kulturze z pozycji personalistycznej*, in: *Edukacja kulturowa. Podręcznik*, ed. R. Koschany, A. Skórzyńska, Poznań 2014, p. 23.

thinking and progressive performance. Paolo Blikstein (Stanford University) proved that the effectiveness of learning outcomes increases by 25% when the sequence of actions is changed (i.e. from a habitual situation – a lecture or exercise – to a situation where theoretical explanation precedes experience). The order is "doing and thinking" and not the other way round. Blikstein introduces the concept of creative collaboration, the effectiveness of which is confirmed by studies conducted on groups of young people with mixed abilities and different ages¹².

In contemporary education the most important question is "What can you create?". The resources will always be available, even if creating is a long process of trial and error. Learning is about creating an intricate concept through numerous creative experiences¹³. Process participants develop concepts, views and theories through multi-directional, wide-ranging activities, while at the same time examining things and phenomena in great detail. They create objects in order to share them with others. They look at the world convinced that they are able to do it and that they can find solutions to a given problem. Of course, this path involves both successes and failures, which affect the emotions that contribute to improved effectiveness of the education process.

Adopting such an approach, the old set of academic competences gives way to learning through experience and creation. Imitating and traditional lectures are replaced with creative education. In this light, the Confucian maxim should be extended by adding to it a fourth element: "Tell me and I will forget, show me and I may remember; involve me and I will understand, let me experience and I will internalize it for ever" because the experience of the creative act undeniably determines the impact of an undertaken action and the effectiveness of teaching process. Thanks to art, the world of experience and knowledge reaches out to other fields.

In modern education, teaching through art and experience replaces learning by heart. Consequently, the educator/teacher is a professional and

¹² P. Blikstein, *Computationally Enhanced Toolkits for Children: Historical Review and a Framework for Future Design*, Stanford University 2016, www.researchgate.net (access 12.01.2019).

¹³ A. Walat, *O konstrukcjonizmie i ośmiu zasadach uczenia się według Seymoura Paperta*, www.kopernik.org.pl (access 13.01.2019).

creative guide who can become, as Ken Roberts puts it, a "window to the world"¹⁴. According to the enlightenment theory of human perception, developed by Ekkehard Martens and Herbert Schnadelbach, education should be treated more broadly than just receiving and gathering information. It should become a medium for comprehending oneself and discovering one's practical interests. Art, the concept of which has changed drastically and has become a synonym of both aesthetic experience and experience in general, comes to the rescue. Today, art is what moves us, evokes emotions, allows us to experience catharsis and builds a dialogue with the recipient. It is why it has such enormous educational potential. The recipient becomes a co-creator because he/she develops the content and the form of a work of art and thanks to the available media shows it to the outside world.

From birth man can feel, hear, see and move at the same time. "The close cooperation of the senses' organs, or their integration, is important for the proper functioning of the human body and therefore we must look at them as one common system"¹⁵. It is worth remembering that by introducing activities from different disciplines of art simultaneously or alternately, all senses are activated, which is the key to the effective acquisition of knowledge and various skills. The senses used in a compatible manner reinforce each other. Therefore, educational meetings should be designed in such a way as to include multisensory activities and take into account the perceptual diversity of the participants.

Self-awareness is important in developing one's own individuality as a supreme value for every human being. It can be achieved through careful contact with a work of art during the course of a workshop. According to Sternberg "helping students discover what they really like to do is one of the core tasks of a teacher of creativity because people find it hard to achieve truly exceptional results in areas they are not interested in"¹⁶. An ideal model of the relationship between the moderator and the participant in cultural projects includes maintaining positive energy, manifested by the exchange of feelings, thoughts and resources. During a museum meeting, we all collect certain

¹⁴ K. Robinson, *Out of Our Minds. Learning to be Creative*, Chichester, West Sussex 2011.

¹⁵ V. F. Mass, *Uczenie się przez zmysły*, Warszawa 1998, p. 16.

