**MeLa** Books

EUROPEAN
MUSEUMS
IN THE 21ST
CENTURY:
SETTING THE
FRAMEWORK

Volume 2

edited by
**Luca Basso Peressut
Francesca Lanz
and Gennaro Postiglione**

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Acknowledgments

Introduction

European Museums: Mapping an Ongoing Change

The MeLa Project, funded in march 2011 by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Programme (Social Science and Humanities) is a four years long research project, which aims to investigate the effects of contemporary phenomena such as globalisation, demographic movement, transformation of migration patterns, increased mobility of people, as well as of objects, ideas and knowledge on the form, organisation, mission and status of museums, and to explore the likely potential role of museums in the construction of an inclusive European identity by facilitating mutual understanding and social cohesion.

Adopting the notion of "migration" as a paradigm of the contemporary global and multicultural world, MeLa reflects on the role of museums and heritage in Europe in the 21st century. The project aims to investigate how, and to what extent, changes in population flows and demography, the impact of new media, the consequent layerisation, complexification and fragmentation of societies and identities and, perhaps more importantly, the recognition of the central focus of such changes to the human experience of life and society in modernity, do, could and should, affect European museums. Focusing on the transformation of museums, seen as cultural spaces and processes as well as physical places, the main objective of the MeLa project is to identify innovative museum practices that reflect the challenges posed by what the project defines as "an age of migrations"—an age characterised by intensive migration flows; accelerated mobility and fluid circulation of information, cultures, ideas and goods; the political, economic and cultural process of creation and consolidation of the European Union, and the consequent high degree of cultural encounters and cross-fertilisation.

The project's Research Field 6, *Envisioning 21st Century Museums*—which is developed in parallel to and in consultation with the other five project research areas—is aimed at pinpointing innovative models, practices and tools to further the role of European museums in promoting new democratic and inclusive forms of citizenship, contributing to foster dialogue between the different ethnic, religious, social and generational groups which characterise our societies, and furthering awareness and education among new citizens and young generations.

While the investigation and the consideration of the role of contemporary museums and heritage has nowadays become a relevant component of the European agenda and lively debate on the subject is gaining prominence, nurtured also by several research projects and academic studies, museums themselves are questioning their raison d'être and roles, and undergoing a process of deep transformation of their missions, strategies, practices, spaces and exhibitions.

The present books collect the work of MeLa Research Field 6, *Envisioning 21st Century Museums*, and are meant to illustrate the preliminary results of its earlier investigations aimed at mapping and exploring such a transformation process and its features, particularly in terms of architecture renewal, museography and exhibition settings. The first phase of this research field thus focused on the possibility of mapping current trends in contemporary European museums in order to set up an overall picture of the state of the art of museum development in relation with the above-mentioned issues and questions. Its activity has been aimed at defining a general framework for the development of subsequent research phases, that are the identification of strategies and practices to support a renewed and increased role for museums, and the revision of their contribution in building a democratic inclusive European citizenship through practicable and effective intervention by EU policy-makers and the institutions working in cultural and educational fields. This research has been investigating different categories of museums, individuated as those which better represent the current status of European museums, including: national history museums, ethnographic museums and museums of cultures, migration museums, city museums, local museums, and war museums. Because of the relevance of some museographical practices in the representation of the evolution of contemporary museums, the research activity has been extended to the transversal topic of temporary exhibition design.

Due to the large quantity of gathered materials, the publication has been divided into three volumes, each of which is organised into sections curated by a MeLa researcher including a piece by the MeLa researchers involved in the investigation, contributions from scholars and museum practitioners, interviews and the presentation of significant examples of museums which are new, have been renewed or are under renovation. Particular attention has been paid to their architectural and exhibition design, which is intended as concretisation of innovative and sometimes highly experimental ideas of what we define as "new museography," new models of representation and communication of knowledge.

The first volume opens with an overview on the evolution of contemporary national history museums, analysing how globalisation, migration phenomena and their effects have challenged these places of stabilisation, where identities are formed and displayed, and their transformation fostered into inclusive arenas of multiculturalism. By considering the representation of national identity as a political act in the sense outlined by political theorist Chantal Mouffe—acknowledging the aim of democracy in a pluralistic condition as the possibility of transforming antagonism into agonism, and creating unity in a context of conflict and diversity, as explained in the complementary text—Clelia Pozzi assumes the so-called "agonistic pluralism model," which Mouffe had previously coupled with art museums, and applies it to national history museums. Her investigation of these institutions as "Agonistic Spaces" explores and exemplifies the museological, museographical and architectural translation of this model, illustrating the modalities in which migration and its agonistic effects may enter the rationale of these museums, a category which, more than others, seems to have been subjugated by coercive interpretations of states and regimes and, moreover, she redefines their role, strategies and spaces from within.

The review of the role of museums as places for the presentation, stabilisation and construction of identities is also crucial in ethnographic museums, which have been profoundly challenged by the mutation of the contemporary political, social and cultural context. The beginning of the 21st century represents a turning point for the role, objective and strategies associated with these institutions, reacting to the evolution of the colonial "west and the rest" model, as well as the effects of globalisation increasing cultural diversity and cosmopolitanism. Challenged by the claim for identity recognition and, at the same time, the demand for an egalitarian representation of cultural differences, the transformation of these institutions, aimed at displaying cultural pluralism, seems to aim at erasing colonial roots by turning the ethnographic approach into an aesthetic one, or by giving voice to minorities in the representation process. Through the comparative analysis of the different progress of new, re-established or refurbished institutions, Camilla Pagani and Mariella Brenna investigate the reasons, the nature and the extent of the current process of renovation, from institutional redefinitions to museological approaches, and categorisation of museums of world culture(s). The interpretation is also bolstered by interviews with some museum workers who are directly involved in this process. These include Maria Camilla de Palma, director of the Museo delle Culture del Mondo di Castello D'Albertis in Genoa, Klas Grinell, curator at the Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg, and Vito Lattanzi, Director of the Educational Department at the Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini", in Rome, and by the theory contribution of Nélia Dias, Associate Professor at the Department of Anthropology at ISCTE-IUL, in Lisbon.

The evolving socio-cultural context also poses a challenge to museums of natural history. These museums have radically changed over recent decades in their relationship with what is at stake in society. Laurence Isnard,

Sarah Gamaire and Fabienne Galangau illustrate the transformations of these institutions, triggered by a powerful increase in the awareness of environmental issues along with their social consequences, the biodiversity crisis, and the development of new interdisciplinary research approaches. The piece explores how these phenomena have questioned the role of natural history museums and exhibitions as sources of knowledge and players in the conservation and validation of scientific and natural heritage, and investigates its evolution, benefiting from technological progress and communication techniques, as well as from growing knowledge on visitor expectations. By reporting the results of a recent survey developed by the authors, the text sheds light on the dynamism of these institutions and their commitment to renovation projects, especially those aimed at including diversity in cultural representations of nature. These considerations are supported by Giovanni Pinna, who questions the role of bureaucracy in the evolution of natural history museums, and of Judith Pargamin, director of the Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de Lille, who offers a highly citizen-oriented reflection on the renovation project of the museum.

In the second volume, the investigation begins by focusing on more local facts, bonded and rooted in specific communities, their stories and identities. Anna Chiara Cimoli attempts to map out and analyse the rise of a huge constellation of migration museums and temporary exhibitions that focus on the relationship between migration and identity. By investigating museological strategies, museographic tools and exhibition design trends that characterise this museum typology, the piece investigates the specificities, implications, difficulties and risks of displaying present and past mobility. By investigating how museology and museography choices can reveal, explain or, in some cases, gloss over the cultural policies and the more general local, national or international political attitudes towards migration, the piece aims to verify whether these institutions act as history museums, or whether they are evolving into vehicles to orient, educate, and participate in political debate. This exploration is complemented by the positions of Joachim Baur, highlighting the ability of migration museums in building a master narrative as a choral epic and a socially unifying experience, promoting a sense of community, representing the diversification of cultural identities, and fostering societal integration.

The rise of migration flows discloses a profound transformation of the current socio-cultural context which museums purport to represent, cooperating with other phenomena to enhance the role of certain locations, especially cities. While updated demographic forecasts envision that in the next 30 years the growth of the world's population will mostly be concentrated in urban areas, the new economic and cultural opportunities offered by globalisation, the fluid mobility occurring at the European and world-wide level, together with the ongoing political, economic and cultural processes of creation of the European Union, are deeply influencing the development of contemporary cities posing both new changes and challenges. It is widely believed that, within this complex scenario,

city museums, as institutions historically responsible for representing the city, recording its transformations and conserving its memory and history, could and should, contribute to these transformations in several ways. Francesca Lanz investigates how city museums are reacting to these stimuli, questioning themselves, rethinking their mission, acquiring new roles and experimenting with new tools and strategies. The piece aims to outline this transformation process in order to interpret it, define its features, identify commonalities, challenges and possible criticalities, and analyse the museographical aspects related to such changes. These considerations are endorsed by the contribution of Jack Lohman who, as former director of the Museum of London, argues for the role of city museums as the endogenous development of communities in their diversity and shaping of the global community. The interview with historian Marie-Paule Jungblut, former deputy-director of the Musée d'histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, adds reflections on the crucial role of international networking projects and the web for the advanced role of contemporary city museums, while different examples of a "new generation" of city museums presented by curators and directors, supports the reflections outlined in the opening piece.

City museums focus their mission on the past and present history of the described urban environments. Nevertheless, a large number of other museums drawing on the distinctive nature of specific locations are likely to play a significant role in the contemporary context.

The third volume focuses, on the one hand on very local museums and, on the other hand, on war museums and temporary exhibitions in national museums and it somehow comes full circle in this publication. As explained by Elena Montanari, the different institutions who aim to conserve, validate and "matrialise" the memory, heritage and culture related to specific places, are characterised by the employment of specific tools and strategies, which may turn out as particularly effective means to foster the role of museums as inclusive social agents in this "age of migrations." Allowing for their status, forms and means, and variation according to their diverse backgrounds, management structures and conceptions of heritage and identity across different countries and cultures, local museums seem to share a common mission in preserving, interpreting, celebrating and presenting the visible symbols produced by human history in a specific environment. In addition, they also perpetuate the origins and sources of cultural heritage, opposing resistance to the effects of globalisation and the increased migrations of people, objects and knowledge, which include impoverishment and distortion of habitats and cultures, standardisation of space, homogenisation of material culture, dispersion of collective memory, etc. as well as assert continuity and stability through secure and rooted values, contrasting the disorientation of self-awareness and enabling societies to define and anchor their identity. The potential, challenges and risks currently pertaining to these institutions are further depicted through the words of Hugues De Varine, who outlines their

specificities, raises pivotal questions and proposes paradigmatic models and practices for their future.

Among the most significant national and local museums, the institutions ensuing from war memories and places are becoming crucial elements in heritage discourse. Luca Basso Peressut considers the many European museums that focus on war and its various representations, identifying two distinct situations. On the one hand, there are still in existence representative models typical of museums of weapons, of armies, and of military history, which were set up between the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. On the other hand, he observes that in recent decades there has been an increase in museums that are committed to emphasising how Europe needs to critically reinterpret its past and the conflicts that have marked it, both in a tangible and an intangible way, overcoming the "divided memories" that have dramatically marked the populations of the European continent as an essential requirement to build the political and cultural identity of Europe. With their tools and representation devices, museums dedicated to the history of European wars are committed to the raising of such awareness through a "policy of memory""that, with no sacralisation or vulgarisation, must involve all cultural institutions, including those devoted to the education of younger generations. Thus, Basso Peressut suggests the role of war museums is crucial in the process of building and consolidating a shared European memory and identity. Moreover, war museums convey the transnational value of those events that are part of a common history that transcends any geographical border, contributing to a better understanding of the importance (and fragility) of peace and freedom, and of the establishment of the European Union based on mutual respect and on the rejection of war as a solution to controversies.

The final chapter by Marco Borsotti analyses the role of temporary exhibitions in the dynamics of approaches of museums to innovative topics. Temporary exhibitions can be identified as significant strategies in the promotion of new approaches to the portrayal of museums, as well as in the search for public interest in media, and in the possibility of generating income, image and prestige. Today, temporary exhibitions are also visible manifestations of an educational, informative or celebratory discourse, which is characteristic of the rapid changeover in the communication rhetoric of contemporary society. Furthermore, temporary exhibition models can also be expressed in dazzling experiences of cultural innovation, leaving permanent displays with the more accustomed role of keeping continuity with historical portrayals and settings. This can be considered a strategy for the renewal of the representational assets of museums.

The overall aim of this investigation was to detect how, and whether, European museums in their diverse range of interests are reacting to the topics and issues of our "age of migrations" and to the changing conditions of production and fruition of culture, memory and identity. As Appadurai already noted almost twenty years ago, it is increasingly evident

that globalisation is not the story of cultural homogenisation, and that contemporaneity is more and more characterised by a high degree of cultural encounters and cross-fertilisations. We are in agreement with the philosopher Wolfgang Welsch that the traditional description of cultures based on the ideas of "inner homogenisation" and "outer separation" is nowadays both descriptively and, in terms of legislation, inappropriate. Our analysis of new exhibition spaces and arrangements in museums of national and local relevance (a distinction which currently proves to be very blurred and perhaps to be overlooked), seems to suggest that the rise and the inclusion of new stances and approaches toward the role of museums and the narratives it puts on display are starting to foster not only a revision of the curatorial practices of museums and approaches but also of those consolidated exhibition design practices and museum organisation that reflected a premise of objectivity and reality and a traditional conception of identity as unique, homogeneous, and geo-politically defined, that is today brought into question by the shifting nature of contemporary cultural conditions in our contemporary "age of migrations."

LBP, FL, GP

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Migration Museums

Migration Museums in Europe
Narratives and their Visual Translations

→ ANNA CHIARA CIMOLI

→ IS EUROPE LATE? IN SEARCH OF NEW MASTER NARRATIVES

The literature on the subject of migration museums is quite poor in Europe. The issue has fascinated historians, anthropologists and museum scholars in the United States, Canada, Australia and New-Zealand for a couple of decades now, but has only touched Europe quite recently. Recently indeed, if one thinks that the Museo dell'Emigrante in the Repubblica di San Marino was inaugurated in 1997, as was the Immigrant-museet (Danish Immigration Museum) in Farum. Most of the European migration museums, however, were set up after the turn of the century: the MhiC-Museo d'Història de la Immigraciò de Catalunya (Immigration History Museum of Catalonia) in 2004, the Deutsches Auswandererhaus (German Emigration Center) in Bremerhaven in 2005, the museum of the Fondazione Paolo Cresci in Lucca and the Museo Narrante della Sila, both in Italy, in 2005, the Cité Nationale d'Histoire de l'Immigration in Paris in 2007, BallinStadt in Hamburg in 2007, the Museo Nazionale dell'Emigrazione Italiana in Rome in 2009, the "Memoria e Migrazioni" pavilion in the Galata museum in Genoa in 2011. The Red Star Line Museum in Antwerp (due to open in September 2013) and the Emigration Museum in Gdynia, Poland (2014-15) are being built at the time of writing.

A huge constellation of migration museums and exhibitions grew very quickly (in Italy alone there are about 30 institutions),[1] while other pro-

1 See the Centro Altreitalie www.altreitalie.it/Le_Migrazioni_Italiane_In_Rete/Musei_E_Mostre/Musei_Italiani.kl and the Museo dell'Emigrazione Italiana websites http://www.museonazionaleemigrazione.it/

jects seem to have failed or have simply been stopped, such as that of the Molo dell'Immacolatella in Naples, those promoted by the non-profit organisation, Migrationsmuseum Schweiz, in Zurich and by DOMiD-Documentation Center and the Museum of Migration in Germany (at the moment just putting on temporary exhibitions) and many others.

Migrations are not always a popular subject, being so strongly conditioned by the political situation of the time. Given the time required to recount an extended period of history and the fact that migrations are not an easy issue to face, neither politically nor culturally, it is taking a long time for European museums to take on the subject along with the resulting multicultural societies and the challenges they present. Still, migrations and multiculturalism are increasingly becoming a fundamental issue for museums—something they simply cannot ignore. The strong impulse to research the field of migration studies in recent years, and consequently the push to a reflection on the role of museums in a multicultural society, characterise European policies, often with the support of public programmess such as those promoted by the EU and its agencies, NGOs and activist groups. This impulse has found echo in the plethora of temporary exhibitions focusing on the relationship between migration and identity, seen through the lens of art, sociology and anthropology. (We are reminded of Migrations at the Tate Britain, "Un air d'Italie" at the Musée Dauphinois in Grenoble, "J'ai deux amours" at the CNHI in Paris, "Becoming a Copenhagener" at the Museum of Copenhagen, "Wahlverwandtschaften–Imaginationen des Nomadischen at the Ethnology Museum in Hamburg, "[S]oggetti migranti" at the Museo Preistorico Etnografico Luigi Pigorini in Rome, just to name a few case-studies of the last couple of years.)

elenco.php?id=4, last visited on December 10th 2012.

IMG. 4.02 — *The interior of the Museo Narrante Nave della Sila, Camigliatello Silano, Italy. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

If the museum was born to strengthen the idea of nation both in its physical and symbolic borders, it is evident that displaying mobility raises a number of questions about the nature, the ownership and the role of the mobile objects displayed; about new, blurred geographies; about an ever-changing political panorama that repeatedly redefines individual and social identities. As Kerstin Poehls remarks

> together with museums of migration [exhibitions] navigate in this contested field of Europeanisation, and they do so along with political parties and activists, scientists from various disciplines, media and public opinion—a broad field and a complex discourse with numerous participants where nothing even close to a consensus has been reached (and where any such consensus is probably not even desirable). Its omnipresence effectively turns migration into a classical 'boundary object.' (Poehls 2012)

If it is true that temporary exhibitions are the precursors of museums, insofar as they can open up dialogic spaces and deal with provocations and highly contemporary issues with some sort of "freedom" or more courageous attitude, it must be recognised that the "blurring effect," as Poehls calls it, produced by this plethora of exhibitions, reflects perfectly the confusion and lack of sense of identity that goes hand in hand with widespread euro-scepticism.

In the "immigration countries," such as Canada, Australia, the USA, Brazil and Argentina, for evident historical reasons, the reflection has a different departure point and is much older, having experienced a peak in the Nineties, though still being very active and involved in a process of continuous redefinition. The Migration Museum in Adelaide was inaugurated in 1986; the Ellis Island Immigration Museum in New York in 1990; in 1994, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum (N.Y.); in 1998, the Immigration Museum in Melbourne and the Memorial do Imigrante in São Paulo; in 1999, Pier 21 in Halifax, Canada; in 2001, the Museo Nacional de la Inmigración in Buenos Aires. Joachim Baur's thesis is that in Canada, the USA and Australia,

> the building of autonomous immigration museums can be substantially considered a reaction to the crisis of narrations capable of promoting a sense of the community and to the diversification of cultural identities. Representing immigration as a socially unifying experience, museums build a *Meistererzählung* [master narrative, n.d.a.] of migration, and in this way they work at revisioning the nation's *imagined community*. (Baur 2010, 2)

From impulse to calling into question the nation, the transnational phenomenon of migration becomes the basis for its narrative constitution. The main character of the immigration museum becomes, then, "representing immigration as a choral epic, capable of creating integration" (ibid., 2–3).

Should we argue that where the concept of nation and of national identity is historically stronger (such as in most European states)—although, of course, this might be debatable—the need to harmonise the "dissonant

heritage" is not a priority in the cultural agenda? The risk is that of a "too strong" national identity, and therefore an "arrogant" attitude towards the new citizens. Of course this is the criticism most often expressed towards the CNHI in Paris, where the colonial past of France weighs heavily on the whole process. Moreover, the educational connection between past emigration from Europe and the immigration it has been experiencing in recent decades might also be debatable. Are we sure that displaying the emigration of Europeans, with its echo of poverty, famine, hunger and disillusionment, makes people more compassionate, sympathetic, or at least more open towards immigrants? Aren't things more complicated than that?

As Michele Colucci remarks, following François Hartog's reflection about the risks of "presentism" (the trend of shaping history according to the needs of the present) "a look at present times has determined a strong forcing and imbalance, putting into a single container fluxes, movements and displacements different from one another in time and space" (Colucci 2007, 724). It is difficult to compare past and present migrations, as Ercole Sori notes when he states that

> it is a losing attitude to associate the revival of research into the history of Italian emigration with the educational aim of soothing the xenophobic and racist moods which permeate today's Italy, now an immigration country. […] The recently promoted within the spectrum of ethno-social stratification […] or in the economic development hierarchy are not the most hostile towards those who have allowing that promotion by occupying the lowest step of the stair? (ibid.)

Jean-Claude Duclos, director of the Musée Dauphinois in Grenoble—not a migration, but rather an ethnographic museum which pays close atten-

IMG. 4.03 — *A room in the Museo dell'Emigrante, San Marino Republic. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

tion to migrations and multiculturalism—describes this very well when he writes about the conflicts which arose from the exhibition "Pour que la vie continue–D'Isère et du Maghreb" (So that life continues–From Isère and Maghreb), which put French repatriates and citizens of Algerian origin side-by-side, each with their own claims and open wounds (Duclos 2008).

This remark by Ercole Sori warns against the worst enemy of migration museums: naivety. Joachim Baur relates the comment by historian John Hope Franklin about the opening of the Ellis Island Immigration Museum: "No one in the black community is really excited about the Statue of Liberty. We came here on slave ships, not via Ellis Island" (Baur 2010, 6). The vast literature about "rival" or "conflicting heritages" which has appeared in recent years (Sandell 2002, 2007; Karp et al. 2006; Labrador 2010; Sandell and Nightingale 2012) is there to show the complexity of museum work in the present day. Who should be represented? What exhibitory method is most suitable for telling the story in an attractive way, without sacrificing the truth? What should be put under the lens of the observer?

Tracing a history of "European's migrant conscience" would be far too ambitious for this short essay. Still, the central question is: why now? When is a nation—a territory, a community—ready to represent its migratory experience? Nancy L. Green wonders about the CNHI in Paris:

> the pertinent question for historians seems to be why now? After two centuries of immigration to France, three decades of historiography on the subject and twenty years of museum projects at a time when the impoverished suburbs have erupted, when the sans-papiers (undocumented immigrants) continue to make headline news, and when debates over history and memory and France's colonial past have made a resurgence, why have the French decided to commemorate their immigrant ancestors now? More generally, why do questions of memory arise at certain moments and not at others? (Green 2007)

Joachim Baur tries to answer these questions starting from the non-European museums, but his answer might just as well be applied to the European ones. Migration museums were born during—or as a consequence of—the museum boom of the 1980s. Moreover, "museum popularity" goes hand in hand with the "musealisation of the popular," a consequence of the expansion of the field of social studies which took place in the 1970s and 1980s. The shift from a single story (in Anglo-Saxon countries, that of the "winners," of the colonisers, and only later that of the "first nations") to a multifaceted, pluralistic history would thus be a necessary condition for migrations to be represented in museums (Baur 2002). In the case of Europe, we could also add that, in certain countries, in particular in Scandinavia, Ireland and Germany, migration museums represent the answer to the need—prevalent mostly among US and Canadian citizens—to go back to family roots, to search one's origins, to trace one's ancestry. After the museum boom, we should talk about a genealogy boom, the reason for the growing popularity of "heritage

tourism," mostly in Northern Europe. The Swedish American Center in Karlstadt, for example, created in 1960, has been, since its inception, a point of reference for the descendants of the Swedish in the "new world." Part of its activity consists in organising and welcoming guided tours for the descendants of emigrants. Its digital archive, "EmiWeb–Living migration history," is "a profit organisation within non-profit organisations" whose purpose, as written on the website, is "getting archives online and contributing to non-profit organisations' research and development" (emiweb.eu). The Norwegian Emigration Center in Stavanger, which hosts the permanent exhibition "The Promise of America," as well as doing genealogical research, also provides information and facilities for "heritage tourists."[2] The German Emigration Center in Bremerhaven is also very committed to linking the two sides of the Atlantic and in promoting its activities in the USA.

Another element that should be added to Baur's reflection, when considering Europe, is the impulse given by the riots that have touched some cities, such as London and Paris, in recent years, and have led many influential figures (Angela Merkel and David Cameron *in primis*)[3] to allude to the death of multiculturalism. Before putting the gravestone on this concept—or utopia, some might think—museums are questioning themselves and their audiences about the nature of multiculturalism, its limits, horizons and meanings. Migration museums, as well as being a celebration of an ancestor's epic voyage, are meaningful when they are sensitive to the tensions, conflicts and negotiation areas which, today, are representative of their true nature. Otherwise, they risk becoming mausoleums or, worse, weekend theme parks.

→ **SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE SPECIFICITY OF MIGRATION MUSEUMS**

Generally speaking, European migration museums tend to tell collective stories, to stress the universal and atemporal dynamic of migrations, factors that are both rooted in the history of the single place, harbour or building, but that also transcend it. The birth of community museums (for example, dedicated to the role of Albanians in Italy, Mozambicans in Portugal, or the Turkish in Germany) is premature, and perhaps not a priority. Beyond considerations of colonial history, the fragmentation of Europe and the separatism professed in some regions, the recent issues connected to the economic crisis and the role of "strong" countries in respect to the poorer ones certainly do not contribute to serene reflection, based on the sharing of a common identity. Consequently, when it comes to the question of the kind and width of discourse promoted—whether at a local, regional, national or international level—, each museum has a dif-

2   See the interview with Diana Pardue, director of museum programs at the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, on HamburgChicagoNews.net, September 2007: http://www.hamburgchica-gonews.com/2007/09/genealogy-gateways-and-great-cities/ (accessed 13th December 2012).

3   The reference is to the speech to members of her Christian Democratic Union party in Potsdam by Merkel 16 October 2010 and to the one by Cameron at the Munich Security Conference on 5 February 2011, both of which led to heated debate.

IMG. 4.04 — *The open air exhibition in the Museu d'Història de la Immigració de Catalunya, Sant Adrià de Besòs, Spain. Photo by Francesca Lanz.*

IMG. 4.05 — *The Museo Nazionale dell'Emigrazione Italiana, Rome, Italy. Photo by Roberto Dulio.*

ferent response, depending mostly on the territory, the period taken into consideration and the audience it addresses. Very local museums tend to stress the epic of their fellow citizens and tell their personal stories—this is very evident in many local Italian museums, such as the Museo Eoliano dell'Emigrazione in Salina or the Museo dell'Emigrante Casa Giannini near Genoa). Historical museums which developed from research centres tend to show documents and to build thematic narrations around them (e.g. the Museo dell'Emigrazione Paolo Cresci in Lucca). Museums with a national vocation, such as the CNHI in Paris, raise the voice of the individual migrant to a higher level, in an *e pluribus unum* attitude. It is interesting to note that, while the CNHI takes into consideration the period from the end of the 19th century, the small MhiC near Barcelona, dedicated to immigration in Catalonia, begins its analysis in prehistory, underlining how migration is a peculiar trait of mankind, and thus avoiding the risk of an overly local perspective.

Museums dedicated to immigration in Europe are exceedingly rare. Apart from the CNHI, the MhiC near Barcelona and the Immigrant-museet in Farum, near Copenhagen, are very interesting case studies, and are therefore described in detail below. A special case is represented by 19 Princelet Street, a building located in the Spitalfields neighbourhood of London, which—in the style of the Tenement Museum in New York—represents a place of memory, being a tenement where many immigrant families have lived over the centuries.

The analysis of migration museums could be easily extended to the many other museums which focus on the theme of displacement, mobility and diaspora, such as those dedicated to slavery (the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, opened in 2007), migrant labour (Le Bois du Cazier in Marcinelle, but also, for example, the interesting Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Industriekultur net), Jewish diaspora, Shoah and Porrajmos, and civil rights (such as the Humanity House in The Hague). Of course, the theme of migrations increasingly interacts with the anthropological and city museums, as well as the new French multidisciplinary museums—such as the Musée des Confluences in Lyon, focusing on the interaction of science and society, and due to open in 2014, and the Musée des Civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée in Marseille, opening in Spring 2013.

As migration is the contemporary or "up-to-date" theme, museums with a different vocation have turned to it. The Cité de la Mer in Cherbourg, for example, organised a permanent exhibition in 2012 ("Titanic. Retour à Cherbourg") and a seminar within the framework of the "Titanic cities" network, arranging the luggage hall in order to create a space dedicated to the theme of European emigration to America.

The borders of migration museums seem to be fluid and under constant re-negotiation. Kerstin Poehls' remark about the "blurring effect" of migration leads us to a two-fold reflection concerning, on the one hand, the physical limits of migration museums and their possibilities to extend their borders and become a sort of new "eco-museum" or "open-air mu-

IMG. 4.06 — *A workshop with migrant citizens in the Museo del Novecento, Milan, Italy. Photo by Marta Vireca.*

seum," on the other, the role of migrants inside migration museums and in museums *tout court*. Should migration museums work on *going out* or on *drawing in*? Should they just concentrate on the past or also deal with the present times in order to shed a light on them? Would an open-air museum be conceivable—I, for one, do not know of any—? And what would differentiate it from a "site of conscience"?

About 500 *sans papiers* occupied the CNHI in Paris between October 2010 and January 2011 in order to express their demands for a better immigration law, therefore interpreting the museum as the "forum" Duncan F. Cameron talked about (Cameron 1971). Migration institutions react to this delicate topic in very different ways. Are migration museums an ideal arena for involving migrants, or should they just tell a story, accompany it and let it work at a cultural level? The chapter of the migrants' participation in museums is very complex, as it represents a real negotiation field. It is often contained in other sections: ethnology, anthropology, the art ones in particular. Many positive experiences, such as those at the V&A in London, the GAM in Bergamo, the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo and the Castello di Rivoli in Turin, the Pinacoteca di Brera and the Museo del 900 in Milan, the Museum of Ethnography and the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest, the Museo de América in Madrid, the Glasgow Museums and many others, often created and developed within the framework of European programmes such as *MAP for ID* and *LEM– The Learning Museum Network Project,* are there to demonstrate that the museum can be a place for migrants to have a voice, and thus strengthen their sense of belonging and of citizenship (Bodo, and Mascheroni 2012; Bodo, Gibbs, and Sani 2009; Pecci 2009; Bolla, and Roncaccioli 2007).

Participation takes time and money, two things museums are usually short of. Not all museums will want to open up their doors to dialogue, as it means being exposed to criticism, asked for more space, recognition and opportunities to participate. Participation also implies, evidently, delicate political balances.

As paradoxical as it may seem, migration museums can exist almost without dealing with the subject of identity at all—identity in the sense of a multifaceted, dynamic, ongoing process. They can merely tell the story of, say, emigration from Germany or Norway to the USA, without addressing the themes of "representation of the other," multi-layered identities, or all the changes in society caused by the mixing of different cultures, habits, languages and traditions. A migration museum does not promote dialogue or mutual comprehension *per se*. It can evoke folklore and nostalgia, exorcise the fear of poverty (an experience so recent in European collective memory) and put on show the success and creativity of migrants. It can separate the story of yesterday's emigrants from that of today's immigrants, and therefore produce a very ambiguous message. It can pretend to tell an "objective" story based on documents, letters, passports and numbers.

Migration museums, which at first glance, in some sort of tautological way, might appear to be the most obvious type of museum dealing with the themes of multiculturalism and intercultural dialogue, sometimes seem, on closer inspection, to be far more elusive and evasive than they should be.

This is why studying them at this time is both fascinating and crucial. They can no longer pretend to stand on their own feet merely by producing a historically "pure" message; they really have to address multicultural audiences—the ultimate reason for their existence—at least in big cities, and they also have to question themselves on whether they want to be some kind of "theme park" or to depict life around them, by considering past emigration from Europe and today's immigration as nothing other than two sides of the same coin. Nevertheless, a migration museum cannot be completely closed in on itself and "neutral."[4] As well as an empathic attitude, it should possess the instruments (time, funding, skills and staff) to open up a dialogue with the audience, and listen to the associations, the members of the communities and the activists.

In the 1980s, for example, the Migration Museum in Adelaide pioneered this approach by opening "The Forum," a space where the various communities, every three months, could tell their story, from their own point of view, through an exhibition. The idea of "ethnic community," at least in some European contexts, can still, however, be slippery and ambiguous.

Other museums have found different ways to "include" without stressing the differences. The Museo dell'Emigrante in the Repubblica di San Marino, for example, manages a very small and simple "space for prayer and meditation," of Franciscan origin, open to all.

Some institutions are questioning themselves about their role in con-

4 Viv Szekeres writes: "History museums cannot pretend to be objective. Historical interpretation and objectivity are contradictory ideas. Given that we cannot be objective, then at least let us own our own bias and author displays. Let us also ask the public for their opinion and include those responses" (Szekeres 2002, 147).

IMG. 4.07 — A room in the Museo dell'Emigrante, San Marino Republic. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.

temporary society, and are designing new wings, exhibitions or sections where they can talk about immigration. The most recent example is that of the German Emigration Center in Bremerhaven which, in 2012, opened a new wing dedicated to immigration to Germany, while the MeM section—dedicated half to emigration and half to immigration—was opened in 2011 in the Galata Museo del Mare e delle Migrazioni in Genoa, a maritime museum.

Of course, exhibiting is not enough if this activity is not accompanied by an outreach and educational plan. Immigration museums such as the MhiC near Barcelona, or the younger Immigrantmuseet in Farum, are very much engaged in these activities, and the role they play in their "community" is clearly a positive one. They are cultural centres, closely connected with the territory they belong to through participatory outreach activities, workshops and conferences. They do not provide the same services as immigration centres (information, language courses etc.), but they do represent a point of reference for the immigrants. It is also likely that the extensive outreach activities organised by the Red Star Line Museum in Antwerp, long before its opening, through—for example—a van which travelled the city inviting the people to join, discuss, share, under the motto "Hier ben ik!" (Here I am!), will also have a positive effect in attracting migrant or second generation citizens.

The question about the mission or usefulness of migration museums should remain central. Talking about the usefulness of museums could, of course, seem inappropriate—is culture useful?—, but this particular typology, confronted with the urgencies of contemporary European history, the "failure" of multicultural societies, the present economic crisis and so on, raises the question in a very precise way. What should the role of a migration museum in Europe be? What masternarrative is more fruitful in keeping together a historical approach and a focus on contemporary

IMG. 4.08 — *The "Cultures" section in the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris, France. © EPPD-Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration.*

IMG. 4.09 — *Museo Regionale dell'Emigrazione Pietro Conti, Gualdo Tadino, Italy. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

challenges? Should the museum promote inclusion, dialogue and mutual understanding, or should it just demonstrate that migration is an eternal phenomenon, part of human nature and history, so that everybody can make connections at their own level, with their own tools? And more precisely: should immigrants work in the museums? How many languages should be spoken in guided tours and workshops? Should there be a place for the immigrants' communities to show off their culture, to celebrate, to discuss?

Evidently, as well as an obvious response concerning the finances, staff and other resources available for all these activities, each museum has to choose and define its profile within the framework of its territory. The MhiC, for example, being a small museum with very few staff and located in a fairly unfortunate district in the suburbs of Barcelona, chose to work on the idea of citizenship—a more extensive, thought-provoking concept compared to the objective concept of "immigration"—and to promote extensive outreach activities with local communities, groups and associations, described in detail in the chapter dedicated to this case-study. The museum is then really "the ear that listens to society" which John Kinard referred to when talking about Anacostia; exhibitions are the outcome of this listening activity, not its point of departure (Kinard 1972).

→ **TRENDS IN EXHIBITION DESIGN**

The lack of a collection and the need to create one can be the stimulus for contacting immigrant associations, activists, individuals and families, and asking them to contribute. This is not a neutral request, as museum operators know well. The fact of being represented in a museum through one's objects creates commitment but also constraints, a positive tie but also a wish to control which sometimes collides with the nature of the museum, its vital rhythm and priorities. Through the necessary, and con-

tinual negotiation, the Immigrantmuseet in Farum shows objects donated by the immigrants, without ever putting too much emphasis on their individual stories, on the owner, etc. The object is "fused" into the main narrative and is given back its personal nature only during guided tours. A very different choice is that of the CNHI in Paris, where the "Galerie des dons" (Gallery of gifts) becomes, symbolically, a very important exhibit. The gallery is physically separated from the permanent exhibition and constitutes a poetic, emotional look at objects brought from home, touched a thousand times, chosen carefully by the individuals who recognise themselves in the institution. After a visit to the thematic exhibition, the walk through this part of the museum suggests a kind of secular ritual of dismissal, a (reversible) wish to contribute—or to give back.

Another interesting case-study which features the idea of "making objects speak" is that of the German Emigration Center in Bremerhaven, also described in detail further on. Here, for example, a pair of jeans owned in the 1970s by a Vietnamese worker represents modernity itself—seen both from Vietnam and from East Germany. The visitor is told the story of the owner, gets to know her name, becomes familiar with her. The owner of the object is given a significant role, and his/her story is recounted via the "technological" passport given to every visitor at the entrance.

As European museums are slowly taking into consideration ways of involving, including and questioning the immigrants, of telling their stories as connected to that of our emigrants, or of opening up spaces for dialogue and confrontation, the exhibition scale still leans in favour of emigration. Indeed, in this time of globalisation, travelling is no longer such a big deal—at least from some countries to others. Many immigrants simply arrive by plane, or even by train. In the 19th century and first half of the 20th century, emigration from Europe to America or to Australia was a real epic, with the ocean crossing—so many of the people

IMG. 4.10 — *A workshop with migrant citizens in the Museo del Novecento, Milan, Italy. Photo by Marta Vireca.*

had never seen the sea before—, the hiatus on board the ships, and the long-awaited arrival in the new country. The huge amount of literature about arrival at Ellis Island or other ports, with all the confusion, hearing an unfamiliar language, fears and hopes all mixed together, is a genre in itself. Many museums, therefore, choose to stress the epic nature of the departure through an immersive experience leading chronologically from departure to arrival. This is particularly the case for museums with a strong geographical connotation, often located near the main ports of departure. Despite a certain penchant for the rhetoric of costume drama, it cannot be denied that this linguistic choice, if well managed, is very effective, and very rewarding in terms of visitor numbers. The examples of the German Emigration Center in Bremerhaven, Ballinstadt in Hamburg and the MeM pavilion inside the Galata museum in Genoa testify to this. Dolls dressed in old-fashioned clothes, the omnipresent suitcases—often mixed in with monitors, audio sources or other ICT devices—, environmental reconstructions, such as the dining room on the ocean liners, the sleeping cabins, the toilets, or the arrival at Ellis Island are the common features of this immersive museum language.

On the other hand, museums who do not have such a strong "genius loci" tend to design and propose more "abstract" layouts, where identification and emotions do not necessarily rely on theatrical techniques and a set design-like museography. This is the case for the CNHI in Paris, where the building, with its colonial origins, is so strongly characteristic that the exhibition design wisely chose to detach from it as much as possible, choosing bright colours, linear showcases and a frequent insertion of contemporary artwork. This is also the case for the MhiC near Barcelona where, as the original building fairly small and not particularly appealing, the choice was to "occupy" the garden over time with volumes each characterised by a strong personality, in dialogue with the content, if not

with the form—the wagon of an old train side by side with the hyper-contemporary "Espai Migrar."

Other museums, such as those of Gualdo Tadino and Camigliatello Silano, both in Italy, use a mixture of historical allusions and contemporary, advanced exhibition techniques. The result is hybrid, but interesting. The Museo Regionale dell'Emigrazione in Gualdo Tadino, near Perugia, is located in a 12th century building, the Palazzo del Podestà. The verticality of the building suggested to organising the display backwards—the departure, and the reasons for it, is the subject of the upper floor, the journey is described on the first floor (with images and audio recordings about ocean crossings) and the arrival on the ground floor (integration, food, religion, work, with a particular focus on mining, this being one of the most common jobs for emigrants to Belgium). While original documents are displayed in very poetic ways—inserted into Plexiglas sheets and hanging from the ceiling, more as if they were flying than as an invitation to be read—, the general choice was to use ICT extensively and, in particular, video projections. Sounds, songs old and new, and personal accounts are mixed with videos from television archives or contemporary images of migrants.

In Camigliatello Silano, in Calabria, the Fondazione Napoli Novantanove chose to adapt an existing building and turn it into a "ship." Here, Gian Antonio Stella, journalist and author of *L'orda. Quando gli albanesi eravamo noi*—a best-selling examination of Italian emigration in the 19th and 20th centuries—, has "translated" his book into an exhibition. While the exterior is clean and simple, the interior suggests the shape of a vessel, which is a very odd effect, as the building itself is located in a mountainous area in central Calabria, quite far from the sea. The museum is described as "narrating," as it does not display documents, objects or historical traces, but rather the history of emigration itself, mainly through posters and rare audio files.

The Internet is a fundamental resource in connecting the existing museums to the huge network of projects in progress (Tirabassi 2007): a case in point is the *International Network of Migration Institutions* launched by Unesco and the IOM-International Organization for Migrations in 2007 (www.migrationmuseums.org), which is still a useful point of departure, despite being very seldom updated, and therefore serving more as a general map rather than as a working or information tool for specialists. The launching of the website followed an important Expert Meeting on Migration Museums (Rome, 23-25 October).[5]

The AEMI (*Association of European Migration Institutions*, aemi.eu) gathers together a number of museums, archives and research centres that work as a network and meet once a year at an international thematic conference to share results, projects and objectives. Another important resource is the website of the *International Coalition of Historic Sites of*

5 See the Centro Altreitalie (www.altreitalie.it/Le_Migrazioni_Italiane_In_Rete/Musei_E_Mostre/Musei_Italiani.kl) and the Museo dell'Emigrazione Italiana websites (http://www.museonazionaleemigrazione.it/elenco.php?id=4), last visited on December 10th 2012.

Conscience, online since 2008 (www.sitesofconscience.org), which deals with migration transversely—part of the Coalition is the *Immigrations and Civil Rights Sites of Conscience Network*, members of whom are, just to quote the European ones, the Bois du Cazier in Marcinelle, the Galata Museo del Mare e delle Migrazioni in Genoa and the Red Star Line Museum in Antwerp. There are also many websites dealing with the representation of migration from or to a precise state or territory,[6] but a closer examination would fall outside the scope of this paper.

In conclusion, I would like to mention briefly the criteria used in choosing the case studies analysed. The first is the originality expressed in the connection content–architecture. This is why the German Emigration Center, the CNHI and the MeM were included. The Red Star Line Museum, despite not being open yet, is also part of this list, and the editors and I thought it important for it to be included, both for its architecture and its urban implications. BallinStadt was also included as an example of an interesting memory rescue operation, involving an entire historical area in Hamburg.

Secondly, since much of my inquiry is on the space given to contemporary immigration in migration museums, the reader will find descriptions of two key examples—the Immigrantmuseet and the MhiC.

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6   See for example, for the case of Germany, www.migration-ausstellen.de (exhibitions) and www.migrationsgeschichte.de (collections). The network Migration in Europe (www.network-migration.org) also provides good information about everything concerning the theme of migration, and also the relationship between migrations and museums. Websites accessed 30th December 2012.

Museum and Nation

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→ **MUSEUM AND NATION**

Since its birth as a public institution in the 18th century, and throughout its development in the 19th century, the museum has had a very close relationship with the stabilisation, consolidation and cultural legitimacy of the concept of the nation and nation state. In recent years, this connection has been highlighted by numerous authors.[1] The primary reference for the majority of studies—and also for this essay—can be found in the

PREVIOUS PAGE, IMG. 4.11 — *A display case in the "Galerie des dons", Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris, France © EPPD-Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration.*

work of Benedict Anderson, where the nation is seen as an "imagined community," which defines itself as a "an imagined political community—imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (Anderson 2006, 6). According to the author, the national community finds a definition from the fact that its members develop a sense of belonging that prescinds from mutual knowledge within the community, that is, by having directly encountered and heard about the other members of the community. It must be imagined as a limited community since no nation encompasses the whole of humanity. It characterises itself, always and exclusively, as a specific part, and in this way it distinguishes itself from other nations. In the Enlightenment tradition, the nation is conceived as sovereign; as dynastic legitimacy declined, to be replaced by a tendency towards freedom and self-determination, the nation state found its extent, its purpose and its symbol. The nation is a community "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation (…), conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (ibid.,7).

Anderson argues that the evolution of the concept of the nation should be read in the light of the cultural consolidation of the nation. In his opinion, nationalism aims to create and make plausible an organic, almost natural, bond for a given population with a distinct culture and with a particular geographic area. He attaches special importance to the concept of the temporal and to the dissemination and promotion of national languages through the press and commercial book market. He identifies three effective instruments of political power (especially with regards to colonialism): the census, the map and the museum. The census provides information about dominated people, the map provides information about the dominated lands, while the museum performs the function of reassuring the state about the legitimacy of its origins (ibid., 167).

Sharon Macdonald (2003) has expanded upon the observations of Anderson, which only brief with regard to museums and referred to the colonial state. She examines the museum's role in education and in the continuous updating of national identity, analysing its function of giving a logic to the nation state since the 19th century. The starting point is Anderson's observation that national identification requires the projection of feelings of belonging beyond immediate experience. When such identification cannot be based on social relations, it must instead have a cultural basis and be anchored to "a matter of shared knowledge and practice, of representation, ritual and symbolism" (Macdonald 2003, 2).