¹⁶ R. J. Sternberg, *A three-faced model of creativity*, in: *The Nature of Creativity*, ed. R. J. Sternberg, Cambridge 2011, pp. 125–147.

experiences that shape us. "Starting from a constructivist model of learning it can be concluded that two factors are indispensable in shaping the learning environment: the activity of an individual and the social nature of learning"¹⁷. This is why social cooperation and collaboration are so important. The combination of various fields in developing the creative potential of the project participants brings an important multiplying effect. It is the result of numerous factors – the involvement of the group, the potential of talents, the use of tools available at a given time and the existing situation. "The introduction of a synergistic mechanism into the educational and social process may contribute not only to the quantitative but primarily the qualitative development of an individual. This development will be effective and predictable as long as it is based on the mechanism of the synergistic shaping of "I" in the social reality"¹⁸. The shaping of "I" and applying the principle of "being here and now" in exploring the world and using everything that is to be perceived in a given moment allows for fruitful and satisfying effects of artistic and educational activities – for moderators and participants alike.

Effective upbringing requires, on the one hand, axiological and normative patterns and guidelines, and, on the other, the student's involvement in searching for, learning about, discovering, and accepting the world of values they adopt. Everyone must constantly look for answers to the questions regarding the validity of one's values, which are to correspond to existing human needs and which are important for the whole of society¹⁹.

Conclusion – holistic education through art

Creating an educational environment through culture and art is a way to develop independent, responsible and sensitive attitudes, which are based on important values such as respect for the aesthetics of the environment.

¹⁷ D. Klus-Stańska, *Tworzenie warunków dla rozwojowej zmiany poznawczej i konstruowania wiedzy przez dziecko*, in: *Pedagogika wczesnoszkolna: dyskursy, problemy, rozwiązania*, ed. D. Klus-Stańska, M. Szczepka-Pustkowska, Warszawa 2009, pp. 455–501.

¹⁸ A. Bulzak, *Synergia jako narzędzie kształtowania "ja" w rzeczywistości społecznej*, in: *Psychologia twórczości*, ed. S. Popek, Lublin 2009, pp. 102–112.

¹⁹ K. Śleziński, *Zarys dydaktyki filozofii*, Kraków 2011, p. 14.

The aesthetics of the environment refers not only to the appearance of the surrounding space, i.e. one's home or room, but also care for common space in terms of ergonomics, architecture and urban planning. It is also the protection of the natural environment, connected with hygiene and health-related aspects. Understanding the conscious shaping of the aesthetic space in this way we start dealing with only seemingly distant topics. It turns out that learning to segregate rubbish, save natural resources or make conscious choices about one's lifestyle, or even ways of spending one's free time, will be of critical importance in building our living and educational environment. In this sense, aesthetic shaping is the awareness of the components of our environment and not just the appearance of things around us. It also includes the culture of language, the culture of public debates, the culture of the media and advertising, methods of communication or social and political culture.

Today, art is closely connected with life and its various manifestations. In this dialogue between culture and social life, it is worth paying attention to nonviolent and aesthetic forms. Poor emotional education in schools contributes to self-misunderstanding. Recent events that have taken place in public space have shown us how insufficient the understanding of social and cultural phenomena is. The aggressive behaviour of teenagers, growing depression and suicide rates among adolescents and adults (116 suicides in 2017 and 730 suicide attempts)²⁰ threaten us daily. Violent and indecent language in public media and internet discussions illustrate how difficult it is for us to handle our emotions. The antidote to these problems is education through art carried out in educational and cultural institutions. Using the language of art helps us to express and regulate emotions. Learning to understand art translates into a deep understanding of ourselves and the phenomena around us. Activities that trigger our innate creative potential increase satisfaction with one's work and develop a feeling of self-satisfaction. Due to the constant changes around us and increased pace of life in the 21st century, creative activity is a necessary condition for proper functioning in the modern world. That is why activities undertaken by creative educators and animators in cooperation with cultural institutions are so valuable.

²⁰ *Młodzi w depresji... W 2017 roku 116 osób popełniło samobójstwo, a 730 próbowało. Ministerstwo zdrowia ma plan ratunkowy*, <https://oko.press/mlodzi-depresji-2017-116-osob-popelniło-samobójstwo-730-probowalo-ministerstwo-zdrowia-plan-ratunkowy/> (access 13.01.2019).

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Małgorzata Bundzewicz

Association for the Development of Psychiatry and Community Care

BOSCH SPEAKS WITH BRUEGEL AT MIODOWA ART GALLERY

"...all you need is art"

The project entitled *Bosch speaks with Bruegel at Miodowa Art Gallery* focuses on the Renaissance Dutch painters and their works: Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights* and Peter Bruegel's *Netherlandish Proverbs*.

Artists from Miodowa Art Studio, a studio of the Association for the Development of Psychiatry and Community Care, together with some invited professional artists interpreted the content of the above-mentioned paintings. Large paintings were created, consisting of canvases of the same dimensions (30 x 40cm) joined together, creating a new understanding of the works of the Dutch masters. The results of the projects have been exhibited in numerous places: in the courtyard of the Collegium Medicum in 2017 during a conference held there, in Miodowa Art Gallery in 2018 and 2019 and in Panorama Art Gallery in Tomaszowice in 2018 and 2019 as part of the Art Meeting (a series of exhibitions entitled *Paradise Gardens* and *Netherlandish Proverbs, Everything Is Different From What It Should Be*). The artists from Miodowa Art Studio who worked on this project, creating their own interpretations of individual parts of the painting, are people with experiences of a mental crisis often diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, personality disorders or borderline personality – disorders involving, among other things, mood instability, identity disorders, and the feeling of being unfulfilled and empty. They are very sensitive and talented people, often artistically educated, graduates of the Academy of Fine Arts or other art academies. Some of them, however, came to the studio for the first time and discovered a love for art, the joy of painting together, spending time together, talking and developing a talent that was not com-

promised by disease. The result of their artistic struggle, which was shown during outdoor exhibitions in numerous art galleries, often presenting their works along that of professional artists, has developed a new value to their artistic creations, building a small but important bridge that connects to the world of higher values, namely art.

For people with experiences of a mental crises, art seems to be a kind of bridge between them and the surrounding reality. Art becomes a defensive shield against obsessive thoughts and uncomfortable situations, an escape to a new friendly space. It is a tool that allows people to express their emotions related to experiencing reality and is often a protest against it. Using the language of art as a means of expression makes those suffering from a mental crisis equal to professional artists for whom this type of contact is often their only and true relationship with reality. This awareness of equality is between two worlds of sensitivity: the world of the professional artist and the world of a person with artistic talent experiencing a mental crisis; it gives a different dimension to creative isolation and solitude in life. It seems that people suffering from a mental health disorder like to use this form of expression, i.e. the language of art, because painting opens up their inner life, allowing thoughts and dreams to escape. They learn to construct a picture as if they were learning to rebuild their lives. For them, creativity becomes a kind of declaration of existence. Artists who are sensitive to different ways of perceiving and describing the world often express their disagreement with the chaos and blandness of the world through their works. They show great tolerance for otherness and they really like people who think differently. Often abandoned and lonely themselves, they look for their own creative path, originality, a world that exists beyond the surrounding reality.

The first project entitled *Paradise Gardens* was inspired by the Hieronymus Bosch painting *The Garden of Earthly Delights*.

Why is Bosch's painting so important to this project? Because we are dealing with a special work. *The Garden of Earthly Delights* or *The Millennial Kingdom* is an oil-on-board triptych (220 x 390 cm), painted around 1500, currently exhibited in the Prado Museum in Madrid.

Much has been written about *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. The main theme of the painting is human sinfulness. An interesting hypothesis was proposed by the Spanish writer, Javier Sierra, the author of the novel entitled

The Master of the Prado, who suggested reading the painting backwards – starting with hell and ending with paradise, which opens the triptych. This interpretation was conducive to the hypothesis that the painting is in fact an encoded message, an expression of the thoughts of the Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to which Bosch belonged. This congregation was established in 1318. It resembled a Masonic lodge with a clearly defined hierarchy and system of values which involved the most eminent citizens of the city and region. The members of the brotherhood met in St. John cathedral during the so-called swan feasts. The Swan Brotherhood, consisting of the Brabant elite of that time, had access to the latest achievements of knowledge. Bosch belonged to a group that was familiar with alchemy, Kabbalah, Neoplatonism, and a variety of "new piety" views and had a huge impact on the spirituality of the artist and his paintings. On the one hand, Bosch's painting should be viewed in purely Christian terms, and on the other hand, in the context of other spiritual schools. One of them was the Adamites. This old sect, dating back to the 2nd century, proclaimed that man should return to the state of original purity from before original sin. According to the fathers of the church, the Adamites were infamous because they celebrated their mysterious feasts naked, which was a sign of the return to the original order and the happiness that prevailed in Paradise. It was also believed that Bosch painted *The Garden of Earthly Delights* for this group. The principle of the group was equality between the sexes manifested in the name itself. The very first look at the painting confirms that we are dealing with a specific work. Its left side shows a vision of paradise in which Christ, not God, blesses Adam and Eve. The first parents, naked, listen to this blessing humbly and attentively. They are surrounded by fantastic animals – elephants, giraffes, ibexes and reptiles, which were well known to Bosch from a treatise attributed to Aristotle describing Alexander the Great's expedition to India. The story of the great ruler who conquered India, showing the exotic and hitherto unknown face of this world, resulted in wonderful engravings depicting wild animals – including elephants and giraffes. A fantastic structure, a variation of the tree of life, rises slightly above the figure of Christ – it is a magnificent dracaena. People and symbols are depicted in the central part of the painting. Several hundred naked people talk, taste fruit, ride wild animals, and, above all, make love. Below, we can see a pond with women surrounded by men on animals. Loving couples