The central element of national discourses, as described by Macdonald and by Richard Handler (1988), is the vision of a completely specific culture, one "made for purpose." Museums are particularly suited to promote

such a culture since they have already established themselves as important repositories of "cultural objects." Collections had once projected the power and the tastes of princes, nevertheless, once they came into the public domain via museums, they could be used to demonstrate (or even verify) the "inner depths" of the nation. The collections and the buildings housing them could now promote the longed for national "specific culture," and sponsor national awareness and pride. Moreover the possession of artefacts from other cultures, allowed nations and in particular colonizing powers to boast of their ability to expand beyond their national boundaries and exercise global domination. Thus the nation's world importance and claims to greatness were laid out for all to see. These displays aimed to put distance between a nation and the others. They also promoted the idea of excluding foreign cultures and the proclamation of cultural and technological superiority of the home nation. They responded to a Darwinian view of culture, with the superior fitness of the nation's "own culture" trumpeted. As summarised by Macdonald:

> museums, then, were capable of articulating two temporal narratives: one, a distinctive national trajectory and two, the nation as final triumphant stage of successive progression. That museum could present both of these simultaneously, through specific artefacts and the sequences into which they were arranged, was part of their technological magic.[2] (2003, 3)

In its examination of the relationship between the museum and the nation, Tony Bennett (1995) cites Benedict Anderson and interweaves his thoughts with those of Nicos Poulantzas, a political philosopher of the nation state. From the latter, Bennett takes the idea that modern state organizes national unity by establishing a specific relationship between time and space, between history and state territory. This is expressed in the dual phenomena of the historicization of territory and the territorialisation of history, which show how much nationhood is about producing parallels between history and territory. In this process the history museum and historical sites acquire a special significance due to their proximity to the political culture of the state and the authority of state institutions. In museums, the national past is not documented but created. Museums are places where the "origin myths are brought up-to-date and projected back onto the past, "creating the national narratives, connecting the individual to national historical events in a more extensive and meaningful way" (Stuart Hall quoted in Kaschuba 2001, 29).

The classic version of staging the nation in museums, is based on a key principle: the production and articulation of a common history and culture. A construct of this type has two implications: on the one hand, it serves as a social harmonizer by attempting to reconcile divergent interests and social conflicts within a wider whole (remember Benedict Anderson's "imagined community" as a "comradely" union, regardless of the

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Note: Considering the length and the complexity of the text, it was decided to translate here only the notes which are in our opinion particularly significant: the note text 1 published here corresponds to note 32 of the original, 2 to 34, 3 to 38, 4 to 42 and 5 to 43.

1   It may be convenient here to indicate the necessary distinction between nation and nation–state: while "State" indicates a political system, legal and bureaucratic, "nation" refers to experiences within this system, in the sense of a supposed unity because of language, culture or traditions. The construction of the nation has in particular to unify the population and the state. The state in its abstract form is difficult to identify with (Stratton and Ang 1998, 139).

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2   Macdonald notes a third quality of museums, which is that they hark back to classical designs, thus implying age and continuity through time. Finally, by promoting a view "outside and above" and apparently detached, museums according to Mitchell (1988, 18-23) have defined the western conception of objectivity and reality.

actual exploitation and inequality); on the other hand, in the desire to emphasize an unmistakable "specific culture," there is tendency to minimize cultural heterogeneity (Foster 1991, 249). In this sense, the theoretician of diasporas Khachig Tölölyan conceived in the museum as space of imagination, alluding to what is universal and referring above all to the symbolic meaning of collecting; he observes that: "[the nation-state] always imagines and represents itself as a land, a territory, a place that functions as the site of homogeneity, equilibrium, integration; this is the domestic tranquillity that hegemony-seeking national elites always desire and sometimes achieve" (Tölölyan 1991, 6).

→ THE CRISIS OF NATIONAL META–NARRATIVES: GLOBALIZATION AND HERITAGE
DISSONANCE

Nowadays museums are far less self-assured than their 19th century predecessors. It is increasingly rare to find emphatic celebrations of national greatness, glory, manifest destiny, civilizing or even racial superiority. Social changes in society at large were of importance as were the "new social history" and the "new museology." One-sided references to national historical splendour and grandeur have lost their previous credibility (Davison 2001; Beier-de Hahn 2005).

National narratives in museums, as elsewhere, however, are confronted with far more substantial challenges than questions of getting the right tenor or feel in their work. The German term *Leistung* indicates the achievement, the fulfilment of a duty, the benefit, the realisation and production of a hit, the triumph and trauma within the representation. The contours of the "imagined communities" need to be renegotiated in many aspects. Since they depend on the past, national narratives are neither static nor limited; they must, on the contrary, be continuously questioned and tested over time. The basic elements of the national narratives and their narrative strategies must be plausible under what-so-ever historical and social conditions are in force, in order to be reliable and effective (Foster 1991, 241; Kaschuba 2001, 29).

This process has become precarious. The construct of the nation as an entity bonded by common culture, history and memory has lost its persuasive force, in an era of globalization and pluralism within society. The congruence of culture, population and territory, which according to Anderson underlies the "imagined community," is ever more uncertain and it is becoming increasingly difficult to marry old concepts of nationhood with current realities (Curthoys 2003; Cerwonka 2004; Kaplan 2006). Nation–states were never hermetically sealed cultural and clearly defined areas, although they were commonly represented and perceived in this way. This is quite clear today with the enormous increase in cross-border movements of people, goods, information and ideas, and the ubiquitous coverage of these processes. The basis of clear narratives of a national identity has been undermined.

In this context, migration has played a decisive role. Arjun Appadurai

(1998) has noted that the social and cultural formation of collective identities has changed irreversibly. Almost as a counterweight to the territorialisation of history and culture, he describes the deterritorialisation of people, concepts and ideas as the strongest trait of this era. In his analysis, global ethnoscapes have arisen from culturally diverse practices; he observes that mobile actors such as tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, etc. and the imagination released from space are "imagined communities" that act transversally with respect to the national State. James Clifford (1997, 250) completes the theoretical picture on the existence of specific diasporas transcending the territoriality and temporality of the national state. These diasporas are characterized by the fact that they have maintained important bonds and practical ties with a distant homeland or with scattered groups elsewhere, thus establishing transnational networks of relationships.

For Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1992, 11) this phenomenon of de-territorialized identity construction and its antagonistic position is not reducible to simple national narratives. According to these authors, the current situation is characterised by a "profound bifocality that characterizes locally lived lives in a globally interconnected world." In the description of this constellation, they ascribe a crucial role to memory. The memory of distant places, or the construction of remembered places from a geographical distance, represent for migrants a symbolic anchor in the creation of identity and community. The arguments proposed by Mary Stevens (2006) are similar; in particular, she highlights the resistance potential of remembrance in the context of post colonialism and migration, as well as the subsequent challenge to nation-building:

> in the postcolonial context, memory has often been seen as a strategy to resist hegemonic power. Diasporic cultural memory has been perceived as particularly subversive since it preserves within the bounds of the country of residence the presence of an elsewhere, an outside. It is not necessary for the memory itself to be emancipatory (indeed it may be imbued with a repressive nostalgia that hinders the development of the subject). The very existence of a set of stories that can only with difficulty be incorporated into accounts of a shared national past constitutes a form of resistance. (Stevens 2006)

In this way transnational dynamics—which are evident as real or imaginary migrations, as well as the border crossing memories and imagination—bring into question national narrations, surpassing the borders of the nation state and blurring a perimeter that was once clearly defined. At the same time, the increased cultural pluralism within the nation state is fostering the crisis of the classical idea of national imagination—"one land, one nation, one people, one culture" (Bennett and Carter 2001, 254). Instead of "imagined communities," based on history and culture, it is possible to detect growing fragmentation and conflict. This is primarily true for colonial societies,[3] such as the USA, Canada and Australia, which

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3 According to the definition provided by Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis (1995, 3), I refer to "settler societies" as "societies in which Europeans have settled, where their descendants have remained politically

in recent decades have been shaken by deep "heritage dissonances." On the basis of this concept, John Tunbridge and Gregory Ashworth (1996, 179–222; Graham et al. 2000, 96–111) have investigated the difficulties that arise in trying to build a national identity based on the history and cultural heritage, with particular attention to the Canadian context, but without excluding the other two aforementioned countries,. In their opinion, the current situation is characterized by a fragmentation into "heritage identities," defined by the contrast among three types of social groups, which present further inner fragmentations. One of these groups is represented by the so-called "founding societies"—ensuing from the British culture in the United States and Australia, and British and French cultures in Canada—which form the basis of national origin myths and dominate the national narrative. At the moment they are facing two key challenges: the first one is represented by indigenous peoples, who ask for the recognition of their status as a colonized country, the acknowledgment of colonial crimes, as well as the implementation of a material compensation; the second is represented by immigrants and their descendants, who want their cultural heritage to be respected and their history to be integrated within the national narrative. According to the above mentioned scholars, these issues may be the cause of the debated tensions: it is then possible to assert that the reference to history and culture often doesn't work as a social glue, and can generate centrifugal tendencies.

According to Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996, 179), the situation in the USA represents a special case that should be considered in depth. This context is characterized by a remarkable diversity of the cultural heritage, which here appears at a peak and owns an explosive power; anyway, the differences and the conflicts are neutralized by the existence and maintenance of a powerful national mythology. The US national identity has stronger ideological and political foundations than in France or Canada. The "American Creed," the American civil religion, which dates back to the Revolution and is nourished by universal political secularism, takes as its core universal values rather than the values of a particular culture (Stratton and Ang 1998, 141–147). Its founding elements are the rights of the individual and individual freedom, equality before the law and private property—as also highlighted by the most potent symbols of the USA, the Statue of Liberty and the Liberty Bell.

Despite the above mentioned peculiarity, it is possible to detect a growing articulation of specific group stories and the dissolution of the founding narratives also in the USA; this fact has been noted and commented with some discomfort. The veteran Democrat Arthur M. Schlesinger, for example, has highlighted the direct link between the pluralisation of cultural heritage and the erosion of national cohesion. This was his admonition, in 1991, in an essay published in Time Magazine: "The growing emphasis on the USA 'multicultural' heritage exalts racial and ethnic

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dominant over indigenous peoples, and where a heterogeneous society has developed in class, ethnic and racial terms." The authors assert that this case it is not about a fixed category, rather a continuum, which makes further differentiations necessary.

pride at the expense of social cohesion" (quoted in Stratton and Ang 1998, 135). In the strengthening of the ethnic-based political identity, he has diagnosed a re-evaluation of group identities, which in a sense could come between the individual and his duties towards the American nation, thereby releasing the centrifugal forces. Referring to the US national motto *E pluribus unum*, he pointed out that: "The balance is shifting from *unum* to *pluribus*" (quoted in Stratton and Ang 1998, 145). As stated in one of his books, Schlesinger fears what he calls the "Disuniting of America," in the event that it won't be possible to re-establish a reliable container for the growing cultural diversity. In a similar way, mainly from a conservative view point, the question was also extended to Canada and Australia, where the risk of a "tribalization," "balkanization" or "Babilonization" of a multicultural society devoid of a shared foundation was denounced (Jupp 2001, 265; Geissler 2003, 23).

Whether the development of the nation is seen as a problematic loss of cohesion or as a positive liberation of sub-national collective identities, it is possible to recognize a relevant growth of the complexity in the construction of a national narrative, establishing ties and mutual dependencies. John Docker and Gerhard Fischer developed a noteworthy description of some of the contradictions and conflicts which have intensified within historical representations:

> colonial versus post-colonial, old settlers versus new settlers, indigenous people versus invaders, majority versus innumerable minorities, white against black or coloured, the search for a collective, inclusive or "national identity "(in an era of post-colonial globalization) vis-à-vis the search for individual and personal or group identity, based on ethnicity, language, country of origin, or religion. (Docker and Fischer 2000, 6)

In the museum, the pluralisation of cultural heritage and the dissolution of shared narrations apprear in two trends: the first records—in the sense of the diagnosis of Tunbridge and Ashworth about the "heritage dissonance"—an increase in the number and intensity of controversies about exhibitions and museum projects (Beier-de Haan 2005; Dubin 2006; Kaplan 2006). The second concerns an augmented interest in the political–identitary differentiation or fragmentation in the museum context, and it is based on the presentation of the history and culture of the single groups of central institutions (Doering 2002, 10; König and Ohliger 2006, 14).[4] Both trends are equally symptom and cause of a crisis in museums' representation of the nation. However, at the same time, the disorientation in the consolidation of the "imagined community"—already

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4   To illustrate the fragmentation of the political identity in the US national historic landscape, Zahava Doering (2002) takes as an example the development currently underway at the National Mall in Washington, D.C., where new and autonomous museums of so-called "minorities" are constantly being opened. Following the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian in 2004, the National Museum of African American History and Culture is currently under construction, and similar projects for Latinos and Asian Americans are under consideration. To a certain extent the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, which opened in 1993, may also be included in this category, although this case, as an expression of the moral superiority of American values, surpasses the special significance for American Jews of the Holocaust (Pieper 2006, 189-191).

proposed in the conception of crisis as a decisive turning point—also strengthens the search for new forms of nation-building, of alternative founding narratives for the community, as well as a "common ground."[5]

→ STAGING MIGRATION AS STAGING THE NATION

Robert Foster raises a central question within the search for common ground:

> how can the construction of national boundaries be sustained in a world now more than ever open to cultural flows? Can a collectivity imagine or be made to imagine itself as a bounded entity when its members are increasingly exposed to a 'cosmopolitan cultural regime' through media, travel, and encounters with migrants and refugees? (Foster 1991, 237)

Castles and others (1992, 5) add a stronger reference to society's culturally heterogeneous fabric, asserting that, with the increased multiculturalism, the celebration of cultural diversity has replaced national racial stereotypes, which have dominated for a long time. This evolution brings about certain difficulties: "How is the tension between ethnic pluralism and the cohesiveness of society as a whole to be resolved? How can a nation be defined, if not in terms of ethnic identity, shared history, traditions, culture and language?"

In summary, this is the question: in a context characterized by multiple transnational dynamics and the internal pluralisation of society, how can the nation, be conceived as a community defined by inner unity, circumscribed and tied to a specific territory? In addition, provocatively: how is it possible to narrate and exhibit the multicultural nation in a context of globalization? And, as for the museum, does it have a role to play in this process? According to Sharon Macdonald, in fact, the crisis of national "representation/re-presentation," raises questions for the institution museums itself, due to the close historical relationship between the museum and the nation:

> if the nation–state and the kind of "public" with which it was associated are on the brink of obsolescence, then what future is there for museums? Are museums perhaps too intimately linked up with material—and place—rooted, homogeneous and bounded conceptions of identity to be able to address

some of the emerging identity dilemmas of the "second modern age" or "late modernity"? (Macdonald 2003, 1)

[…] I would like to propose an interpretation of the birth of museums of immigration as a strategy to overcome the crisis in the concept of nation in museums. The thesis I propose is based on the reading of the internal dynamics of these places, which, despite the diversity of their collections, are characterized by a presentation of immigration as a transversal narration and, starting from this consideration, the exhibition of an "imagined community" for migrants. In this way the various stories of immigrants from different origins are not only intertwined, but also blended with the stories of the early settlers, who were themselves immigrants, thus connected to a wider framework.. Thus immigration museums can operate as a stage for the harmonisation of dissonant cultural heritages, as well as a platform for a multicultural re-visioning of the nation.

The concept of "re–vision" evokes two different ideas: a renewal of contents and a structural consolidation of the concept of nation. The first aspect involves the recognition of the history of those who have long been marginalized, the re–evaluation of the counter–narratives of non-hegemonic groups and, above all, the shift from homogenizing attitudes to a mentality encouraging cultural diversity. The second aspect appears in the growing inclusion of multiple narrations in a migration masternarrative. These ones tend to gather and regulate the imaginations, which have been stretching beyond the limits of the nation state. The immigration museums act as tools for re–centring the politics of identity (above all ethnic identity), as places of national identity politics, ensued by gathering and assimilating particular political identities. They can also operate as a "staging ground" (Annis 1986) for the reformed nation, in the name of multiculturalism. Thus, immigration museums can be intended as a boundary and a continuation from previous museums that represented the nation.

As far as concerns the aspect regarding continuity, […] it is necessary to note to what extent social inequalities and conflicts are omitted, when exhibiting a migrant "imagined community," or represented through the valorization of cultural diversity, in the name of ethnicization and culturalization. What is at stake is also the relationship between exhibition and appearances, which is characteristic of the national meta-narrative, in other words between exhibitions, history and the perspectives of the indigenous population: it is important to clarify and, more generally, to think about how, in presenting a mainly inclusive narrative, specific forms of exclusion may be produced.

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5 The national museums of cultural history are the natural locations for new ideas and research in this field. Especially those opened in Canada and Australia in the last decades, such as: the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa/Hull, opened in 1989 […], the National Museum of Australia in Canberra, 2001 […] and the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C which is currently undergoing renovation. These museums are founded in part on old collections. In the Natural Museum of American History, for example, we detect to the difficulty or even impossibility of producing a synthetic and coherent national history in a multicultural word full of diverse ideas about identity. Richard Handler (2003), powerfully shows how curators, after great debate, have given up on trying to narrate a coherent national story. The important sense of community now is unable to grow from the same "historical substance," instead—as Handler says, in reference to the functionalist model of secular rites of Durkheim—it must come as "solidarity ritual," in the common consumption of attractive exhibits, and the actual content becomes secondary. The transverse phenomenon of the "new national museums," which were created and are ideally placed in second modernity, is the subject of a profound analysis by Beier-de Haan 2005.

Text translated by Matteo Ghidotti and John Elkington.

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The German Emigration Center

→ SIMONE EICK

Simone Eick is the Managing Director of the German Emigration Center at Bremerhaven, where she previously has operated as Scientific Director and Deputy Director. From 2003 to 2005, she has participated to the scientific conception of the museum at Studio Andreas Heller in Hamburg. Her studies in History and Philosophy at the University of Hannover were concluded by a dissertation on "American emigration in the 19th century."

Many changes have happened since the AEMI Conference which took place in Bremerhaven in 2009. While the first wing of the museum, opened in 2005, is about emigration from Germany and Eastern Europe via Bremerhaven from 1830 to 1972, in April 2012 we opened a new wing dedicated to immigration in Germany. We are now, therefore, a museum about migration from 1683 until today (we chose the year 1683 because it was the year a first large group of German people settled in North America). The two buildings are connected by a bridge, which of course is very important to highlight its symbolical meaning.

We have not changed the "emigration" part, but now we provide a closer look at the integration of German Americans in the Unites States and on immigration to Germany in the last 300 years.

The German Emigration Center is located in Bremerhaven, somehow "at the end of the world" for many Germans. We are located at the New Harbour from where many people departed. The total number of people

PREVIOUS PAGE, IMG. 4.12 — *The chest of drawers in the "Gallery of the Seven Million," German Emigration Center, Bremerhaven, Germany. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.13 — *German Emigration Center: Exterior view. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

who left Bremerhaven harbour totals 7.2 million, among whom 3.4 million were from Eastern Europe.

Bremerhaven is like any other German city, a place where, since the Fifties, people came to work, mainly in the fishing industry. Since the official ban of organised labour coming from abroad to Germany, which happened in 1973, the workers' family members also arrived in Bremerhaven.

Our museum has 200,000 visitors a year; we are a public-private partnership project.

The museum's narration is based on two pillars. One is the importance of real biographies and objects, the other is the effectiveness of the historical reconstructions.

I will give you a quick overview of the old building because some of you have not been in Bremerhaven, so that you can get the picture. You start from a reconstruction of the quay in 1890, and from this moment the visit turns into a kind of time–travel. In the "Gallery of the 7 million" we display a part of our collection of migrants' biographies. As a matter of fact we have carried out research on over 2000 people who migrated via Bremerhaven. For some of them, we know all the generations, up to 7 generations of one family, but in other cases we just know the name and the date of departure. The central part of the museum concerns the theme of the crossing and here we display the changes that happened from 1854 from 1929. At the end, there is a reconstruction of Ellis Island, where you can experience how it feels to be asked questions by an immigration inspector, and if you do not answer correctly you have to go back. This is very popular among young people.

As for the new wing, when we started thinking about the extension of our museum, there were a lot of questions and doubts. Our idea was, and is, that we want our visitors to compare historical migration with migration happening today, so the idea is to tell them stories about German Americans in order to show that the Germans were not "top of the class,"

and therefore to discuss the theme of integration, interculturality etc. We reconstructed parts of Grand Central Terminal in New York in the year 1913. It is a place of transit, both physical and symbolic—from being an emigrant to an immigrant. Here, a German mother with her child asks where the train to Chicago leaves: it is a way of talking about the movement of German people in the U.S.

In the second room we have a waiting hall where we tell stories of German Americans from 1683 to today. This is the last room of the historical tour. After that, the visitor is shown the history of immigration to Germany in the last 300 years. How should be it be displayed? We decided to rebuild a 1973 shopping mall, a key date not only because it was the year when organised labour migration to Germany stopped, and so many family members started arriving, but also because it was only three years after the opening of Eastern Europe following visit of the former Chancellor Willy Brandt to Warsaw. We could have chosen another year, but it was important for us to have a historical flavour, and we did not want to portray the Germany of today because the following year it would be old. So, we chose a public place again, because this allows us to meet all the members of society, all the social classes and the different nationalities etc.

We have a German department store, a supermarket, a travel agency, a hairdresser, and of course "*Eis*" (ice-cream sellers), this is important because of all the Italian ice-cream makers who came to Germany. The idea is that the visitors discover migration in Germany in everyday life, so we chose shops representing different aspects of integration: the hairdresser, for example, stands for appearance, the way one looks, which is of course very important. Past the hairdresser the visitor finds the antiques shop. This is a very important shop because here we deal with the theme of religion, identity, tradition and what in Germany we call *Heimat*, something linked with the concept of "home." For example, here we show objects referring to different religions—we have "memory objects" from Protestants, Lutherans, Calvinists, Catholics, Muslims, Jews and Serbian Orthodox, the latter offered to the museum by refugees from the former Yugoslavia—, so the visitor can compare each faith with another and find out which objects were worshipped by different groups of migrants.

The visitors then find a photo studio where we display albums, designed like those personal photo albums that are kept in almost every family. This display is very popular because it rouses the curiosity and allows the visitors to have a closer look at people they have never met.

In the department store one can see how we work with the objects from our collections. You can see "memory objects" displayed together with real objects that were sold in a department store in 1973. In a showcase you can see fake Diesel jeans, an obvious western status symbol, made by Vietnamese workers in the GDR. Most of these Vietnamese people stayed after the fall of the Berlin wall. Another example is two drinking bottles looking almost the same at first glance, but one is from 1973, while the other belonged to a miner from Poland in 1953 Visitors can compare two objects that look the same but tell different stories. The idea we suggest is

that you have to have a closer look, when talking about migration.

On the second floor of the building there is a part we are working on at the moment, where we will have an immigration office showing the bureaucratic steps necessary for people coming to Germany today. At the moment, we are looking for objects and for more information.

We also have a cinema, with the atmosphere of the 1950s, and we are showing productions about the descendants from German migrants to the USA and Argentina.

At the beginning of the visit every visitor gets a boarding pass—the entrance ticket—, and with that he gets to know the biographies of two migrants: one emigrant and one immigrant. We chose the couples very carefully: for the emigrants we have groups of settlers, workers, housewives, academics, inventors etc., while for the immigrants we chose 15 immigration groups, among whom there are Huguenots, forced migrants, students, contract workers, travelling merchants, etc. We chose these groups not only because of their large numbers, but also of their importance for German immigration history. For example, we have 4,000 Italian icemakers, but they are important because in every German city you can see their business.

Let me give you two examples: one is Martha Hüner, who emigrated in 1923 to the USA, and the other is Mai Phuong Kollath, who came to Germany in 1981. Both were very young when they emigrated, both had to change their professional lives. Martha opened two bakeries in New York together with her husband, and Mai became an intercultural coach after the fall of the Berlin wall.

Both of them suffered discrimination. When World War I broke out, Martha lost her bakeries because the shops were in a neighbourhood where many Czech people lived and they did not want to buy bread from the Germans. Mai lived in Rostock, in the north of Germany, where in the 90s there were violent attacks on the houses of the Vietnamese community. Both women kept objects from their parents. Martha kept a horse brush her father gave her, and Mai kept a letter from her parents and a pair of jeans. The fake Diesel jeans mentioned above.

Source: Speech by Simone Eick, Director of the German Emigration Center in Bremerhaven, at the AEMI Conference in Cracow, 20 September 2012.

Case Studies

IMG. 4.14 — *Deutsches Auswandererhaus–German Emigration Center, Bremerhaven, Germany. Project by Andreas Heller Architects and Designers. The luggages stored in the hold. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

Deutsches Auswandererhaus–German Emigration Center
Bremerhaven, Germany

The Deutsches Auswandererhaus is among the major points of reference as concerns the museography of migration in Europe. Inaugurated in 2005 in a medium-sized town, peripheral to the tourism routes, even though easily accessible from Bremen and Hamburg, it has enjoyed huge success from the outset in terms of visitors (about 200,000 per year, more than 1.5 million in October 2012, 90% of whom were German, with ten percent coming from abroad, especially North America). In 2007, it received the prestigious *European Museum of the Year Award*, while in 2008 it won the *Best in Heritage Award*. In April 2012, the museum inaugurated a new 1,900-square-meter wing, built ex-novo and dedicated to immigration in Germany over the last three centuries.

Seven point two million people left from Bremerhaven from 1830 to 1974; sixty percent were German, while the other 40% were Polish, Russian, Czech, Hungarian and Romanian. The harbour experienced two principal migratory waves—one around 1850, and the other circa 1880.

The museum tells the story of the migrants, following them step by step along their journey through a highly immersive experience, as well as very rich from the sensory point of view and with significant recourse to technology, environmental reconstructions, etc. From this point of view, Bremerhaven's museum has become a paradigm for many other European museums—including BallinStadt in Hamburg, MeM in Genoa and the Cité de la Mer in Cherbourg. The quality of the architecture, the extent of the exhibition space, the variety of exhibits, the richness of the educational program, and the amount of ICT are really outstanding.

Designed by Hamburg-based Studio Andreas Heller Architects and Designers, the Deutsches Auswandererhaus is located in front of the New Harbour, and is part of the urban renovation programme known as *Havenwelten Bremerhav-*

en (Harbour Worlds Bremerhaven), which has led to the construction of a number of tourism-oriented buildings as well as museums. In recent years, in fact, the town has undergone a radical restyling, aimed mostly at attracting family tourism centred around the theme of the sea.

The story of the museum begins twenty years before its creation, when the *Freundeskreis Deutsches Auswandererhaus* (Circle of Friends of the German Emigration Center), founded in 1985, began to support and promote the project. In the late Nineties, the *Initiativkreis Deutsches Auswandererhaus* (German Emigration Center Initiative) also played an active role in the project.

The museum is based on a private-public partnership, with funds allocated by the Municipality of Bremerhaven and the State of Bremen (not by the Federal State, although federal funds did actually pay for the construction of the new wing, at a total cost of two million euros). The museum is managed by the private company *Paysage House 1–Gesellschaft für Kultur und Freizeit mbH & Co. KG.*

The museum's collection is composed mainly of letters and photographs, but also includes objects such as suitcases, passenger lists, passports, family memorabilia, diaries, many of which have been donated by visitors—in some cases, the museum has made replicas, as similar as possible to the original.

It is interesting to note that the museum's long-term project has been to concentrate first on the theme of emigration, a theme very familiar to many Germans, and of great interest to their descendants, which number more than 50 million worldwide—in addition, emigration is once again a hot topic, given that 150,000 Germans are leaving the country each year. It was only at a later stage, once the public had become familiar with the museum, that the immigration wing, treating a more delicate theme, was opened.

IMG. 4.15 — *Sketch by Andreas Heller. © Studio Andreas Heller, Hamburg.*
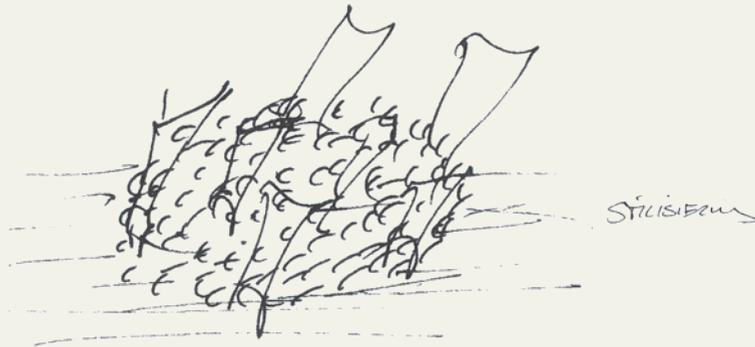
IMG. 4.16 — *Exterior view of the German Emigration Center, including the new wing on the right. © German Emigration Center. Photo by Klaus Frahm.*

IMG. 4.17 — *The "Gallery of the Seven Million." © German Emigration Center. Photo by Werner Huthmacher.*

The Deutsches Auswandererhaus' mission is not only to run its exhibition system, which, although spectacular, appealing and rich in technology, always requires some form of mediation and space for discussion and reflection. The educational activities in the museum include film projections, debates, book presentations, conferences, concerts, open-air tango-bars, temporary exhibitions, collaborations with universities, research centres, museums and magazines.

Among the many temporary exhibitions organised, we note "Pacific Palisades, California USA"—about German writers who escaped from Nazi Germany, 2006—, "Off to Buenos Aires! German emigrants and refugees in the 20th Century" (2008), "The Flight After the Flood. New Orleans–the city left behind" (2009) and "The Yellow Ticket. Trafficking in Girls" (2012), the result of a research project which involved descendants of Germans resident in New Orleans, with the aim of sensitising public awareness of the link between migration and climate change, and thus shifting the focus from historical processes to contemporary issues and challenges.

All the texts, both written and audio, are in English and German. "News," a magazine containing information about the museum's activities, is published regularly.

→ AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

The museum is located opposite the New Harbour, opened in 1852. The place itself is representative of the history displayed inside. The genius loci here is of tremendous importance, and the architecture plays cleverly with the contiguity of inside and outside, in a sort of hyper-realistic attitude, overlapping the "artificial" experience of the inside with the "real" nature beyond the windows.

The two buildings, the first dedicated to emigration (2005) and the more recent one to immigration (2012), are aligned geometrical blocks, parallel to the harbour, with a beautiful promenade in front, and are linked via a bridge. The overall surface is 3,200 square meters. From the compact volume of the "emigration" building emerges a transparent globe, a tribute to the travellers who left to cross the ocean (they are also celebrated in a monument located on the quay). The concrete wings, or "sails," hint at the handkerchiefs waved at the moment of farewells. The elliptical basement is in concrete, while the upper rectangular level is covered in wood. The same covering is adopted in the new wing, giving a sense of harmony and unity to the complex.

The opening of the new immigration wing emphasised the museum's argument that emigration and immigration are actually two faces of the same coin—the eternal theme of mankind on the move, which also includes refugees, seasonal workers, asylum seekers, and all other categories of people who leave their homeland, be it for a short or extended period of time. "Moving stories" is the motto of the museum, and so reads a press release by the museum (2012):

"The didactic presentation and communication of migration as a human behaviour is the main focus of the work at the German Emigration Center. Migration is understood as all movement: from classical emigration to work-migration to flight and persecution. Migration is not looked upon as temporary, but rather as a behaviour which human beings resort to when personal living conditions face the threat of a change for the worse, or when personal safety is put at risk. […] Migration is therefore a permanent phenomenon and not a finalised historical incident. Migration itself is looked upon at the German Emigration Center as a whole process which starts with the socialisation of the potential migrant in his home country, and ends with integration in the destination country. We summarise this whole process with the key word 'acculturation.'"

The personal and direct experience of this discourse is facilitated by the visitor's identification with the migrant's biography. Indeed, historical biographies constitute the heart of the museum and the key it has chosen to use.

IMG. 4.18 — *Aboard the steamship, the dining room. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

**IMG. 4.19** — *Aboard the steamship, the dormitory. © German Emigration Center. Photo by Stefan Volk.*

IMG. 4.20 — *Reconstruction of the Grand Central Terminal in New York. © German Emigration Center.*

IMG. 4.21 — *From Ellis Island to Canada. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*
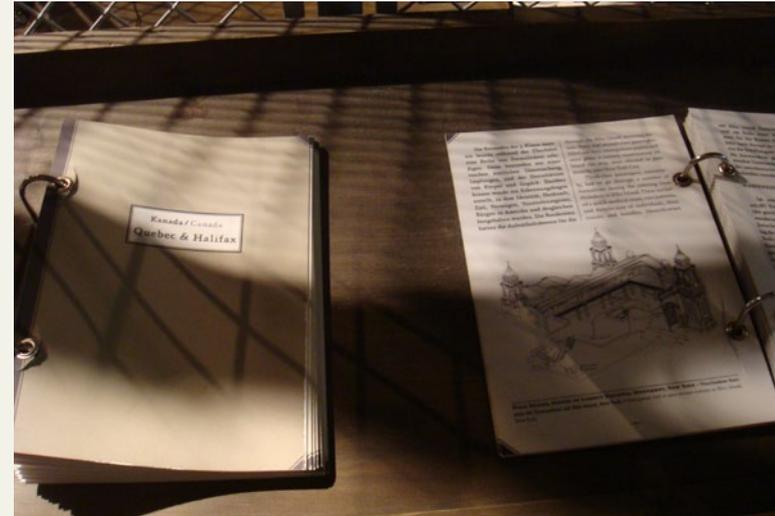
IMG. 4.22 — *The shopping mall in the new immigration wing. © German Emigration Center.*

The identification "deal" is made at the beginning of the visit, when the visitor receives a boarding pass—with an iCard—with both the data of an emigrant and those of an immigrant. Throughout the visit, when the iCard activates the interactive devices through the RFID technology (radio frequency identification), the visitor is able to share the adventures, difficulties and challenges of that individual.

The entrance is from the square behind the building, along a busy road where there are also public services. The hall contains the restaurant-cafeteria—also with open-air tables for the milder weather, and often also used for parties and receptions—, a well-stocked shop and the ticket office. After purchasing a ticket, the visitor accesses a room which hints at a reconstruction of a 19th century waiting room of the *North German Lloyd* (now destroyed), dedicated to hip-hop aesthetics, with graffiti and posters. They are invited to wait here until a small group is formed. It is only at this point that they are ushered into a small room where they can listen to an audio file. Subsequently, they enter one of the most spectacular spaces in the museum, where the harbour quay is reproduced. Here, 45 figures stand, dressed in the fashions of three different eras of the whole 150-year period . Beyond the quay, the steamship *Lahn* is waiting. We see only the dark, menacing side of it, while the voices of people from Eastern Europe mingle with the noises of the harbour in the background.

The visit continues in the "Gallery of the Seven Million," a huge room with windows facing the sea. Here it is possible to glean information about the emigrants—who they were, where they came from, why they left. This is where the visitor encounters real biographies. The design is reminiscent of a 19th century archive, with an enormous chest of drawers from floor to ceiling organised chronologically. Some drawers can be opened, and they contain the stories of 2000 migrants, told through photographs, documents and letters. Devices activated by the iCard tell the story of the visitor's "own" migrant. From the comfort of sofas facing the windows, audio files are accessed via headphones.

Exiting this bright space, comes the surprise. We become that voyager, it's we who are embarking, and the crowd of figures on the quay are waving to us. It is interesting to note that by "collecting" the visitors together in the first room, we establish a certain rhythm, a certain atmosphere, which helps to preserve the surprise. Once on board the ship, we are asked to observe and experience life on three different kinds of vessel—the sailing ship *Bremen* (1854), the steamship *Lahn* (1887) and the transatlantic ocean liner *Columbus* (1929). Past the hold, with its "classic" accumulation of old luggage, we cross the different spaces—the cabins, the dining rooms, the toilets…—and we understand their functions thanks to a plethora of interactive devices, videos, first-hand documents. In a bathroom, for example, an annoying drip makes us bend over a washbasin. Here we read: *Please turn off the faucet*, and our movements generate a screen display with information about hygiene conditions onboard.

Arrival in New York is visually represented by the white mesh of the Ellis Island registration hall, where the migrants were gathered and examined, and where their language knowledge and mental health were tested. Here visitors can be put through the same test used for the immigrants from 1892 to 1954. Again, with the help of original documents, we get to know real life stories, and we discover which were the most frequent destinations in the USA.

Following their arrival in the New World, visitors can see and read how emigrants prepared themselves for their emigration—by using, for example, letters sent home, or guide books— and also what date the immigration countries— the USA, Canada, Australia and South America—collected from the new arrivals; this is all on display in the "Office of the New World."

In the reconstructed ticket booths of Grand Central Terminus in New York (1913), the biographies of the emigrants who have accompanied us thus far are recounted as far as their present-day descendants. The railway station is also the place to learn about the hardships and challenges as well as the successes of German

immigrants to the USA, in three time periods: the mid 19th century, the end of the 19th century, and the middle of the 20th century.

Past the hall of Grand Central Station, the visitor arrives at a shopping mall, "frozen" in the year 1973, when the German parliament passed a law banning the recruitment of migrant workers. From one shop to the next—the hairdresser, the kiosk, the ice-cream seller, the department store—the history of immigration in Germany from the 17th century on is exhibited in more biographies, recounted by personal objects, passed down from parent to child, symbolic of a link with tradition, or rather its dynamic transformation over time. In the Roxy cinema two films, specially produced for the German Emigration Center, may be viewed: "Welcome Home" and "24h Buenos Aires."

Anna Chiara Cimoli

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IMG. 4.23 — *Museu d'Història de la Immigració de Catalunya, Sant Adrià de Besòs, Barcelona, Spain. The "Integration Game." Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

Museu d'Història de la Immigraciò de Catalunya–MhiC
Museum of the History of Immigration in Catalonia–MhiC, Sant Adrià de Besòs, Barcelona, Spain

The museum, inaugurated in 2004, is located in the municipality of Sant Adrià de Besòs, contiguous to Barcelona, and linked to the city by the Ronda Litoral and the underground.

The office and temporary exhibitions space are hosted in the Masia de Can Serra, a small rural 19th century building with no special appeal. The permanent exhibition is located just alongside the Masia de Can Serra inside a wagon of the *El Sevillano* train, used by emigrants who moved to Catalonia from the south of the country during the 20th Century. In this section, the themes of departure and journey are considered.

An external pavilion, the "Espai Migrar," designed by Jorge Mestre and Ivan Bercedo (Mizien Arquitectura SLP, Barcelona), displays mostly videos and photography. In this section the main issues are globalisation, trespassing borders and arriving in a new homeland.

The garden, partly cultivated by the elderly living in the neighborhood, forms an integral part of the museum and allows for open-air activities. In October 2012 the new exhibit "Temps de migracions" was inaugurated. This extension, as well as creating a new entrance, provides a historical excursus through a timeline, describing migrations from pre-history to industrialisation. This extension, which occupies the arcade of the Masia de Can Serra, refers more to "migratory" than to historical concepts (nomadism, prejudice, territoriality and interculturality).

The museography is interactive and plays on personal emotions and reactions rather than on scientific data. Each "thematic island" asks the visitor three questions aimed at stimulating a personal response. For example, in "Nomadic Humanity," the questions are:

→ Who is this speaking another language? *Ignorance*;

→ Why am I afraid of him? *Insecurity*;

→ Who is "the other one"? It seems that I am "the other one" for him as well…*Prejudice*.

The texts are written in Catalan, Spanish and English.

The MhiC counts approximately 12,000 visitors per year. Its website, www.mhic.net, is also used as a virtual museum and as a shared working platform. Here you can find the links to the blogs which gather together all the "work in progress"—mainly by schools.

The name of the museum, with its evident political message, indicates that the research field is Catalonia, but the area of interest is much broader, since at the core of the museum's mission is the recognition of migrations as an international, eternal phenomenon—temporary exhibitions, in fact, do not focus only on Catalan themes, but tend to show the diversity and peculiarities of each migrant community.

Despite the limited dimensions of the museum—in terms of physical area, number of staff and resources—the MhiC represents an interesting case-study for its dynamism and outreach capacity. The museum's mission has three cores: the historiographical, the social—the museum as a place promoting inter-cultural policies—and the testimonial—the museum as a collector of individual and collective stories. A documentation centre is also part of the institution.

→ **REPRESENTING CITIZENSHIP**

The main subject of the museum is the story of migrations to Catalonia from their origins up to the present day, with particular focus on the last century. About one and a half million people moved to the region between the 1940s and 1970s, especially from Estremadura and Andalusia.

The central discourse concerns the connection between 20th century migratory history and

1 | Introducció - Recepció. Temps de migracions
2 | Humans en moviment. Línia històrica
3 | l'Andana i El Sevillano. Migracions del Segle XX
4 | Espai Migrar. Migració y Globalització
5 | Masia de Can Serra. Exposicions temporals i arxiu MhiC

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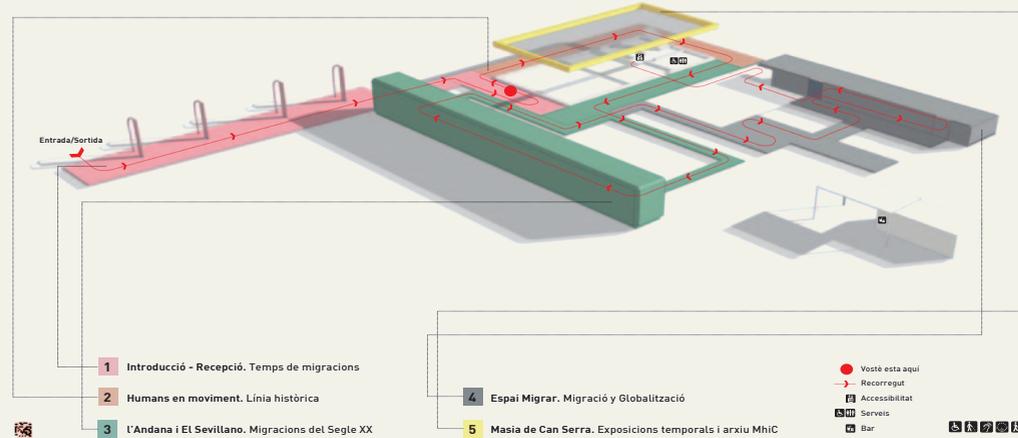
IMG. 4.24 — *The articulation of the museum spaces. Courtesy of Museu d'Història de la Immigració de Catalunya.*

IMG. 4.25 — *A view of the "El Sevillano" train. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

that of today, between internal and international migrations, seen through a lens which considers migrations as the result of a search for a better life, the expression of a "collective tenacity," and thus a symptom of a society's vitality. This discourse is expressed through the active involvement of the public, whether composed of the elderly, teenagers, schoolchildren or the local public—the conference room regularly hosts associations, organisations and institutions which use it for their own meetings, parties and other activities.

Above all, the museum aims to be an arena for inter-cultural dialogue. In order to attract the public it appeals to the emotional, shared dimension typical of migrations, a dimension that concerns not only individuals but society as a whole, given that it is based on transversal issues which are important to all, such as family, social ties, the challenge of improvement and the definition of identity.

Among the more successful initiatives, we are reminded of "Diàlegs migrants," a project—and later also a photo exhibition hosted by the museum—which put together "old" and new immigrants, bringing them together in order to open up spaces for dialogue, starting from the proximity of their life stories—this project was designed by *Fundaciò Ciutadania Multicultural-Mescadìs,* and sponsored by the *Diputaciò de Barcelona*, the Ajuntament de Barcelona and the diocesan Caritas; the museum was one of the partners. Another important project was "Fem un museu. Jo també he estat immigrant," that involved many neighbourhood schools in the search for documents to become part of the museum's collection (the output can be seen at http://oliba.uoc.edu/mhic_joomla/webs).

The location of the museum is quite unusual and is undoubtedly in some ways problematic. It is a suburban museum, located in the middle of a busy junction and spread over different units. Beginning with these objective data, the choice was to "immerse" it physically in the social and urban fabric by entrusting the gardens to the elderly—mostly immigrants from the south of the country, and therefore protagonists of the story told in the museum—and by working actively on designing projects which involved the public. The museum, despite its small number of staff—director, security guard, a couple of external collaborators for educational activities and one or two interns per semester—, offers a rich and diverse range of activities. Its relationship with the public and its willingness to listen are the basis of the museum's cultural project.

The permanent collection is displayed aboard an original carriage of the *El Sevillano* train, dating back to 1958 and donated by the railway museum of Vilanova i la Geltrù. Inside the carriage, each section describes a different moment or aspect of the journey, from departure to arrival, often using personal accounts—which can be read on monitors or listened to through audio devices in their original language, while the guidebook is also translated into English. Narration is developed through superimposing visual (photo, video) and audio accounts, creating a strong emotional response.

The display is quite traditional. We find some of the "commonplaces" of the museography of migrations, such as the luggage–monitor, the display of objects connected to the journey—bags, a water bottle, luggage tied up with twine, dolls dressed in old-fashioned clothes—some digital reconstructions of the migratory routes—indicating the three main points of departure: Seville, Badajoz and La Coruña—or of the time necessary to travel from the south to the north of the country—which today would be the flight-time to Ecuador. Again, the visitor can read on a monitor some sentences from a letter telling about the fears and sensations of journey, or watch the sea as it looked from the window to those who maybe had never seen it before, or experience the confusion of arrival at the Estaciò de França.

In this specific case, the historical container, even if completely decontextualised, has the function of leading the visitor, almost by the hand, inside an important place for migratory history, and therefore to transform the public into an actor who, while walking the train's corridor, identifies with the epic journeys of many Spaniards.