and erotic companionships populate not only land, but also water and air, which gives the garden of love a cosmic framework and a religious-universal reference of meaning. The motif of water as the source of life appears often in the painting. Numerous beings, innocent as flowers, play in a quiet garden, living in perfect harmony with animals and plants, and the sensuality that overwhelms them seems to be filled with pure joy and delight. In the central part of the painting, we see various fruit – raspberries, blueberries, wild strawberries which are reminiscent of the first sin, but also refer to a source of delight – food and sweetness. People are accompanied by birds, which are a symbol of fertility and triumph. At the bottom, both women and men create a pure paradise, returning to their original and natural state. The two uniformly bright, serene and harmonious heavens contrast with the inferno which is a dark, earthy pale caricature. The Musicians' Hell, as this third part of the triptych is called, is one of the first representations of musical instruments. It also contains musical notation. We are dealing with a colorful epic story, which is an immensely significant inspiration to be processed and understood by contemporary artists using the language of art.

The second project was based on and inspired by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *The World Upside Down, Netherlandish Proverbs*.

The World Upside Down, the proposed theme for the ninth exhibition at the Panorama Art Gallery in Tomaszowice as part of the Art Meeting, attended by artists from Miodowa Art Studio, was a reference to the painting entitled *Netherlandish Proverbs* painted in 1559 by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, a Dutch painter, one of the main representatives of the Northern Renaissance. Over a hundred proverbs and idiomatic expressions can be found in the painting, depicting the society of that time and a world that many believed was turned upside down. Bruegel combined the art of speech with the art of imaging, exposing stupidity, amorality and human thoughtlessness. Everything here has a meaning, which reflects the world of that time and the artist distancing himself from those events. The painting is still relevant as the same absurdities surround us today. It is like subverting all concepts and principles that surround us in every situation. It is not only a real problem but also a symbolic point of reference for artistic creation and for reflection on the events that surround us.

It is an oil painting on a board, 117 × 163 cm, depicting a rural landscape in which numerous groups of figures and objects can be seen, forming separate motifs. In the foreground, there is a vast yard with a large cottage, a pillory and an old shed. The background consists of a brick tower with outbuildings and a wooden stable. Between them there is a river forming a valley and in the distance one can see the estuary of the river where a fishing vessel is sailing. Some elements are presented contrary to the principles of perspective, which is by no means the result of the author's lack of knowledge of the principles of building space, but rather a conscious subordination of form to content. In the center of the composition there is a porch where the devil is listening to people's confessions, and next to it, a monk ostentatiously mocking Christ and putting a false beard on his face. A figure standing by a barn allows the world to spin on the tip of a finger, while a peasant standing nearby is throwing pearls before swine. Everything has its own meaning, reflecting the then contemporary world and the artist's distance. Groups of small figures scattered across the entire painting take part in separate episodes that are not distinguished by any hierarchy, neither conventional nor perspective. Here are some examples of proverbs "painted" there and their modern interpretation: "Turn the world upside down" – everything is different than it should be; "Do not push your luck"; "The die has been cast" – the decision has been made, there is no turning back; "Casting pearls before swine" – to devote yourself to something that is not worth the sacrifice; "Be like a cat on hot bricks" – to be impatient; "Carry fire in one hand and water in the other" – to be duplicitous. The artists from Miodowa Art Studio painted these proverbs, often including more examples than those shown in the original painting. About one hundred works were painted which, when properly combined and juxtaposed with the works from the project entitled *Paradise Gardens*, led to a very interesting exchange between Bosch and Bruegel.

Art Studio Miodowa i przyjaciele artyści, Wielki Obraz. Bosch rozmawia z Brueglem,
oil on canvas, 200 x 300 cm, 2018–2019, Miodowa Gallery archive





Hieronimus Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, oil on panel, 220 × 390 cm, approximately 1500, https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ogr%C3%B3d_rozkoszy_ziemskich





Pieter Bruegel, *Netherlandish Proverbs*, oil on panel, 117 × 163 cm, 1559,
https://pl.qaz.wiki/wiki/Netherlandish_Proverbs

Art Studio Miodowa i przyjaciele artyści, Wielki Obraz. Bosch rozmawia z Brueglem,
the central fragment of a collective work based on Hieronymus Bosch's
The Garden of Earthly Delights, Miodowa Gallery archive





Art Studio Miodowa i przyjaciele artyści, Wielki Obraz. Bosch rozmawia z Brueglem, a fragment of the left panel with a fountain in the middle of the Garden of Eden of Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, Miodowa Gallery archive



*Art Studio Miodowa i przyjaciele artyści, Wielki Obraz. Bosch rozmawia z Brueglem, a fragment of the cenntal part of Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, Miodowa Gallery archive*

*Art Studio Miodowa i przyjaciele artyści, Wielki Obraz, a fragment of a work based on Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, Miodowa Gallery archive*





Obraz. Bosch rozmawia z Brueglem, based on Pieter Bruegel's *Netherlandish Proverbs*, a fragment of a collective work, Miodowa Gallery archive



*Art Studio Miodowa i przyjaciele artyści, Wielki Obraz, a fragment of a work based on Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, Miodowa Gallery archive*

*Art Studio Miodowa i przyjaciele artyści, Wielki Obraz, a fragment of the central part of a work based on Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, Miodowa Gallery archive*



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MUSEOTHERAPY CONTRIBUTORS

Małgorzata Bundzewicz

Artist painter, set designer, art therapist, exhibition curator. Małgorzata Bundzewicz studied at the Faculty of Law of the Jagiellonian University and at the Faculty of Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. She completed a post-graduate programme in film, theatre and television scenic design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. She works in the fields of painting, drawing and set/stage design. Since 1989, she has been conducting art therapy workshops at the Association for the Development of Psychiatry and Community Care. Bundzewicz set up Miodowa Art Gallery, where she presents works of both professional artists and amateur artists with experiences of a mental health crisis. So far, she has organized about thirty individual exhibitions of paintings and drawings. She was a curator of exhibitions organized under the programme called *Schizofrenia – otwórzcie drzwi* [Schizophrenia – open the door] at the Palace of Arts in Kraków and nine ART MEETING exhibitions of artists from the Association of Polish Artists and Designers. She created about twenty theatre, film and television scenic designs. Her works are exhibited at the National Museum in Gdańsk, the Museum of Modern Art in Darmstadt and are part of private collections in Poland and abroad. Bundzewicz is also an author of numerous studies on the history of art and creative activity of people with experiences of a mental health crisis, e.g. *W poszukiwaniu nieutraconego talentu* (Biblioteka Psychiatrii Polskiej), *Artyści-strażnicy wyobraźni* (Polish Psychiatric Association).

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Art historian, critic and museologist; member of SAREC ICOM and AICA, deputy director of the Museum of King JAN III's Palace at Wilanów. She worked at the National Museum in Warsaw from 1979 to 2008, first as an assistant and finally

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Łukasz Kędziora

Łukasz Kędziora holds a PhD degree in history which he obtained at the Faculty of Historical Sciences of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. He is a graduate of the University of Adam Mickiewicz (art history and European cultural tourism). Kędziora is the originator and co-organizer of the International Scientific Meeting "Neuro-history of Art" in Toruń and a scholarship holder of Università della Calabria, Facoltà 'di Lettere e Filosofia, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (twice), De Brzezie Lanckoroński Foundation, Creativity Promotion Fund of the Polish Society of Authors and Composers, Marshal of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship and Mayor of Toruń. He was the head of grant projects at the faculty of Fine Arts and the Faculty of Historical Sciences of the Nicolaus Copernicus University and a trainee at the Sainsbury Center for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia. Kędziora is an author of numerous scientific and critical publications, both in Polish and in English, including the book entitled *Wizualność dzieła sztuki. Ocena potencjału neuroestetyki w badaniach historyczno-artystycznych* published in 2016. He is a co-editor of the monograph entitled *Sensualność ekspozycji muzealnej*. In 2018, he conducted an inventory of the collections of the Polish Mission in Orchard Lake, USA.