IMG. 4.26 — *The interior of the "Espai Migrar ." Photo by Francesca Lanz.*

IMG. 4.27 — *The open air section dedicated to borders. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

In the garden we also find the "Espai Migrar," a 300-square-metre open space dedicated to migrations in an era of globalisation and to the shift from the idea of "immigration" to the more contemporary one of "citizenship." If the *Sevillano* was about departure, here we are concerned with all the physical and identitary stages that characterise arrival and the challenges of the new life. This area is extremely interesting since it succeeds in treating a huge variety of issues in quite a limited space. It is organised in three parallel and longitudinal units, one dedicated to the myth of departure, the second to the frontier, the third to arrival and settlement. The overall image of this area, from the outside, suggests the impression of a superimposition of coloured, transparent layers. The first. when looking from the *Sevillano*, deals with the moment of departure by displaying, on one side, several icons of consumerism which contribute to creating the myth of an "elsewhere" and pictures dedicated to farewells; on the other side, there are images evoking family ties.

The second unit, through two parallel partitions made of mesh, evokes the image of the frontier—in all its declinations: physical, administrative, mobile, internal and urban. The visitor enters this space over a level crossing. The mesh is the support to a visual survey (photos and signposts) of the risks, challenges and contradictions of borders.

Separating this volume from the previous one is a glass wall dedicated to arrival, on which there is a reproduction a map similar to a hypothetical underground, with lines of different colours crossing each other. The colours of the lines correspond to themes such as language, perception of the other, work and the "Ulysses syndrome." The stations have the names of the large cities of the world, the places where immigration takes place.

Between this wall and the final volume, drawn on the ground, there is a game played all over the world. Here it is inspired by the various stages of "integration," with continuous leaps back and forth depending on the rhythm of bureaucracy and of justice.

Inside this space the focus is on settlement and stabilisation—the themes treated are housing, work, culture, sport and spare time. Here we have several brief texts and an evocative iconographic apparatus, with many poetic screen printings on glass. On one of the two short walls of this rectangular space videos which the visitor may chose are displayed. The other short wall, the one towards the Masia de Can Serra, is used as a video screen. Touch-screen videos allow an in-depth viewing of some of the videos.

Inside the Can Serra, at the ground level, we find the offices. These host the documentation centre, the CEDHIC (*Centro de Estudios y Documentación de Historia de la Inmigración de Cataluña*) and a meeting room, while temporary exhibitions are held on the first floor (100 sq.m.). The museum pays special attention to the needs of the hard-of-hearing, the visually-impaired and the disabled.

Anna Chiara Cimoli

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IMG. 4.28 — *BallinStadt Hamburg, Germany. The "Ship of Dreams." Architectural reconstruction and adaptation by LeisureWorkGroup GmbH. Exhibition design by Studio Babelsberg. Courtesy of BallinStadt, Hamburg.*

BallinStadt
Hamburg, Germany

Located on the Veddel Island, one of the many islands that form Hamburg's archipelago along the Elbe river, BallinStadt takes its name from Albert Ballin, an enlightened manager who was the director of the *HAPAG* shipping company from 1898 to 1918.

The buildings we see today are the reconstruction of the Emigration Halls built by HAPAG where the travellers gathered, found accommodation, spent the quarantine period, and waited for their turn to leave from Hamburg harbour. It is estimated that about five million people, mostly Jews from Eastern Europe, left from Hamburg's harbour bound for America.

HAPAG first built some accommodation buildings on the *Amerikakai* (America Quai) in 1892, but they soon became too small and inadequate. Subsequently, from 1898 to 1907, the company built a real "city inside the city," consisting of a reception hall, sleeping and living quarters, dining hall, administration building, clinic, stable, luggage room, two hotels, and even a church, synagogue and music hall. The quality of life, the hospitality and sanitary conditions were generally good, compared to other harbours and departure stations of the same period. Some special measures, aimed also at preventing conflict, were adopted; people of the same country were generally kept together, and kosher food was provided for the Jewish community, a unique opportunity among European harbour cities (Albert Ballin was a Jew himself). The emigrants, on arrival on Veddel Island, were medically examined, and all the Russians, plus all those suspected of being ill, had to undergo quarantine. All clothing and luggage was disinfected.

The first facilities opened in 1901, and at their busiest hosted 3,500 people. Three years later the "city" had to be extended, and other 43,000 sq.m were added, plus 6,000 for the quarantine barracks, the latter being donated by the municipality. Construction went on, in stages, from 1898 to 1907. During World War II, the Emigrant Halls were used by the *SS group Germania*; later on, the halls which had survived the road construction of the nearby Wilhelmsburg district became an immense prison camp. Subsequently, the British Army commandeered the halls in order to accommodate several companies. In 1947 they were used as temporary shelter for those who had lost their homes during the Hamburg bombing. In the 1960s, all the halls bar one (no. 13/14, later an automobile body shop) were torn down; only the church was preserved. The Emigration Halls were "re-discovered" thanks to a story-writing and theatre workshop in the nearby neighbourhood. In 2004, the City of Hamburg, realising the cultural and historical value of the place, despite its being completely unrecognisable at that time, decided to fund the reconstruction of several buildings (two-thirds of the funding was public).

The museum consists of three buildings in a "U" shape, with glass volumes "inserted" into two of them. The buildings host the information centre and entrance hall (building no 1), the exhibition itself, organised according to a "classic" design, going from departure to arrival (no. 2), and the reconstruction of the reception area and of a dormitory in 1910, as well as the research centre, shop and restaurant (no. 3). BallinStadt tells the story of the migrants coming not only from Germany, but from all over eastern Europe, and it does so in the very place where the migrants gathered before leaving for the United States from 1850 to 1938. "Milieu reconstructions" and recourse to theatrical forms represent the language and display method chosen by the curators. The architectural reconstruction and adaptation was designed by LeisureWorkGroup GmbH, while the exhibition design is by Studio Babelsberg, based in Potsdam.

IMG. 4.29 — *The advertising image of the museum. Courtesy of BallinStadt, Hamburg.*

IMG. 4.30 — *A general view of the museum premises. Courtesy of BallinStadt, Hamburg.*

IMG. 4.31 — *The museum premises with the open-air restaurant. Courtesy of BallinStadt, Hamburg.*

IMG. 4.32 — *The first exhibition room characterized by the balloons evoking the historical background. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.33 — The "archive" collecting the passengers lists. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.

IMG. 4.35 — The reconstruction of a steamship cabin. Courtesy of BallinStadt, Hamburg.

IMG. 4.34 — The prow of the "Ship of Dreams." Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.

IMG. 4.36 — The reconstruction of street life in New York. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.

IMG. 4.37 — The dormitory. Courtesy of BallinStadt, Hamburg.

→ A JOURNEY THROUGH SPACE AND TIME

The reconstruction of three halls—only one of which, building no.3, retains some original parts—"as they used to be"—very much a 19th century attitude towards restoration—is in itself a testimony to the sense of heritage expressed in BallinStadt. The aim of the design of the buildings and the exhibition aims is to suggest a "days-gone-by" atmosphere, the charm of history, an immersion into a world that no longer exists. This does not necessarily mean that the museum concept is romantic or superficial; the dark side of emigration is shown, described, explained in detail. Still, complexity is somehow "levelled off" through the choice of certain narrative solutions, such as the invitation to listen to personal accounts, which form the fil rouge of the narration. This is very common in museums dealing with migrations—as well as in those related to Shoah, war crimes or difficult historical matters. Here, the curators have chosen to personify the emigrants through life-size mannequins in period garments, and this represents one of the points of affinity with the German Emigration Center in Bremerhaven, opened two years previously.

Another museological choice—also very popular—is that of the "milieu reconstruction" or "period rooms." The atmosphere of the place is recreated using techniques which are almost theatrical. The feeling of being on a cinema set is sometimes strong, and communication from the museum only reinforces this impression. Reference is often made to family tours, to the fact that the museum is suitable for all ages, to a kind of of "leisure" or "amusement" to be found in the museum experience—of course, no museum would want to describe itself as offering a miserable experience. In keeping with this, there is a successful interactive game for children and teenagers. The museum hosts "heritage tours," organised increasingly by US tourists keen to discover their "roots." Effective advertisement and communication is also to be found in tourist areas. Soon after the museum opened in 2007, *The New York Times* wrote: "The colourful and unorthodox presentation styles, which

sometimes border on kitsch, should appeal to younger museum-goers."

In the first room the visitor is presented with five real biographies scattered through different historical moments and personified by life-size dolls. An audio device placed next to each doll tells their stories and allows the visitor to identify with each. Hanging from the ceiling, white balloons represent the main issues involved in the choice to migrate and contain symbols of them; they include tolerance, money, religion and the pursuit of freedom.

The next room is dedicated to the main reasons for emigrating from Europe in the 19th century—the "push and pull factors." Here, an interactive map—in the form of an over-sized book—shows the native countries of the emigrants—between 1881 and 1914 mostly the Ukraine, Galicia, Lithuania and Belarus. Many documents relating to the dream of the "new world" are shown here, among which advertisements for the various shipping lines. Attention is drawn to the economic and political factors which led to emigration, such as industrialisation, the inflation of the 1920s and the religious persecutions. The design marries the dream of the "golden land" to a golden wall, complete with images of arrival in the new land hung from it, circulated via the propaganda of the emigration agents (and later prohibited). Here, the narrative stresses the siren song which was so diffused throughout Europe in the 19th century and beginning the 20th. A common technique in migration museums, luggage containing video instead of garments, is used in this room. One room is a reconstruction of Albert Ballin's office. Above the mantelpiece, a video-installation shows German actor Wolfgang Völz impersonating *HAPAG*'s director. A giant photo of the original office, the furniture and personal documents provide information about this elegant, skilled man, who committed suicide in 1918, two days before the end of the war ended, out of fear for the possible political consequences of his involvement—he had served as a mediator between the German empire and Great Britain prior to the outbreak of World War I. Beyond the control station, the visitors

embark on the so-called "Ship of Dreams." They are accompanied by personal questions about their departure, such as *What are you taking with you?*, written on the columns. The ship is represented by its prow—the part stands for the whole—, and oriented towards a huge glass window, suggesting wide open spaces, while the rest of the museum spaces are mostly immersed in half-light.

On board, visitors are informed about the accommodation available—the differences between the classes in terms of comfort and hygiene crystallize in the reconstruction of the cabins for the "rich" and the "poor"—, the change for from sail to steam, with all its implications, and the cost and duration of the journey. The destination is New York, via Ellis Island. The statue of Liberty stands behind a mesh, but before reaching it the migrants have to pass medical assessment and interviews, represented by full-size dolls of the officers. Via posters, shop windows, and even a horse-drawn cart bearing fruit and vegetables (and video installations), the visitor is then plunged into the New York of 1900s. There is also a small section here dedicated to emigration to Latin America.

In the final room, some display cases present a profile of the German community and the story of the "Little Germany" neighbourhood, almost decimated following an accident at sea in 1904, which saw the deaths of about 1100 people from the area. There are stories of commercial success—such as those of Levi Strauss and Henry John Heinz, and artefacts showing the merging of the two cultures. Pictures accompanied by text narrate the stories of several statesman of German origin, such as Henry Kissinger

and Ernesto Geisel. Finally, we discover what happened to the emigrants we met in the first room. The "U" shape of the building means that we find ourselves back where we started, and able to tie up the thread of personal and social history. No space is left for reflection on contemporary immigrations or multiculturalism.

The adjacent building recreates the original atmosphere of the place. Here we find very little text, no partitions, no real "museum exhibition," but rather an immersion in the dormitory "as it used to be." Passing by the beds, in the open luggage we find texts, documents and artefacts describing the lives, habits, rules, rights and duties of the guests. We discover, for example, that men and women were hosted in different dormitories, but families were kept together; children slept two to a bed. Life-size mannequins suggest a dialogue between an officer and a guest at the moment of registration

Genealogy research can be carried out free in the research centre; the museum provides access both to the Hamburg passenger lists, and to other databases, thanks to a partnership with Ancestry.de.

<div align="right">Anna Chiara Cimoli</div>

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IMG. 4.38 — *Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris, France. Renovation project by Patrick Bouchain and Loïc Julienne. A view of the permanent exhibition. © EPPD-Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris.*

Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration–CNHI
National Centre for Immigration History–CNHI, Paris, France

The Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration is located in the Palais de la Porte Dorée, built in 1931 for the Colonial Exhibition. Since then, the building hosted the Musée des Colonies, later called Musée d'Outre-Mer, then Musée des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie (the scientific design of the latter was by Georges Henri Rivière). A typical Art Déco example, it is decorated by frescoes by Pierre Ducos de la Haille and bas-reliefs by Alfred Janniot. The iconographic program of the building illustrates the exchanges between France and its colonies (Janniot's bas-relief façade describes the colonies' economic contribution to France, while the Salle des Fêtes' frescoes describe the opposite process). On the ground floor there is an Aquarium, a ticket office and a bookshop shared by the two institutions, and the huge "Salle des Fêtes" or 'Party Hall' dedicated to art projects often commissioned by the CNHI itself, or to public conferences, presentations or celebrations. The exhibition rooms are located on the first and second floors.

Prior to the opening of the CNHI, the institution developed a participatory policy with the aim of involving institutions, the cultural world and activists, as well as creating a collection (the museum had no collection: the works of art were bought on the way, while the documents were partly donated by privates and partly found in archives). The Cité's vocation, in fact, is not to be a research centre itself, but instead to work as a collector, a catalyst, and a place where researchers meet both at a national and at an international level, as is the case of the Cité de la Musique and of the Cité la Science.

Beyond the permanent exhibition, a rich program of temporary exhibitions is also at the heart of the CNHI's mission: among the more recent we recall "J'ai deux amours" (November 2011–June 2012); "Migrants en Guyane. Pho-

tographies de Frédéric Piantoni" (February–May 2012); "Vies d'exil—1954–1962. Des Algériens en France pendant la guerre d'Algérie" (October 2012–May 2013).

Part of the Cité is also the Abdelmalek Sayad Library and Archive, whose catalogue can be browsed online. It contains 20,000 documents. Educational activity is at the core of the Cité's mission. Part of it is a literary contest, the so-called UniverCité (a popular university organizing conferences and workshops, often linked to the activity of the bimonthly magazine *Hommes et Migrations*, published by the Cité itself), the presence of performance art (music, dance…), video and film projections, workshops with artists and educators for all kinds of public, literary cafés on Saturday afternoons, guided tours both at the museum and at the building.

The website is extremely rich in documents and has a very useful section for teachers. The film *Deux siècles d'histoire de l'immigration en France* can be seen here.

→ THE PAST AND THE CONTEMPORARY

The first project for an immigration museum to be built in Paris dates from 1976. This project, presented by the *Office National de Promotion Culturelle des Immigrés* (National Office for the Cultural Promotion of Immigrants), was confirmed by the socialist government in 1983 also thanks to the appointment of the historian Gérard Noiriel. In 1990, the *Association pour un Musée de l'Immigration*, created by a group of historians and activists, among them Noiriel, took charge. Some associations of immigrants and of activists worked under the same management since the end of the eighties, trying to draw the public attention to the rediscovery of migration history, seen as a common heritage.

Following the interest demonstrated by Lionel Jospin, in 2002 President Jacques Chi-

IMG.4.39 — *A sketch of the hall and the forum. © Agence Construire, Paris, courtesy of Loïc Julienne/ Agence Construire, Paris.*
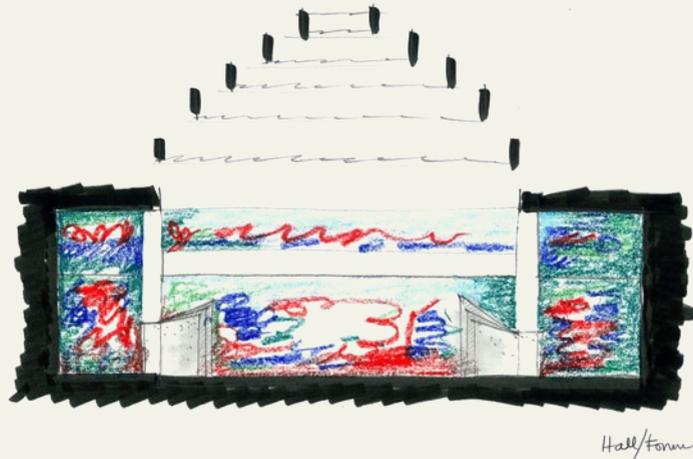
IMG. 4.40 — *A view of the front facade. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.41 — *The "Galerie des dons." © EPPD-Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris.*

rac created a specific committee inside the ADRI-*Agence pour le Developpement des Relations Interculturelles* (Agency for the Development of Intercultural Relations), and charged Jacques Toubon to design what at that time was called *Centre de ressources et de mémoire sur l'immigration* (Resource and Memory on Immigration Centre).

The project was officially launched by Jean-Pierre Raffarin, who on the occasion of the presentation announced the choice of the Palais de la Porte Dorée as the location of the new museum, which since then took its present name. The riots in the Paisian suburbs (2005) demonstrated the failure of the adopted policies until that moment and aroused a reflection on the nature of multicultural societies and on integration strategies. That same year, the necessity to read France's colonial history anew became evident: the appeal entitled *Nous sommes tous indigènes de la République* (We all are Republic natives) was published on the internet and had a huge echo. The same year, protests against the law asking to underline in school programs the positive role played in the overseas colonies blew; meanwhile, activists asked for the institution of a Memorial Day commemorating slavery. Slowly, a series of claims appeared which seemed to be parallel or juxtaposed, when not competing. The different "heritages" seemed in conflict, almost in competition with each other.

In 2007, a group of historian members of the scientific committee left the group, protesting the restrictive policies concerning immigration in France, and maybe also not agreeing on some points concerning the cultural direction undertaken by the project. Nevertheless, the restoration and requalification works, directed by Patrick Bouchain and Loïc Julienne from the Paris-based Construire, chosen in the consultation organised by the Direction des Musées de France in 2005, continued and the Cité opened its doors on 9th October, 2007.

Both for its content and the choice of the location, since the beginning the museum aroused bitter controversy, and it was often criticised. The fact that it was never inaugurated by President Sarkozy or any of his delegates was interpreted by many as a political choice.

Director, Luc Gruson in 2011 wrote: "The lack of inauguration meant for some people lack of recognition. For others, on the contrary, this meant that the institution might somehow 'disturb'. But most of the French simply never heard about it, and it is true that the lack of a political message at the moment of opening, cast a doubt on the 'legitimisation' project sent by the museum." It must be stressed that between October, 2010 and January, 2011 the Cité was occupied by 500 *sans papiers* (undocumented people), who recognised in it the right place to express their demands. The exhibition areas are quite rigid, since the rooms are located around two huge, full-height spaces, symmetrical in respect to the entrance, following the idea of alignment, monumentality and rhythm, typical of the time when it was built.

The first space the visitor meets, on the upper floor, has the function of a historic and general preamble. It is occupied by three metallic volumes, hung from the ceiling, designed to be looked at from below. Each of them is dedicated to a subject—migrations on a world scale, migrations towards France and the distribution of migrants in the country—and chronologically articulated in four steps, from the turn of the XX Century up to today. Through maps (also published on the website: www.histoire-immigration.fr/histoire-de-l-immigration/questions-contemporaines/cartes), the visitor gets the basic information.

In the same space the visitor is given the audio guides that are necessary to listen to the stories disseminated along the way. Here starts the permanent exhibition, called "Repères" (points of reference). Here, the documents belong to three macro-typologies: anthropologic documents (interviews, first-hand stories), historic (handwritten or published texts, books, leaflets, posters, historical synthesis in a touch-screen form) and artistic (photography and works of art).

IMG. 4.42 — *A view of the permanent exhibition. © EPPD-Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris.*

IMG.4.43 — *A view of the permanent exhibition. © EPPD-Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris.*

IMG. 4.44 — *The "Rencontres" section in the permanent exhibition. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.45 — *Barthélémy Toguo, Climbing down, 2004. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.46 — *A view of the exhibition "J'ai deux amours," 16 November 2011-24 June 2012. Image used for the museum's communication, courtesy of Costa Edutainment.*

The overall idea is that the experience of immigration, in the two centuries taken into consideration (XIX and XX), has common features, regardless of the place of origin and of the reasons for departure (the search for a better life, the issue of housing, that of identity, of integration and so on). Therefore a thematic approach was chosen, capable of taking into consideration the historical and chronological dimension, leaving instead in the background in-depth views into this or that specific migration history.

"Repères" is organised into three main areas, each sliced into various sub-themes, that we quote here using the same titles as the exhibition's sections:

→ The choice to leave, the journey, the meeting with France (sub-themes: Emigrating, In front of the State, Welcoming country/Hostile France, Here and there);

→ Living and working places (Life places, Working, Grounding, Sports)

→ The contribution of cultures (Diversity).

This last section, maybe the most interactive, reflects on the theme of language—for example through a work of art by Zineb Sedira—, of the "other" in artistic production (containing interviews with artists and film extracts), on the power of objects—in their passage from everyday life to fashion systems, in their transnational component, in the superposing of layers through time: this is the case of Mona Lisa, Italian par excellence but the symbol of the Louvre at the same time…

Around one of the two galleries is the "Galerie des Dons" (Gift gallery), where objects donated by migrants or by their descendants are exhibited. What is mostly valued here is the uniqueness of each persons story, which always melts into a common, national, shared story: immigration is seen as a crossing phenomenon, which somehow affected almost every family, and which today is an integral part of France's history. Matt plastic sheets, put on the glass, are eliminated one after the other, as gifts arrive at the museum, so as to show what lies beside and giving the sense of an ongoing process.

Around the other gallery, temporary smaller exhibitions are held.

The museum's strong issue is the narration of immigration as a "shared heritage" (in line with the USA, Canadian and Australian examples). The historical, more detached approach was preferred to a memorialistic approach, also in order to favour a sort of collective appropriation process. This sense of collectivity is very strongly part of the museum's mission: the museum wants to be *un lieu et un reseau* (a place and a network) and to create a strong interaction between cultural offering and social request. The collaborative aspect seems to be one of the crucial points—the migrants associations which fought to be part of the process now expresses some perplexity about a place the reads as an expression of the State…

According to Luc Gruson, research shows that the visitors think that the museum stresses the society's point of view too much, and the migrants'too little: a perspective for the future could be to "insist less on migration and more on integration."

Anna Chiara Cimoli

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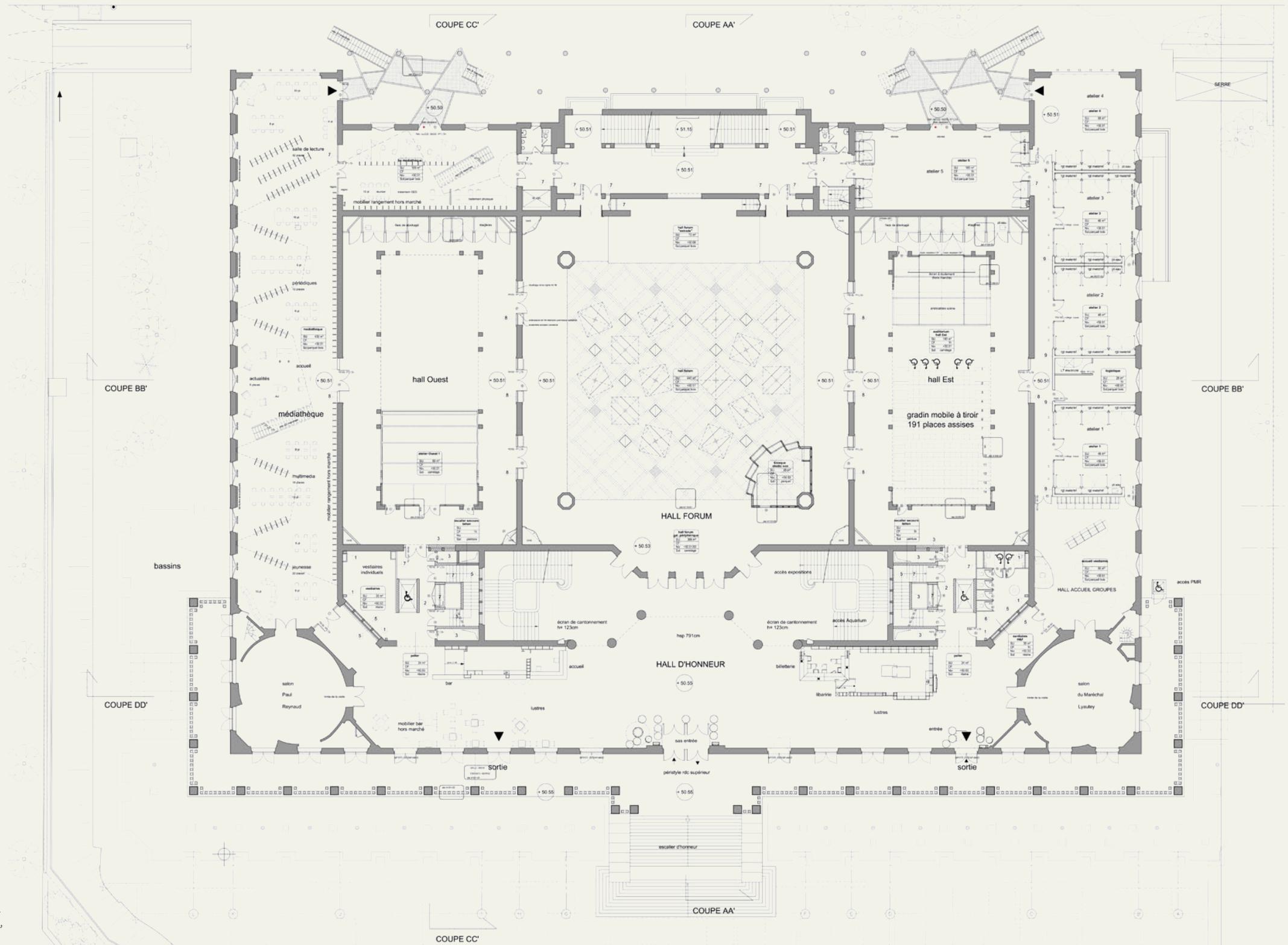
IMG. 4.47 — *Ground floor plan. Courtesy of Agence Construire, Paris.*
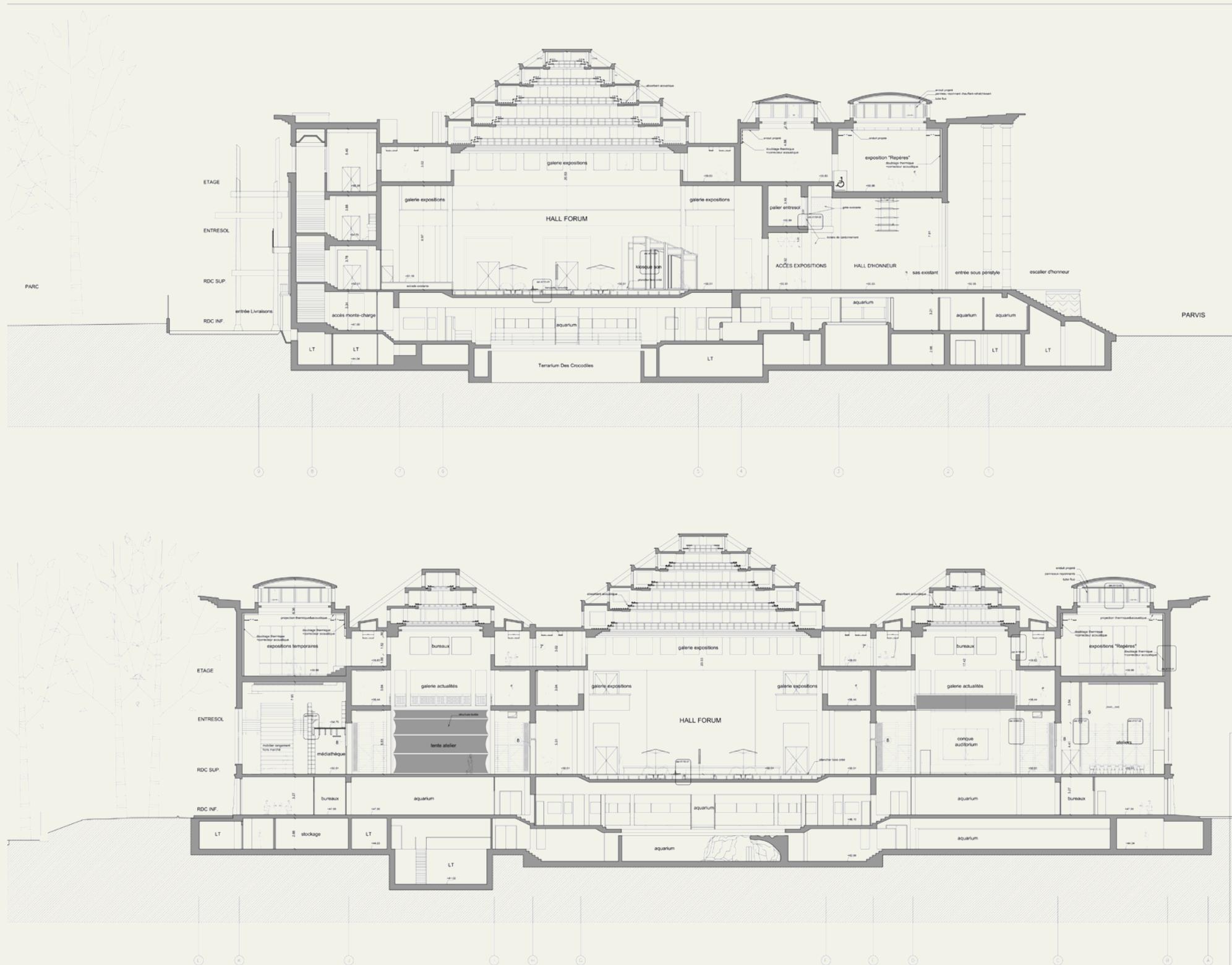
IMG. 4.48 — *North-south section (AA) and est-west section (BB). Courtesy of Agence Construire, Paris.*

IMG. 4.49 — *Galata Museo del Mare e delle Migrazioni, Genoa, Italy. Renovation project by by Guillermo Vázquez Consuegra.Exterior view. Courtesy of the Estudio Vázquez Consuegra, Seville. Photo by Duccio Malagamba.*

Memoria e Migrazioni–MeM
Galata Museo del Mare e delle Migrazioni
Memory and Migration section–MeM, Galata Sea Museum, Genoa, Italy

The "Memoria e Migrazioni" (MeM) section, inaugurated in November 2011, occupies the entire third floor of the Galata Museo del Mare e delle Migrazioni in Genoa. It covers a 1200 sq.m. surface. The building—the oldest in Genoa Harbour—was renovated by Guillermo Vázquez Consuegra, who transformed it into a transparent volume, open to the surrounding environment, thanks also to the presence of the mirador, the viewpoint on the top floor. Both the Galata and the nearby Aquarium, one of the most successful entertainment structures in Italy, were opened in 2004, the year Genoa was European Capital of Culture.

The Nazario Sauro submarine, part of the Galata collection from 2009, is the first museum ship in Italy that may be visited by sea. It therefore constitutes another attraction for tourists and other visitors who, in 2011, numbered over 200,000—according to the website Trivago, Galata is the eighth most visited museum in Italy today.

The former President of the Italian Parliament, Gianfranco Fini, visited the MeM soon after its inauguration. It was also the site of one of the first public visits by Andrea Riccardi, Minister of International Cooperation and Integration in the Monti government. This shows to what point the museum is taking on an important challenge and touching on a contemporary and sensitive theme. It is the first permanent installation to deal with the theme of the representation of immigration in an Italian museum. In fact, while many European museums are progressively trying to include the multi-layered issue of multiculturalism (through temporary exhibitions, educational programs and participatory practices), Italian museums appear to lag behind in this respect. Since 2011, in order to reflect its new nature, the previous name Galata–Museo del Mare e della Navigazione became Galata–Museo del Mare e delle Migrazioni.

Galata is a municipal museum and is part of the Mu.Ma network (Genoa Sea and Navigation Museums, also including the Maritime Museum in Genova Pegli and the Commenda di Pré, a place of hospitality for pilgrims going to or coming from the Holy Land during the Crusades). It is managed by Costa Edutainment.

→ **TAKING A STANCE**

The MeM project derives from the exhibition "La Merica! Da Genova a Ellis Island, il viaggio per mare negli anni dell'emigrazione italiana" (La Merica! From Genoa to Ellis Island, the sea journey in the years of Italian emigration, 2008–2011), which described the phenomenon of emigration to America using a wide variety of multimedia tools—including those designed by Studio Azzurro—, and which was rewarded with huge success in terms of visitor numbers (400,000 in total).

This interest, together with the will to deal with the theme of migrations in a city which was one of the focal points for emigration in Italy (together with Naples), was the driving force behind the transformation of this single episode into a permanent exhibition. The MeM deals with both emigration and immigration, giving them equal room, and seeing them as two linked chapters of the same story. "A journey in search of the past in order to understand the present"—so reads the slogan on the poster where a young African man, in a red shirt, is

framed against a black-and-white photograph of a 19th century ocean-going vessel. The message is clear: History is circular and unpredictable; yesterday we were the migrants, now someone else is. Tomorrow, who knows?

Let us now first analyse the design of the exhibition , and then proceed to a broader reflection on the choices and challenges. The exhibition design is based on interactivity (there are 40 interactive devices) and historical reconstructions. Emphasis is placed on the reconstruction or simulation of the migrant's experience, rather than on the display of first hand documents—as is the case, for example, at the MEI in Rome, or the Fondazione Paolo Cresci in Lucca. At the beginning of the tour, the visitor receives a reproduction of a "real" passport. It contains the data of one out of twenty migrants (two of whom are still alive) and during the visit it is inserted into bar-code readers, in order to follow the stages of the journey in a participatory and empathic way, identifying with the real concerns of the migrant's life.

The first room is occupied by the reconstruction of a part of the historical center of Genoa, where the inhabitants—actors leaning out of monitors representing the windows of the original houses—talk both to each other and to the emigrants. The commonplaces regarding migration mix and overlap in a lively buzz of activity. Then, there is the reconstruction of the Lavarello brothers' travel agency and the façade of the hotel which hosted the emigrants before their departure. The next step in this "chronological" journey is the Maritime Station, where the interactive dialogue between the traveller and the customs officer takes place. The moment of boarding is represented in a reconstruction of the quay and of the hanging footbridges which suggest the image of broken ties. We then board the "Città di Torino" steamship, where we experience the claustrophobia and the unease of the voyage. The interior of the steamship is reconstructed in detail—second class cabins, sick-bay, emigration commissioner's cabin, confinement cell, refectory and women's section. Both the voyage of the poor—with bunk-beds where you can sit

and listen to audio files—and of the wealthy are shown, in order to give an idea of how money could make the difference between a comfortable or painful journey.

The arrival in America is narrated via the three most common destinations for those who left from Genoa: Argentina—with a reconstruction of the Boca neighbourhood, the houses painted in bright colors like those of the Liguria region—Brazil, which, after the abolition of slavery in 1888, encouraged immigration in order to compensate for the lack of labour; a roaring jaguar represents the dangers of life in a fazenda, and the United States—the symbol for which is Ellis Island's Grand Hall. In this last room visitors can take the same intelligence and linguistic tests the immigrants were put through This can be quite an intense personal experience. In the same room, there is a huge 19th-century-style filing cabinet, , where the public can look for "his or her own migrant" and discover whether that particular journey had a positive or negative outcome. Opposite, a bank of monitors allow access to the CISEI (Centro Internazionale Studi Emigrazione Italiana) data-base, which contains boarding lists of all Italians departing from Genoa harbor.

With a clear linguistic switch, we enter the wing dedicated to immigration to Italy. This begins with a selection of photos by Uliano Lucas representing 1973, the year migratory balance became active. The first interactive display, in this part of the museum, is called "Journey Postcards." Here the visitor can choose a postcard and place it on a table, and by doing so activate a video with autobiographical narrations which challenge the idea of "exoticism." Among the monologues, there is an "imaginary" one by one of the victims of the Portopalo shipwreck (1996).

In the following space we see a ship from Lampedusa, the result of a special agreement between the municipality of the island and the museum. If the visitor holds a fender, he can listen to the accounts of migrants. By the ship, in small cases, there are several objects belonging to the migrants (documents, pieces of clothing, a baby's bottle…).
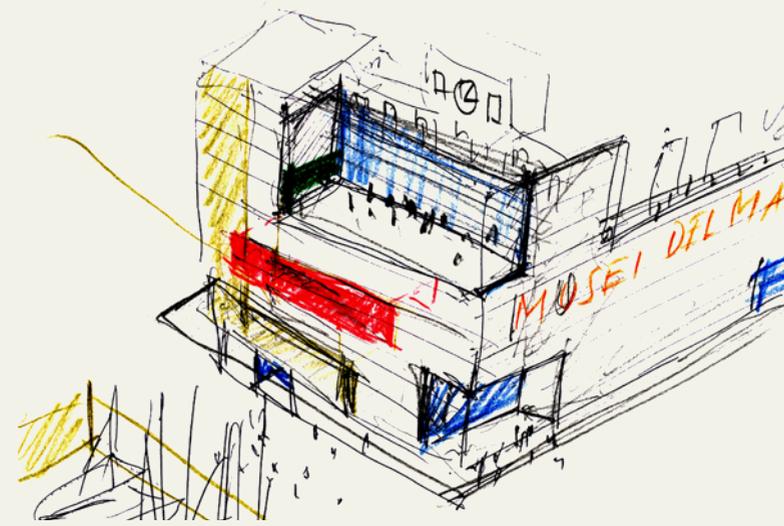
IMG. 4.50 — A sketch of the museum project by Guillermo Vázquez Consuegra. Courtesy of the Estudio Vázquez Consuegra, Seville.

IMG. 4.51 — A view of the museum. Courtesy of the Estudio Vázquez Consuegra, Seville. Photo by Duccio Malagamba.

IMG. 4.52 — Memoria e Migrazioni–MeM section: the arrival in Ellis Island. Courtesy of Galata Museo del Mare Archive, Costa Edutainment. Photo by Merlofotografie.

IMG. 4.54 — *Interactive display: the dialogue with the customs officer before the departure. © Archivio Galata Museo del Mare. Photo by Merlofotografie, courtesy of Costa Edutainment.*

IMG. 4.55 — *A reconstruction of the Boca neighborhood in Buenos Aires. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*
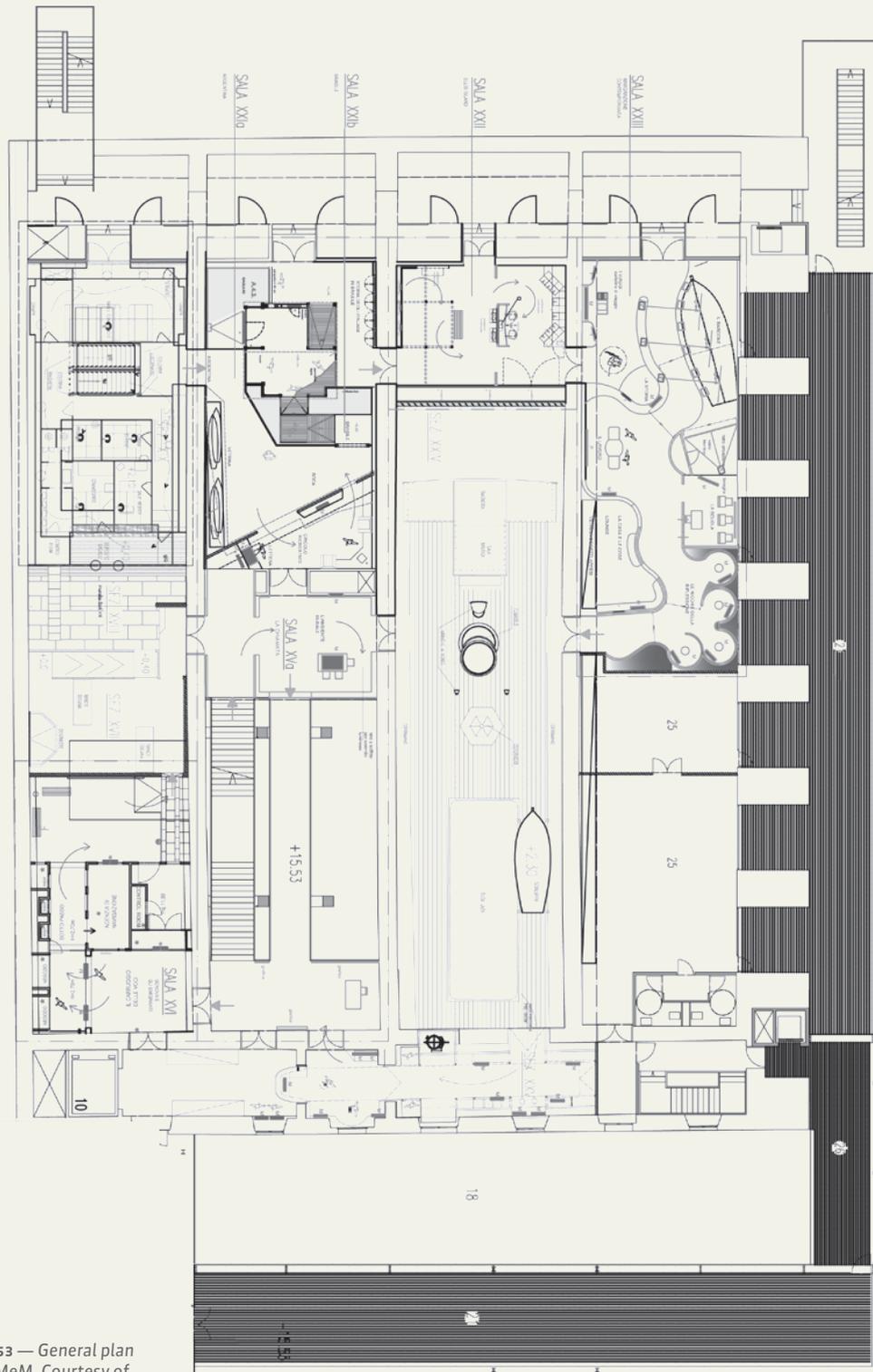
IMG. 4.53 — *General plan of the MeM. Courtesy of Deborah Bruno, Genoa.*

IMG. 4.56 — *On the monitor, an actor reading an original letter by an Italian migrant. © Archivio Galata Museo del Mare. Photo by Merlofotografie, courtesy of Costa Edutainment.*

IMG. 4.57 — *Life in a Brazilian fazenda. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

On the walls, video projections show dramatic images of the rescue of shipwrecked persons, made by the Italian Finance Police. Due to the power of the images—which need no captions—and the evocative nature of the objects, this is one of the more moving rooms.

The narration now underlines the "positive" aspects of immigration through three main themes—work, school and gastronomy. In the exhibit "Who steals our jobs?" we see some provocative videos that show how immigration represents a pillar of Italian welfare. The visitor is invited to choose an object—a safety helmet, a bag, a hairdrye—which, when placed on a base, activates a video about the different aspects of the work done by immigrants, with a special focus on the care of children and the elderly. Next to it, an interactive video shows a classroom. The visitor, standing as though s/he were the teacher, can call on one of the pupils, who will then read an autobiographical text. On another wall, a video shows an Italian chef—Chef Kumalé—accompanied by four colleagues from four different countries, preparing several recipes; this refersto the popular TV cooking shows. The final exhibit consists of "reflection niches" inspired by the "confession rooms" of the Big Brother format. Here, the museum staff ask questions in the form of a quiz. The multiple-choice answers are recorded and used for statistical purposes. The aim is to challenge what we knows—or think we know—about migrations. After each visitor response, whether right or wrong, the curator provides a short, clear explanation.

It is worthwhile including a few observations concerning the choice of content. The museum seems to have divided opinion in the scientific community. On the one hand, there are those who have welcomed the fairly explicit stand and the choice of an immersive, emotional experience. Conversely, however, there has also been criticism of the massive use of technology and the sequence of historical reconstructions and interactive devices which do not leave enough space for personal reflection, making the museum more suitable for schools or a young audience rather than for adults and the general public.

The curators themselves acknowledge some of the criticism, such as the unsuitability of the audio sources in some rooms, or the fact that technology is by definition fragile, and a broken device represents a "hole" in communication that cannot easily be filled.

It is true that the exhibition design is quite dense, that there are few spaces for decompression and relaxation, and also that an adult or elderly public might sometimes have difficulty with the interactivity. Of course, this problem is common to all the museums who have made this kind of technological stand.

But what is perhaps more important to underline is the "political" relevance of the choices made by director Pierangelo Campodonico, developed with President Maria Paola Profumo, architect Deborah Bruno and the scientific committee as a whole. For the first time in an Italian museum, a permanent exhibition discusses immigration not as an emergency to be addressed, but rather as a historic phenomenon, which has always existed and is deeply-rooted in human nature and history.

The physical, historical and cultural continuity between the two sections of the MeM creates an appropriate background for the visitors to tie the threads of history, and immerse themselves in it with empathy. In the "reflection niches," then, one can go more "in-depth" and work on facts and figures, which are quite rare inside the museum; in this way, the visit is not always based solely on experience rather than on numbers or information.

The MeM is based on the assumption that migrations have always existed, are a fundamental key to understanding mankind, and that the notion of "difference" is deeply rooted in it. This fresco is designed to communicate the idea of the complexity of migrations, above all by promoting personal meetings with real life experiences,in order to escape the vagueness of generic discourse.