Robert Kotowski

Director of the National Museum in Kielce, professor at the Department for the Study of Cultural Heritage Institutions at the Faculty of Journalism, Information and Book Studies, University of Warsaw. His scholarly interests focus on cultural heritage, and social history of the 20th century, especially the interwar period, as well as museum and modern management systems of museum institutions and, in recent years, museotherapy. Author of many scholarly publications on history and social and management issues, and the author of a book about one of the most valuable objects of the National Museum in Kielce entitled *Portret dziewczynki w czerwonej sukience* by Józef Pankiewicz.

Stephen Legari

Stephen Legari holds a Masters of Creative Arts Therapy with an art therapy specialisation from Concordia University and a Masters of Couple and Family Therapy from McGill University. He has worked extensively as a therapist in adolescent psychiatry, addiction recovery, community art therapy, and child development. In 2017 he became Program Officer for Art Therapy at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. This comprehensive museum-based therapy program includes therapeutic groups, a community art studio, research collaborations, and internships for art therapy students. Since taking on this role, Mr. Legari has collaborated on museum-based therapy for people living with eating disorders, epilepsy, breast cancer, and published chapters and articles on internship supervision, neurodiversity, and therapeutic program development. He resides in Montreal, Canada.

Małgorzata Minchberg

Visual artist, specialist in creative pedagogy, author of numerous publications on creative pedagogy, including *Współpraca międzyrodowiskowa: artysta w szkole* awarded R. Czernecki Prize In 2019. Małgorzata Minchberg is currently working on her PhD dissertation entitled *Interdyscyplinarna edukacja przez sztukę* [Interdisciplinary education through art]. She was a teacher of art and art history at all levels of systemic education and an instructor of visual arts. Minchberg was the head of education department at the Warsaw's Branch of the Royal Łazienki Museum. She is an author and co-author of numerous artistic and educational projects implemented in cooperation with educational institutions, local government organizations (Centre for Civic Education, Przystanek Twórczości Foundation) and the most important cultural institutions in Warsaw (Museum of Modern

Art, National Museum, Zachęta National Gallery, Centre for Contemporary Art, Copernicus Science Centre) where she also acts as museum educator. Minchberg has exhibited her works in Poland and abroad (ŻAK Art gallery in Gdańsk, ART gallery in Płock, Łażnia Gallery in Gdańsk, Warsaw Sculpture Gallery, Academy of Fine Arts in Manchester).

Joanna Waniek

Graduate of the Medical University of Silesia. Initially an internal medicine physician in 1974 Joanna Waniek started working 1974 at the Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology of the Second Psychiatric Clinic, then at the Addiction Prevention and Treatment Unit and the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Clinic. She dealt with dual diagnosis patients, i.e. those suffering from a mental illness and alcohol addiction. At that time, museotherapy became a special area of her interest, bringing tangible treatment effects. Since 2013, she has been working at the Mental Health Clinical of the Central Clinical Hospital of the Ministry of Interior and Administration.

Elżbieta Barbara Zybert

Bibliologist and librarian. Zybert graduated from the Institute of Library and Information Science at the Faculty of History, University of Warsaw. She is involved in the organization, management and functioning of various types of libraries and conducts research on different methods and forms of work (including bibliotherapy and social information science), which are useful for the work with the socially maladjusted, the imprisoned, the mentally and physically disabled or those in health and social care facilities. She is interested in the role of the book and the printed word in the lives of ethnic and national minorities as tools for preserving the cultural heritage of a given country. Zybert is a member of editorial boards of scientific journals on library and scientific information science, including "Przegląd Biblioteczny" (editor-in-chief), the oldest Polish journal devoted to library science. She is the chairman of the Programme Board of "Polish Libraries" journal. Since 1995, Zybert has been the head of the Section of Youth Awards (General Board of Polish Librarians Association) for the best master's thesis in the field of bibliography and information science. Since 2012, she has been a member of the Scientific Council of the National Library. She is the head of Department for the Study of Cultural Heritage Institutions at the Faculty of Journalism, Information and Book Studies, head of postgraduate library science programme at the University of Warsaw, and a member of the Central Committee for Degrees and Titles (2017–2020 term of office).