The MeM sends a clear message: the society we live in is already multicultural, the intersection points among "different people" are already infinite, the reality is not the one recounted by

IMG. 4.58 — *The interactive display called "Journey Postcards." © Archivio Galata Museo del Mare. Photo by Merlofotografie, courtesy of Costa Edutainment.*

IMG. 4.59 — *A boat given to the museum by the Municipality of Lampedusa. © Archivio Galata Museo del Mare. Photo by Merlofotografie, courtesy of Costa Edutainment.*

IMG. 4.60 — *The interactive display dedicated to cooking. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

the media, it is rather that which is "diffused" in a community's life—the "everyday multiculturalism" which Amanda Wise and Selvaraj Velayutham refer to. Religion is also taken into account, though in an "indirect" way. We see, for example, the prayers offered by Senegalese marabouts to the emigrants, or several objects of worship in the showcase dedicated to everyday things—candles from the Holy Land, a reproduction of Ganesh, etc.

The geographical focus is initially very local, but then becomes wider and wider. Genoa, once an important harbour, is now a post-industrial city with no particular appeal to migrants, especially if compared to cities such as Milan, Turin or other cities in Northern Italy. The interpretation of the present day is therefore a wide one, taking into account national and international phenomena—such as wars, famines, unemployment and poverty.

The narration is choral, and it attempts to show the migrants' point of view through the reading of letters—in the first part, based on archival research carried out at the Civic Archive in Genoa, the Fondazione Paolo Cresci in Lucca and other archives—and video accounts. The philological approach of the first part is brough to life via the videos with actors playing the migrants, dressed in old-fashioned clothing. Here, the individual voices represent an entire community of travellers; they tend to melt into the choral narration, even if we are encouraged to follow the path of the individual migrant whose passport we receive at the beginning of the visit. The accent here is not so much on the "success" or "failure" of the migratory adventure, but rather on the sense of leaving, the hopes and fears and the historical impact of migration. The insertion of "dissenting" voices, such as those of the "priggish" of the XIX Century in the first room, create a link between the prejudices of yesterday and today.

The museum's agenda is not to stimulate "parallel interpretations" of migration history, but rather to suggest empathy, and to support it with objective data. This attitude is a very plastic one, especially in the "reflection niches,"

where the quiz is not about feelings or personal opinions—such as, for example, in the Tolerance Museum or in some exhibits in the Anne Frank House—, but about facts and figures, whose sources are always quoted. It is demonstrated, for example, that there exists no connection between immigration and crime or the unemployment rate.

At the end of the visit, a computer shows the results of surveys made in parallel by the MeM, the Bois du Cazier in Marcinelle and the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, gathered in the Sites of Conscience, of which the Genoa Sea and Navigation Museums network is a member.

Anna Chiara Cimoli

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IMG. 4.61 — *Immigrantmuseet, Farum, Denmark. An exhibition case dedicated to life in an asylum cam. Exhibition design by Kvorning Communications and Design. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

Immigrantmuseet
Immigration Museum, Farum, Denmark

The first exhibition was created in 2001 as part of Farums Arkiver og Museer, the local museum of the municipality of Farum, north of Copenhagen. The new permanent exhibition was inaugurated on 27th January, 2012, and is designed by Kvorning Communications and Design, an architectural firm based in Copenhagen. The museum is located inside the Farum Cultural Centre, which also hosts a cinema, an art gallery, a library, a music school and a café. Together, these activities create a very lively atmosphere and help bring people to the museum—access to which is free.

The area of the museum is about 400 square metres, and is divided into four parts: the hall, the "kitchen," the so-called "labyrinth" and the temporary exhibitions gallery.

The museum focuses entirely on immigration, in the spirit of integrating the Danish Emigration Archives based in Aalborg, with which the museum has developed a close cooperation. Together with Mosegaarden, in the town of Værløse, and "The old grocery store, Cornelen" in Farum, the Immigrantmuseet is part of the Furesø Museums network.

The museum addresses itself mostly to people living in Denmark, with a special focus on school children. The recent translation of all the texts into English makes the museum accessible to a wider public, as well as to the tourists. One of the main challenges is to attract migrant citizens and to involve them in the cultural reflections going on in and around the museum. Its physical position in the heart of the cultural centre could help, but because it has been open such a short time, the work is still in progress.

The educational activities regarding schools and adults are developed mainly through visits, which can be "general" or thematic, video projections accompanied by talks, concerts, genealogy courses and other forms of involvement. Some activities are being designed expressly for teen-agers, such as an "integration game" played both in the classroom and in the museum.

The museum is run through public funding—both governmental and local—and tries to attract other funding for its research activities, as well as for projects concerning exhibitions and other kinds of public activities.

It is member of AEMI and of the Danish Museums network, and collaborates with a number of institutions, mostly in Europe but not exclusively. Part of the outreach activity is developed through the social networks and the museum's blog. An important tool is the website dedicated to integration strategies through 500 years of Danish history (www.velkommenher.dk).

The museum has developed three databases, dedicated to the registration of immigrant workers from 1812 to 1924, to awarded citizenships from 1776 to 1960, and to expulsions from 1873 to 1919, all accessible through the website. It also owns an archive—mostly made of interviews. At the beginning the collections were very small, but through time they have attracted more donations and loans.

→ **IN THE LABYRINTH**

Ellis Island in New York, Pier 21 in Halifax and especially the CNHI in Paris, as well as other European museums, proved to be the best source of inspiration for the Immigrantmuseet. The CNHI was particularly influential due to its multi-layered interpretation of migration as an individual, social and historical phenomenon, and the continuous interconnection between theoretical issues and personal histories.

IMG. 4.62 — *The front of the Museum and the Cultural Centre. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.63 — *The corridor at the entrance of the museum. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.64 — *Comparison among the three monotheistic religions. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

In the Immigrantmuseet, history is always used as a tool for putting events into perspective, and helping the visitor trace a personal reflection. Very little text is used and the museum wants to be a place where questions can be raised, to make people think, rather than learning cold facts, which can be found in the literature. Historical data is foundation from which it is possible to suggest other interpretative layers than the more obvious ones—the ones we find in the media, for example. From this viewpoint, contemporary and controversial items such as the burqa, urban ghettos, the social impact of migrants, and all matters concerning citizenship can be seen under a different light.

The museum does not take a position, but it presents evidence of historical facts and puts them under a prism, so as to shed new light on the present. It often does so in a very synthetic, visual way—also due to space limitations. For example, the issue of "importing queens" as a political currency of exchange, often recurring in European history, is represented through a beautiful queen's dress, on loan from a theatre. Irony is used delicately as a means to stress the paradoxes that often punctuate matters of migrations, identity and the perception of the othe r. This is also the case, for example, of the puppet TV film shown recently, where Arabic words merge into the Danish language, as in teenagers' slang, or of the children's book from 1954 where a language and an iconography about Africa was used that would never be acceptable today, using our sensitivity and awareness of linguistic "propriety."

The access hall consists of a corridor on whose sides words related to migrations are written in white against a bright, red background. The lack of a timeline has been questioned by visitors, who think it would have been a useful tool (interview with Susanne Krogh Jensen, 17 July 2012). The choice was to create a suggestive opening space to show the complexity of the issue of immigration. A mirror at the end of the corridor, aside from opening up the perspective, suggests that the subject of the museum, in the end, is us. Texts are very short

with some touch-screen devices offering more in-depth analysis.

In this very graphic layout, some showcases display documents and artefacts (books, hats, records, scarves, passports, magazines, posters…) related to a number of selected themes that introduce the complexity involved in the issue of migrations—traditions such as the "importation" of the Christmas tree from Germany, "immigrations as a brand," referring to the traditional Dutch blue peasants' hat, identity, remittances, citizenship laws, the UN's refugee convention, the presence of Buddhists, work permits, the so-called Foreign Law of 1875, etc. Personal stories are the access key. For example, the statement "My religion is Palestine" made by a person who had never lived in his grandparents' homeland is the key to access the issue of belonging.

Another issue dealt with here is faith. The main differences among the three monotheistic religions can be discovered by lifting some flaps in two cupboards—comparison is made among food, the holy book, calendar, baptism, etc.

The next space is a wider room where, on one side, there is a written insight into the theme of citizenship and the history of the laws which have led to current legislation, displayed through a series of posters, one next to the other. On the other side of the room the theme of food was chosen as a key to access the issue of diversity. A cupboard shows different ingredients, while a series of drawers can be opened and personal stories related to food, traditions, recipes and the symbolic sense of cooking are displayed. Here the visitor is also offered multi-sense experiences. For example he/she is asked to smell spices and to recognise them, discovering that, despite being used in Danish food, they are often grown elsewhere.

Past these two introductory spaces, the visitor enters the "labyrinth," dedicated to cultural encounters. The first part of this room, again conceived as a series of thematic "islands" with a strong visual element and very little text (integrated by touch-screen devices), deals with

IMG. 4.65 — *A view of the exhibition cases in the "labyrinth." Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.66 — *A "classic" revisited: luggage and the story it tells. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*
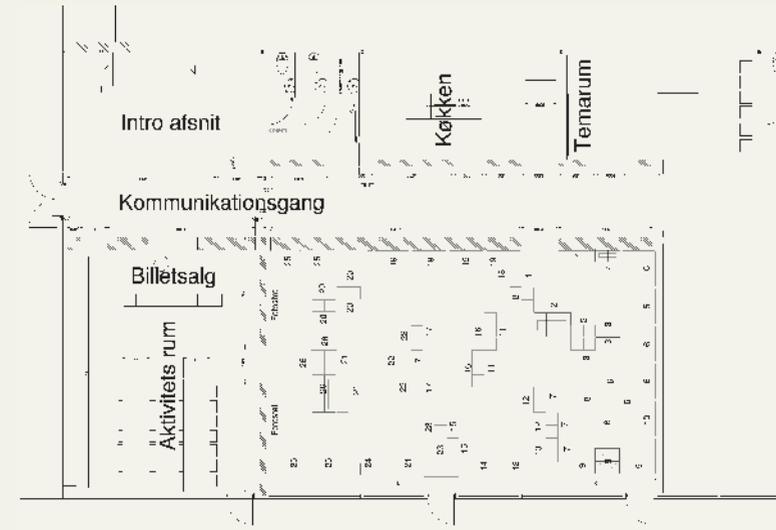
IMG. 4.67 — *Plan of the museum by Kvorning Communications And Design. Courtesy of the Immigrantmuseet, Farum.*

IMG. 4.68 — *Scale model of the museum. Courtesy of the Immigrantmuseet, Farum.*

IMG. 5.69 — *The space dedicated to food and cooking and their meanings. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.70 — *Exhibits in the "labyrinth." Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

IMG. 4.71 — *Exhibits in the "labyrinth." Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

the issues of the historical reasons for going to Denmark—from French and German peasants in the 17th century to Turkish and Yugoslavian guest workers in more recent years, to scientific researchers employed in the pharmaceutical industry up to football players—and on the legal treatment of the foreigners. Up until 1952, for example, people could be asked to leave if they could not prove they had enough money to live in the country. Some personal stories are told, chosen from the database concerning expulsions managed by the museum. Cartoons of the prophet Mohammed cannot be ignored though, of course, they are not exhibited. The reflection concerns the consequences of talking about other cultures without taking into account feelings and perceptions. This is also the museum line when talking about gypsies. Being a very delicate and controversial issue, no easy solution is outlined, but it was still felt important to include them in the museum narrative. A brief account of the legislation concerning gypsies is offered, and a comparison with the destiny of nomadic peddlers—here represented by artefacts made of human hair. A law was passed to ban peddling so that even gypsies would be banned. Human trafficking is also hinted at as a very current and delicate subject.

Most of the issues are dealt with through personal stories. This is the case, for example, of the discourse on refugees and asylum seekers, an important national concern. The museum received on loan a number of artefacts belonging to a German person who was responsible for cultural activities in refugee camps after World War II. Another important loan consists of a collection of letters exchanged between a Danish man who hosted an Austrian child after World War I, and the natural father. In these two cases, for example, the strength of the real story is so evident that it is used to exemplify a complex discourse, almost to replace it.

The last part of the labyrinth is centred on current events and on the very idea of "meeting the other." It deals with city ghettoes, second generations, mixed marriages, adoptions, transmigrations, commonplace concerns such as the controversy regarding the burqa—it is estimated that only between 50 and 100 women are wearing it one at present in Denmark.

A huge gallery hosts thematic temporary exhibitions, which last about 4 months each.

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IMG. 4.72 — *Red Star Line Museum, Antwerp, Belgium. Project by Beyer-Blinder-Belle Architects and Planners LLP. View of one of the museum premises with the panoramic tower. Photo by Anna Chiara Cimoli.*

Red Star Line Museum
Antwerp, Belgium

Red Star Line worked as a shipping company linking Antwerp and the United States from 1873 to 1934. It is estimated that about two million people travelled from this harbour to America—mostly eastern Europeans, including Jews escaping from Russia and Galicia.

The company was founded by the *International Navigation Company* (INC) and its aim was to transport petrol from Philadelphia and New York to Antwerp. The INC found a Belgian partner, a local mercantile house, and together with it a profitable business emigration. Ships sailed to the USA and to Canada under the Belgian flag—at times also British or American flags—for economic reasons—labour and ships were cheaper. Both the government and the city of Antwerp provided the company with advantageous conditions. Since 1902, *Red Star Line* has belonged to the *International Marine & Mercantile Company* founded by J.P. Morgan. During World War I, management moved to Liverpool.

It then later went back to Antwerp, but the number of emigrants fell due to the restrictions imposed by the US government. The 1929 crash was another serious blow for the company, which was liquidated in 1934 and sold to Holland America Line in 1939.

The three original warehouses on the Rijnkaai cover an area of 1,777 sqm. Medical examinations, administrative checks and luggage disinfection took place here. The oldest building (1893-94, called RSL1), at the corner of Montevideostraat, was a hangar of about 400 sqm where medical examinations took place. Just before the war, 550 sqm RSL2 (customs) was built by the city of Antwerp for storing goods, and later luggage. In 1922, after the Dillingham Immigration Restriction Act that defined a quota per nationality, the company built RSL3, an 800 sqm open space with metal columns, designed by Jan Jacobs specifically for third class passengers. This interesting art deco building housed showers, fumigation kettles, a hairdresser's and two waiting rooms. On the upper floor were the washrooms and a waiting room where migrants queued up before medical examination.

The *Red Star Line* site is located in the old port neighbourhood, het Eilandje, and is undergoing a major city renewal project which will transform a forgotten part of the city into a commercial and cultural hub. The museum will open in September 2013.

The nearby Museum aan de Stroom (MAS), an impressive, outstanding museum designed by architects Neutelings and Riedijk and inaugurated in 2011, was a focal point in this renewal process. This institution, rapidly becoming one of the main tourist attractions in the city as well as being massively frequented by Antwerp's citizens, deals with the twofold theme "Antwerp in the world" and "the world in Antwerp." The physical proximity and the contiguous areas of interest mutually reinforce the two institutions, as well as contributing to the renewal of the neighbourhood. It is interesting to note that the restoration of the *Red Star Line* premises has broadened the perimeter of the "mental city map" for citizens, in a clear example of the recovery power of culture and of a virtuous process of urban regeneration started by museums.

The first impulse in preserving the three remaining warehouses of the *Red Star Line* shipping company came precisely from the need to save them from destruction. In fact, used for different purposes after the company's liquidation, they had been neglected since the 60s. In 2004 the city of Antwerp decided to purchase the *Red Star Line* premises, classified as a listed building (RSL1 was the last one to be classified in 2006).

IMG. 4.73 — *Rendering of the exhibition design with the "globe." Courtesy of Beyer Blinder Belle – Christophe Gaeta and Red Star Line Museum, Antwerp.*

IMG. 4.74 — *Rendering of the exhibition design with the "timeline." Courtesy of Beyer Blinder Belle – Christophe Gaeta and Red Star Line Museum, Antwerp.*

**IMG. 4.75** — *The plan of the building before the intervention. Courtesy of Red Star Line Museum, Antwerp.*
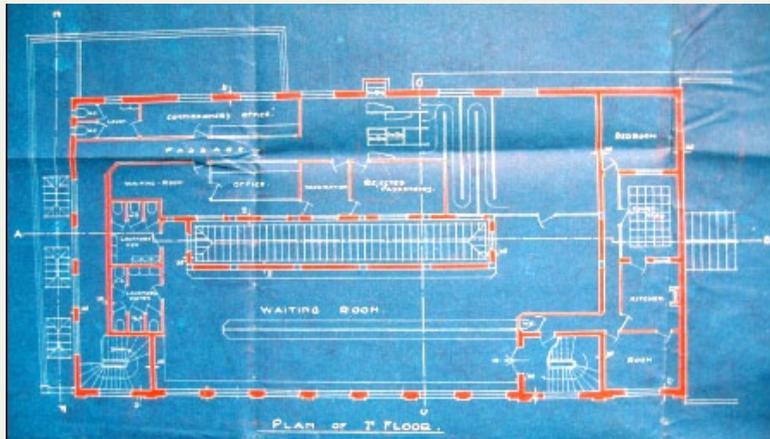
NEXT PAGE, IMG. 4.76 — *Rendering of the exhibition design. Courtesy of Beyer Blinder Belle – Christophe Gaeta and Red Star Line Museum, Antwerp.*
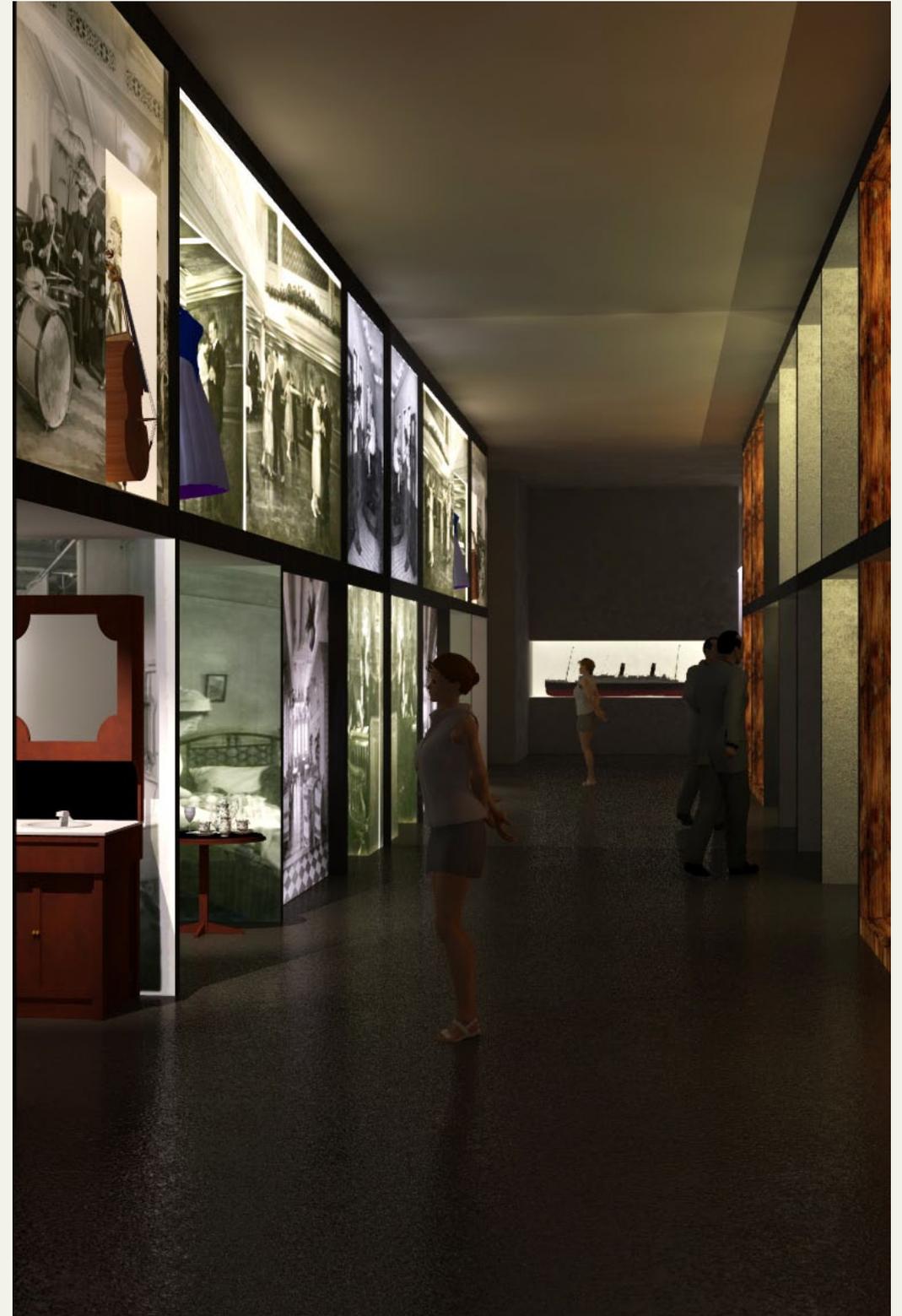
In 2005, the temporary association of Beyer-Blinder-Belle Architects and Planners LLP—designers of the Ellis Island Immigration museum—and the engineering company Arcade Ltd. started drafting the renovation process, following an open call by the Flemish Master Builder.

Initially the project was set up as a generic plan to transform the buildings into a *lieu de mémoire*. In 2007, the project was transferred to the museum department and a scientific committee was created which designed the general concept, based on the awareness that the history of the *Red Star Line* could serve as an example of the universal phenomenon of mobility.

The concept chosen by the curators is to have the visitors walk the same route followed by the emigrants from departure to arrival. Entrance is from RSL2. Here the ground floor is conceived as a multifunctional open space hosting the ticket office and the museum shop. Small temporary exhibitions, lectures etc. can take place here. The visit to the main exhibition starts in RSL1 and focuses on international mobility in the past and in the present, while in RSL3 the stress is on the history of the Red Star Line shipping company and on Antwerp as an international migrant harbour. At the end of the main exhibition there will be a research centre and an area dedicated to the "Leave your trace" interactive tool. The two main narrative instruments are multimedia on the one hand, and historical experience on the other.

A sloping walkway leads to the observation tower, the only new area—which replaces a small, 40s building which is suggestive of a ship's prow. The panorama from this viewpoint is breathtaking, and puts the visitor in the position of looking forward, in an attitude of suspension, as might have been that of the migrants. This element represents the physical and visual link with the river, which is about 200 m. away. It also represents an "icon," in the sense that, with its height—the same as the flagship—and verticality, it testifies to the city the presence of a place which was completely erased from collective memory—at a later stage, after the museum's opening, the regeneration of the Scheldt quays in front of the museum might be undertaken.

Thanks to a widespread campaign, the collection—the result of the merging of the city of Antwerp's museum collections and of the non-profit organisation, Friends of the Red Star Line, as well as private collections, is now rich in communication items such as posters, brochures, calendars, postcards, as well as fans, handkerchiefs and other promotional items. Among the artefacts present in the collection are the objects used aboard the ships such as tableware, cutlery, plates, music programs and menus, as well as ship models and personal artefacts.

Unfortunately, the Red Star Line archives were probably destroyed during the war—some documents were found in the Holland American Line's archive, others in the Ellis Island Immigration Museum's archive, etc. Still, archival research plays an important role in the museum—it has already proved itself crucial in preparing the main exhibition. The Research Centre will collect contemporary as well as historical personal histories, and will also serve as a place for genealogy research. Through databases, the visitors will be able to do research on the collection, on the Belgians who emigrated from 1500 to 1960 (approx. 100,000 already in the databases), as well as access tools on migration history, passenger lists, etc. Collaboration with the Family History Association of Flanders was set up, which allows access to the database in the museum.

A pre-opening was offered to the city in April 2012 through a 3-week festival, which was also an occasion to verify how spaces work in RSL2 (the festival attracted 20,000 visitors). Programs for the two years after the opening comprise an exhibition on the centenary of the outbreak of World War I, a photography exhibition, the further development of the Research Centre in collaboration with other institutions and archives, publications (catalogue and book on emigration via Antwerp) and the collection of migrants' stories.

The first point of strength of the Red Star Line Museum is its location. The fact of being located inside the original premises of the company is a powerful story in itself. Despite the long abandonment, the warehouses could be renewed through a delicate consolidation and restoration process, and are in themselves a *lieu de mémoire*. Still, compared to other European experiences, it seems that the museological choice will not offer an immersive experience in the past "as it was" (or "might have been")—notwithstanding the fact that historical and personal experience is always important in the overall narrative—but rather to build continuous bridges between past and present, local and global.

The museum deals with migration from 19th century up until today, and interprets the history of the company as a malleable example of the universal history of migration from pre-history to today. The museum's concept is very clear: quoting Eric Vanhaute "the intention is to present an image of long-distance migration as a social process. The process occurs at the crossroads of movements, from the individual story through local experience, the passage itself (transport), international and intercontinental contacts, all the way through to global relations. Thus, it covers human choices, external challenges and threats, transport and movements, new settlements, hospitality and exclusion" (quoted in Nauwelaerts 2008, 18). The vision is that local history is told through a universal prism—that of mobility as the core of human nature. Still, if mobility is a universal and ever-extant dimension, migration and travel change through time. The exhibition will then focus on these changes.

At the very beginning of the main exhibition, a short introduction is offered through a picture of 3rd class passengers in the buildings—taken exactly in the place where the visitor stands. After a brief text about the company and the buildings, the discourse will open up through a monumental globe—where 360° screens will broadcast a film loop focusing on the universal but also personal experience that people have with mobility, through both historical and contemporary footage—and a timeline, where twenty individuals will represent different moments in history going from prehistory to today. The attempt here is to reverse the "classical" theory that sees settling down as an arrival point in the history of humankind, and to show how mobility has represented a great propulsive force.

Passing the nearby building, we dive into the "historical story," finding out what happened to the passengers travelling on Red Star Line ships. While the chronological approach is quite "classical"—from departure to arrival—, the attempt here is to bring history to life through a number of thematic stages. The journey starts in Eastern Europe—only about 10% of the people leaving from Antwerp were Belgians—and through its development some themes are investigated, such as marketing networks, the "push and pull" factors, the voyage by train to Antwerp, transmigration through the city—how it looked to migrants and how they saw it—, controls in the building, the departure, the voyage on the ship—the division into classes, social rules…—, the arrival at Ellis Island, the attachment to one's roots represented by the ethnic press and other documents, and so on. Recourse to multimedia is very important in the overall exhibition design.

At the end of this journey there will be two art installations, one with contemporary testimonies of people living in Antwerp linked to important symbolic places in the city, and another one showing 800 people invited to represent the "basic" human experiences linked to migration—such as fear of control, saying goodbye etc. The museum does not have a space dedicated exclusively to educational activities (though an empty room beneath the tower could be used for that purpose in the future), but the choice is to hire cultural mediators able to compare their personal migrant experiences, through storytelling, with the ones narrated in the museum.

The outreach activities developed through time

IMG. 4.77, 4.78, 4.79
— Renderings of the exhibition design. Courtesy of Beyer Blinder Belle – Christophe Gaeta and Red Star Line Museum, Antwerp.

testify the wish to include the migrants living today in Antwerp in the story told, and to make the Red Star Line a living experience, thanks to a balancing of immersive experiences—suggested, for example, in the rooms dedicated to life aboard or to the arrival in Ellis Island—and information about the context. The idea here is not to facilitate immersion in the past, and therefore work on the emotional impact of the space, but to suggest the infinite connections of past and present, of the universal history with the personal.

The museum designed some research and communication tools to contact Antwerp's population before the opening. One of them is the "transit bus" touring around the city which collected about 400 stories, out of which the exhibition "Hier ben ik!" ("Here I am!") was conceived. Another important one is "Leave your trace," an interactive tool available online and accessible from the Research Centre for the people to tell their stories through pictures and texts. The social media are of course a very important means of communication with the public, who react to the demand for stories, objects and testimonies.

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City Museums

City Museums in Transition: A European Overview

Cues for reflection

→ **FRANCESCA LANZ**

As many authors have already pointed out, a city museum is a relatively new museum type, the definition of which is neither unified nor fixed (Galla 1995; Bertuglia, and Montaldo 2003; Kistemaker 2006, 5-6; Visser Travaglini 2008; Postula 2012). It is not defined by the type of objects it conserves; in fact, its collections usually include very heterogeneous objects, sometimes strictly related to the city's identity and history, and other more diverse items, gathered together according to the collecting strategies and the socio-political context of the time. They may thus include archaeological finds, photos, historical art works, garments, furniture, paintings, objects of material culture, and private collections and memorabilia, as well as new, recently-acquired, objects such as digital content, contemporary works of art, audio, video, and much more. A city museum is neither defined by the ownership of its collections nor by its funding sources, which may be municipal as well as national or private.

Originally, city museums developed to conserve and display the city's history and, indeed, they are usually identified with historical museums, but today this is often not the case for many new and renewed city museums, whose mission and purpose are being developed beyond their traditional role towards a more active social involvement within the contemporary city and its communities. They may be identified with local museums, but nowadays their "relatively small geographical focus (...) transcends itself in attending to the transnational relations which produce the place whose cultures the museum maps" (Whitehead, Eckersley and Mason 2012, 100).

PREVIOUS PAGE, IMG. 5.01 — *"Your museum" display at Palazzo Pepoli, Museo della Storia di Bologna (the Bologna city history museum), Italy. Project by Mario Bellini Architect(s). Exhibition design by Mario Bellini Architect(s) with Italo Lupi. Scientific Director Massimo Negri. Courtesy of Mario Bellini Architect(s) and Massimo Negri.*

Perhaps nowadays, one of the most telling definitions of a city museum is the one given by Steven Thielemans in 2000, and quoted by Renée Kistemaker in her introduction to the fourth symposium on city museum in 2005: "a city museum is a museum about and in the city. It is connected with both the strategy of the city and with its citizens" (2006, 5).[1]

This definition has been taken as the starting point for this analysis of the contemporary evolutionary trends of city museums across Europe. The survey mapped about 50 city museums, including the museums of the capital cities of the 27 European member states, those of the capitals of the candidate states, city museums located in major European cities which have hosted significant events over the last five years—such as the Olympics, the Expo or that have been nominated European Capitals of Culture—, and recent eye-catching projects for new city museums around Europe. Some of the most telling examples, selected because of their outstanding attempts at developing innovative models and approaches—in terms of both programme and museographical project—have been then visited and, where possible, their curators and designer interviewed.

The aim of the research was to explore if and how city museums are reacting to the challenges and changes posed by what the MeLa project defines as "an age of migrations."[2] The survey developed around some main research questions, investigating the role that city museums can play within a changing urban context, how they deal with the growing heterogeneity of the city's population ensuing from contemporary mobility and migration fluxes, and how their role and this context influences their strategies and narratives, in order to eventually examine how their communication tools, spaces and exhibition design might consequently change and contribute to the effectiveness of the museum's mission.

This chapter should be understood mainly as a working document, which collects and summarises the preliminary findings from this in-progress research, and aims at outlining possible developments, cues for reflection and fields to be further investigated.

1   Such a definition leaves out many museums located in the city, owned and managed by the municipality, but where the focus is not the city itself, clarifying thus a common misunderstanding—this is the case, for example, of the Italian civic museums, a very few of which are actual "city museums." On the other hand, it covers other museums, such as neighbourhood museums—e.g. the Kreuzberg Museum—whose activities and contents are strictly related to an important part of the city's identity. Hence, in a way, it enlarges and blurs the boundary of the field, virtually including museums that focus on an urban region or a metropolitan area—such as the Ruhrlandmuseum or the museum of the city of Trento and the Region of Trentino in north Italy—as well as other museums that do not call themselves "city museums," but which actually are about their host city, its socio-cultural development and its identity—such as the Galata Museo del Mare e delle Migrazioni, in Genoa or the MAS in Antwerp. Some of these museums are presented in the case study section of this chapter and in other chapters and volumes of this book.

2   The notion of "migration" is adopted by the Project as a paradigm of the contemporary global and multicultural world. Thus "migration" is not meant only as a matter related to people, but rather as a complex condition of contemporary society, which seems to be increasingly characterised by an accelerated mobility that involves people and entire populations, different kinds of "migrations" of bodies, objects, ideas, information, goods, knowledge and cultures (Basso Peressut and Pozzi 2012).

→ CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN CITY MUSEUMS: A TURNING POINT

Increasing attention is currently being focused on city museums, a phenomenon that is attested to by the lively new debate that has developed around the subject as well as by the significant economic investments of which they have recently been the target. In the last ten years a number of city museums have been inaugurated across Europe and further afield, including both new projects and renovations of historic city museums.

Examples include the Museum of Liverpool in the United Kingdom designed by the Danish studio 3XN Nielsen Architects—a £72m project inaugurated in 2011, which self-defines itself "the largest newly-built national museum in the UK for over a hundred years"—, and the Museum of London—here they have recently concluded a £25m project aimed at redesigning part of the museum's spaces and galleries with a project by Wilkinson Eyre Archicitecs and a new exhibition design by an in-house team, as well as opening a new museum venue in the Docklands dedicated to the history of London's East End. In France, the Musée Gadagne in Lyon was reopened in 2009, with an investment of €30m to restore the building, double its spaces, and re-design the exhibitions. The Musée Historique of Strasbourg, closed in 1987, was re-launched in 2007 with a project by Laurent Marquart. The new Musée d'Histoire de Nantes, hosted in a fifteenth-century castle, has opened with a new exhibition design by Jean-Francis Bodin, and in 2013 in Marseille, the new city history museum will be inaugurated in time for the Marseille-Provence 2013 European Capital of Culture events. In Spain, the renovated Museu d'Història de la Ciutat de Barcelona opened in 2008 and the new Museo de Historia de Valencia in 2003. In Belgium, the new Museum aan de Stroom—MAS in Antwerp, a €33.5m building designed by the Rotterdam firm Neutelings Riedijk Architects, was inaugurated in 2011, and the Stadsmuseum Gent—STAM, was restored and enlarged in 2010.

In the north of Italy, three city museums have recently been completed, each of them focusing on the city's history and hosted in an ancient and relevant building that has been restored to turn it in a museum: the Santa Giulia in Brescia, designed by Tortelli and Franzoni architects, opened in 1998 and extended in 2011; the Palazzo Pepoli in Bologna, funded by the CARISBO Bank Foundation, designed by Mario Bellini with Italo Lupi and Massimo Negri at a cost of around €18m, and inaugurated in 2012; and in Bergamo, the Museo Storico dell'Età Veneta, inaugurated in 2012, with a new exhibition—mainly ICT based—designed by the video and multimedia studio N!03 in collaboration with Alessandro Bettonagli Architecture Entertainment. In Germany, the new Frankfurt's museum project, due to open in 2015, is currently underway at a cost of about €45.95 m with the constructions of a new museum building designed by architecture studio Lederer, Ragnarsdottir und Oei.

The list may be even longer, encompassing other European cities, or even expanding out from Europe internationally, including, for example, the USA—with the $72.5m Chicago History Museum project, the projects for the city museums of San Francisco, Tampa Bay and Atlanta, or the

IMG. 5.02 — *The Museum of Liverpool, United Kingdom. Project by 3Xn Architects. © Jose Campos, courtesy of 3XN Architects.*


$100m Boston Museum project—and Asia, with projects such as the $150m Capital Museum of Beijing, inaugurated in 2006.

In addition, many other city museums throughout Europe are currently undertaking extensive renovations and rethinking their collections, spaces and exhibitions, as well as developing many interesting projects. Examples include, though are not limited to, the Museum of Copenhagen, the Amsterdam Museum, the Helsinki Museum and the Museum Rotterdam.

The birth of city museums in Europe can be traced back to the second half of the nineteenth century when the largest cities, involved in the urban, economic and social transformations of the time, attempted to preserve documents, stories, and memories from the past. These museums were usually hosted in ancient, iconic buildings of the city, and were conceived as repositories of civic treasures and places where the history of the city should be conserved. Their collections were meant to represent the city, tell its story and celebrate its glorious past; consequently, they were very heterogeneous and included several kinds of objects, usually organised according to typological or chronological criteria. From the second half of the nineteenth century, this museum type spread throughout Europe and many city museums were established.[3] However, by the early second half of the twentieth century the city museum was already a mostly outdated and disused museum type.

At the end of the 1990s, city museums again became the subject of attention. This new interest was triggered by the need for these museums to move away from the doldrums in which they found themselves, but was also a consequence of the new pressing issues ensuing from a changing
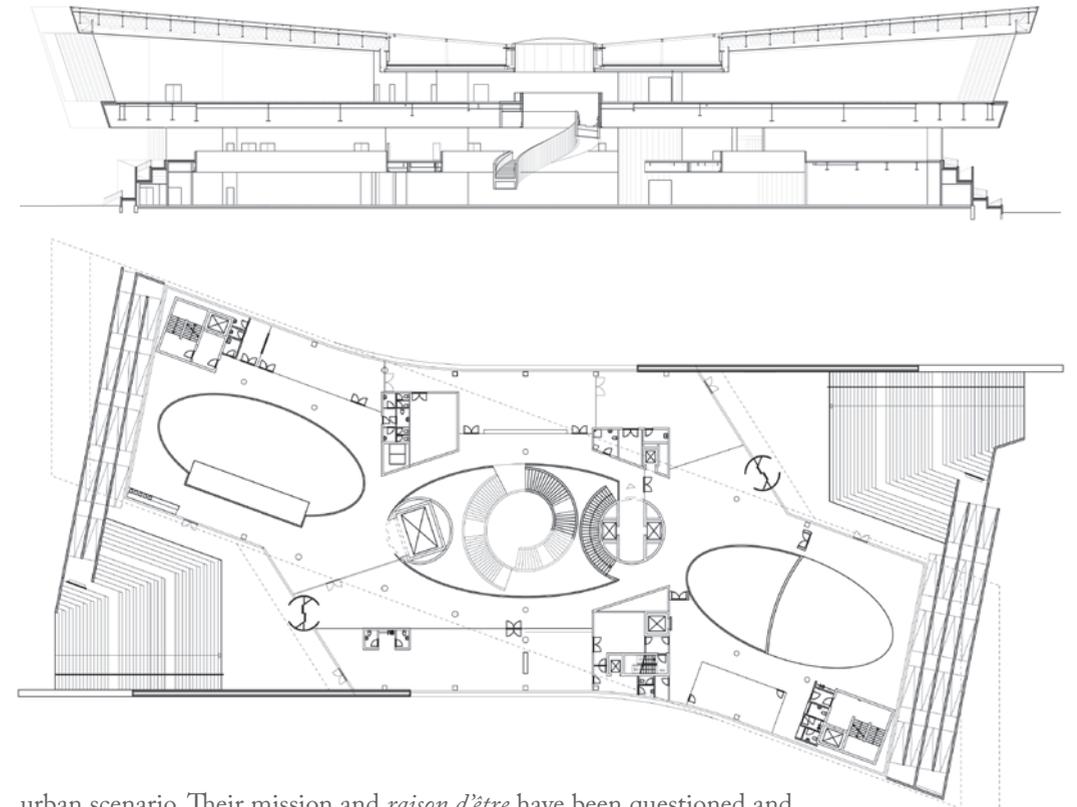
IMG. 5.03 — *First floor plan and section of the Museum of Liverpool, United Kingdom. © 3XN Architects.*

urban scenario. Their mission and *raison d'être* have been questioned and reconsidered, and their role redefined from one of merely preserving and displaying the city's glorious past, to representing and interpreting the city's present, as well as imagining and debating its future (UNESCO 1995; Fleming 1996; Kavanagh, and Frostick 1998; Bertuglia, and Montaldo 2003; McDonald 2006; Kistemaker 2006; Aymonino, and Tolic 2007; Jones, Macdonald, and McIntyre 2008; Calabi, Marini, and Travaglini 2008; Jones et al. 2012). Several new tasks have been envisioned for them, starting from their historical role and moving beyond it. They are seen as a custodian for the city's history, a mirror of civic memory and belief, a place of identity-building, interlocutors for local governments and urban planners, access points to the city, and much more. Among their new tasks they are undersood on the one hand, as urban marketing tools for city promotion, acting as a portal for city communication, often tourist-oriented and occasionally also implemented in relation to city branding and local policies (Monlieu 2012; Tisdale 2012a). On the other, they are asked to carry out a social role, being more involved in urban and social issues, addressing difficult topics and contributing to fostering dialogue between the different ethnic, religious, social and generational groups of the city (Galla 1995; Fleming 1996; Lohman 2006; Kistemaker 2006).

As David Fleming pointed out, the increasing attention paid to city museums is not only theoretical or speculative, but is also a response to the new cumulative demands which are "part ideological, part economic,

3   Such as the museums of London (the Guildhall Museum, founded in 1826, and the London Museum, founded in 1911); the Musée Carnevalet in Paris, whose project dates back to 1860 and was inaugurated in 1875; the Historical Museum of the City of Vienna, which opened in 1887; the Helsinki City Museum, which was set up in 1911 or the Amsterdam Historical Museum, first opened in 1926.

driven by perceived social and educational needs, and by cultural competitiveness between cities looking to diversify their post-industrial role towards European tourist currencies" (1996, 132). At the same time it may also be related to the re-emergence of local and regional identities in a context of political and cultural re-definition, and to the current dynamics which affect many European cities.

It is widely recognised that the ongoing political, economic and cultural process of creation of the European Union, the fluid mobility occurring at the European and global level, and the new economic and cultural opportunities offered by globalisation, are transcending the political-economic sphere, to the extent that they influence almost every aspect of human life and activity. Extensive research, as well as statistical surveys, has already shown how cities are deeply affected by these phenomena in every aspect of their structure (Sassen 1991, 1994; Martinotti 1993; Amendola 1997; Rykwert 2000; UN|DESA 2012). Being the destination of material and immaterial fluxes of objects, individuals, information and business, many "European capitals"—which may be national capitals, historical centres, as well as new cultural, political or economic key areas—are currently experiencing rapid and profound changes, assuming crucial new roles in a highly competitive framework, struggling to hold on to a large share of the market, attract tourism, and secure economic investment and the hosting of international events.

At the same time, the ongoing phenomena of migrations and movements of people are also leading to a new demographic growth in European cities, and are reconstituting an internal cultural diversity after a long period of ethnic simplification. According to the Eurostat 2012 statistics, 9.7% of the population of the 27 EU states are citizens born in countries other than those in which they reside.[4] Of this number, a third were born in a non-European country, and most of them are concentrated in urban centres. Consequently, matters and concerns related to globalisation, migration and the growing ethnic-cultural mix which characterises contemporary societies currently represent some of the most pressing issues for urban cultural institutions and policies, including city museums.

While on the one hand all these processes undoubtedly produce new energy within European cities, they also pose new challenges and can lead to an increase in social friction and new cultural, social, ethnic and economic "invisible boundaries" (UN-HABITAT 2008). As Georges Prevelakis pointed out:

> cities are today in the forefront of new opportunities and dangers (…) In order to promote new forms of cooperation between cultures, cities need to invent and to propose new cultural and political models. They are in an

excellent position to become laboratories of the "dialogue of civilization" in order to counterbalance the effects of the "conflict of civilizations" raging in the surrounding sea of the global archipelago. (2008, 21)

Many major European cities are currently reconfiguring their cultural and political agenda according to this context, a renewed cultural and economic impulse and a new emerging social context.

As already envisaged by the theoretical debate debate so far developed on this subject, city museums, as institutions historically charged with representing the city, recording its transformations and conserving its memory and history, should and could play an important role, not only in registering these urban changes, but also by acting as cultural tools capable of influencing and driving them, going beyond their traditional role of repository of city history, and involving themselves in contemporary urban and social issues.

Nowadays the number and features of new city museums recently opened and renovated around Europe and beyond and in particular some pioneering experiences developped in recent years, seem to suggest that this very debate and the above mentioned urban socio-political scenario are ultimately encouraging an actual transformation of this museum type, and that city museums are reacting to these stimuli. Different city museums are infact experimenting with new strategies, promoting intercultural programmes, redesigning their exhibitions, reorganising their collections, broadening their activities, rethinking their narratives and communicative approaches and ultimately facing new challenges and seeking out new models and tools with which to tackle them. It is undoubtedly difficult to set up shared strategies or common tools and, obviously, different cultures, histories and museological models generate different kinds of museums—this is especially true if we consider city museums, which are nowadays facing a deep evolution, and which are deeply influenced by and embedded in their specific local contexts, the city, that, moreover, is itself under transformation. However, several city museums are currently implementing new approaches and interesting solutions that may provide suggestions worthy of further exploration and development: the aim of this essay is to outline the most significant challenges and possibilities, paying particular attention to the role of exhibition and museum design and to the emergence of new museographical models.

→ CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Whether city museums develop more towards city promotion and tourist communication, or direct their efforts more towards a socially-oriented purpose, a common trend in this transformation is the shift in their focus from urban history to social history, and in an interest towards the contemporary evolution of the city. This shift currently represents an impetus for development and one of the major challenge.

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4   Since 1992, net migration continued to be the main determinant of population growth in the EU-27: in 2010 there were 47.3 million foreign-born residents in the EU, corresponding to 9.4% of the total population—of these, 31.4 million were born outside the EU and 16.0 million were born in another EU Member State. According to recent statistics, there were 48.9 million foreign-born residents in the European Union in 2011—of these, 32.4 million were born outside the EU, and 16.5 million were born in another Member State.

More generally, the challenge of representing contemporaneity is a matter of reflection for many contemporary museums, a field which offers exciting development prospects but which also opens up several new issues and questions: how to represent something that is happening while we are talking? how to prevent the rapid obsolescence of the museum's message? and how to get away from the "closed history" model of representation?

Museums seem to face a dichotomy between representing what is in the here-and-now—processes that are ongoing, rapid and unpredictable—, and their own traditional and consolidated practices and approaches, concerning which it could be argued that they are a non-natural place to represent processes. The shift that many city museums are performing in order to focus on the city's present and future, on the one hand should be related to a wider frame of reference avoiding to self-refer in dealing the subject, which undeniably requires the development of new working strategies and the use and implementation of new communication tools, as well as the development of new approaches to storytelling, exhibiting and new museographical models. On the other hand it also entails a deep reflection on their very cores—the collections and the museum's relationship with the city itself.

City museums were created as historical museums; recording, conserving and representing the history of the city was—and in some ways still is—their main purpose, and their narratives and collections have been constructed on this basis. Their collections thus include various objects, sometimes collected because of their relevance to the city's history, others donated to the museum by private citizens and collectors; they were often influenced by the taste, different collecting strategies and the city's sociopolitical context of the time of the museum's creation. The heterogeneity of their collections often makes it difficult to go beyond the nineteenth-century model, while historical collections may be not appropriate for representing the contemporary city, its dynamics and multifaceted identities.[5] Hence, city museums today need to work hard on and with their collections, reinterpreting them, making the most of their archives, and developing new selection criteria for the objects to be displayed—often also reducing their number. At the same time, they need to set up new collecting strategies to enlarge their collection, upgrading them to include contemporaneity, and thus facing questions of how and what to collect, how far from the object they should go, and how to display the

IMG. 5.04 — *Joan Seidl, Director of collections and exhibitions, inspects native artifacts in the storage of the Museum of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Photo by Ric Ernst, Vancouver Sun.*

new kind of objects collected—which may sometimes be unusual and problematic, consisting of personal items, as well as voices, films, sounds, photographs and contemporary works of art, and in some cases also related with difficult topics and delicate personal histories.

In addition, their other cornerstone, the relationship with the city itself, is also questioned by this shift. Since the museum is now attempting to focus not only on the city's past and history but also—and sometimes primarily—on its present and future, what kind of relationship exists between the museum and the actual city which is, at the same time, the cultural and physical context of the museum, the subject of the museum itself, and also exists just beyond the museum's walls? Which links, synergies, cross-references and mutual enrichments may be established? What should and could a visit to the museum add to the experience of the city?

A definition of a city museum as a museum *in* and *about the city*, understands the city on the whole, including its history, present, and future, its places and their transformation, its multifarious identities and its many and different inhabitants.[6] The current developments of many cities also give rise to rapid urban changes, with the demolition of large industrial districts, the building of new areas, and the social and physical transformation of many historical neighbourhoods. At the same time, the global economy is making the cities' architecture progressively less diverse and more homogeneous, deleting many points of reference and thus affecting the citizens' sense of belonging and the overall urban quality of life.[7]

The city which these city museums are representing is thus neither monolithic nor unitary. Its identity is strictly related to the identities of a variety of subjects coming from abroad, who live and experience the city with their intellectual and cultural differences, with different expectations

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5   It is the case, for example of the Museum of Vancouver. Since 2009 the Museum of Vancouver is going through a deep process of renovation, involving the museum all-round including a rethought of the museum's mission and vision, as well as the redesign of its permanent galleries and the reassess of its collections. When the Museum born in 1894, the goal was to showcase the curiosities of the world for the enlightenment of Vancouverites; today new acquisitions centre on reflecting the Vancouver story, from major directional shifts in communities to those items that create everyday memories. Thus many objects today are not apt to represent the story of Vancouver according to the new museum's vision: the Director of Collections and Exhibitions Joan Seidl explained during a tour to the archives, that when the museum's staff was setting up the new galleries, they realized, for example, that there were no objects in the museum's collections about Chinese Vancouverites. The museum is currently carrying out a massive project of digitalization of a large part of its collections, creating a on-line open access database, handling objects repatriations, while at the same time collecting and acquiring new objects to represent Vancouver and its inhabitants as they are today.

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6   Several scholars (e.g. Mason, Whitehead and Graham 2012) have already highlighted the role of places and the representation of places in museums in shaping people's personal identity and providing a setting for collective memory.

7   With no reference points, Rykwert states, quoting Kevin Lynch, "a citizen cannot 'read', let alone 'understand' his home," since they make the place legible, and "not only offer security but also heighten the potential depth and intensity of human experience" (2000, 133).

IMG. 5.05 — Pop-up project "If This House Could Talk," Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. This community-based history and public art project was created and produced by the residents of the Cambridgeport section of Cambridge. Photo by Ross Miller.

IMG. 5.06 — Pop-up project "If This House Could Talk," Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. Photo by Cathie Zusy.

and aims, on a long-term as well as temporary basis. The city's places—considered not only as physical locations but also "in terms of the social relations which they tie together," as "processes" themselves with their own indetities (Massey 1991, 28)—change and evolve constantly. "The modern city—pointed out Joseph Rykwert—is a city of contradictions (…) it houses many *ethnes,* many cultures, and classes, many religions. This modern city is too fragmentary, too full of contrast and strife: it must therefore have many faces not one" (2000,7).

Which city museum for this city? What is the "place" of "city" in city museum? What may be its role in handling these urban transformations? Should it only record them, or it can play a part in driving them? How can this be done?

→ TO REACH OUT: THE CITY MUSEUM BEYOND ITS WALLS

It stands to reason that one of the priorities for city museums is to create, recreate or strengthen their bond with the city and its inhabitants. Therefore many of them are currently devoting considerable effort to the development of multipurpose outreach projects, aimed mainly at connecting with the different urban communities. At the same time, these projects are tools for the museum to address contemporary city issues, develop new collecting strategies focused on contemporaneity, experiment with alternative curating approaches and also to reach a broader audience (Betti 2012).

An interesting field of experimentation in this context is that of exploring the possibility of the museum physically moving into the city and its communities, bringing the museum into the streets, and out of its enclosure. This is not only a strategic trend for city museums, as for all contemporary museums—which has several positive effects from a communicative and promotional point of view as well as in community engagement (CFM 2012)—but, for a city museum, it is also a basic question of approach and conception, a metaphor for, and a reflection of, the city museum's openness and bond with the urban reality.

This aim results in several different types of project and experiment. These include, for example, the development of outdoor pop-up projects (Tisdale 2012b), which are proving to be a very effective tool. They are flexible and cheap—a very important quality in this particular time of crisis—, open to multiple levels of engagement with the public, able to accommodate different perspectives and, moreover, they can create direct links between the museum, the city and the people, reconnecting places, history and personal experience.

Similar advantages are provided by the implementation of out-and-out mobile museums and urban installations such as the "Museum on the Move," a series of outreach events using a mobile trailer developed by the Museum of London in the early 1990s at the time of the "Peopling of London" exhibition to consult and publicise the project as extensively as possible (Merriman 1995, 1997). Another example is the San Francisco

IMG. 5.07 — *Exterior view from East First Street of the BMW Guggenheim Lab, New York City, USA. Project by Atelier Bow-Wow from Tokyo: the structure is designed to be responsive to the cities that the Lab visits. © Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York. Photo by Paul Warchol.*
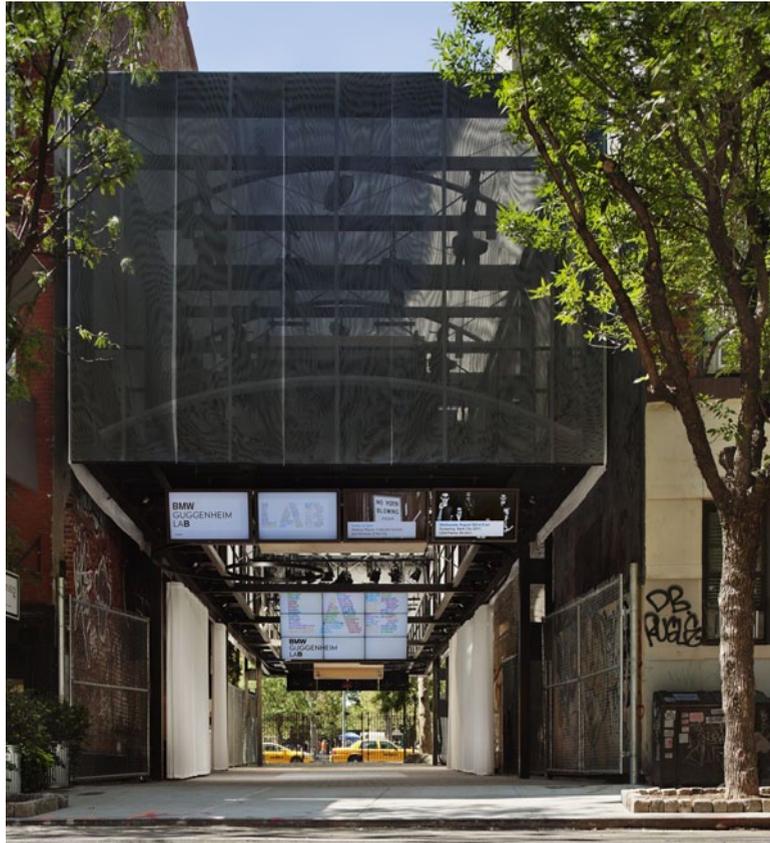
IMG. 5.08 — *BMW Guggenheim, Berlin, Germany. The Lab opened in Berlin from June 15th to July 29th, 2012 at Schönhauser Allee 176, Hof 3. Prenzlauer Berg, Berlin, Germany. © 2012 Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York. Photo by Christian Richters.*
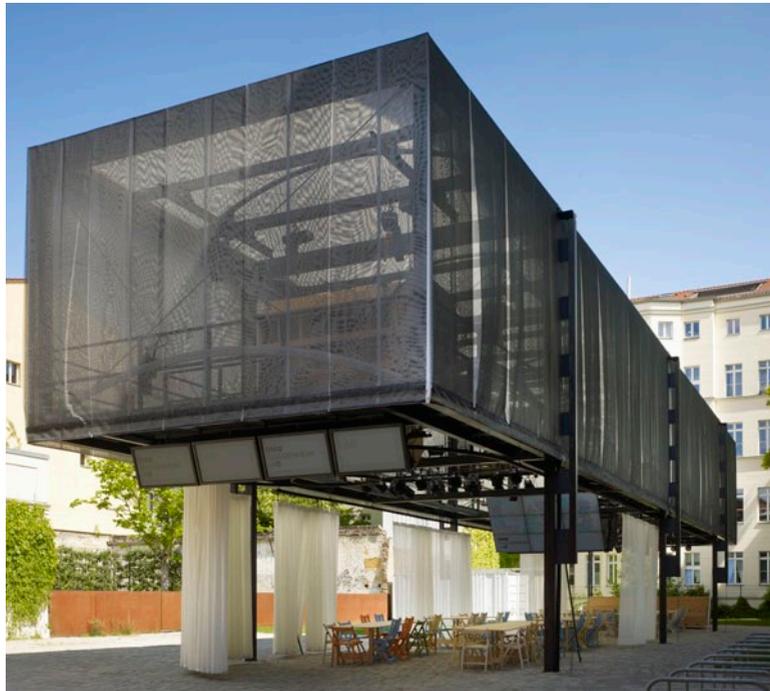
IMG. 5.09 — *BMW Guggenheim Lab, Mumbai India. January 3rd, 2013, Batliboy Compound Mumbai. © 2013 Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York. Photo by UnCommonSense.*

The Mumbai Lab was developed by Atelier Bow-Wow in cooperation with Mumbai's SDM Architects, who designed a structure which suited the densely populated environment of the city. Modeled after the Indian mandapa, an outdoor pavilion traditionally used for public celebrations and events, the Mumbai Lab structure is built primarily in bamboo; it evokes a light, open and transparent quality.

"Mobile Museum," a participatory touring exhibit that fits in the back of a car, or "the WALL" by the Museum of Copenhagen, an interactive multimedia urban installation travelling around the city over a four-year period up to 2014, developed as a communicative tool for the museum, a way to improve accessibility to the museum's archive about the city history, and an experimental tool to collect material about the contemporary city (Sandahl et al. 2011).

Food for thought and ideas for further development can also be provided by other city-related projects, such as the BMW Guggenheim Lab, a mobile interdisciplinary laboratory travelling between 2011 and 2013 to major cities worldwide and aimed at addressing issues of contemporary urban life through programs and public discourse, or the Berlin's "Info Box," a red pavilion designed in 1995 by Schneider and Schumacher as a temporary structure to provide information about the construction around Potsdamer Platz since 2001 (Choi 2009), as well as by performative art and other cultural events as festivals and fairs in public spaces.[8]

It is important to remember that the possibility of establishing and nourishing a relationship between the city and the city museum lies not only in temporary or communicative projects or educational and partecipative activites, but also in the very project of the museum itself. The design of a city museum can be seen as an opportunity for urban development, for the rediscovery and enhancement of the city's heritage, and a chance to nurture awareness of the city's cultural resources and identity, thus contributing to the cultural, touristic and economic development of the city. Including the city in the museum and the museum in the city also means considering one as an inseparable part of the other, also from an architectural and urban planning point of view.

8 New technologies can also make a significant contribution to these outreach projects. Social media facilitate the communication and promotion of these experiments, and increase their level of openness and the possibility of audience involvement and engagement. They can also enrich the experience by adding new levels and content (Allen and Lupo 2012). Examples abound: in the field of city museums and in relation to their relatioship with the city, two interesting examples are the historical pop-up, developed by the Museum of London "street museum" mobile application, and the "city insights" programme for city exploring.

IMG. 5.10 — *The Amsterdam Museum, Netherlands. © Amsterdam Museum.*

The museum is located in the old city orphanage, which was restored and opened to the city. The restoration project was developed by Van Kasteel and Shippers. According to the aim of the work, focused on the possibility to "give back this urban space to the citizens by truly opening it up," the architects realised extra windows and some huge show case, opening the walls of the orphanage (Kistemaker 2008).

IMG. 5.11 — *Stadsmuseum Gent–STAM. The Abbey Refectory, which was restored and included in the museum itinerary. © Phile Deprez, courtesy of STAM.*

The opening or renovation of a city museum can provide an opportunity for the restoration and rehabilitation of a city neighbourhood or a significant historic building which has its own history and identity, and which can be thus returned to the city and itself become part of the museum's collection—among the many examples, the Italian museographical tradition has largely experimented in this sense (Lanz 2013). The construction of a new museum, on the other hand, offers the possibility to work on urban planning, rehabilitate or enhance an urban area and create a new iconic city symbol, which can act as a new, cultural and physical reference point within the city—the project for the MAS in Antwerp and the Museum of Liverpool for example, originate also from this aim.

The museum itself can be considered part of the city's urban fabric; its rooms can be the city's streets and squares, its windows the city's showcases, its facilities urban meeting points, and its exhibitions libraries and schools, transforming the museum's mission and approach into an architectural concept. The Antwerp museum for example has been intended as a city walk with a panoramic terrace; the design of the Amsterdam Museum was meant to represent the museum's openness towards the city, including a gallery—the Schuttersgalerij Gallery—meant as a freely accessible "museum shopping street" (Kistemaker 2008); and similar reflections can be done in relation with the renovation project of the Museum of London by Wilkinson Eyre Architects (see ahead the section on the Museum of London). At the same time, the city's streets and squares can be seen as a part of the museum collection, not with historical reconstructions within the museum, but rather with a broad-based museographical project, which considers the actual places of the city as if they were rooms of the museum, and which encompasses the whole city and its cultural heritage—including city areas such as archaeological sites or historic buildings, as well as the city's everyday life—a part of the city's cultural heritage which the museums should collect, preserve and present.
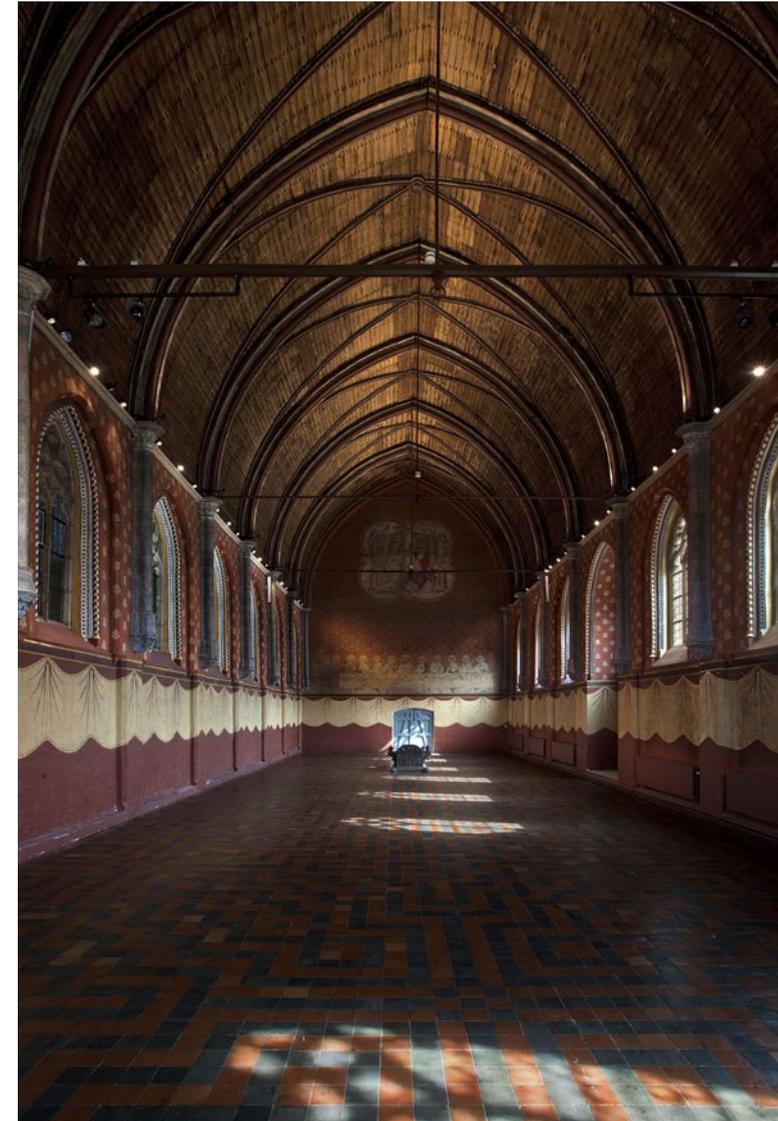
The museum can be the starting point of a journey within the city, beginning inside the museum's walls and spreading outside,[9] recounting the city's history and representing its identities as bonds with and enabled by people's relations to, with and within the city's places over time, and thus contributing to restoring the sense of city places at a time of rapid urban change.

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9   The Museum of London, for example, provides maps for thematic city walks related to some museum topics – for example, passing through several historic buildings connected with the slavery trade; the Amsterdam Museum has recently inaugurated the exhibition Amsterdam DNA, an introduction to the city museums and a visit to the city in the context of four topics identified as the city's main values, and which characterise its development in the past as well as today. Other meaningful suggestions can be provided by the Bologna city museums or the Brescia city museum, developed according to the Italian model of the "museo diffuso" (Lanz 2013).

IMG. 5.12, 5.13 — Aerial views of Santa Giulia, the city history museum of Brescia, Italy. The pictures illustrate the museum complex and the sourranding area, situated in the historical city center. © Archivio fotografico Civici musei d'Arte e Storia di Brescia.

The scientific project of Santa Giulia: was curated by Andrea Emiliani, the architectural project by Giovanni Tortelli and Roberto Frassoni, 2012. According to the so called "progetto brixia," the museum should spread in the city, involving other areas of the city centre and historical remains.
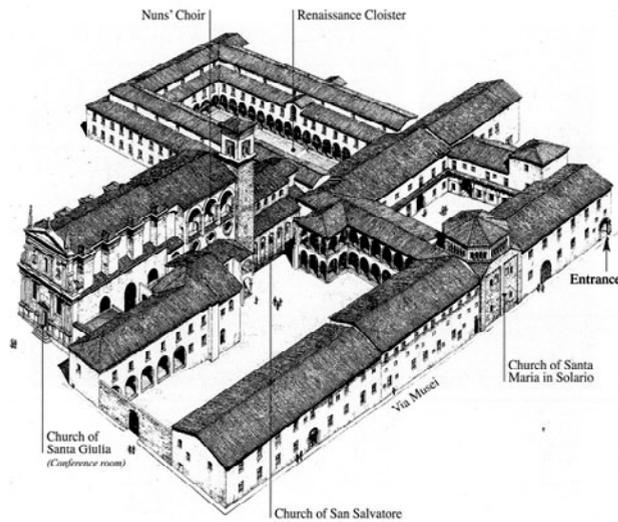
IMG. 5.14 — Axonometry of the ancient monastery, which was restored to host part of the museum.

IMG. 5.15 — A view of the monastery and the Domus Pavillon from the Horti. © Archivio fotografico Civici musei d'Arte e Storia di Brescia.
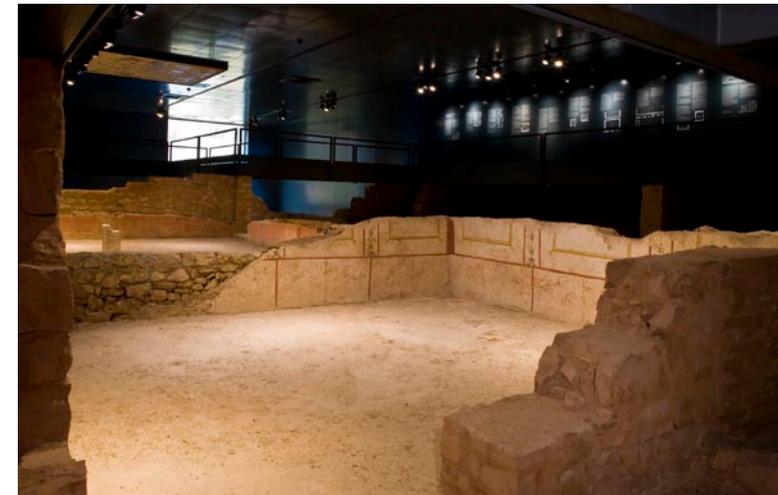
IMG. 5.16 — A view of the archaeological remains in the Domus Pavillon. © Archivio fotografico Civici musei d'Arte e Storia di Brescia.

The Santa Giulia museum is an example of the implementation of the idea of "museo diffuso" developed Andrea Emiliani and Fredi Drugman in the 80s.

The "museo diffuso", a term that is almost impossible to translate in English, is a kind of museum that aggregates different places and complementary functions. It is a system of cultural places that does not only include other museums, local cultural services and centres (such as libraries, schools, universities), but also archaeological and historical sites, witnesses of local material culture and industrial remains – which are considered the roots of this culture – and any kind of local cultural resource relevant for the cultural life and identity of the territory. This museum is not constrained by a geographical definition. It has a physical site, but, as a matter of fact, it is a "network-museum," rather than a museums' network: it reaches out beyond its own walls, involving and interacting with the whole territory and cultural institutions it refers to, broadening its cultural horizons and its collection by including people and places, local, historical, and material cultural, tangible and intangible heritages. It is a 'civic project', a museum with a social utility and cultural and political dimension whose aims are to: recreate a link between the museum's collections and the contexts they originate from; rekindle memories of places and traditions by enhancing the rich cultural heritage of the territory it refers to; act both as a place of identity making and as a modern 'access portal' to the territory, making the most of local resources, also in a touristic and promotional point of view, in a fruitful collaboration between public and private institutions (Drugman 1982; Emiliani 1985).

IMG. 5.17 — *A view of the city from the bouleverd of the Museum aan de Stroom–MAS, Antwerp, Belgium. Project by Neutelings Riedijk. © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*

City places are the very roots of a city museum, and might become a powerful starting point for the museum itself to help people rediscover them, the history of those who lived and live them, the events which have taken, and still take, place there, and the memories embedded in every corner of the city. This means giving a sense to places in order to better understand them, and thus better live them, as well as deciding whether to preserve or change them, respecting history, which is not mere subordination, but rather an awareness that this is the precondition for conscious choices concerning the future of the city.

The museum's activities and policies, as well as its architecture, exhibition design and communication tools, can contribute to furthering the rediscovery of the city and its places, and to nurturing in the city's inhabitants a sense of belonging to the city and its communities despite their ethnic origin or place of birth, creating the basis for an inclusive idea of "citizenship" and ultimately contributing to the development of the city from many points of view.

→ TOWARDS FLEXIBLE AND OPEN MODELS: THE TEMPORARY DIMENSION

As mentioned above, city museums in this process of rethinking are faced with the challenge of representing the city altogether, accounting of multiple perspectives, including plural voices and allowing alternative interpretations, including in the story those who have traditionally been excluded. They are thus currently attempting to develop tools and communicative strategies that can both reflect the new purpose of the museum in relation to its new mission and role, and help them in such a shift.

Flexibility and openness seem to be among the main features required.

New information and communication technologies may represent one possible response; they are changeable, can allow multiple entry points, include plural voices, overlap several layers to the display, make archives

and collections available to a wider public, and encourage participation. However, it currently seems that the ICT are not really a solution or, at least, not as important as they could be. In fact, the costs of these devices, their maintenance and updating should be carefully considered as well as the problems related to the technological divide, while their integration with museum messages and exhibition design still need to be explored further—the outstanding design process for the Wall of the Museum of Copenhangen demonstrates how the use of these new technologies not only allows and foster but actually requires, also a deep rethought of the visual, communicative and epistemologic approaches to history and storytelling to really make a difference (Sandahl et al. 2011).

Another strategy that is being implemented by city museums, is to work with temporary exhibitions to deal with current city issues and with sometimes hot and difficult topics (Pohels 2011). Here, curators can explore new topics and experiment with new strategies and tools, while designers are free to develop new communication and exhibition solutions. Temporary exhibitions are flexible both in terms of content and communication strategies, and thus may be more appropriate than other tools for representing highly contemporary topics and may also obviate the risk of the rapid obsolescence of the museum's messages due to their relatively short duration. Temporary projects can be an excellent opportunity for museums to tests new curatorial approaches—such as co-curating and community involvement—and new topics. Moreover temporary projects provide the opportunity for the museum to work with its collections by reinterpreting them and displaying objects which are usually stored, and occasionally enlarge their collections by acquiring new items, and implement new collecting strategies, such as participative collecting, loans, or digital collecting.

Several city museums are working extensively with temporary projects in this sense. Some of them are intended as actual pilot projects, leading to a more extensive revision of the museum's permanent display. The Amsterdam Museum, for example, in 1985 started to explore the topic of migration through several temporary exhibitions, which then led to the decision to include this topic in the new permanent display in 2000 when the new permanent exhibition on the contemporary city was opened. The museum continues to this day to develop temporary exhibitions and programmes with the aim of problematising the history of the city and dealing with contemporary issues (de Wildt 2012). The new Galleries of Modern London of the Museum of London on their side are the result of a long process of reflection on issues related to diversity, migrations, and the identity and history of the city of London, carried out by the museum since the 1990s and marked by several projects and temporary exhibitions.[10] The Musée d'Histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg has also

10   Examples are the "Peopling of London" project, (1993–1994); the project "Belonging: Voices of London's refugees" (2003); the Symposium "Reflecting Cities," held at the Museum of London in 1993, and several programmes focused on "diversity strategies" carried out in the 2000s, such as "London Voices"

IMG. 5.18 — *The exhibition "My Town: A celebration of diversity," a the Schuttersgalerij of the Amsterdam Museum, Netherlands, 29.06. 2012 - 1.02.2013. © Amsterdam Museum.*

worked extensively with temporary exhibitions since its opening in 1996. Since then, it has promoted several exhibitions in accordance with its mission of representing history "as the visualisation of the political, cultural and social development of the city, in order to stimulate the public to dialogue with its cultural heritage" (Jungbult 2008, 77). Some of these exhibitions have also been achieved by exploring new working models, such as the possibility of virtual exhibitions and cooperation with other historical and city museums throughout Europe and the world. As the former deputy director of the museum, Marie-Paule Jungbult, states,

(2001-2004) or the "Reassessing What We Collect" project: all these projects ultimately informed most of the thinking behind the new permanent galleries.

transnational networking proved to have several positive aspects; beyond having an evident economical impact on the exhibition budget because of the possibility to share some expenses, it provides the museum staff with an important opportunity to improve their skills, enhances the visibility of the museum, also at an international level, and gives the curators the possibility to widen the exhibition contents, and encourages them to explore difficult topics in a less restrained way.

On the other hand, the problems of archiving such events can make them less effective in the long term, and their message can be lost and forgotten more quickly, in particular when they have no impact on the museum's permanent display and message. However, the benefits of temporary exhibitions are considerable and numerous, and these experimentations can provide interesting stimuli and insights for the development of new approaches and communication strategies. New and more flexible exhibition tools and techniques, which can easily allow changes and upgrades to museum content, also need to be explored and developed.[11] Some museums, for example, are already working on hybrid solutions by developing long-term temporary exhibitions and short-term permanent displays, as the Museum of Copenhagen that is gradually replacing the former permanent chronological galleries with shorter-term thematic and issue-oriented exhibitions. Other examples include the gallery "your Museum" at the Bologna's city history museum where people, associations and groups active in the city can contribute with objects and small collections, which are displayed on a temporary basis to represent the contemporary city and its citizens' memories, or the new Roman section of the Museum of London "Our Londinium," which was opened in 2012 and will last for two years. This is co-curated, with several young people contributing to the update to the Museum's Roman gallery exploring the parallels between Roman London and today's city, and represents an interesting experiment to create an exhibition comprising installations which are based in and around a pre-existing permanent gallery.[12]

At the same time the important role of temporary exhibitions and other programmes requires that a particular attention is devoted in the design of the museum's areas for workshops, didactic activities and temporary exhibitions. The latter in particular need today more space than in the past; these spaces have to be well connected with the other exhibition areas and museum's facilities, but at the same time they should be inde-

11   This should also involve a serious reflection on exhibition sustainability, in terms of costs, environmental impact, and recyclability, especially at this time of deep economic crisis and change.

12   The idea of working simultaneously on two different levels, one based on the permanent display, the other temporary and thus more flexible and changeable, has also been explored by other museums, and could be implemented further in city museums, opening up interesting possibilities. Among others, examples are provided by the "Passports" exhibition at the National Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, where particular attention is devoted to the representation of different communities on a temporary basis; the experience of the Design Museum in Milan, where the collections are re-displayed every year according to a new interpretation of the scholar and designer who curate the new exhibition; the exhibition "Ospiti Inaspettati" (Milan 2010), a temporary exhibition of contemporary design pieces displayed in four historical house-museums in Milan; or the experimentation of the inclusion of contemporary artworks in historical museums, as in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam, or in the Museum of the Romanian Peasant in Bucharest under the direction of the Romanian artist Horia Bernea.

IMG. 5.19, 5.20, 5.21 — *A view of "Our Londinium" exhibition in the Roman London Gallery of the Museum of London, United Kingdom, 2012. Photos by Francesca Lanz.*

"Our Londinium 2012", an exhibition and a new installation in the museum's Roman London Gallery, was created through the cooperation among the museum staff, some artists and a group of more than 100 young people aged 14-24, who worked together for over three years.

The exhibition "reinterprets what the Romans left behind and questions how Londoners today are similar and different to the people who lived in Londinium (Roman London).
It comprises a series of installations in the Roman London Gallery, including creative artworks, digital exhibitions and modern objects (…) poetry, sculptures, animations and films, all inspired by London past and present.
The young people who worked in this exhibition represent London's diverse identity." (from the exhibition introduction)

"Respondig to crisis: these placards were collected by students at Goldsmiths College from the 'Anti-CUts' demonstration in March 2011. The placards express dismay and anger about the current economic crisis and Governemnt spendings cuts. We don't know how Roman Londoners reacted to their government's decision to withdraw from Britain. Is protesting the most effective way of dealing with problems in society today?"
(from the display label)

pendent, in order, for example, to be capable of hand out different visitors flows and allow frequent refurbishments without interfering with the museum's everyday work. Moreover it is worthy to be pointed out that the implementation of temporary exhibitions as well as new type of exhibition and communicative tools and interfaces (as computer terminals, art installations, video based displays, etc…) seems to be actually furthering the development of new museum spaces, which are poly-functional, multi-purpose, and more flexible in their destination and uses and whose relevance and architectural features are currently under definition.

→ **FURTHER CUES OF REFLECTIONS**

Most of the above considerations briefly outlined above obviously do not concern only the city museums, however these changes altogether are nurturing significant change in city museums, a change that is ongoing and full of promising perspectives and difficult challenges. It is not the purpose of this section to draw any conclusions, but rather to outline some early insights for further reflection and investigation.

At the same time the shift of the focus of city museums from city history to the contemporary city and the reconfiguration of their role from repository of civic memory to agent of urban development also entails a gradual disappearance of the idea of total representation and supposed objectivity of the museum. An increasing importance and attention is paid to the significant identity, social and political work which city museums can carry out within the city having and declaring at the same time, their stance and transmitting their outlook through their activities, exhibitions, design and architecture.

Migration and cultural diversity are also recurrent areas for reflection in this process of rethinking. Migration is usually interpreted as a movement of ideas and people, whose experiences, skills, and backgrounds have always enriched a city's economy, identity and culture; it is often presented as the catalyst and pre-condition for a town's growth and change, or the history of the physical, economic and social development of the city is traced in relation to the various immigration flows over time. Migration is sometimes included in the museum as the core of new temporary exhibitions, programmes and activities, or at others as a stand-alone gallery—having much in common in terms of communication strategies, narratives and approaches with many new Migration Museums. At other times, it is embedded in the main story, either as a parenthesis or as part of the thread. It is usually presented through highlighting the cases and personal stories of migrants as examples of the current ethnic and social diversity of the city, using pictures, personal items, audio and video recordings, focusing on particular groups—such as guest workers or refugees, or a city's ethnic groups.

In doing so city museums are eventually reconsidering their understanding of civic social identity—even challenging approaches and purposes—

IMG. 5.22 — *The Sackler Hall in the Museum of London, United Kingdom. Design by Furneaux Stewart. This hybrid space works as a cafe, an information hub and a place for temporary exhibitions. It is the conceptual and physical fulcrum of the whole exhibition area, characterised by a circular curtain of led displaying information and video art works, commissioned every two years by the museum. With its highly adaptive character, it reflects the ever changing and questioning approach of the museum. Photo by Francesca Lanz.*

IMG. 5.23 — *The Visible Storage of the Museum aan de Stroom–MAS, Antwerp, Belgium. This space is occasionally used for temporary exhibitions; these activities are often organized by a group of young people (MAS in Young Hands) activly collaborating with the museum. © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*

IMG. 5.24 — *The "Expanding City" room in the Stadsmuseum Gent–STAM. © Phile Deprez, courtesy of STAM.*
This space is meant as a room for temporary exhibitions, as well as for debates and meetings. It currently hosts a web-based exhibition on the contemporary city (including a video game on the problems and concerns of the contemporary city), a terminal where visitors can create their own movie on the city, and, in the center, a relax area where some screens display videos about the contemporary city.

eventually furthering an idea of "citizenship" that is not based on legal or bureaucratic rationale, on ethnic origin or place of birth, understanding a "citizen" every people living in the city and being part of the city's community, despite their origins, religions, birth or culture. Against an official definition of "citizenship," intended as "the particular legal bond between an individual and his or her State, acquired by birth or naturalization, either by declaration, choice, marriage or other means under national legislation"[13] they promote an idea of citizenship as a multifaceted sense of belonging and participation, an open category, a sense of entrenchment, "civic connoisseurship," identification and active citizenship in and with the public space.

City museums, as they are currently evolving, thanks to their long tradition and experience of working locally with other cultural and social actors, due to their local roots, community engagement, closer links with places and people, and their ability to establish a privileged and enduring relationship with the communities and other cultural actors settled in the urban territory, may effectively become spaces where encounter and dialogue among different identities can take place, where the interferences between local and global emerge, and discussions about potential frictions materialise. In this way they can contribute, even more than other institutions, to the reconfiguration and dissemination of a multifaceted sense of belonging and participation and to the promotion of a sharper awareness of an inclusive European identity.

Moreover it is worth mentioning that both new and renovated city museums are currently trying to bring in new approaches, including new strategies for storytelling and the representation of history, as well as a rethinking of their narratives and communication. In this sense, most are reinterpreting the city's history in relation to a broader perspective, looking at the local city's history within a European or even global context, and with reference to contemporary issues. Hence, the museum's narrative is often structured on two levels, one which is very locally based and strictly related to the city and the immediate vicinity, and another which extends beyond the national context, by consciously expanding its vision and adopting transnational values.

At the same time many city museums are attempting to move away from a purely chronological approach and are beginning to narrate the city's history from the present, or including frequent references to contemporary matters along with the historical narration. In some cases, they have decided to develop a thematic, diachronic display, which is organised around some main topics—often presented as the cornerstone of the city's identity and part of its intangible heritage—and explored through the city's history. This method in particular, characteristic of temporary exhibitions and recently implemented in permanent displays, seems to

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13   From the Eurostat Glossary http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Glossary:Citizenship (accessed 8 April 2013).

have given rise to new and multiple interpretations of the history, connecting the past more directly with the present, while the filter of the past may simultaneously help to address some current city issues which may be difficult or contested.

Broadly speaking, it would seem possible to identify an overall shift from an object-focused to a content-oriented approach to storytelling. Consequently, new—or revisited and implemented—exhibitions techniques should be used to effectively convey the messages and display new objects—which can sometimes be very difficult both in terms of their physical or intangible forms, and as far as the embedded values and stories are concerned—, allow multiple interpretations and, at the same time, avoid misunderstandings.

Exhibition design may play a fundamental role. As Sharon Macdonal pointed out in her article reflecting on the role and potentialities of museums to articulate new identities in a post-national and trans-cultural perspective, "visual and spatial features of museums also have implications for conceptions of identity" and such issues need to be tackled "through aesthetic strategies (...) as well as through content" (2003, 3). The nineteenth century model, she continues, "entailed a detachment of the viewer—thinking of themselves as outside or above that which was represented" offering "the idea of a privileged, objective view point" (ibid.).

If the exhibition design and the museum's organization of that time reflected the same premise of objectivity and reality and a traditional conception of identity as unique, homogeneous and consolidated; similary some current trends in museological as well as museographical approaches can be seen as the results of a overturning of this state of being—we are reminded of the increase of projects and activities oriented at involving and engaging the museum's visitors; the ever major attention paid to visitors surveys and studies; the penchant in displaying personal stories or the development of participative programmes and curatorial approaches as well as, from a design and communicative point of view, the implementation of particular exhibition tools and devices that can foster the interaction, encouraging an even physical participation of the visitors, and creating a sympathetic connection between them and the museum narration. The *viewers* become *The User*, who is no more detached from what is represented, but actively part of it, touching, listening, choosing, playing a role in the exhibition and in the making of its contents.

In considering the current evolution of contemporary museums, as well as of many other contemporary museums, it is important not to underestimate the crucial importance of the connections which exist between the museum's design and the museum's contents, and the intellectual and expressive aspects of the exhibition design itself.

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City Museums: Do We Have a Role in Shaping the Global Community?

→ JACK LOHMAN

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Before taking up his present appointment, Jack Lohman had been Director of the Museum of London since August 2002, and was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the Queen's 2012 Birthday Honours for his work at the Museum of London.

PREVIOUS PAGE, IMG.
5.25 — *"Our Londinium" exhibition in the Museum of London, United Kingdom. © Museum of London.*

We live in an age of profound cultural transition, a time in which the complexity of our multicultural world confronts us with challenges, which have taken on an urgency and intensity quite unlike anything we have experienced in recent history. It is a time when hardly any of our city museums are free from having to undergo deep soul-searching as to their meaning and role.

The past decade or so, in particular, has been a period of deep crisis marked by tension and clashes between and within nations. Such conflict has variously been described as a clash of "civilizations," of "cultures," of "world-views" or "values." It is a tension which is ongoing and which deepens in intensity daily. The role of culture in the twenty-first century has become central to the discourse on how an increasingly "global" world can survive without the threat of some being swamped by the overpowering cultural force of others.

It is also a time in which the managing of cultural diversity has become a skill and a competence, which is sought after in just about every sphere of human endeavour. Most sensible and fair-minded people acknowledge that learning to live with diversity is essential to peace and human development. Respect for and understanding of difference, cultural sensitivity, freedom of cultural expression, cultural identity and cultural rights occupy a substantial space on the global political agenda. This is the age of identity politics in which the conflicting interests of preserving cultural identity, and that of absorbing and being absorbed by prevailing dominant cultures, clash with bloody force.

These clashes are not new. It is not the first time that people have been divided along the faultline of cultural difference. Human history is littered with tales of cultural conflict resulting in conquest and annihilation but also of cultural encounters resulting in human development and progress.

→ GLOBALIZATION: NOT A NEW PROCESS

"Globalization," though a modern term used to describe the consequences of extraordinary rapid technology-driven, information-based advances over the past two decades, is not a new phenomenon. It is, in fact, one of the oldest processes known to humankind. It began when our forebears set out from Africa to populate the planet half a million years ago. The story of globalization is that of the development of humankind itself. It is the story of the meanderings and coming together, the exchanges, the giving, the taking and the sharing in the long process of human encounters and achievements.

Human memory is appallingly short and the speed of change, which is the hallmark of the current experience of globalization, gives us little time for reflection and recollection. And so we fall prey to the amnesia of our age, and ascribe uniqueness and particularity where it is not deserved. We point to the manifestations and proofs of our new global era with a sense of wonder and self-admiration—global trade, the global economy, global investments and global information systems and networks. Some

of us even describe ourselves as "global citizens," members of that unique band of wanderers who consider themselves free of the shackles of nationalism and who choose to believe that national borders, passports and immigration officers are minor irritations along the global highway.

So when Richard Parker, Senior Fellow at the Shorenstein Centre, John F. Kennedy School of Government Faculty at Harvard, and an Oxford economist, reminds us that, while there is much that is undeniably new about the world in which we live, there is little new about what he refers to as the "long-established patterns and achievements"[1] upon which much of this "newness" is built: "Even those larger features we think of as most distinct about our own "global" era today—the immense trade flows, or the constant information of the worldwide web, or the electronic financial markets that send billions of dollars coursing around the globe—all have a longer and deeper heritage than most of us understand."[2]

Parker cites as an example, current US international trade which, though the total volume has increased, when measured as a percentage of gross national product, is virtually at the same level it was under Theodore Roosevelt because the US economy has grown proportionately. Similarly, in the case of international finance and global capital markets, we forget that the "golden age" of trade and investment happened, not in the last fifty years but in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The significance of Parker's argument is that, unlike those who would have us believe that we live in a unique and unprecedented period of human history, we can in fact look for what he calls "patterns and connections (…) trends and similarities" and we are able to tap into the rich traditions of the past, the experiences and values of our mutual ancestors and our faith to "shape this world as those before have tried to do."[3]

But increasing diversity and consequent conflict mark the spirit of the infant twenty-first century, leaving hardly a corner of our world untouched. There is a growing sense that "this is not going to go away." The times are indeed "a-changin'," and "a-changin'," in a way that seems bent on destruction. What is equally disconcerting is the confusion, which has been created, particularly in the West, among institutions which once thought they knew the way things worked and were clear about their role in society. Religious institutions are an interesting example of this. At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was little doubt in the minds of most mainline church leaders in the West that Christianity was strong and on the verge of spreading its message to every corner of the earth. The spirit of optimism and faith which spurred the Church on well into the second half of the twentieth century has given way (in the most part, if somewhat reluctantly) to acceptance that the world is religiously pluralistic and that the "Christian West" no longer has meaning other than as a historical definition of a bygone age which will probably never be seen again.

1   Parker, Richard. 2002. "From Conquistadors to Corporations: Wanna do something about globalization? You might start learning a little history." *Sojourners Magazine* 31, (3).

2   Ibid.

3   Ibid.

IMG. 5.26 — *The Book of Tributes in the City Gallery of the Museum of London, July 7th, 2005. Photo by Francesca Lanz.*

However, in spite of all this, religious traditions still have the ambivalent power to be agents of both healing and destruction. Fundamentalism manifests itself in almost every religious tradition, fuelling intolerance of that which is different. In recent times, the expanding plurality of cultures, values and norms has led to conflict and exclusion. Forgotten is the wisdom of theologians such as Max Müller who taught that those who know only one religion, one culture, one way of life, know none, not even their own.

This thought is echoed in UNESCO's position on cultural diversity. In a recent statement we read: "among UNESCO's chief missions is ensuring space for and freedom of expression to all the world's cultures. It considers that, while each culture draws from its own roots, it must fail to blossom without contact with other cultures. It is not therefore a matter of identifying and safeguarding every culture in isolation, but rather of revitalizing them in order to avoid segregation and prevent conflict." The statement concludes: "this cultural dialogue has taken on a new meaning in the context of globalization and of the current international political climate. Thus it is becoming a vital means of maintaining peace and world unity."[4]

Because we are all by both nature and nurture cultural beings and our institutional life is an expression of our corporate cultural identity, none of us is free of cultural influence, nor should we be. The events of 11 September 2001 have reminded us that ignorance of our diversity and differences, wilful or not, holds the seeds of mass destruction as surely as any nuclear weapon. The world is caught between opposing currents or forces with regard to this issue. While opposing, they are also interrelated.

On the one hand, there is what is called the "centripetal force" of globalization which refers to the phenomenon of the world's cultures be-

ing increasingly thrown together, leading to an undermining of a sense of territorialism and an increase in a sense of collectivism and a shared reality. The world is thus woven together by the global forces of media, communications, information and technology. But the benefits for some, more often than not, work to the detriment of others. The divide is clearly defined between the West and the Rest. The power of global integration is felt by the Rest as threatening, as overpowering, a threat to the uniqueness of the already marginalized masses. On the other hand, we are witnessing the ever-increasing struggle for particular cultural, ethnic, religious and other identities. The centrifugal forces of narrow group identities, of blood and belonging, the deep ties of language, religion and race all conspire to mitigate against the forces of "centripetalism."

→ **MUSEUMS AND DIVERSITY**

Museums exist within this complex global environment, and are not spared the pressures and challenges to transform and find a role and meaning. We are not able to stand apart from the societies in which we exist, to interpret and reflect diverse society to itself.

In another statement on culture, UNESCO has this to say: "a museum works for the endogenous development of social communities whose testimonies it conserves while lending a voice to their cultural aspirations. Resolutely turned towards its public, community museums are attentive to social and cultural change and help us to present our identity and diversity in an everchanging world."[5] This role and definition of museums has come a long way since their formal establishment 200 years ago as places for the display of artefacts and for study. Today, museums are defined as "non-profit-making, permanent institutions in the service of society and its development, and open to the public, which acquire, conserve, communicate and exhibit, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment." This broadening of definition has shifted our role from being merely a "stage" to being "actors" on the broader stage of life itself where we are part of the larger cast made up of societies and nations and where together we develop the plot for our future. In this sense we are more than "actors." We are "interactors" who present the multiple, diverse interactions between nature, culture, history, art, craft and indeed everything that makes us who we are.

The world in which we play this role is characterized by an extraordinary juxtaposition and diversity of peoples, cultures, traditions, ethnic, political and religious differences thrown together as never before. The historian, Arnold Toynbee, identified this phenomenon as Volkwanderung, the swirling movement of individuals, peoples and cultures in pursuit of a different and better life. Within given national societies, both new arrivals and older ethnic or cultural groups struggle to express their differences, their uniqueness, while being brought face to face with others do-

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ing the same. The old hegemony of dominant cultures is breaking down, bringing with it a sense of dismay and threat. Even the United States, the only superpower left, despite its own multicultural nature and the inordinate influence of its culture on the rest of the world, is finding it difficult to live in this new order. What we are witnessing today, in the face of this perceived threat, is a growing intolerance for difference and conflict.

When faced by a threat of this nature, we have, as a society, three responses to choose from. One is to assimilate. Assimilation is, at heart, the defeat of one by the other, a capitulation to the dominant culture. It is how many minorities perceive the dilution and co-option of their cultures while the majority prides itself on being "tolerant." In this way, much, if not all of the richness of diversity is lost or driven underground, there to be perceived as undermining and subversive by the majority.

The other response is that of exclusion. We build borders around ourselves and our cultures and require that others stay outside them.

The third way is to acknowledge difference as equal and as having the right to co-exist within a neutral public space, while pursuing difference and expressing it within private spheres of individual social reality. This is what is known as liberal coexistence. Despite its best intentions, the avoidance of open conflict and the balance of mutual self-interest in public programmes, liberal coexistence can lead to isolation and fragmentation. It is entirely dependent upon mutual tolerance, an agreement to live beside each other, not to threaten each other.

In all these responses, diversity, rather than being protected, is sacrificed for the sake of a perceived unity and an avoidance of conflict. The commitment to promote "the fruitful diversity of cultures" for a more open and creative world in the new twenty-first century context, expressed in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2 November 2002), is based upon its conviction that "respect for cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue is one of the surest guarantees of development and peace."

The recognition of the centrality of culture in peace-making, the pursuit of full liberty, individual and societal meaning and expression, provides cultural institutions such as city museums a rare opportunity. This is "foreign territory" to many of us working in museums. The challenge to museums to engage in issues such as the building of national identity out of the fragments of diverse groups, to be agents for change and peace building, and help to address the challenge of poverty reduction are all part of a brief which some would consider beyond our ambit and capability.

There is therefore a need to engage the discourse within the museum community itself, lest there be a feeling that we are being asked to step in where others have failed. We need to grapple with these questions honestly, allowing our own fears and concerns to be expressed. We need to be assisted in confronting our own cultural agendas, in facing our own limitations.

How are we coping with diversity within our own environments? How open are we to the "other" point of view on issues which are precious to us? How will we conduct these debates and with whom? How will we be assisted in dealing with the potential conflict which will inevitably arise from the discussion? What is the extent of our accountability and to what and to whom are we primarily responsible?

There will be those who will have no doubt and will need no convincing of the rightness of this role and there will be those who will be anxious as to what the implications for themselves and their institutions might be. There will also be those who will have very real difficulties and even be resistant to engaging in the discussion. This is the nature of our own diversity as a community of museums—a diverse community within diverse communities.

I am personally of the view that cultural institutions and museums, and city museums in particular, do indeed have a critical role in all of this. I have been fortunate to be part of such an endeavour in South Africa in the restructuring of museums in that once fraught country where diversity was the cause of deep divisions. I am very aware that nation-building out of the material of the past is not possible without a willingness to face that past squarely, while at the same time acknowledging the power of its legacy to survive in the present and into the future. It is this legacy, the baggage of the past, the unresolved issues, the unexpressed fears and the uncritical assumptions, the imposition of what others think to be best, that undermine our highest hopes and best intentions. Without dealing with our own issues regarding diversity, we will do no better than others who have tried before us.

The challenge for us as a community within a community is to be honest and courageous in the acknowledgement that if we are to play a role in which all the richness of city culture can contribute to the development of people in their totality, then we must be true to the challenge of being more open to diversity ourselves: the people who direct museums, who work within their walls, who conserve, curate and exhibit.

We must be what we wish to become and what this world in all its global richness can and must be.

Source: *Museum International*, Vol. 58, no. 3, 2006, pp. 15-20.

International Networking Projects and the Web

Interview with Marie-Paule Jungblut

→ **MARIE-PAULE JUNGBLUT**

Marie-Paule Jungblut is an historian and philologist. She studied History and German literature at the University of Luxemburg and at the University of Göttingen. From 2004 to 2011 she was chair of the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Archaeology and History (ICMAH) and of the International Association of Museums of History (AIMH). She is associate lecturer in museology at the Université de Liège and since 1991 she has been working as a historian and curator at the Musée d'Histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, serving as deputy director of the two museums of the city of Luxembourg (the Musée d'Histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg and the Villa Vauban – Musée d'Art de la Ville de Luxembourg). In particular being responsible for the first permanent exhibition of the museum and the temporary exhibitions program. In February 2012, she was elected director of the Historisches Museum Basel.

The Musée d'Histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg opened in 1996. It is housed in four restored residential houses dating from the 17th to the 19th century, still bearing archaeological traces from the Middle Ages. The aim of the restoration project, which turned this historical building into the city museum's venue was, on the one hand to study the historical evolution of the buildings, bringing into light and enhancing its archaeological remains, while at the same time enriching the architecture and the museological aspect of the premises and provide the museum with all the modern facilities needed by such an institution. A "floating" glass façade and a panoramic lift that passes through the entire height of the museum is a characteristic feature. The lift, thanks to its transparent walls and re-

PREVIOUS PAGE, IMG. 5.27 — *The Luxembourg City History Museum. Architecture by Conny Lentz (Luxembourg); structural project by Gehl & Jacoby et Ass.; museographical project and exhibition desing by Adeline Rispal (Repérages Architects, Paris).*

duced velocity, allow visitors to see the rock foundations on the lower levels and to enjoy a panoramic view of the Grund district and Rham plateau on the upper levels, providing the visitor with an overview of the city's development, from its first settlement to the country's independence in 1839 and thus becoming a part of the exhibition path itself. The exhibition illustrates the more recent history of the city through five themes: City and Power, City in Motion, City and Environment, City and Facilities and City in Europe, all of which form a link between past and present.

The Luxembourg City History Museum "understands its mission of representing history as the visualisation of the political, cultural and social development of the city, in order to stimulate the public to dialogue with its cultural heritage." Since its opening, the museum has extensively worked with temporary exhibitions according to this vision and as a strategy to deal with difficult and contentious topics, aimed at fostering dialogue between history and the present. Most of them have also been used to explore different curatorial approaches and experiment with new media, ICT, and new working strategies, as transnational networking and other forms of interdisciplinary cooperation.

In this interview, Marie-Paule Jungblut, former deputy director of the museum, talks about this experience, its benefit and potential.

What's the role today, in your opinion, of a contemporary city history museum like the Musée d'Histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg?

The mission of the Luxembourg City History Museum is to preserve the city's history, making it accessible to people today and preserving it for future generations. It is committed to serving audiences of all ages with educational exhibitions and programs that are both thought provoking and entertaining. The Museum focuses primarily on the city of Luxembourg, and also seeks to place the city and its people in an international context reflecting its location at the centre of Europe, and connecting the local story to the stories of humans worldwide.

Why should city history museums use the Internet and other new Information and communication technologies?

One of the main duties of history museums today is to combine the safeguarding of cultural heritage, inextricably linked to such an institution, with contemporary and innovative presentations and communication forms. Collections should thus be freed from the "dust of history" and historical objects should be revealed in their significance for the present.

With the use of timely forms of communication (such as Web 2.0 or Augmented Reality) and new thought approaches, museums can open up to whole new audiences. Contemporary products enhance the image of history museums and provide them with the additional advantage of being able to offer sponsors an attractive platform for their presence.

Some of the exhibitions promoted by the museum have recently been developed in cooperation with other history and city museums around Europe and worldwide, and sometimes also with multidisciplinary teams. Why cooperate? What are the benefits of such a working strategy?

In view of the sophisticated commercial products that are on today's market, curators of history museums are often not confident enough in developing digital products themselves. The result is that either they won't contemplate the idea for want of money or, should funds not be an issue, they entrust the development of digital products entirely to commercial companies. The risk then is that the end product clearly bears the hallmarks of the enlisted production company.

Alternatives are national and transnational co-productions between history museums and interdisciplinary partnerships with educational establishments. These bring about not only an added value in terms of content of the products and a reduction in costs, but also significantly enhance the external image of the participating houses. The individual museums are able to position themselves on an international stage. Furthermore, cooperation projects give curators the chance to further their professional development through exchange with colleagues.

Since its opening, the Luxembourg City History Museum has amassed a wealth of experience in transnational cooperation projects, in terms of both "real" travelling exhibitions and web-based projects. Could you talk to us about some of these experiences?

The first digital product that the Luxembourg Museum launched together with the Helsinki City Museum and the DASA Working World Exhibition between 2003 and 2006 tackled the question of what makes a good European citizen, namely "The Real Citizen." The participating curators set themselves the challenge of developing a product that would address the questions of young people. An additional technical challenge was also to make the product suitable for the visually impaired. This resulted in a range of technical constraints that led to the product being rather static in design.

IMG. 5.28 — *"Explore Poverty," a on-line exhibition conceived by the Luxembourg City History Museum in collaboration with the Minnesota Historical Society, the Helsinki City Museum, the DASA Arbeitswelt Ausstellung, and implemented by the Koln International School of Design. http://www. explore-poverty.org.*
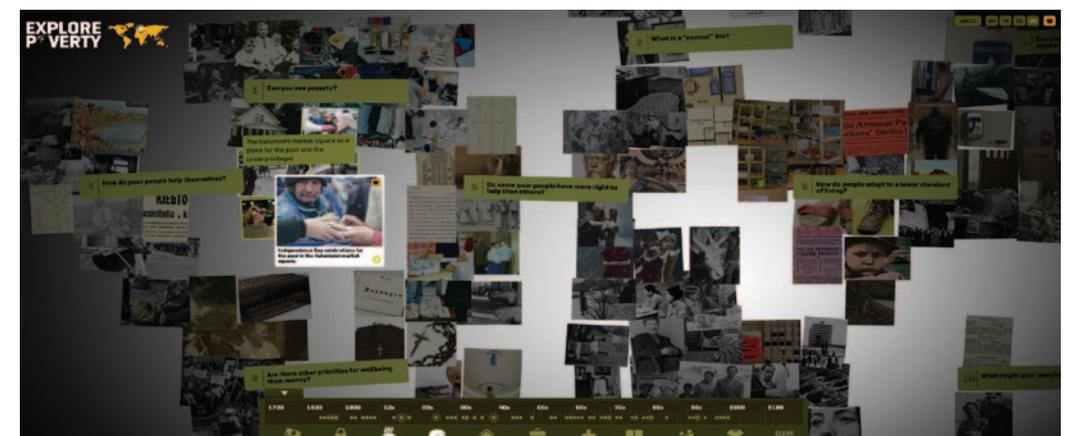
IMG. 5.29 — *The on-line exhibition "Explore Poverty" is implemented also in some social media. This external page, which acts as a "virtual space apart," displays the ongoing discussions on Twitter and Facebook. http://www.explore-poverty.org.*

The second cooperation project was brought to life in the context of an actual exhibition on the subject of poverty. The project "Explore Poverty" (www.explore-poverty.org) involved five different institutions from four countries and two continents. Each treated their subject according to their content orientation.

The content was provided by the Luxembourg City History Museum, the Helsinki City Museum, the DASA Working World Exhibition and the Minnesota Historical Society. For the design the four museums worked with students and professors from the Cologne International Design School. Through working with the young design students from Cologne, the (conventional) exhibition curators were forced to come to grips with the communication forms prevailing on the Web 2.0. The aim was not to publish a classical exhibition catalogue on the net.

The curators from the Helsinki City Museum, from DASA and the Luxembourg City History Museum knew each other from several previous cooperation projects, which also included the website, "The Real Citizen." They had already developed a working method in the context of this previous project, which they transferred to the new project.

Each museum appointed a so-called producer, who was to be responsible for the preparation of images, films and texts within each house. They also chose a project manager, who was to be in charge of coordinating the project. The responsibility of the project manager consisted of sourcing the material from the producers and conveying it to the students of the Cologne Design School. The challenges the manager faced varied in nature. On the one hand, the manager had to build up trust over thousands of kilometres, while also organising the communication between participants and overcoming cultural differences. On the other hand, there were technical difficulties that needed to be solved with regard to data communication.

In your experience, what aspects are fundamental for successful cooperation?

First of all, trust. In a transnational cooperation with partners with heterogeneous content, the different partners need to be able to rely on each other to raise the agreed money, to provide the material in good time and, most importantly, to place their trust in the leadership of the manager.

In the case of "Explore Poverty," the four museums reached an agreement, which contained a rough concept regarding contents and which also laid down the distribution of roles, a time schedule and the financial framework for the project. Since three of the four partners were from Europe, it was agreed that the design would also be developed in Europe. As it was decided not to work with a professional company, but to "risk" working with design students, trust played a very important role. The work with 20 students gave access to a broader creative repertoire, but the partners did not know at the beginning what they were going to get and therefore needed to trust one another that the decision that was made would overall prove advantageous to the project.

Then "communication" is another fundamental aspect to create trust and motivation and to keep this up over a longer period of time, in addition to exchanging emails and creating an Internet platform for the transfer of digitised material and video conferences, "real" meetings are vital. This was confirmed in both the transnational Internet projects that Luxembourg City History Museum, DASA and the Helsinki City Museum have been involved in. While there is no doubt that the Internet these days offers fantastic opportunities for the technical exchange of information, when it comes to reaching an agreement on content and aesthetic issues, human contact is indispensable. In the case of the "Explore Poverty" project, for instance, several "real" meetings were held at the Cologne International Design School. First the students presented four different websites, which were discussed. The team then agreed on one project, which the entire student group went on to develop.

Trust and open communication allow cultural differences to be overcome to a certain extent. The curators had to clarify at the outset how far the project could go in order to tackle a subject as difficult as "poverty" and therefore it also necessary to come to an agreement regarding the so-called "metadata" of the objects.

Does this cooperation also affect the exhibition contents?

Yes it does: not all city museums, in fact, share the same self-understanding of their social role. Many curators do not have the courage to tackle "difficult" subjects of recent history. Cooperation projects result in one's own cultural heritage being viewed with a more discerning critical eye.

Interview by Francesca Lanz

Case Studies

IMG. 5.30 — *Museum of London, United Kingdom. Children looking at cases in the World City Gallery, within the new Galleries of Modern London. © Museum of London.*

Galleries of Modern London, Museum of London
London, United Kingdom

The Museum of London was funded in the 1960s by merging two earlier museums, the Guildhall Museum (1826) and the London Museum (1912). The new Museum of London opened in 1976 and since then has operated as a social and urban history museum.

From 2000 onwards the museum has carried out several major renovation projects both from a programmatic and architectural point of view, which have led the museum to rethink its mission, practices, narratives and communication strategies; widen its activities; refocus its objectives and reorganise and enlarge its collections and spaces. The museum currently comprises two venues—the Museum of London and the Museum of London Docklands, as well as a commercial archeological service, the MOLA, Museum of London Archaeology. Overall, the museum attracts over 400,000 visitors per year and holds the largest archaeological archive in Europe with the mission to "inspire a passion for London […] through increasing public awareness, appreciation and understanding of London's cultural heritage, its people and its stories."

Wtihin this renovation project in 2003 a new museum venue, the Museum of London Docklands, was inaugurated. It is housed in a listed early-19th-century sugar warehouse at Canary Wharf, and displays the stories of the port, the River Thames and the local communities of the East London riverside. It also develops educational programmes, activities, exhibitions and workshops aimed at exploring and representing London's East End, one of the most multicultural and multilayered areas of the city. Among its 11 permanent galleries, the "London, Sugar & Slavery Gallery" is one of the most noteworthy. Through historical objects and documents, as well as personal histories, works of art, music, videos and short movies created for the gallery, it examines London's involvement in transatlantic slavery with interesting references to new types of slavery in the contemporary city, racism and the contribution of Africans and other communities to London's culture and wealth. In this sense, the museum building itself is part of the collection; the West India Dock and the warehouse complex which has been renovated to host the museum are, in fact, a physical manifestation of London's corner of the so-called "trade triangle."

In these years, the museum's contents, exhibition design and spaces have been reviewed and rethought in detail; as a final step, in 2010, the Museum of London was re-launched with the opening of the new Galleries of Modern London.

→ OPENNESS AS A WAY OF WORKING

The Museum of London opened in 1976 in a new building at London Wall within the Barbican Estate. The museum was designed by Philip Powell, Hidalgo Moya and Partners, who also conceived part of the exhibition design with Higgins, Ney & Partners.

When the Museum of London was inaugurated it was the subject of much debate and criticism. Critics agreed that the difficulty in actually finding and getting to the museum was one of the major issues, a problem that earned it the title of "the most retiring public building in London." In fact, the problem was mostly due to the urban features of the site, which is characterised by a system of high walkways created in the 1960s and '70s by the City of London with the aim of separating pedestrians and cars, supposedly for mutual benefit. Other common criticisms were related to the exhibition design and display, thought to be overburdened with objects and information, and conceived without a hierarchical rationale.

The building characterised by concrete structures and a white ceramic tile façade, interrupted by a window facing onto the remains of the Roman and Medieval wall—unfortunately overwhelmed by the museum and the walkway design. The exhibition developed around the inner courtyard, arranged along a spiral route on two levels connected by a ramp; it was organised chronologically and divided into ten sections corresponding to specific historical periods. The exhibits were mainly four-square brick showcases, with a base containing the technical equipment, and a movable glass cabinet. The overall exhibition design, the exhibit system and the architectural project, with its open-plan layout and free-standing columns, were conceived to guarantee flexibility of the interior arrangements and the possibility to easily amend them.

The four-year renovation project carried out by the museum, resulting in its re-launch in 2010, needed to address this issue of context. The re-launch was the final step in a long and complex process of rethinking the museum's narratives and approaches, which lasted more than ten years and led to the redesign of the museum's spaces and the transformation of the lower floor galleries.

Wilkinson Eyre Architects were entrusted with the overall architectural renovation project,

while the design of the new galleries was developed by an in-house team with an intimate knowledge of the museum's collections. The design team consisted of Leigh Cain (Head of Design and Exhibitions), Gail Symington (Head Designer) and was led by the museum director himself, Jack Lohman, who studied architecture and is a professor of Museum Design and Communication at Bergen National Academy of the Arts in Norway.

A previous project by Wilkinson Eyre to roof over the internal courtyard was dropped by Lohman when he took on the position of Museum Director in 2002, in favour of a less iconic and eye-catching but more practical project. The final design respects and understands the original building and, at the same time, is aimed at enhancing it, reconfiguring and expanding its spaces, and increasing the museum's connection with the city. Wilkinson Eyre scheduled the reorganisation of vertical and horizontal circulation flow around and within the museum, including a new staircase tower and the design of the new museum entrance, whose canopy, which projects over the existing city highway, is designed to improve the visibility of the entrance, and so raises the profile of the museum.

The project also provided additional space for shops, exhibitions and other facilities, including the new City Gallery. The City Gallery is a glass-wall extension added to the museum's

north wing, which contains the Lord Mayor's Coach, and is devoted to the contemporary city. This is a space conceived of as a kind of "museum shop window," facing the London Wall, bringing the museum down to the street and symbolically opening it up to the city. This architectural solution can be seen not only as a gimmick to signal the presence of the museum—the entrance to which is still hardly visible—but also as an architectural metaphor for the idea of openness characterising the new museum approach and its desire to establish a straightforward relationship with the city and its citizens.

In addition, the Wilkinson Eyre project also redesigned the Museum's Weston Theatre as a multipurpose location for cinema, performances and talks, and connected it via a hanging glazed staircase to the Clore Learning Centre, a new space completed in 2009 in accordance with the museum's mission to further develop its educational outreach programmes and work closely with schools.

The design of the new Galleries of Modern London is an important part of the major renovation project which the Museum underwent and that has affected not only the museum's spaces and its exhibition design, but also entailed a deep rethinking of the museum's narratives. The Galleries of Modern London are the result of a long process of reflection on issues related to diversity, migrations, and the identity and history of the city of London, carried out by the museum since the 1990s and marked by several major milestones, starting with the "Peopling of London" project.

As Nick Merriman pointed out, the "Peopling of London" project was aimed at "highlighting the neglected history of London's diverse populations by placing contemporary communities in a long-term historical context" and demonstrating that London "has always had a culturally diverse population from various parts of the globe." The project, which led to an exhibition run from November 1993 to May 1994, ignited much debate and was a new departure for the

Museum of London substantially informing its subsequent work.

The new Galleries of Modern London depict the history of London from 1666 (the year of the Great Fire) to present days. They are organised into three chronological sections—the "Expanding City" (1666-1850s); the "People's City" (1850s-1940s) and the "World City" (1950s-today)—ending in the new "City Gallery" and then flowing into the "Sackler Hall"

The vision at the ground of the new galleries is well represented in their entrance panel where visitors can read:

"Two themes run through our story: London and the world—For the past 300 years, London's fortunes have been tied up with people, goods and ideas from overseas. This story is about London's relationship with the rest of the world. People and change— People are at the centre of the story. Through London's past people have shaped the city's fortunes and in turn have been changed themselves. Like any great city, London never stands still. Its buildings rise and fall. Its character evolves. The choices Londoners made in the past affect us all today—just as our choices will help shape London's future."

Such an introduction declares that what the museum displays is not *the Story* of London but *one possible interpretation* of London's history, in the light of the contemporary city and looking towards its future. The museum stands on what story it *chooses* to tell. Migration is a central topic of this story and it is embedded— sometimes explicitly, other times deductively— into the entire narration, promoting the idea that this is something London should be proud of, rather than a "problem." London's contemporary multifarious identity and its distinctive features are described as being the result of different cultures, life styles, religions, sexual habits, languages and fashions, resulting from the migration of people to and within London, throughout history as well as today.

PREVIOUS PAGE IMG 5.31, 5.32— *Views of the Museum of London from the street and from the upper walkway. Photos by Francesca Lanz.*

IMG. 5.33 — *The new staircase to the Clore Learning Centre. © Edmund Sumner, courtesy of WilkinsonEyre Architects.*

IMG. 5.34 — *Display of the coach of the Lord Mayor before the recent renovation project. December 2005. Photo by Justinc.*

IMG. 5.35 — *Exterior of the City Gallery. © Museum of London.*

Considerable effort has been made to avoid grouping together or categorising London's inhabitants according to ethnic groups, revisiting the idea of migration as a widespread movement of people, which thus enlarges the borders of London's "imagined community" to all those who live in the city and contribute to its development, regardless of whether they are foreign-born, temporary residents or the long-term settled. The Galleries present cultural diversity as part of the city's wealth, enriching its cultural, social and economic life, and ultimately promote, with clear political implications, a positive view of migrants and migration.

The exhibition design of the galleries has been developed by the museum's team in accordance with this vision and with the aim of ensuring the best integration between the message, the collection and the exhibition design itself. As Jack Lohman declared "the design and architecture of the museum should be as varied and surprising as the locations in which they stand. Our new Galleries of Modern London have given us a wonderful opportunity to showcase how creative design can bring a new diversity of content and experience into the heart of the museum (…) London speaks through these galleries and (…) space has been created to make the city's many voices heard."

While previously the displays hardly reached recent times, with the opening of the Galleries the whole ground floor of the museum is today completely dedicated to the story of modern and contemporary London and its inhabitants, from the Great Fire in 1666 to the present. Innovative lighting systems and the latest conservation technology, as well as multimedia installations, interactive devices and new technologies have been used in the new exhibition design to enhance and virtually expand the objects displayed, which, after careful selection, constitute the key element of the new exhibition.

The museum's collections are in fact extremely heterogeneous and diverse, as were the collection strategies of the two previous institutions which formed the foundation for the creation of this Museum. The museum today owns more than two million objects, and its curatorial practices now seek to make collecting a more collaborative process. Several programmes have been implemented to collect recent history and build an oral historical archive with the contribution of many Londoners. Contemporary collecting projects have also been developed, and new criteria regarding the acquisition of items donated to the Museum have been defined. In the Galleries, more than 7,000 objects are on display—a selection from the museum's collection, enriched by new objects, as well as music, audio and video materials. The collection is supported by multimedia contents to provide additional information for an in-depth visit, and to allow visitors to explore exhibits in detail and follow their own interests. Original objects are displayed whenever possible, with an interesting integration among historical documents, reproductions, reconstructions and technological devices. One example is the small room devoted to Charles Booth's map of London poverty of 1888-89, where original pages are on display and a reproduction of the map is used to cover the floor and walls of the room, which includes an embedded touch screen allowing visitors to explore a digital version of the map.

The Galleries' three sections develop chronologically around the central Garden Court. Some exhibits have been conserved as they were—this is the case of the Victorian Walk, a historical reconstruction of an old London street with original shops façades and interiors—while other rooms and cases have been redesigned. Immersive spaces and historical reconstructions abound; some of which are more evocative, some others very much literal, leaving little place to imagination and reminding us of the Anglo-Saxon tradition of "period rooms." Visitors can listen to witnesses from the Second World Ward in a suggestive space with a suspended bomb, step inside a real 18th century prison, or walk in a reproduction of an Georgian pleasure garden featuring original dresses, illuminated by a sophisticated lighting system that simulates the flow of time, furnished with several original objects, and animated by a fifteen-minute film of a theatrical performance.

IMG. 5.36 — *Museum of London, project by Philip Powell, Hidalgo Moya and Partners, 1976.*

Source: *Architectural Review, Vol. CLXII, no. 695, 1977, p. 27.*

Plan at level 5, entrance.

1. Cinema / lecture hall
2a. High level walkway
2b. Future high level walkway
3. Void
4. Entrance concourse
5. Sales area
6a. Pedestrian bridge
6b. Proposed pedestrian bridge
7. Temporary exhibition
8. Temporary exhibition store
9. Entrance hall to office block Bastion House
10. Introductory area
11. Prehistory
12. Roman gallery
13. Dark gallery
14. Medieval London
15. Reformation
16. Late Tudor
17. Early Stuart

Plan at the lower exhibition, mezzanine level.

1. Kitchen
2. Cafeteria
3. Void
4. Public wc
5. Lord Mayor's coach
6. Treasury
7. Late Stuart
8. Eighteenth-century
9. Nineteenth-century
10. First World War
11. Twentieth-century London
12. Second World War
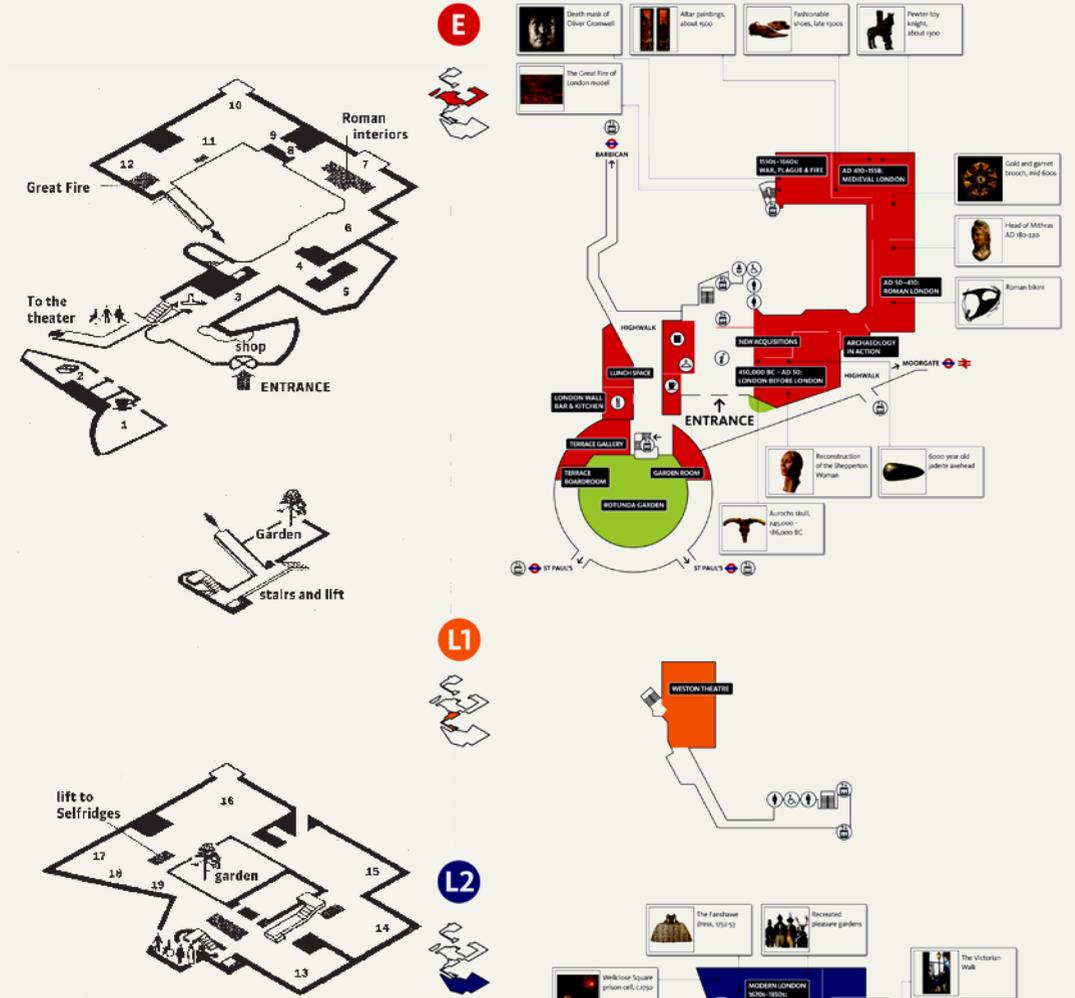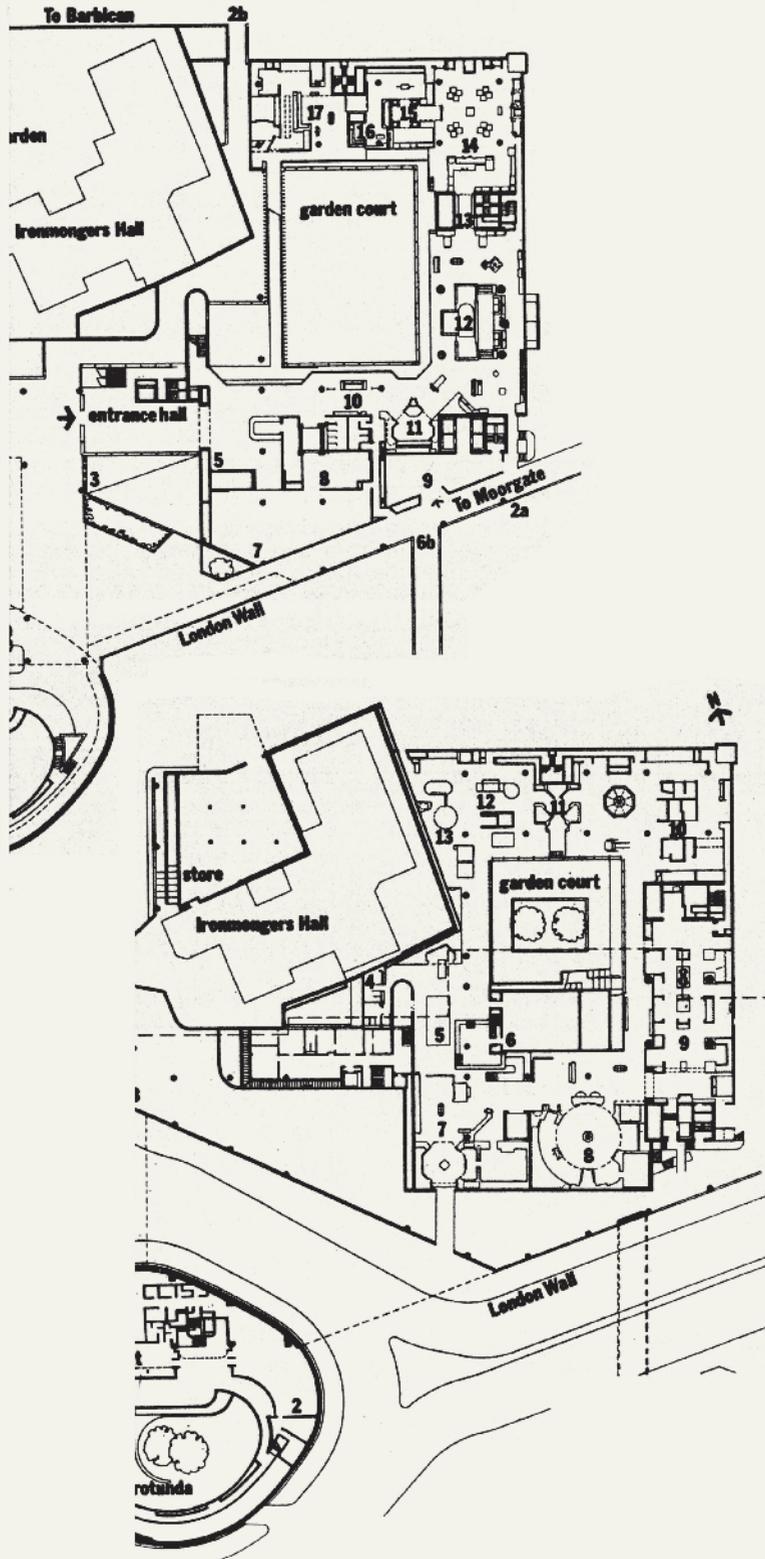
IMG 5. 37 — *Exhibition layout, drafted from the informative material distributed at the museum, 2001.*

Source: *Bertuglia, Cristoforo Sergio and Montaldo, Chiara. 2003. "Il Museum of London." In Il Museo della Città, 54-62. Milan: Franco Angeli*

1. Cafeteria
2. Families and schools area
3. Foyer
4. Temporary exhibitions
5. Temporary exhibitions
6. Prehistory
7. Roman gallery
8. Late-Roman period
9. Saxon Period
10. Medieval London
11. Tudor London
12. Early Stuart
13. Stuart Period
14. Eighteenth-century London
15. Nineteenth-century London
16. The Empire's capital
17. Early twenty-century London
18. Second World War
19. London Today

IMG 5. 38 — *Exhibition layout, drafted from the informative material distributed at the museum, 2012.*

Some original cases, where possible, have been updated, implemented and reused, while others have been redesigned with innovative materials and display concepts—timber panels with images digitally printed directly on them, resin flooring embedding images and including walkable cases, walls made of glass reinforced concrete for the 20th century gallery and solid acrylic surface material for the new cases. These are designed to be integrated apparatus which hold objects, bear labels—sometimes carved into them—, act as highly tactile touchscreens using projectors instead of traditional monitors, and at the same time organise the space—an the contents—without dividing or fragmenting it.

In the last section "World City" the narration is structured around several main topics which can be read as the cornerstones of the city's identity, and which are used to recount London's more recent history, represent its current distinctions and challenges, and stimulate debate about its future.

The exhibition ends in the new City Gallery and in the Sackler Hall.

This space is where Powell and Moya previously displayed the Lord Mayor's State Coach. It is a central space, visible from different points along the exhibition path, and intended to be a visual fulcrum of the space and a spatial and metaphorical point of orientation within the exhibition. Despite its cardinal position along the museum's visit flow, due to the architectural layout, this was a fairly dark space. Wilkinson Eyre removed the ramp connecting the museum's two levels, replaced it with a step in the northwest corner, and redesigned the façade to the inner garden, bringing light inside and opening up new views onto the surrounding buildings, and thus transforming this space into the core of the museum. The Sackler Hall is the only interior space designed by an external studio, Furneaux Stewart Design & Communication.

The Sackler Hall is the physical fulcrum of the whole exhibition area and its functional destination is somehow representative of the shift carried out by the Museum of London in its approach and understanding of its role. It is

defined as a contemporary "information hub" and a café, but actually it can be described as a hybrid multifunctional space. At one side of the hall, a bank of computer pods offers more information about the objects on display and in the stores, and so widening access to the museum's knowledge, and allowing personal and individual browsing and data gathering. The space is also equipped with relaxing booths, a cafeteria, an area hosting changing temporary exhibitions on London creativity and a 45-metre LED screen loop displaying information and video art work commissioned every two years by the museum in partnership with Film London. The Sackler Hall with its highly adaptive character, its leaning towards being seen and used as an actual public city place, is a museum's space able to reflect the ever changing and questioning approach of the museum itself supporting and even nurturing the activities which may take place here.

In the renovation of the Museum of London, the architectural project increased the space by 25 percent to include the new function and facilities required in a new contemporary museum and, at the same time, supported the new exhibition master plan, which was fashioned according to a new vision of the museum's role. Here, the architecture, the exhibition design and the museum narrative reflect the idea that, as Jack Lohman recently said at the 2012 CAMOC Conference, "a [city] museum should not only [be] taking energy from the city in which it is, but also creating new energies and synergies with other cities in the world," and, first and foremost, it should "not only provide access but genuine openness to all voices, adopting openness as a way of working."

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IMG. 5.39 — *General view of the section "Expanding City." © Museum of London.*

IMG. 5. 40 — *View of the section "People's City": the Lyon's tea house corner. © Museum of London.*

IMG. 5.41 — *View of the section "World City." © Museum of London.*

IMG. 5.42 — *View of the section "World City": the river of ideas. © Museum of London.*

From the panel: "Capital concerns. 7.5 milions Londoners and raising …! 50 resident communities of over 10.000 people from 33 different nations. 300 languages spoken. 14 major faith practised."

The central touch screen allows visitors to express their opinion on some current city's issues.

On the background: John Bartlett's depicting the Poll Tax riots in Trafalgar Square on 31 March 1990

IMG. 5.43 — *The Charles Booth's Map of Poverty, 1887–89 in the section "People's City" section. © Museum of London.*

IMG. 5.44 — *The Oral history war room in the "People's City" section. © Museum of London.*

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IMG. 5.45— *Københavns Museum–Museum of Copenhagen, Denmark. A view of the "Becoming a Copenhagener" exhibition, November 2010–December 2013.* © Anne Mette Kruse, courtesy of Museum of Copenhagen.

Københavns Museum–Museum of Copenhangen
Museum of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

The Museum of Copenhagen was established at the turn of the 20th century. Since 1925, its collections—originally consisting of works of art, models, interiors and photographs related to the history of Copenhagen—were exhibited in the attic of Copenhagen City Hall. As the collections grew, more space was needed, so in 1956 the museum moved into the former premises of the Royal Shooting Society, a mansion built in 1787 and located in the western city district of Vesterbro, close to the city's central station and not far from Copenhagen city centre. This venue still hosts the museum's permanent galleries and temporary exhibitions today, while offices and archives are located in separate buildings.

The museum is owned by the Municipality of Copenhagen—the Copenhagen City Council is the museum's main subsidy provider, although the museum also receives state-subsidy from The Heritage Agency of Denmark on an annual basis. Its board of management consists of the City Council's Culture and Leisure Committee, and the museum is run on the basis of 4-year contracts between the museum and the municipality, with the shared objective of contributing to the cultural environment and permanent cultural heritage of the city. The museum also acts as the local archaeological authority, with responsibility for archaeological matters in Copenhagen and Frederiksberg and with the aim of "ensuring that the city's development occurs while bearing cultural insight and public memories in mind."

In 2010 the museum changed its name from *Københavns Bymuseum* to *Københavns Museum* or Museum of Copenhagen, chosen because it was perceived to be simpler as well as more self-explanatory than its former name. The museum's collections, knowledge and communication have been traditionally focused upon the city's development and life of the citizens, as well as on some major events and personalities of Copenhagen's history, documenting the history of Copenhagen from the 12th century to the present day. In recent years, however, the Museum of Copenhagen has been undergoing major changes, seeking to reposition and redefine its role within the contemporary urban context.

This process started in 2005, mainly as a consequence of the desire to reach more people and become more relevant to the life of Copenhagen's citizens. Firstly, besides the programmes and activities promoted by the museums, this shift is reflected in the new museum's mission, which was reformulated in 2005 and states: "the Museum of Copenhagen must participate in the strengthening of the individual citizen's sense of identity—and thus enhance the development of a feeling of 'belonging together' in the city." Subsequently, the archaeological excavations connected to the new City Ring Metro—begun in 2009—have also played a central role in accomplishing this shift. The archaeological responsibilities involved in preparing for the metro have, in fact, led to growth within the museum alongside the recruitment of new staff members with new competencies and specialised skills. Since 2008, therefore, the museum's repositioning process has accelerated, becoming more complex, reorienting the museum's strategy, and promoting practices and projects aimed at fostering dialogue and "participating in contemporary discourse on the ever-changing nature of the city and its inherent plurality."

→ SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES

The transformation process that the museum of Copenhagen is currently undergoing should be related, on one hand, to the overall European scenario and the evolution of city museums and, on the other, to the cultural and political context of both Copenhagen and Denmark. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, Danish cultural policy has been aimed at eco-

nomic and national revitalisation; over the last ten years, especially, the cultural discussion has, to a large degree, focused on what constitutes "Danishness," Danish cultural heritage and national identity, as coherent narratives in a multicultural world. Documents such as the *Danish Cultural Canon* (2005) were aimed at stimulating and consolidating national identity as a force for social cohesion and cultural assimilation of public dialogue, discussions and activities on identity and nationality. At the same time, strategic plans such as *Culture for All* (2009) gave more importance to improving the national aspect of social cohesion in local societies. At the end of 2011, a new government took office. The new governmental programme, *A Denmark That Stands Together*, states that Denmark is a country "where diversity thrives" and where respect between people, regardless of their background, is promoted. The identity values introduced by the new government, as well as the economic crisis, have given rise to a debate on paradigms of identity displayed in public cultural policy, and the role of the arts and public cultural policy in the contemporary societies dominated by migration, globalisation and Europeanisation.

Copenhagen has always diverged from the national political vision, at least as it has been set up over the past decade. The municipality grounded its policies on the self image of a sustainable city, inclusive and well-integrated, with room for everyone—a vision which is also clearly reflected in recent policies, such as the *Copenhagen Integration Policy 2011-2014* and the related *Programme for Engagement in CPH 2011-2013*. Diversity is seen as an asset, and the idea of "citizenship" reconsidered; it is meant as inclusion, a "sense of belonging and integration," as a "dynamic" and a two-way process of "involvement" and "engagement," based on mutual understanding and respect rather than on homologation and assimilation.

Over the last three years, The Museum of Copenhagen has informed its vision and practices according to this agenda. As the new museum director, Jette Sandahl, recently declared, the museum is "struggling to deconstruct the grand totalising meta-narratives of chronology, of male power, and of privilege shared by so many other city museums." Hence the museum's efforts are currently targeted at re-examining its paradigms and turning towards a more fluid concept of identity in the belief that the museum "as scientific institution" has to "learn to contain and encourage diverse interpretations, doubts, disagreements among people, and unsolved dilemmas." The museum is looking for new methods to "shift perspectives" and include multiple voices, foster dialogue and encourage participation, reach out from behind its walls to create a closer relation with all citizens and take part in all city discourses. A very ambitious plan, especially during the current period of serious economic crisis.

The Copenhagen Museum is currently reorganising its resources and trying to rethink its spaces as much as possible, taking into consideration also the constraints ensuing from its being hosted in a historical, protected building. In 2010, Brisac González completed a design proposal for the new premises of the museum within the confines of the historical building Christian IV Bryghus, located in the city centre close to the new Danish Royal Library (Schmidt, Hammer and Lassen architects, 1999) and the Danish Jewish Museum (Daniel Libeskind, 2004), but the museum had to give up this project due to external obstacles beyond their control.

Today, most of the museum's permanent galleries within its historical venue, have been rearranged in order to host temporary or semi-permanent exhibitions, in the attempt to implement a more flexible approach to exhibiting. Currently, only a small part of the old "permanent galleries" (dating back to 1996) remains on the second floor; the second and the third floor display exhibitions devoted to the history of Copenhagen, while a special temporary exhibition programme has been established, and related events are mainly hosted on the museum's ground floor, which previously hosted the gallery on medieval and renaissance Copenhagen.

Temporary exhibitions are developed by the museum to further exploit and enhance its collections, on the one hand by providing an opportunity to reinterpret them in a new light, while on the other, allowing the possibility for their enrichment through the acquisition of new objects—usually related to the contemporary city. Furthermore, the museum is developing a number of new outreach projects aimed at entering into dialogue with the citizens of Copenhagen and foster communication and participation; these projects sometimes also lead to short temporary exhibitions.

Examples of these experimental strategies and new approach include different kinds of initiatives, such as the exhibition "As I Am–lgbt in cph," the history of Copenhagen's gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and transvestite population, or the project "Collecting Nørrebro," an on-site local project involving young people, and aimed at collecting new and alternative stories from the everyday life of Nørrebro, a city neighbourhood that embodies most of the traditional conflicts in Copenhagen, but also the renewal and the emergence of new cosmopolitan hybrid cultures. The two major projects which probably represent, in the most paradigmatic way, the shift the museum is attempting to perform are the exhibition "Becoming a Copenhagener" and "the WALL."

→ BECOMING A COPENHAGENER

"Becoming a Copenhagener" is a semi-temporary exhibition hosted on the ground floor of the museum; it was planned to last for two years, from November 2010 to December 2012, but has recently been extended for another year because of its relevance to the city's identity and for how well it represents of the museum's new approach.

The exhibition focuses on immigration to Copenhagen, "presenting immigration as the catalyst and pre-condition for the town's growth and change" and interprets the current practices of migration and globalisation against the background of the city's history and traditions. It is grounded in the belief that the identity and cultural heritage of Copenhagen reaches beyond its geographical borders, and is shaped by the absorption and transformation of the other multifarious and hybrid cultures of many different people coming to it. "In the discourses of museums—says Jette Sandahl, the museum's director—identity is most often linked to received interpretation of history and the past, but in real life, people seem to be less interested in where they come from, and more concerned with what is to become of them. In that context identity can be seen more in terms of choices, more in terms of where people want to go, who they want to be—as a striving, as hope for the future." As she further explained, the aim of this exhibition is therefore to look at local history from the perspective of its relevance to the city's future and, while focusing on migration, it wishes to trigger reflection on the cultural heritage of the city of Copenhagen, in both the past and the present. At the same time, the exhibition seeks to address a discourse about "who the Copenhageners are" and their identity, in relation to a wider reflection of what it means to be (or not be) a Dane, which is a rather contested and taboo discussion at national level in Denmark. Being a Copenhagener is thus presented as something different from being a "Dane," as a matter of choice, an open process of becoming, rather than a closed category.

An in-house team developed the designed concept and layout of the exhibition, which is conceived as an object-based exhibition. Notable curatorial work has been carried out in choosing and reinterpreting the objects of the museum's collections and exploring how they could give new responses to new questions. The objects on display mainly come from the museum's collections, complemented by temporary loans from some immigrant citizens, pictures, videos, and some art works, completed by several labels and panels. The exhibition has also provided the museum with the opportunity to enlarge its collections, by acquiring some new objects related to the contemporary city, and migration in particular.

"Becoming a Copenhagener" traces the history of physical, economic and social development of the city, in relation to the various immigration flows over the course of time, from the origins of the city up to the present day. It focuses on

IMG. 5.46 — *"Wanted-Unwanted" section within the "Becoming a Copenhagener" exhibition. Display on the Roma settlement including historical and recent pictures, a video and newspapers articles. © Anne Mette Kruse, courtesy of Museum of Copenhagen.*

From the panel: "(...) In the 16th and 17th century, it was decreed by law that Roma people, or gypsies, as they were known, were lawless and must be expelled from the realm (...) The severe legislation meant that the Roma people had almost disappeared from the city by the end of the 18th century (...) in 1972 a group of Roma people was allowed to settle on Amager Common. This created a heated debate. Since then the common has several times been the site of new Roma settlement causing renewed discussion of Roma presence in the city."

IMG. 5.47 — *"Cosmopolitan Copenhagen" section within the "Becoming a Copenhagener" exhibition. © Anne Mette Kruse, courtesy of Museum of Copenhagen.*

IMG. 5.48 — *"Urban Communities" section within the "Becoming a Copenhagener" exhibition. © Anne Mette Kruse, courtesy of Museum of Copenhagen.*

From the panel: "(...) Copenhagen consists of a number of small, interconnected parts in the form of districts, individuals and communities that simultaneously reflect a local uniqueness and function as centers in complex, global network. Communities based on music, culture, home, language, civic virtue and resistance create and remodel the city's many different cultures and help newcomers find their feet. At the same time, they reach beyond the city as a locality and connect the urban as a phenomenon together across borders and nationalities."

the relationship between migrants, the city of Copenhagen and the citizens of Copenhagen, and is divided into four thematic sections— "Arrivals," "Wanted–Unwanted," "Cosmopolitan Copenhagen," and "Urban Communities": this organisation is an attempt to develop the topic thematically rather than following a pure chronological approach. Moreover, this has helped the curators deal with some difficult topicsby framing them within a historical perspective—an example is the the display on the Roma settlements.

The exhibition is full of stimuli, its aims and contents are fascinating and outstanding, and the project as a whole is a remarkable starting point for the development of a new museum narrative. However some messages may result too hidden and/or difficult to understand—especially for those who are not so aware of the city's cultural and socio-political context. This partial failure in conveying the exhibition's core messages, in our opinion, can be traced back mostly to the meagre design of the exhibition— this, perhaps, also due to a lack of resources. The exhibition design is very basic; it consists mainly of simple square wooden display cases painted white, which contain most of the objects, support pictures or video projections, and contribute to the organisation of the interior spaces by turning into benches or small walls—though the articulation they provide is not always effective in relation to the visit path and the exhibition contents. The task of conveying the exhibition's messages is entrusted mainly to the objects themselves and to the panels. The general lack of a coordinated graphic and spatial project working with and on the objects results in an ineffective overall exhibition design, and does not contribute to getting the visitors physically and emotionally involved in the visit experience, or in orienting them within the multiple and rich contents of the exhibition; nor does it contribute to explain the exhibition's multiple layers which would empower its communicative ability. A more articulated and researched exhibition design could have contributed to communicating the multiple messages of the exhibition and evoke its multiple layers, while a kind of synergy

with the museum's other ongoing project "the WALL," could help to foster and allow multiple interpretations of the exhibition itself, enriching further its contents and relating them to the opinions of citizens.

→ THE WALL

The Wall is a 12-metre long. 2-metre high interactive multimedia installation, consisting of four multi-touch plasma screens, mounted in a customized shipping container which will travel around the city for period of four years.

Through an interface which consists of a mixture of historical documents from the museum's archive and collections and contemporary photographs of the city, users can explore the city's history and be informed about its present. They can comment, download documents, and add personal stories through different media and supports (e.g. uploading private documents such as photos, videos, music or texts; voicing opinions in a video-blog; recording videos and pictures) both on site through the WALL interface, and from home via the WALL website.

It is difficult to define what "the WALL" is. It may be understood as a communicative tool from the museum; a travelling urban exhibition on city history; a way to knit together places and their history, and to strengthen the relationship between the city museum and the city itself; a tool to foster participation and dialogue; a repository, an archive, and an endless open catalogue of the museum's collections, digitalized and made available to a wide public; and a strategy for documenting the contemporary city and a participatory collecting practice. It may be argued that it is at the same time all that. Perhaps it may be effectively described it is as an exploration of how to represent the contemporary city and its history in the light of Contemporaneity, based on subjective rather than objective multiple, multi-layered and alternative, cognitive maps; a metaphor for the museum's changing orientation towards dialogue, a more open approach and the use of participation in the description and creation of city's cultural heritage.

IMG. 5.49 — *The WALL.*
© *Museum of Copenahgen.*

The WALL is the result of the collaboration between the Museum of Copenhagen, the Gibson International production company from New Zealand, the Danish graphic studio Spild af Tid, the ProShop Europe installation company. The realisation of the WALL has been possible due to the financial support of the Copenhagen City Council, The Labour Market Holiday Fund, The Heritage Agency of Denmark, as well as through the contribution of private individuals, businesses and institutions.

IMG. 5.50 — *The WALL.*
© *Caspar Miskin, courtesy of Museum of Copenahgen.*

From the introductory panel on the WALL: "The WALL is a dialogue about Copenhagen—its inhabitants, history and contemporary challenges. It is a rediscovery of the capital, a rallying point at street level where citizens can exchange memories, visions and mixed feelings about the city we live in. Through the WALL you can tell your own stories about the different neighbourhoods and their strengths and weaknesses, heroes, scapegoats and magical spaces. Or you can stroll back into history and explore the stories, themes and images already at the WALL. The WALL is a celebration of the city and its diversity, our lives and our tales."

IMG. 5.51 — *The WALL.*
© *Caspar Miskin, courtesy of Museum of Copenahgen.*

The ideation of "the WALL" was an interesting interdisciplinary process in itself, and involved theoretical reflections as well as investigations into the use of new technologies, graphic and communication design demonstrating how the use of these new technologies not only allows and foster but actually requires, a deep rethought of the visual, communicative and epistemologic approaches to history and storytelling.

On the other hand, in our opinion, some issues are still unresolved. For example, although Jette Sandahl declared that most of the museum's work will flow through the WALL in one way or another, it is not clear today how the WALL will eventually influence the museum's practices, and how this one-to-one relationship could be practically implemented. Other concerns are related also to the production and maintenance costs of this tool—they are unknown, but most likely not inconsiderable—and with the handling of the potentially huge amount of heterogeneous information collected through the WALL.

Moreover it must be said that some design aspects could also be improved, such as some physical problems in viewing the big screens, the light reflection on the screens, and, more and foremost, the relationship between the wall and the city's real physical locations that host it. The design process of the WALL focused mostly on conceptual aspects, graphic design, and the technological implementation of the ideas on which the WALL project itself has been founded, neglecting the architectural impact of the equipment and its possible interaction with the physical spaces it was to occupy. As a result, the WALL remains rather indifferent to the context in which it is inserted. Inasmuch as it is an itinerant urban installation for the various squares and districts of the city, more attention could have been paid to developing a physical relationship with these spaces, embellishing and characterising them in such a way as to go beyond being merely a digital device for dialogue, and becoming a physical meeting place, capable of fostering a dynamic and a synergy not only with its self-created virtual space, but also within the urban space which hosts it.

However, these notes do not in any way diminish the value of the WALL, which among its potentialities seems to have the ability to include multiple voices and collect different points of view, overcoming monolithic and unique narrations and rediscovering the complexity and multiplicity of contemporary culture. As a practical experimentation on the shift in the collecting, communicating and exhibiting practices of museums—a shift fostered by new ways of conceiving, producing and consuming knowledge generated by the contemporary, global, multicultural and digitalized world—the WALL is a high-potential and future-oriented pilot project, opening new perspectives for the strategies and practices of city museums.

Francesca Lanz

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IMG. 5.52 — *Palazzo Pepoli, Museo della Storia di Bologna, Italy. Restoration project by Mario Bellini Architect(s). Exhibition design by Mario Bellini Architect(s) with Italo Lupi. Scientific Director Massimo Negri. The foyer with "the tower of time." Courtesy of Mario Bellini Architect(s) and Genus Bononiae.*

Palazzo Pepoli–Museo della Storia di Bologna
Bologna City History Museum, Bologna, Italy

Palazzo Pepoli, Museo della Storia di Bologna is the city history museum of the city of Bologna, in Italy. It was inaugurated in 2012 as the final step in a project started in 2003, called Genus Bononiae–Museums in the City. Genus Bononiae is a project under the management of the Bank Foundation CARISBO intended as a civic cultural network of historic buildings and cultural centres spread throughout the urban area, with the aim of creating synergies among museums, libraries, galleries, and other local cultural centres and initiatives. "To better describe and understand the genus and stock of the Bolognese people from yesterday and today, Genus Bononiae–Museums in the City follows a path through the city and narrates its history, life, arts and dreams; it uses the streets of Bologna as corridors and the buildings and churches as rooms, blending into the existing institutional structure, and ensuring a full link with other museums, art galleries, as well as the other cultural, economic and social initiatives which animate the local community" (from the Museum website).

On the one hand Genus Bononiae is based on the exploitation of the already working system of civic and cultural institutions of the city, on the other, it is directly involved itself with eight historic buildings which have been renovated and rehabilitated for public use, each of which has an inherent historical and artistic value and hosts a cultural centre. The Biblioteca d'Arte e di Storia di San Giorgio in Poggiale (Art and History Library), is hosted in a deconsecrated 16th century church owned by the Bank Foundation and restored in 2009 by the architect Michele De Lucchi to turn it into a library. The library houses the collection of art and history books of the Bank Foundation, a newspaper and journals archive and a photographic archive. San Colombano is a historical holy complex comprising a range of buildings aggregated over the centuries, beginning from the

7th century, which was purchased and restored by the Bank Foundation in 2005. Besides the historical and artistic value of the church itself and its decorations, since 2010, the site has also hosted a collection of ancient musical instruments, a specialised library and several musical events including performances using instruments from the collection. Santa Maria della Vita is a monumental site dating back to the 13th century and includes a hospital, a church, a sanctuary and an oratorio. The complex is currently owned by the local healthcare centre and is one of the most important examples of Baroque architecture in Bologna. Moreover, it hosts several important historical works of art and the Museum of Health. The Palazzo Fava, one of the most important historical palaces in Bologna, is today used as an Exhibition Centre. It is also possible here to admire the frescoes by the Caracci and part of the collections from the CARISBO, as well as exhibitions from other important public and private collections. The network also the Casa Saraceni, a Renaissance palace that today is the headquarters of the Bank Foundation and whose ground floor is used for art exhibitions and other cultural events; the church of Santa Cristina which was inaugurated and opened to the public in 2007 to house an art collection and be a centre for music; San Michele in Bosco, a large, historic "belvedere" overlooking Bologna, managed by the bank Foundation since 2007; and finally, the Palazzo Pepoli, the city history museum, which is the core of this project.

→ **CONTENTS–OBJECTS–DISPLAY: A BALANCED EQUILIBRIUM**

The Bologna city history museum was inaugurated in 2012 and, unlike most of city museums, especially in Italy, is a private museum, run by the CARISBO Bank Foundation. It is housed in a medieval palace dating back to the 13th-

IMG. 5.53 — *The Genus Bononiae network.*

"Genus Bononiae, a cultural, artistic and museum itinerary in the historical center of Bologna."

Genus Bononiae.
Un percorso culturale,
artistico e museale
nel centro storico di Bologna.
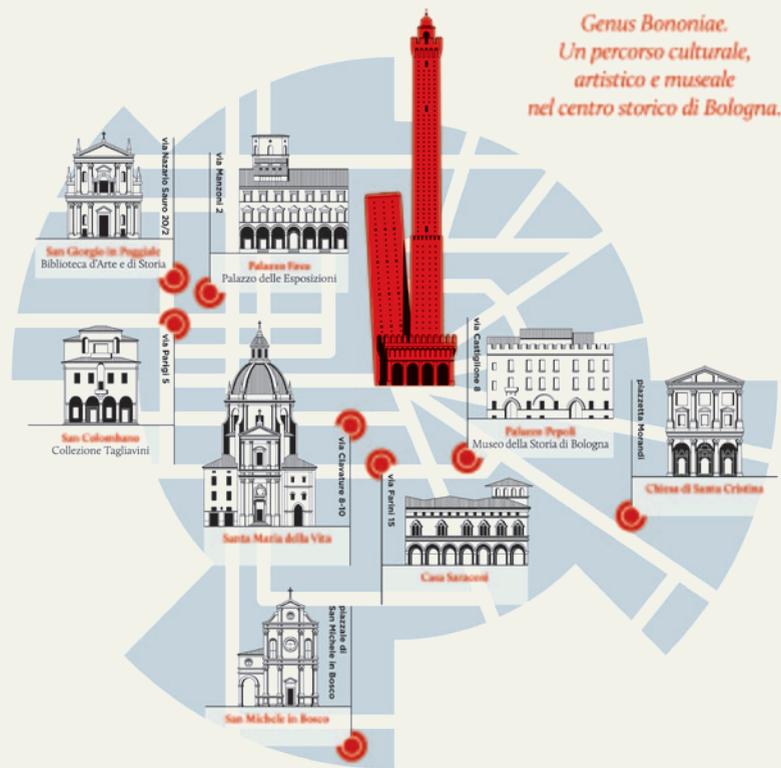
IMG. 5.54 — *Palazzo Pepoli. Exterior view of the historical palace restored and transformed into the city history museums.*

14th centuries, which has been restored and transformed into the city museum. The restoration took seven years and was the project of Mario Bellini Architects, who designed and put in place the museum exhibition in partnership with the architect Italo Lupi, who curated the graphic design, the multimedia design studio Studio Base 2, and Massimo Negri, who was entrusted with the museological and scientific side of the project.

In 2003, Mario Bellini won the competition to design and build the museum, including the restoration and interior design. The restoration work focused firstly on the implementation of measures to strengthen the building, several ceilings, Gothic arches and rooms. Consequently, special attention was devoted to the restoration of each room and its décor which had been damaged by time and later additions. The whole project, according to Bellini's working method, aimed at preserving and enhancing the ancient building, and creating a synergy between the historic building and the new use to which it would be put, along with the related facilities. The most important new structure is the central glass and iron tower, located in the inner courtyard, which has been covered so it can be used as an entrance hall and connecting hub along the exhibition paths. The tower includes the stairs and elevators needed to connect the different floors for a coherent visit flow.

The museum is on two floors of about forty rooms in total organised into several sections, which tell the story of the development of the city and its culture from the Etruscans to the present day. On the ground floor are the reception facilities and the first exhibition rooms. Passing through the central tower, metaphorically interpreted as a tower of time—the time of the visit, the time we are exploring the museum, and time as a scientific and philosophical field of exploration for many major Bolognese historical scholars—the exhibition continues on the upper floor, while the mezzanine contains offices, educational rooms and temporary exhibition spaces.

The narration is chronological, using key episodes, symbolic figures and anecdotes, and occasionally interrupted by some cross-cutting themes designed to represent a particular feature of the city in a diachronic way. Examples are, among others, the thematic room devoted to the "Forma Urbis"—the urban historical development of the city and its morphology—where a portion of an original Roman street is displayed with a reconstruction of a portion of Bologna's porch and old city shop signboards; the the city of water room—an immersive installation evoking some of the underground sections of the Aposa river and explaining audio-visually the relationship between the city, its economy and culture and the local water system; or the "City of Languages" section—devoted to the development of the Bolognese dialect, its evolution, preservation and relationship with Italian languages and other languages and dialects. In one of these thematic rooms, a series of selected daily news items from local newspapers are displayed and collected in a database which may be browsed via touch screens. This is one of the few references to the city's everyday life, together with the last three rooms of the exhibition: "Your museum"—where citizens can temporarily display their own small collections associated with a memory, a special moment or an emotion; "The people of Bologna speak"—where it is possible to listen to talks from a number of distinguished Bolognese figures from the contemporary worlds of politics, culture and sport; and Sentimental Journeys—where a computer terminal provides access to a geo-tagged blog called *Percorsi Emotivi* (in the blog site members can express a thought, a suggestion, or a memory connected to a certain place in the city) and where a city map, designed to be used to attach comments to about beloved places in the city, ultimately functions as a kind of visitors' book.

The entire narration is made up of a combination of objects, images and multimedia elements. Actually, the museum collection mainly includes objects already owned by the Bank Foundation and therefore is not particularly large. The curator made thus the choice to set up what he describes as a "narrative museum,"

IMG. 5.55 — *The room devoted to "the coronation of Carlo V." © Francesco Radino, courtesy of Mario Bellini Architect(s), Massimo Negri (Genus Bononiae).*

An ancient line-drawing frieze depicting the honour parade for the coronation of King Charles V, has been reproduced on free-standing tempered safety glass elements through a film treated with silk-screen printing. Using projections, sounds and other tools drawn from scenography and theatre language, here the visitor is immersed in the historical event, which is not literally reproduced, but rather suggested through metaphor and a dream-like experience.

IMG. 5.56 — *The "Forma Urbis" section. © PaoloRighi, courtesy of Massimo Negri (Genus Bononiae).*

IMG. 5.57 — *"The People of Bologna Speak" section. © Francesco Radino, courtesy of Mario Bellini Architect(s), Massimo Negri (Genus Bononiae).*

IMG. 5.58 — *" The City of Water" section. © Francesco Radino, courtesy of Mario Bellini Architect(s), Massimo Negri (Genus Bononiae).*

IMG. 5.59 — *The central tower called "the tower of time." © Paolo Righi, courtesy of Mario Bellini Architect(s), Massimo Negri (Genus Bononiae).*

The tower consists of a steel varnished structure with glass wall-plugs. These glass walls are covered by a film treated with silk-screen printing, which is progressively dense from the bottom up. Therefore, the tower's ground floor is transparent, while the highest level is coloured white and very bright, thus giving an idea of the dematerialisation of the entire structure.

IMG. 5.60 — *A display case in the section "Bologna on stage: the secular life." © Francesco Radino, courtesy of Mario Bellini Architect(s), Massimo Negri (Genus Bononiae).*

IMG. 5.61 — *A display cases in the "After Unification of Italy" section. © Francesco Radino, courtesy of Mario Bellini Architect(s), Massimo Negri (Genus Bononiae).*

focused on storytelling, rather than being collection-oriented. In this way, the exhibition display and the graphic design play a fundamental communication role, filling information gaps and contributing to building and conveying the messages. The museum uses different communication tools, drawing on theatrical languages and scenography, creating immersive spaces and historical reconstructions, using the exhibition apparatus and graphic communication to visualise concepts and integrate information, and implementing messages through the use of ICT and multimedia devices. The museum's storyboard, curated by Massimo Negri, has been developed alongside the interior, graphic and multimedia design of the exhibition, in a successful partnership, where all the different competences have been mutually influential and have contributed to implementing and shaping the museum's contents.

The exhibition apparatus fits in the existing spaces, detached from the walls and composed of self-bearing elements which include all the necessary technical facilities, including the electrical and lighting systems; they are stand-alone elements, custom designed for the museum by Mario Bellini and freely placed in the space according to a different geometrical and spatial grid from that of the building. The exhibition elements are based on different variations of the initial concept of a three-dimensional cage made up of a squared white glazed steel frame hosting the collection's objects and the related information panels (designed by Italo Lupi using texts, drawings, images and other graphic communication tools).

These "cages" host the artworks and give them their own individual space, isolating them within the narration and, at the same time, drawing attention to them. In the final part of the exhibition, where the narration is very dense and temporally compressed, the need to highly synthesise these contents and also display several very heterogeneous objects—including pictures, newspapers, comics, photos, fabrics, and much more—led to the design of a different version of these same cages, which here dilate within the space, becoming a sort of "room in-side the room" where objects and graphic supports are displayed. Throughout the exhibition some backlit double-faced panels, framed by the same steel cage, report the general historical narration through texts and images; they are more than just a label, and are capable of dialogue and creating a communicative unit with the other elements of the exhibition. This exhibition design system creates an intimate unity between the objects and the communicative support (images and texts) as a visual tool devoted to storytelling. At the same time it is flexible and reversible, and guarantees both the respect of the historical context (the palace's room), and an optimal illumination and preservation environment, custom designed for each specific object.

Palazzo Pepoli, as far as its narrative approach is concerned, is a traditional city history museum, whose organisation follows a linear timeline from past to present. It does not deal with contemporary city issues, such as the urban or social development of Bologna, it hardly reaches contemporaneity and talks little about, or with, Bologna's multifarious inhabitants. It rather stands out among other newly restored city museums around Europe due to its exhibition design and its organisational structure.

The whole narration of the museum is grounded in visual communication, whether based on original objects, reconstructions, replicas, texts or images. The visit to the museum and the transmission of its contents are meant as a mental, physical and emotional experience, and the collection's objects are intended to be nodes in the complete narration, a narration which provides them with a context and which is, in turn, validated by the objects themselves. The link between the story told and the objects themselves, is entrusted to the museum's communication and conveyed by the display. The result is a coherent exhibition design, characterised by a well-balanced combination of information, objects, multimedia installations and traditional exhibits, capable of being exhaustive but also of leaving space for personal interpretation.

A further innovative aspect of this museum

IMG. 5.62 — *Ground floor and first floor plans and longitudinal section. Courtesy of Mario Bellini Architect(s).*


Exposition

Facilities

Offices

Distribution

Ground floor
A. Entrance. The painted city Courtyard
B. The tower of time
1-2-3. Estruscan Bologna
4. The via Emilia
5. The stone and the word
6. Medioeval Bologna
7. The protagonist
8. Forma urbis
9. the Battle of Fossalta
10. "The stolen bucket." Wars among the families
11-12 the Bentivoglio

Mezzanine
Space for temporary exhibition and educational activities

First floor
13. The coronation of Charles V in Bologna
14. The Council in Bolonga
15. Bologna on stage: the sacred
C. Multimedia Space
D. 3D Virtual Theatre
16. Bologna on stage: the secular life
17. Bologna the "learned": the arts
18. The science
19. Literature
20. The city of water
21-22. Music
23. The arrival of Napoleon
24. 1848-1861
25. After Unification of Italy
26. 1898:Aemilia Ars
27. Futurist in Bologna
28. Marconi and modern industry
29. Neither near, nor yet so far
30. Your Museum
31. The people of Bologna speak
32. Sentimental Journeys
33-34. City of languages
E. Room of Culture
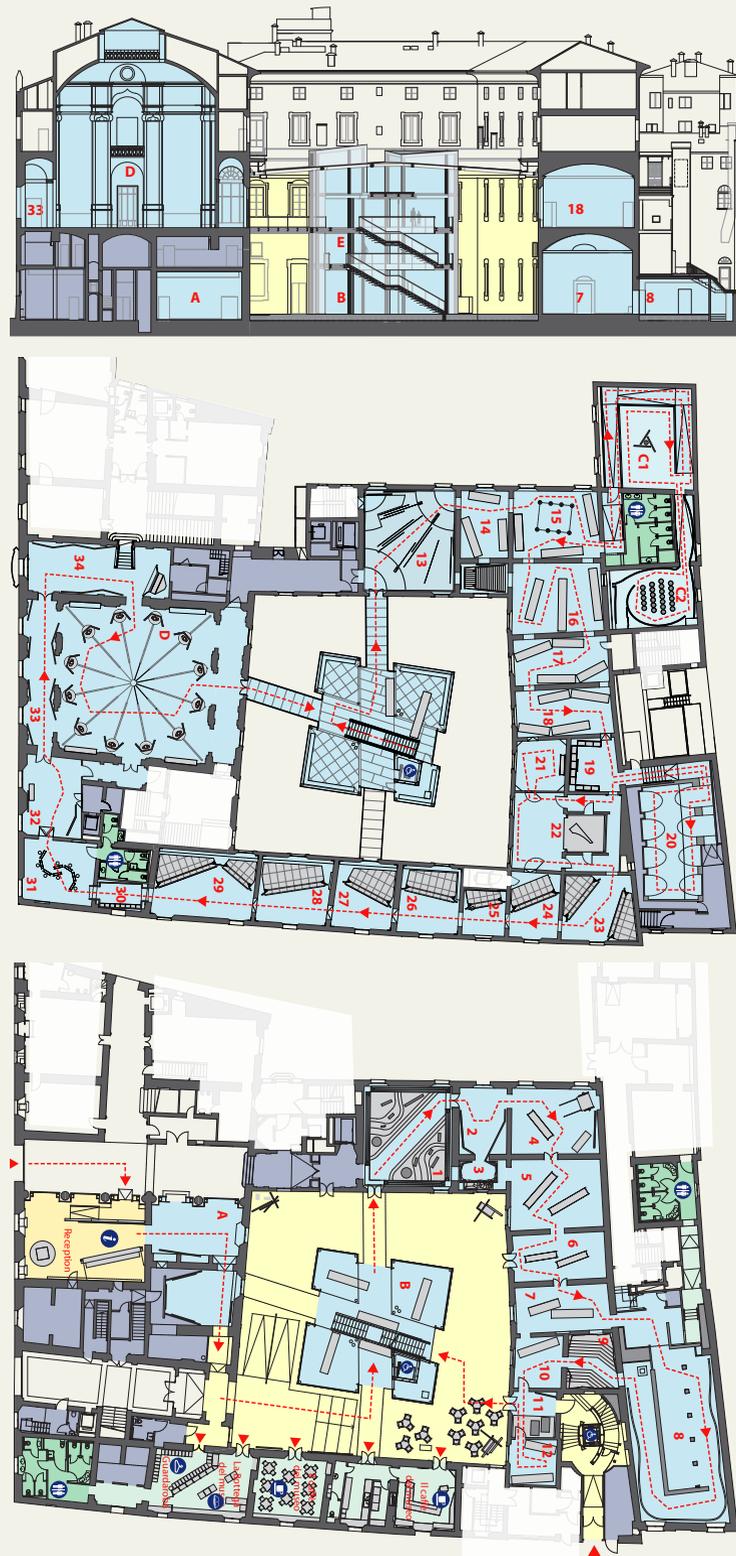
is the relationship between the museum and the city, including the link between the museum and its venue, the other building of the Genus Bononiae Network, and the entire historic city centre. The Genus Bononiae project states its aim thus: "[…] to tell the history of the city through a variety of instruments: direct acquaintance with the places of the city, permanent expositions and the integration of the physical witnesses of the past and the present, through a continuous and structured programme of activities." The city museum is thus the core of this narration, and, at the same time, its very collection is virtually enlarged by including the palace hosting the museum, the buildings of the Genus Bononiae network, and the city as a whole with its cultural resources and physical places. These links result both in programmatic and curatorial aspects as well as in physical and museographical solutions. The palace's rooms, for example, have not been modified and have been carefully restored in order to make the building itself part of the museum's collection – the historic columns at the entrance, enclosed by light glasses incipiently underline the building's pre-eminent role. The Palazzo Pepoli, unusually for a new museum, does not have many of the facilities which today characterise most of the new and renovated museums. Indeed it has no conference room or library, and very little space for temporary exhibitions; this is because all these functions are hosted in the other buildings of the Genus Bononiae network, coherently with the idea of creating a museum of the city within the city.

In addition, the museum also seeks to create cultural links with the city, through "educational activities" carried out in cooperation with the various city museums, "loans" of works and finds, and "scientific cooperation initiatives" launched by the many museums and cultural entities of the city of Bologna. These links are established not only through the museum's programmes and activities but also within and by the exhibition itself. Particular attention has been paid, in fact, to graphic communication, in order to create a link with Bologna through references to places—such as maps and pic-

tures – and through cross-references with other museums of the city dealing with specific topics mentioned in the exhibition—such as some "video points" which present those civic museums connected to a given theme, and graphic signals called "balloons" which highlight several temporary events in the city which are related to a given museum topic.

This networking method, its communication strategies, and its dual aim of creating a cultural system both for the people of Bologna and for the promotion of tourism in the city via beneficial partnership among various agencies – including both private and public sectors, different kinds of museums, and other local cultural institutions and resources – transform this into a both stimulating and highly suggestive project.

Francesca Lanz

IMG. 5.63 — *Historisches Museum Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany. The "Ostend//Ostanfang" (East End//East Beginning: A District In Transition) exhibition, 2011.* ››

Historisches Museum Frankfurt

History Museum Frankfurt, Germany

The Historisches Museum Frankfurt (History Museum Frankfurt) has its origins in collections of the city and citizens of Frankfurt am Main, dating back to the 16th century. They were originally housed in the municipal library, the "chamber of curiosities" of the old imperial city of Frankfurt. Founded between 1861 and 1878 on the basis of civic initiatives, the Historisches Museum is the oldest museum in Frankfurt financed by the municipality. During the 19th century it was a kind of "universal museum" for the city of Frankfurt, which is still present today in its collections. Despite the fact that, since the early 20th century, part of the museum's collections have coalesced into many new museums in Frankfurt, they still comprise more than 630,000 objects, including paintings, prints and drawings, photos, sculptures, textiles, furniture, musical instruments, coins, armour, pottery, toys, scientific instruments industrial historical items.

Since the 1970s, the museum has developed into a "museum-family." The Children's Museum (Kinder Museum Frankfurt, founded as a department in 1972, with its own dedicated site since 2008), the Museum of Caricature (Caricatura Museum Frankfurt, founded as a department in 2000, with its own building since 2008) and the Porcelain-Museum in Frankfurt-Höchst (Höchster Porzellanmuseum, since 1994, in its own building): before the new museum project was launched in 2008, the museum family attracted between 90,000 and 130,000 visitors per year.

The museum has a tradition of "re-inventions" or reforms during its long history. The general concept behind the museum was last exten-

sively revised in 1972. With the slogans "place of learning versus temple of the muses!" and "culture for everyone," the Historisches Museum launched a process by which the museum would become, first and foremost, a place of learning open to all strata of the population. The socio-historical issues of historical scholarship of the time became the new guidelines for the content-related work carried out by the museum staff. The museum became a disputed institution in the 1970s. In the city of Frankfurt it was heavily criticised by the conservative citizens for the "critical" and left-wing impetus of the new exhibition and the sheer quantity of textual information contained within it. On the European museum scene, on the other hand, it was one of the most visited and "quoted" examples of the new museology of the 1970s. This leading position among German museums for cultural history was already lost by the 1980s, when new ideas of scenography and new building concepts generated more attractive museums. The conceptual and didactic innovations had been accepted and adapted quickly in most of the museum concepts in the 1970s and 1980s.

Nowadays, forty years later, the Historisches Museum is once again renewing its underlying concept in relation to the challenges posed by contemporaneity and the development of the city; it is thus restoring its buildings, redesigning its exhibitions and rethinking its spaces, and constructing a new museum venue.

→ A NEW CONCEPT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

As in 1972, new construction measures are currently providing an opportunity for change. The historical buildings have just been restored and were re-opened in 2012. Norbert Diezinger (Diezinger Architects), an ex-collaborator of Karl-Josef Schattner in Eichstätt, has achieved far more than merely a technical modernisation

›› *Debut exhibition of the Historisches Museum Frankfurt's "Mobile City Lab," which continues to collaborate with members of the town society to realize exhibitions on current topics in the urban space. Portrait series of thirty Ostend personalities by Stefanie Kösling. © hmf. Photo by P. Welzel.*

and embellishment of the façades. The unique ensemble of five historical monuments from seven centuries (12th to 19th centuries) has now been made visible and understandable from both the outside and the inside. Every monument, heavily damaged during World War II, has its own staircase; the identities of the five buildings have also been strengthened by the materiality and colour of floors, walls, ceilings and windows. Modern additions are clearly recognisable. In addition, the new exhibitions are arranged according to the features of the five buildings, and comment on their history.

The planned new construction (by Lederer Ragnarsdóttir Oei architects, LRO, Stuttgart) is aimed at creating a striking museum architecture , which is also capable of merging with the complex urban-architectural situation on the Römerberg. The new building is the result of an international competition held between 2007 and 2008, involving 50 architects. The competition was greatly influenced by aspects of urban planning. Indeed, since 2005 a vigorous debate about the future of the historical city centre has led to the decision to "repair" the historic city centre by demolishing structures erected in the postwar-period and the construction of new buildings recalling the pre-modern history of the oldest quarter of the city. Thus, within the concept of LRO architects, the old museum buildings are completed by a new one which joins up the fragmented "Saalhof" to an adjacent court building. Divided by a new museum square, and following the tradition of the old streets (in an east-west direction) of the quarter, a larger exhibition building will be placed at the southern end of Römer place. Its double-beaked form, with sandstone façade and two gabled slate roofs, has an ambiguous effect. At first glance it is not clearly recognisable as a modern or historical building, and if historical, it could be a church or an industrial building. This ambiguity is an interesting quality, linking the new building to the history of the place, as well as the cultural message of the museum. The construction measures are due for completion in 2015. After opening, the new museum complex will offer c. 6,000 square meters of exhibi-

tion space, compared to 3,200 in 2008. There will be 1,000 square meters of special exhibition space in the basement of the new building, supplemented by about 500 for a new exhibition format called "city-lab exhibitions" on the top floor. In the old buildings, 240 square meters will be devoted to the children's museum, and an additional 40 for changing presentations within the new permanent exhibition "Collectors and Donors of Frankfurt." All in all, there will be almost 1,800 square meters for temporary exhibitions and 4,200 square meters for permanent exhibitions.

The renewal will affect not only the museum's spaces but also its focus and approaches, transforming the museum from a specialised historical museum into an actual city museum. It aims to become a centre of information, reflection and discussion about Frankfurt, offering the multi-faceted explanations and backgrounds of the city's past as a frame of reference. As a forum for the important topics concerning municipal society, it will contribute to the process by which that society comes to an understanding of its present and future. With its collections, exhibitions and events, the museum will place as much emphasis on reacting to the present as it does to raising questions about the past and the future.

In doing so the museum will adopt a new participatory orientation, which takes the wealth of its visitors' experience and knowledge seriously and makes use of it as an integral element. It will address itself specifically to the numerous new citizens from a wide range of the world's cultures, as well as to the international guests visiting the trade-fair town and transportation hub that is Frankfurt. Many new perspectives of the museum concept will result in the permanent exhibition "Frankfurt Now!" which will address questions such as: Who or what makes Frankfurt what it is? Who actually lives here? How do different people experience Frankfurt? Do we all live in the same city, or are there many different "Frankfurts"?

Such an exploration of the present-day town requires new forms of museological work. The

museum proceeds on the assumption that every one of the city's 700,000 residents is an expert on Frankfurt and invites them to share their expertise at the new Historisches Museum. To this end, the means are being created for a new participatory exhibition series called the "City Lab." Here, with the participation of various groups and initiatives of the local society, exhibitions on changing subjects will be developed. These subjects will not be determined by the museum, but either proposed directly by the groups themselves or worked out jointly. The museum's thematic spectrum will thus be expanded to include the urban society's knowledge and experiences of its own city.

The Kinder Museum (Children's Museum) with its 40-year experience in multi-generational and interactive museum practice plays an important role in the development of the City Lab and the other interactive formats in the new museum. It will be reintegrated into the new museum site by 2015 and will be responsible for the installation of multi-generational offers in all of the new exhibitions. It also has a leading role in designing and modifying the participative strategies of the museum—finding partners in the local/regional society, framing partnerships with these groups or initiatives and organising the setting-up of exhibitions. Moreover, since 2011, a series of experimental projects outside the museum sites have been launched in order to collect experiences with this kind of work, and create a growing network of partners of the museum within the city – examples include a project in 2011 about a changing city quarter, the "Ostend," which presented 38 contributions from participants, or, in 2012, a project concerning the oldest public swimming pool in Frankfurt, the "Stadionbad," founded in 1925, together with a swimming club. In 2013, the City Lab resides in the hall of a popular sports club at Ginnheim, with a cooperative exhibition "G-Town–living room Ginnheim."

Finally, this new participative strategy takes two recent developments into account—firstly, the new techniques of creating knowledge enhanced by the World Wide Web, in particular by the so-called "Web 2.0" which, with "user-

generated content" such as Wikis, crowd-sourcing and other tools, have changed the public's attitude towards institutions such as museums, libraries and archives. More visitors want to comment on the work of the museum or even to participate in their work. The new concept of the Historisches Museum responds to this trend by its participative approach, as well as by a wide range of interfaces in the exhibition media, which can be commented on or enhanced by the visitors themselves. All of the museum's digital sources will be combined by 2015 into a "museum portal" to be accessed in the museum or via the Internet, where all the information may be commented on by the users. Secondly, the new concept takes into account the fact that the museum's audience has changed since 1972. Frankfurt is currently the city in Germany with the highest degree of cultural diversity; only a minority of its citizens were born here, 44 percent have a migration background (either they or their parents come from other countries), and 25 percent carry a foreign passport. In this multicultural city's society, it is no longer the nation or national traditions which form the common ground; rather, it is the city which is shared and created by its inhabitants. In addition, Frankfurt attracts a lot of visitors from other countries, particularly from outside of Europe due to the international airport acting as a gateway to Europe for Asian and American tourists. Thirty percent of the museum visitors in 2008 came from other countries, with an increasing proportion of non-European visitors, another 30 percent came from other regions of Germany and 40 percent from the local region. The challenge is thus to combine exhibitions which attract the local and regional people, who are all in different ways "experts" of their town, and also put together attractive offers to the increasing number of tourists with hardly any knowledge of the town, or even of European culture.

As a result, within its renovated and new buildings, through collaboration with the other museum's branches, such as the Children's Museum, and via new exhibition design, the new museum opens a wide range of views on

IMG. 5.64 — *Plans of the new museum. Project by Lederer Ragnarsdóttir Oei architects, LRO, Stuttgart.*

NEXT PAGE

IMG. 5.65 — *Section of the new museum.*

IMG. 5.66 — *Detail of the exhibition layout for the section "Frankfurt Now!"*

IMG. 5.67 — *3D computer model of the area devoted to the display of the city's model.*

Viewpoint   Seminarraum   Stadtmodell   Aktivity Space   Wechselausstellung   Fenster Vitrinen   Museums Portal
Archiv der Projekte   Feedback Station   Lounge   mit temporärem Leitsystem   Bibliothek der Alten
&
Stadtlabor unterwegs
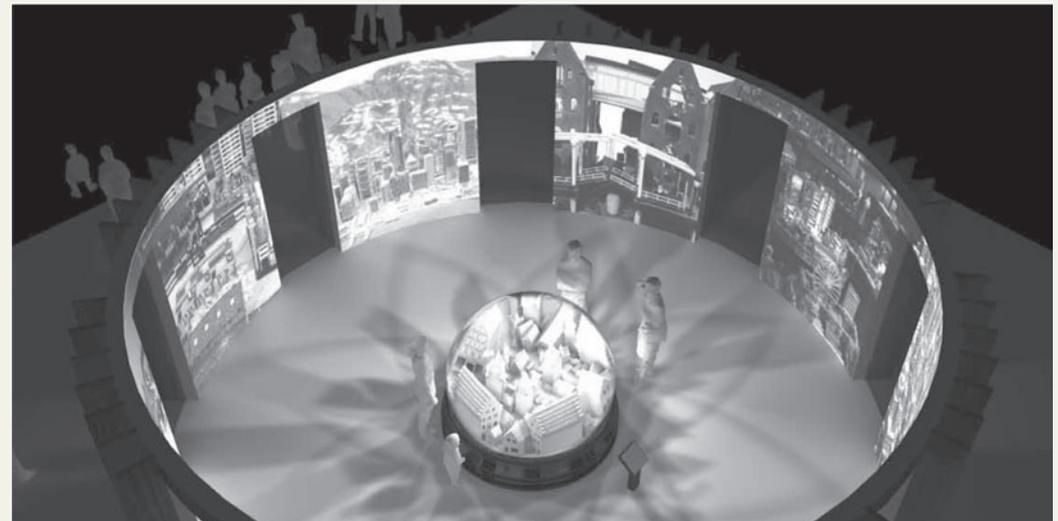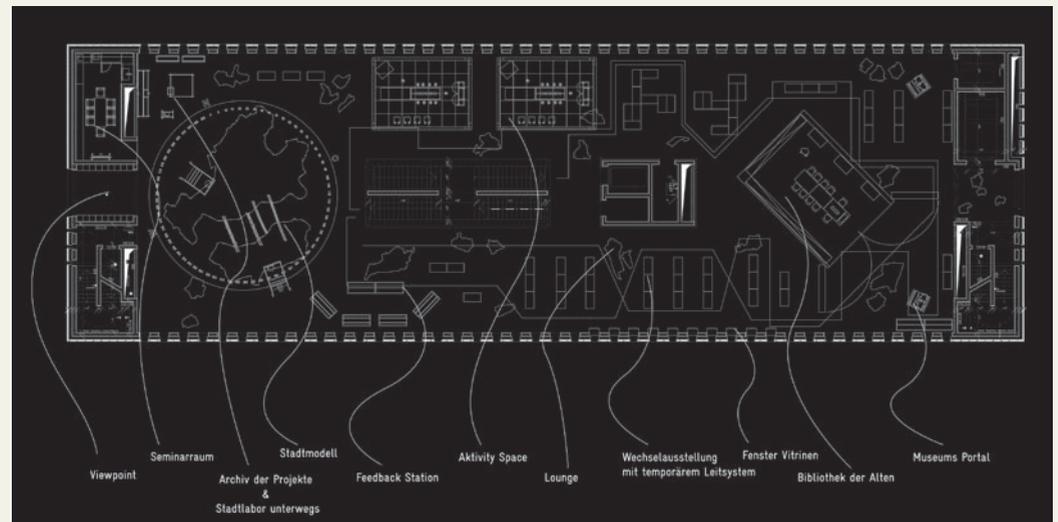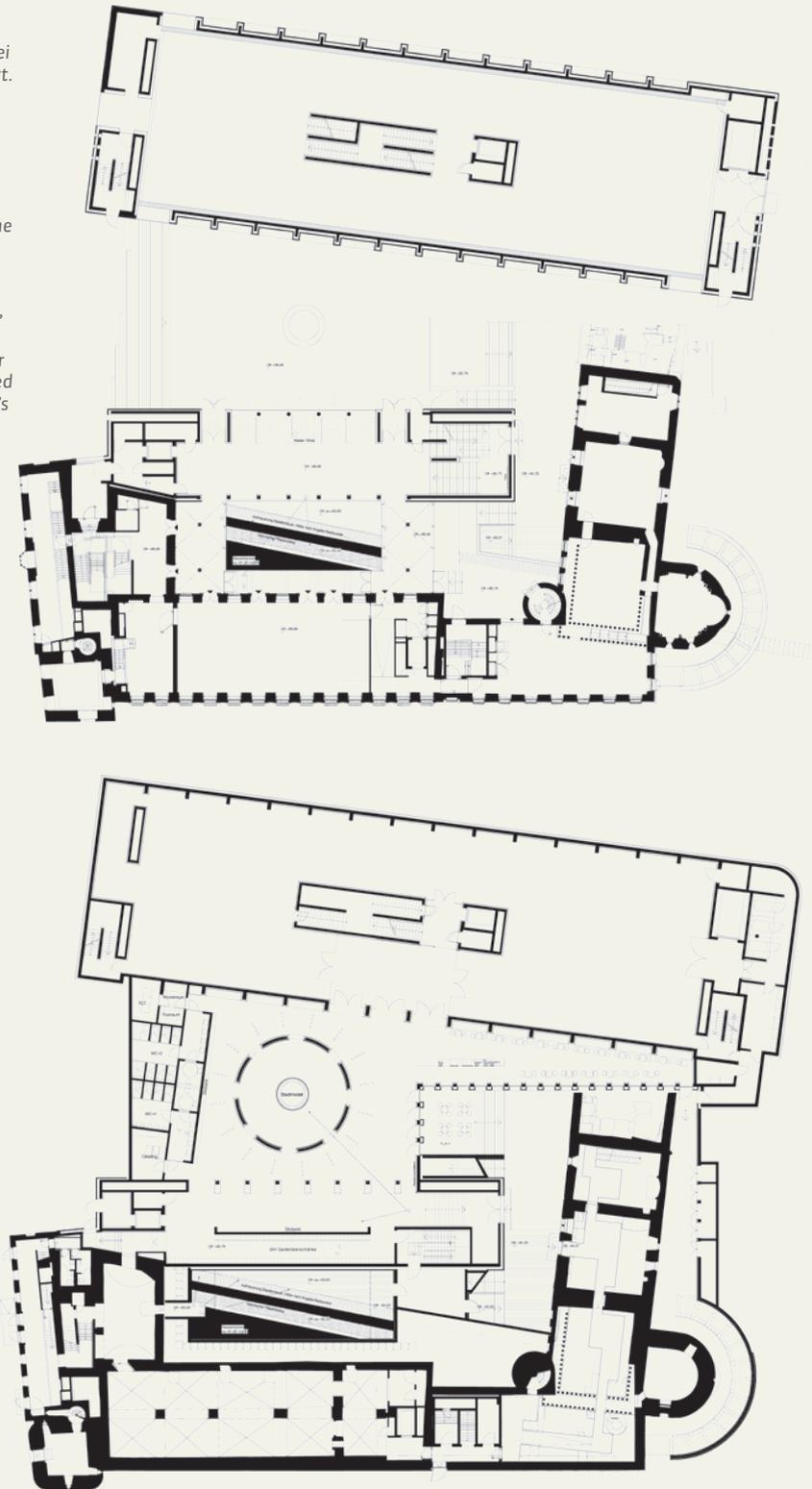
Frankfurt, in different formats, directed towards the diverse needs of visitors. In the recently renovated old museum buildings of the "Saalhof," the museum offers three exhibitions focusing on the historical museum's buildings and collections, while the exhibitions of the new museum will be focused on the city itself. These exhibitions will be designed according to the above mentioned context and approaches, and put together in collaboration with different scenographers who have been engaged to create diverse environments and establish a variety of styles in the museum. (The designers for the new permanent exhibition on the city's history "Frankfurt Once?" are Gillmann and Schnegg, who already designed the renewed exhibition in the old museum's buildings, and while the Kossmann DeJong studio will be responsible for the introductory installations at the entry level and the large space dedicated to the present day city "Frankfurt Now!").

The courtyard level beneath the museum square will receive visitors with two installations – the "Frankfurt Harbour" and the "Frankfurt Models." The "Frankfurt Harbour" is an impressive archaeological find in the grounds between the old and new buildings, dating back to the late 12th/early 14th centuries. Visitors can see the archaeological remains and explore their history and meaning with several digital devices. The second installation will reflect on the identity of Frankfurt, questioning what kind of city it is: here, eight images of Frankfurt will be presented in the form of artistic town models, selected by the audience and put in place by an industrial robot in the cellar.

In the big exhibition house, temporary exhibitions will be presented on 1,000 square meters of the courtyard level. On the first and second upper levels, comprising a total of 2,000 square meters, the permanent historical exhibition "Frankfurt Once?" will spread out in four thematic sections – "Townscapes," "Citizens' Town," "Money Town" and "World Town" – rather than presenting the city's history chronologically, while the entire double-gabled attic floor will be devoted to the exhibition "Frankfurt Now!," presenting contemporary Frankfurt

and its future issues, and to the "City Lab" space that will host temporary exhibitions based on the museum collection and created with the participation of local residents. With its large panorama window and 84 additional windows, the top floor will also offer a spectacular view of the town.

Overall, this important museum transformation is based on the belief that, as a contemporary city museum, it should tell not only the city's history, but also explain the present and discuss the future of the city. It should also help the citizens and guests to read the city; it presents itself as the place for the urban themes of Frankfurt, as a kind of city "laboratory" or city "forum" and thus involves its visitors actively. In this sense, the renewed Historisches Museum aims to become a 21st century "universal museum" for the city of Frankfurt.

Jan Gerchow

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IMG. 5.68 — *Museum aan de Stroom–MAS, Antwerp, Belgium. Project by Neutelings Riedijk. The permanent exhibition dedicated to the "Display of Power. On Prestige and Symbols." © Jeroen Verrecht, courtesy of MAS.*

Museum aan de Stroom–MAS
Antwerp, Belgium

The MAS Museum aan de Stroom has been defined in different ways, as a cultural heritage forum, promoting integrated local heritage policies and coordinating different collections, organisations and practices; as a landmark, catalysing the image of a developing district through the visibility of its eye-catching monumental form, but also fostering and orienting the local cultural programme; as a vertical city walk, guiding visitors through a sequence of different lively public spaces, almost defining a new city centre. MAS offers a complex experience providing a multi-faceted presentation of the history of Antwerp, which is a history of migration—of people, objects and ideas—because of its world port identity.

Among the few newly-built Belgian museums in recent decades, it is now the youngest and largest in Antwerp, bringing together the collections from the former Ethnographic Museum, the National Maritime Museum and the Folklore Museum, along with part of the art collections from Paul and Dora Janssen and from the Vleeshuis Museum. The large size of the collection managed by MAS—it includes 470,000 pieces—and its heterogeneous character—it gathers together archaeological finds, folkloric and exotic objects, ship models, paintings, photography and ethnography from the former colonies—offer the possibility to promote different exhibitions on a variety of themes.

The museum was designed by the Dutch architects Neutelings Riedijk and inaugurated in May 2011. It is located in Antwerp's Het Eilandje ("the little island") neighbourhood, an area that is currently undergoing massive transformations. It is a riverside zone of warehouses, factories and docks from the Napoleonic era, not far from the city's historic centre, where the museum stands with its highly iconic architecture that makes it a recognizable part of the urban fabric and a local landmark.

The mission of the Museum aan de Stroom focuses mainly on the narration of the history of the city, though the institution is not defined merely as a "city museum"—as also indicated by its name, literally "Museum by the River," referring to the location of the building, as well as to the ancient appellation of Antwerp (which was also known as "Stad aan de Stroom"), and celebrating the crucial role of the Scheldt in local development. The evolution of the identity of the city has indeed arisen from its story as world port, fostered by an excellent geopolitical location. Since the 16th century, it has been a place for the meeting and exchange of diverse cultures. Nowadays, Antwerp is still, after Amsterdam, the Western European urban centre with the largest number of different nationalities—more or less 170, including a flourishing Jewish community, significant Moroccan, Chinese, Turkish and Eastern European groups, and several representatives from India and the Middle East.

The declared task of the MAS is to present the long history of exchanges between the city and the world, in order to highlight the factors and events that produced and enhanced the development of the port, the urban area, its population and peculiar cultural system. The institution thus promotes a glo-cal mission, recounting the stories "about Antwerp in the world and the world in Antwerp." Though MAS does not label itself as a "city museum," its features, contents and purposes allow its identifications as a contemporary city museum, proving how the encompassment and the role of this institution are currently questioned and constantly redefined both in theory and in practice.

→ THE CITY IN THE WORLD AND THE WORLD IN THE CITY

The museum building is a 10-storey high tower, conceived via a combination of a showcase of

IMG. 5.69 — *The MAS tower. © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*

IMG. 5.70 — *The vertical boulevard, intended not only as a space for distribution but also for exhibitions and cultural activities. © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*

IMG. 5.71 — *The panoramic terrace on the MAS rooftop © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*

NEXT PAGE, IMG. 5.72 — *The starting point of the vertical boulevard articulated around the escalator, characterised by transparent walls made of undulating glass panels, which allow a panoramic and everchanging view of the city. © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*
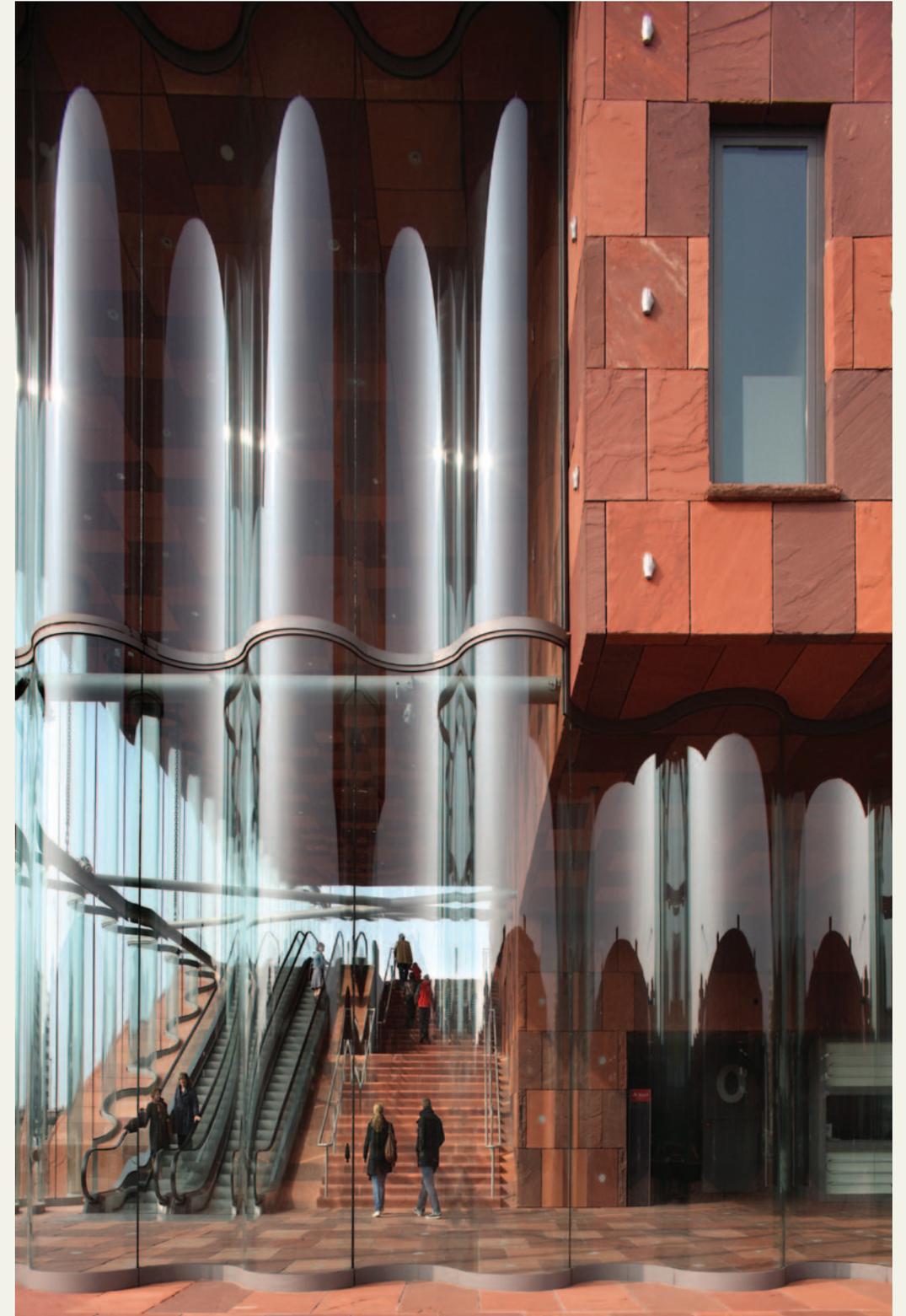
the city's history and a public space. The plan ensues from the aggregation of a large "black box" dedicated to a specific themed exhibition and a vertical boulevard developed around the escalator, which is not merely a distribution area but also a living public place, where cultural activities and temporary installations take place. The extension of the museum's heritage also triggered the idea of a "Visible Storage," located on the second floor of the tower; designed as a sequence of open-view storerooms, this space is meant to preserve the objects that are not being exhibited and offer the opportunity to look behind the scenes of a history of active collecting.

The architectural layout of the different floors apparently remains constant—it is unaltered on floors 3 to 8, where the temporary and permanent exhibitions are displayed, and changes slightly on the lower and higher levels, where the services (reception, café, ateliers, offices, restaurant and a conference room) are concentrated. Nevertheless, every box is rotated through 90° compared with the previous one. This rotation, that has a significant influence on the design of the spiral tower, may be perceived through the moving position of the escalators, and the evolution of the point of view on the city. The differentiation between exhibition and distribution spaces—one avoids daylight, while the other is characterised by a transparent wall, made of six metre-high curtains of undulating glass—contributes to the individuation of two different realms. One is related to the past, the "black boxes" which immerse the visitor into a chapter of the city history, the other to the present, the boulevard projecting an ever-expanding and ever-changing view on the city, the port and the river. This pattern fosters a differentiated visit model: the public may choose which of the exhibition areas to explore, and in which order, and thus have the option of viewing a part of the whole story or constructing a personal path.

This possibility is also due to the organisation of contents via a thematic structure. The history of the city and its relationships with the world are presented in four permanent exhibitions, "Display of Power," "Metropolis," "World Port" and "Life and Death," with the support of major

and minor temporary exhibitions. Visitors could even decide not to enter the exhibition boxes and remain in the public space, which is freely accessible until 10 pm. The MAS boulevard, which culminates in the panoramic terrace on the 60–metre high rooftop, is indeed meant to be a lively public space and a reference point for the cultural life of Antwerp.

The connection with the city develops at different levels, since the museum operates beyond its walls through the construction of physical, symbolic and institutional relationships. It invades the urban surroundings with the square—characterized by a mosaic floor designed by Luc Tuymans, who reproduced a Dead Skull from an old plaque on the façade of the Cathedral of Our Lady, thus evoking a connection between a Golden Age and a contemporary Antwerp icon—and the pavilions at the foot of the building, where public events and open air exhibitions take place. It manages an outdoor collection, composed of sixteen cranes located near the Scheldt quay (declared listed monuments in 2002), representing the incredibly rapid technological developments in port activities over the last century. It contributes to the organisation of further collections across the city. It enhances cooperation with other local institutions (The Flemish Literature Archive, the City Conservation Library, the History Department of the University of Antwerp). Furthermore, MAS is taking part in the history of the city itself. The spiral tower has become a landmark in the urban context—contributing to the requalification of the image of the Het Eilandje District, Antwerp's old port area, which is currently undergoing a significant renovation, and adding value to the north-south cultural axis that connects the area with the inner city, linking several "cultural stepping stones"—as well as an icon within the cultural scene. Not only is it recognized as a dynamic meeting place and the catalyser of a rich cultural programme, but it has also contributed to a general regeneration plan conceived at the end of the 20th century, when Antwerp (like other cities in Flanders) was associated with degeneration, cohabitation problems and criminality. The latter were defeated via new

urban development, the realization of major infrastructural and cultural works (including the Court designed by Richard Rogers and the Red Line Star Memorial) and the enhancement of innovative cultural policies, fostering social cohesion between people with different backgrounds through cultural activities and promoting mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue through education.

The presentation of the city's history through transversal thematic investigations, rather than a chronological narration, allows exploration of the multi-layered traces of the commercial, social and cultural flows and the contribution of these exchanges to the local identity, as illustrated by the heterogeneous integrated collections (combining pre–Columbian art, ethnology, maritime heritage, etc.).

The "Display of Power" illustrates the objects, the symbols and the stories representing the different forms of prestige, domination and control that have influenced the history of Antwerp—from the image of the various rulers during the Dutch Revolt, to the notion of rank that has always characterised relationships in Japan, from the prestige of African rulers from the 16th to the 19th century, to a collection of Indonesian weapons from the colonial period. The four sections are displayed around four pavilions—an upright dome over a golden cross, a dome over a perfect red-painted square, a suspended dome with fluorescent orange recesses, and a temple designed by Maori artist, George Nuku, presenting its vision of Polynesian heritage in Western museums. The pavilions are equal in size but not in shape, with exterior walls adorned with portraits of the respective rulers. The representation of Power, which has been a crucial issue in the development of such an economically and politically alluring city, depicts the contacts (and conflicts) among Antwerp and the world, highlighting exchanges but also denouncing abuses and misunderstandings, including those fostered by the colonial museums.

The section dedicated to the "Metropolis" illustrates the evolution of the port city, highlighting its multicultural identity. By exploring its past

as a world-class mercantile centre, and its contemporary development through the effects of its international kudos, migration flows and globalised culture, the exhibition attempts to analyse the relationships between "Here and Elsewhere," starting from the pictures and posters of the 1894 World Fair, where the colonial heritage was exhibited as an exotic trophy, through the emphasis on the mysterious nature of these far-away cultures, and ending with the photos by Karin Borghouts, illustrating the contemporary "Multicoloured City," where the local population is characterised by the assimilation of an intercultural composition. The exhibition space is articulated through a sequence of rooms circumscribed by a transparent wooden construction, supporting a variety of city portraits and simulating the layout of a traditional museum, but providing a more flexible and reversible architectural solution.

The exhibition presenting Antwerp as a "World Port" explores the growth of the small settlement into one of the largest international hubs, emphasising the role of the city as a crossroads and meeting place, and illustrating the development of intercultural connections, especially through the contacts with Belgium's former colonies. The undivided exhibition space, whose vast dimensions bring the visitor face-to-face with the enormous scale of the port area, displays various documents recounting the port's expansion, trade and shipping, and the people involved in it.

The "Life and Death" theme explores the global religious and philosophical diversity within existential meanings, from the rituals of ancient Egypt to the perception of ancestors in Africa, from death as life in Melanesia, to rebirth in Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism, and finally to eternal life promised in the three religions of The Book. The exhibition highlights differences as well as common beliefs about life and death in Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The presentation of the variegated and dynamic identity of Antwerp is not only focused on its past. The museum uses the history of—and the traces arising from—international connections

IMG. 5.73 — *Vertical section of the tower, highlighting the spiral development of the vertical boulevard around the escalator. © Neutelings Riedijk Architects.*
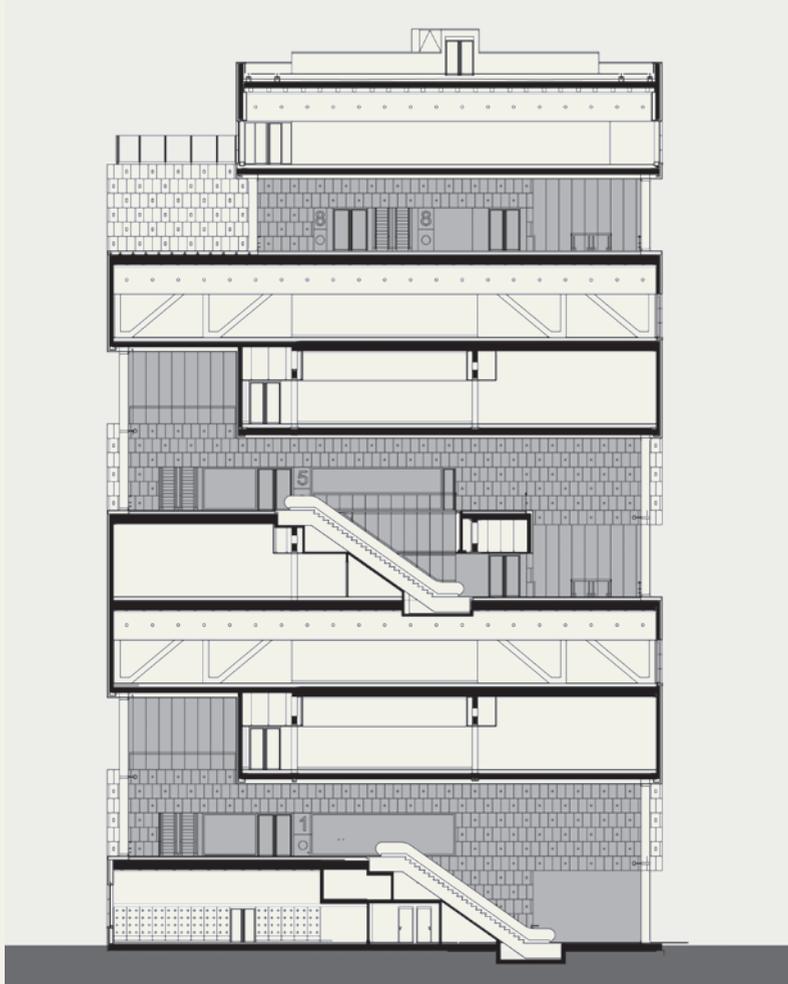
IMG. 5.74 — *Fifth floor plan, illustrating the typical layout of the exhibition areas.© Neutelings Riedijk Architects.*
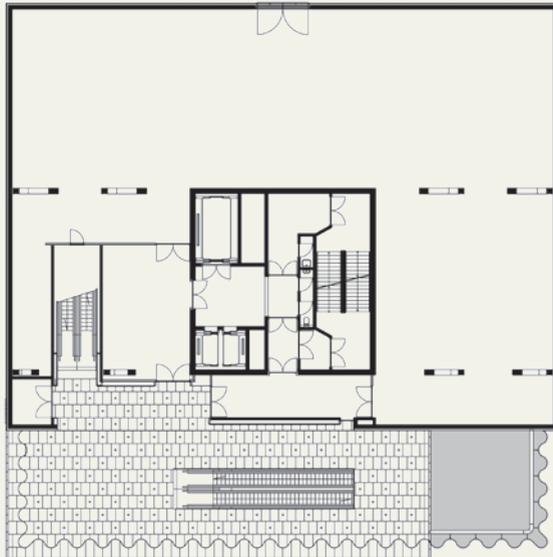
IMG. 5.75 — *The gallery dedicated to the permanent exhibition illustrating "Life and Death. On Men and Gods," displayed on the seventh and eighth floors. © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*

IMG. 5.76 — *The gallery dedicated to the permanent exhibition illustrating the "World Port. On Trade and Shipping," displayed on the sixth floor. © Jeroen Verrecht, courtesy of MAS.*

IMG. 5.77 — *The gallery dedicated to the permanent exhibition illustrating the "Metropolis. On here and elsewhere," displayed on the fifth floor. © Jeroen Verrecht, courtesy of MAS.*

IMG. 5.78 — *The gallery dedicated to the permanent exhibition illustrating the "Display of Power. On Prestige and Symbols," displayed on the fourth floor. © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*

IMG. 5.79 — *The temporary exhibition "Masterpieces in the MAS. Five Centuries of Images in Antwerp," displayed from May 2011 to December 2012 in the gallery of the second floor. © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*

IMG. 5.80 — *The Visible Storage, providing the visitors with a rare opportunity to look behind the scenes of the museum. © Filip Dujardin, courtesy of MAS.*

and exchanges to tell new stories, to depict the present and to envision the future. The ever-changing development of the city is reflected in the enhancement of semi-permanent display strategies, based on annual revisions of the settings and the objects selected (also related to a collection turn-over project) and on the implementation of minor temporary installations within the permanent exhibition areas. The constant revisions of proposed content, which is also encouraged by the assignment of an entire floor to temporary exhibitions and by the frequent renovation of the artworks displayed in the public boulevard, allow the Museum aan de Stroom to include the ongoing history of Antwerp and to play an active role in the promotion of the local contemporary heritage.

The attempt to enhance the presentation of the city through an up-to-date vision is also fostered by the integration of different "voices" in the displayed narration. This strategy is enhanced through innovative activities and tools that are conceived to encourage the involvement of a diversified audience, that is, a plurality of the population representatives, by inviting them to actively contribute to the conceptualization and installation of the displays—for example, the museum is developing new projects to potentiate the participation of young citizens, such as the "MAS in Young Hands" project (also supported by the European Youth Capital programme held in Antwerp in 2011), which allows a group of teenagers to contribute to the definition of some exhibitions, to experience interactions with artists and curators, to add objects to the collection, etc.—or by implementing special temporary exhibitions that are not meant to present the local history, but rather to explore the different cultural references that are present in the city (because of the migrant communities) and which have contributed to its development—the section dedicated to the "Metropolis" is currently closed by a room dedicated to "Home Call," an installation curated by anthropologist Ann Cassiman, describing the cycle of life and death of the Kasena, the population of northern Ghana who represent a significant part of the people living in Antwerp (the city's

second biggest African group after the Moroccan one): through eloquent photographic and video documents, the exhibition juxtaposes the presentation of family homes in Ghana with the lives of the Ghanaians who migrated to Belgium, highlighting ancestral traditions, sense of belonging and cultural differences, and illustrating the effects of globalization on the domestic material and immaterial cultural settings.

By presenting the local history through the lens of the history of world cultures, emphasising the role of diversity that has always contributed to the development of the city and highlighting the exchanges and the connections between objects, people and ideas, the Museum aan de Stroom represents a relevant instrument contributing to an inclusive definition of the complex local identity, enabling individuals and groups to gain recognition, enhancing citizenship, and thus reducing social tensions and fostering intercultural dialogue.

Elena Montanari

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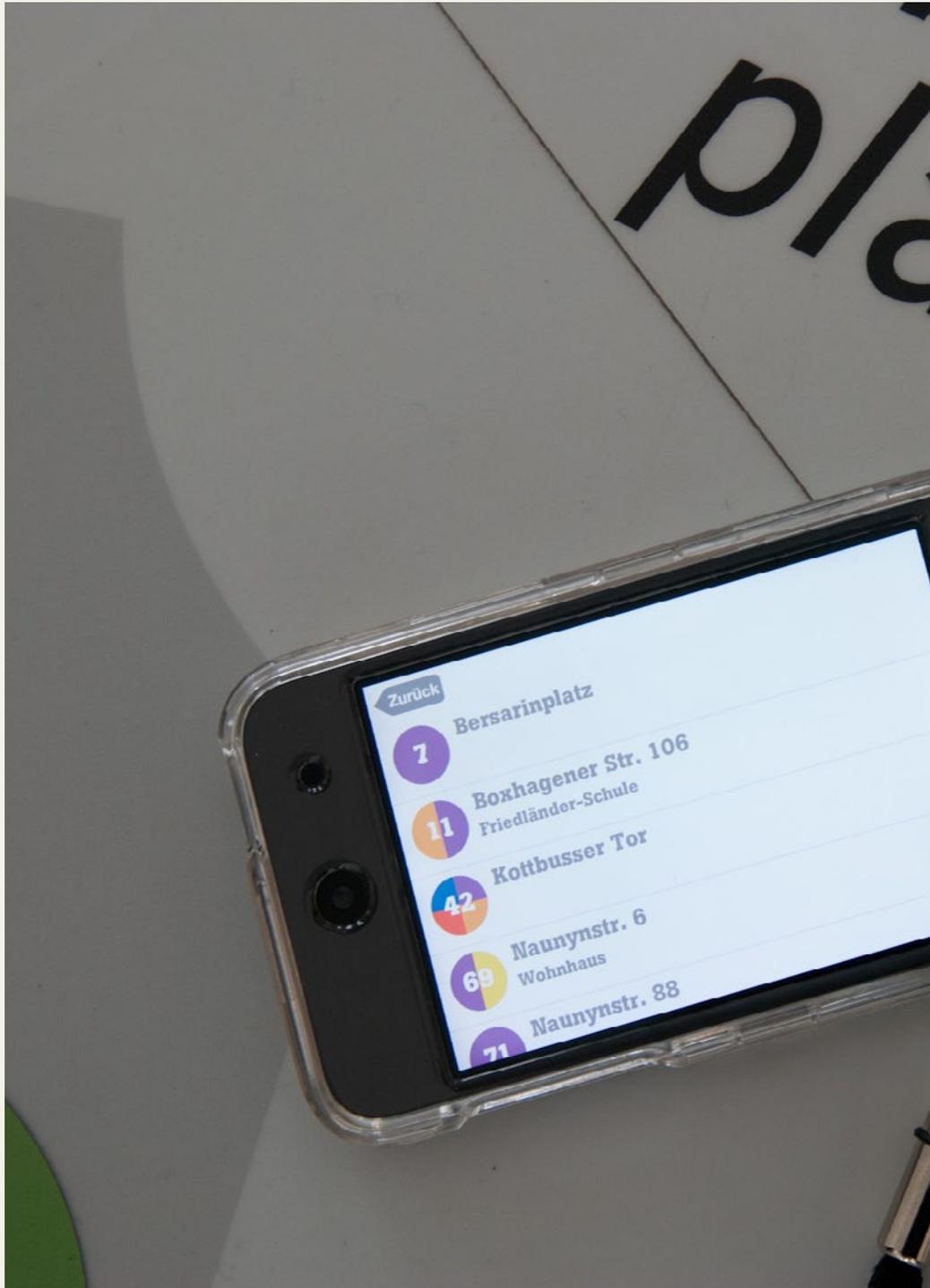
IMG. 5.81 — *Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum, Berlin, Germany. The exhibition "Local chats. city–migration–history: from hallesches to frankfurter tor." Photo by Ellen Röhner.*

"ortsgespräche", Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum
"local chats", Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum, Berlin, Germany

The Friedrichshain–Kreuzberg Museum documents the history of this borough of Berlin, formed in 2001 by merging the former East Berlin borough of Friedrichshain and the former West Berlin borough of Kreuzberg, two of the most dynamic, culturally lively and multicultural district of the city.

The museum has been created after the merger of the two districts, joining the former museum of Friedrichshain (originated in the late 1980s) with the Kreuzberg Museum, conceived in 1978 as a local museum of urban development and social history, and opened in 1990. The Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum is hosted in the original premise of the former Kreuzberg Museum, in a typical factory building in Adalbertstrasse completely restored and complemented by a new stair tower and lift and new facilities.

In January 2012 a new permanent exhibition of the district museum of Friedrichshain–Kreuzberg opened: "ortsgespräche. stadt–migration–geschichte. vom halleschen zum frankfurter tor" (local chats. city–migration–history: from hallesches to frankfurter tor). It has been curated by Frauke Miera and Lorraine Bluche, and funded by the Hauptstadtkulturfonds (Capital Cultural Fond) within the project "Migration macht Geschichte" ("Migration makes History"). Frauke Miera and Lorraine Bluche, the independent curators who designed the exhibition describe how it has been conceived and realised.

→ CITY HISTORY, PEOPLE, PLACES, MEMORIES

Main objective was to overcome the dualism of "general" history versus the history of the "others" in the exhibition, and to create, instead, a space in which the recollections of migrants, their descendants and locals are interwoven with each other—complementing, contradict-

ing or presented side by side. Migration history was to be told as an integral component of urban history and what was shown to be understood as many-faceted, many-voiced and discursive.

In other words, the idea was to tell the history of a city district as the history of all its inhabitants—as a history of migrants, their descendants, locals and the recently immigrated: as an inclusive and multi-perspective city history.

In order to put this idea into practice, we first decided on a topographical approach. We made particular places in the district of Friedrichshain–Kreuzberg into the main hubs or structuring elements of the exhibition. We assumed that the linking of urban development and migrational processes can be especially well shown at specific places in the city. People meet at such places, they imprint and change these places in the course of decades and centuries. Different experiences and perceptions, common characteristics, conflicts and change come together there. The strength of this topographical approach lies in the fact that the various contributors speak on the same subject in each case—namely their recollections, their associations with certain places. The interviewees are not thereby reduced to certain real or ascribed attributes. Migrants and non-migrants alike have the chance to speak on equal terms as agents in city life.

Secondly we involved members of the "glocal community"[1] in a variety of ways in the exhibition and collection process. During the phase of exhibition preparation we sought and carried on dialogue with a large range of people who are politically, socially and culturally active in

1 With the expression glocal community we mean the people, groups and organisations in the catchment area of a museum of urban history who should, or in the ideal case would be in communication or discourse with the museum: that is, regardless of social categories, education, ethnic or religious attribution, migrational background, gender or sexual orientation, physical or intellectual abilities.

IMG. 5.82 — *Exhibition "Local chats. city–migration–history: from hallesches to frankfurter tor." Photo by Studio Kaiser Matthies.*

IMG. 5.83 — *Exhibition "Local chats. city–migration–history: from hallesches to frankfurter tor." Photo by Studio Kaiser Matthies.*

IMG. 5.84 — *Exhibition "Local chats. city–migration–history: from hallesches to frankfurter tor." Photo by Studio Kaiser Matthies.*

the district. At the beginning of the project we carried out a series of workshops which gave rise to an exhibition advisory board, which met every three months. In the workshops and the advisory board meetings we brought the concept and each further sequence of the main steps of our work up for discussion and developed these in dialogue with those involved.

The places chosen for the exhibition were decided in this way, among other aspects. Furthermore, numerous Kreuzbergers and Friedrichshainers contributed their voices to the exhibition, particularly regarding more recent district history. Supported by our volunteer allies we conducted interviews with more than one hundred people which were added to the exhibition in the form of audio interviews and video interviews, quotations etc. In addition, some of the interview partners have contributed objects. Moreover, visitors have a variety of opportunities to leave their own traces or perspectives in the exhibition since its opening. Especially the opportunities for contributive participation[2] during the running term symbolise the idea of the non-exclusion and discursiveness of story telling and the space created in the exhibition for reminiscence.

Within the exhibition "local chats" we have laid the foundation for a completely new collection stock: an audio-archive of the district of Friedrichshain–Kreuzberg is being created here currently to offer place-related multiple perspectives, on everyday history.[3]

For this part of the project we asked about thirty local inhabitants to give us their personal city tours. We asked them for places in the district

where they enjoy or dislike being, which have particularly influenced them, and which they see as typical for the district.

Every interview partner described 5-8 places in the district from their individual viewpoint. These are everyday, personal stories about the first flat, the first German course, places of individual politicisation, about places of refuge or threat, about places of spare time pleasure and personal meetings, and stories in which events of overriding historical importance combine with subjective experience.

While choosing interview partners—migrants and non-migrants—we consciously took care to illustrate not only a large range of local people, but also to allow people whose voices are not usually heard in a museum to have a chance to speak. So beyond the apparent norm those who speak here include the illegalised or undocumented, children, youngsters, old people, one deaf person, homosexuals and of course people with the most varied migrational backgrounds. Some of the interviews were carried out in German, some in the respective native languages of the interview partners. All interviews were transcribed, translated if necessary and afterwards cut in order to generate stories which relate to specific places. Moreover, the stories were translated into English and recorded for listening. Altogether we have collected about 150 stories on about 120 places in Friedrichshain–Kreuzberg.

In the exhibition the visitors and guests enter an oversized city map of the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, on which c. 120 numbered and multi-coloured raised spots each mark a place. One or more stories from our interview partners are concealed at each place. The visitors receive an iPod, specially programmed for this purpose, which leads them around the city map and at the same time makes the respective local stories audible, readable and visible, that is: at each place you can hear the appropriate audio-track, read the transcript of that track and look at current photographs.

The multiplicity of perspectives on history and the city becomes clear in various ways. On the

2   On the categories of participation see Nina Simon, The Participatory Museum, Santa Cruz, CA: Museum 2.0, 2010. We have described elsewhere our systematic approach to forms of participation as curators in our project "ortsgespräche." Bluche, Lorraine, and Frauke Miera. 2013. "'Geteilte' Erinnerungsräume. Zur Vision eines Inklusiven Museums aus kuratorischer Sicht. Die Ausstellung „ortsgespräche" in Kreuzberg Museum," in Partizipative Erinnerungsräume. Dialogische Wissensbildung in Museen und Ausstellungen, edited by Felix Ackermann et al. Bielefeld: Transcript.

3   The exhibition "local chats" extends over two floors. On the first floor six places are shown in their historical depth in detail and—in particular concerning the more recent history—the different perspectives of inhabitants on these places are presented. In this article we refer to the second floor.

one hand, the visitors learn something about the varied, individual characters and biographies of those interviewed via the personal tours. On the other hand, the tours overlap at various points: here the visitors can hear several stories from different points of view relating to the same place. Taken as a whole, a sort of dense and yet at the same time differentiated description of the district is created by its inhabitants.

Frauke Miera and Lorraine Bluche

www.miera-bluche.com

IMG. 5.85 — *Exhibition "Local chats. city–migration–history" at the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum, Berlin, Germany 2012. Photo by Studio Kaiser Matthies.*

NEXT PAGE, IMG. 5.86 — *Exhibition "Turin Earth: cities and new migrations," at the Diffused Museum of Turin, 2009. Courtesy of Museo Diffuso della Resistenza della Deportazione, della Guerra, dei Diritti e della Libertà, Turin, Italy.*

→ **MAP AND MAPPING A VISUAL AND CONCEPTUAL TOOL**

The above mentioned exhibition triggers some reflection on the potential role of recent experiments with geo-tagging and other approaches to personal and emotional mapping in city museums as a visual, metaphorical and cognitive tool that can provide city museums with an interesting field for experimentation.

Indeed, maps are inherently visual and cognitive tools, open to multiple interpretations and uses. They are particularly suited to examining the history of people and places through the overlapping of different levels of analysis, content and meaning. Whether they are virtual or real, drawn on a museum wall or downloaded to a mobile phone, maps are, in fact, increasingly present in museums, in a variety of ways.

A city map is used to visualise and browse the contents of MuseoTorino, the museum of the city of Turin launched in 2011. It defines itself as a "virtual museum with a real collection: the places of the city" and as a "participatory museum." Citizens and visitors can add contents, according to the idea that since "the city is ever-growing and changing, its means of representa-

tion [i.e. the city museum] should change and evolve as well." The museum itself consists of a web site, where over 2,000 places have been catalogued and visualised on a city map, using the most advanced database programs, such as web 3.0, semantic web, and the system of open linked data. It is possible to browse the map with several keywords or through different topics, and citizens and visitors can add information about places and contents, or add new places to the museum catalogue.

A "walk-on-able" city map drawn on the floor of a room in the above mentioned exhibition at the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum structuring the exhibition's contents, and different kinds of maps—including an interactive instrument based on Google Earth and mind maps created by immigrants—were used to represent new city geographies, borders and nearness in the exhibition "Turin Earth: Cities and new migrations," promoted by the Diffused Museum of Turin in 2009 and aimed at encouraging reflection on the social and cultural changes in the city caused by recent migrations, human rights and citizenship consciousness.

Historical and contemporary maps are also being included in the permanent displays of many city museums to enrich and contextualise the story they tell and the objects displayed, and to connect them to the historical and contemporary places of the city outside the museum. An interesting example is in the previously presented Ghent City Museum; here, an aerial photograph of the contemporary city welcomes the visitors as an introduction to the exploration of the city's history starting from its present. In this room it is also possible to access the digital project "Views of Ghent" which allows an exploration of the city's development over time, comparing different historical maps and views that depict how the city's streets and buildings have changed in appearance and function over the centuries, telling the stories of places and people who lived and worked through the ages in the city, and offering an in-depth exploration of related objects from the museum's collection.

Many other outstanding examples of the role

of maps could be mentioned, some of which are based on the use of geo-blog to build sentimental and emotive maps of the city, such as "Percorsi Emotivi" (Sentimental Journeys), a geo-tagged blog where members can express a thought, a suggestion, or a memory connected to a certain place. The blog is also included in the Bologna City History Museum with the aim of representing the ever-changing and growing identity of the city. In the final room of the exhibition, there is a computer terminal to access the blog and an aerial photograph of the city, which is designed to be used for attaching comments to the city's places, just as in the blog, but which functions mainly as a very interesting kind of visitors' book.

Maps have proved to be a valuable tool, not only to represent the complexity of contemporary reality, but also to investigate and read about it. In a city museum they can fulfil several roles, including helping to connect and re-link people and places, contemporaneity and history, the museum and the city.

Francesca Lanz
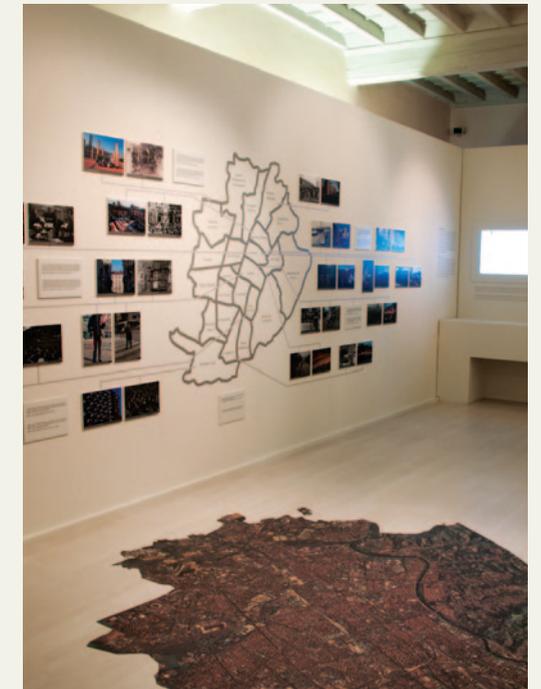
IMG. 5.8 — *Stadsmuseum Gent–STAM, Belgium. The Museum Hall.* © Phile Deprez.

"Filip Berte | The Graveyard. Cities on the Edge," Stadsmuseum Gent–STAM

Ghent City Museum–STAM, Belgium (17th May–4th November 2012)

STAM, the new Ghent City Museum, opened its doors to the public on the 9th October 2010, but it has a much longer history. Its origins date back to 1823 when the Commission for Monuments and Cityscapes was formed in Ghent. Ten years later, the Commission initiated the founding of an archaeological museum, the 'Musée Historique'. Members of the commission donated the first pieces of the collection themselves, and other collectors soon followed suit. This resulted in a highly heterogeneous group of objects—charters, manuscripts, coins and medals, archaeological relics, glass and ceramics, paintings, sculptures, pictures of cityscapes, furniture, musical instruments, and so forth. Ghent was the only unifying factor; a large number of the objects illustrated public life in the city before 1800, which naturally attracted the interest of the city council. In 1884, the museum was given its own building and curator and opened up to the public. In the early 20th Century, the city council decided to give the museum a new home in Bijloke Abbey, but these plans were considerably delayed by the First World War. The Bijloke Archaeological Museum was finally opened in 1928.

The idea of setting up a new, contemporary city museum in Bijloke Abbey emerged in the late 1990s. By 1997, operations at Bijloke Archaeological Museum had been severely scaled down. A new purpose was sought for the building and its contents. In 2000, Gent Cultuurstad (Ghent Heritage Unit) was founded. One of its main tasks was to create a new city museum. Bijloke Museum closed its doors for the last time on the 11th September 2005 and the new museum opened in 2010.

The STAM museum is located on the Bijloke site, a place closely linked to the history of Ghent. An infirmary was located here for over 750 years. This function ended in the early 1980s when, over the next few years, the site was transformed into a venue for cultural activities. Today, this includes the Bijloke Music Centre and art classes organised by Ghent University College. The opening of STAM was the final phase in this re-purposing of the site. The permanent exhibition circuit is located in Bijloke Abbey, the oldest parts of which date from the 14th century and a new wing designed by the city's architect Koen Van Nieuwenhuyse, has been built; it hosts the museum's entrance, the reception, the museum café, a terrace and the introduction space.

During the planning stage for the new museum, several critical decisions had to be made regarding how the permanent collection would be displayed. STAM tells the story of Ghent chronologically but the story begins in the city of today; we move from the present to the past and then back to the present. For STAM, the city itself is its real treasure. The museum is conceived as a gateway to Ghent and aims at encouraging visitors to go out and discover the city for themselves, to form a new understanding of it. Wherever possible, the story is related through original objects and documents. This was—and is—only made feasible through working closely with other heritage institutions in Ghent and further afield. It was decided at an early stage that the permanent collection would be complemented by interactive multimedia displays, thereby increasing visitor involvement in the museum. A special role has been devoted to temporary exhibitions.

IMG. 5.88 — *Museum assonometry. The renovation project included the design of the museum's entrance and the construction of a new building. This new wing hosts the museum's hall including facilities as the ticket office, the bookshop and the cafe. On the first floor, a balcony overlooking the entrance and the double-high bookshop leads to a new exhibition space (the introductory room) and, through a glassed gangway, links the new wing with the exhibition itinerary within the abbey.*
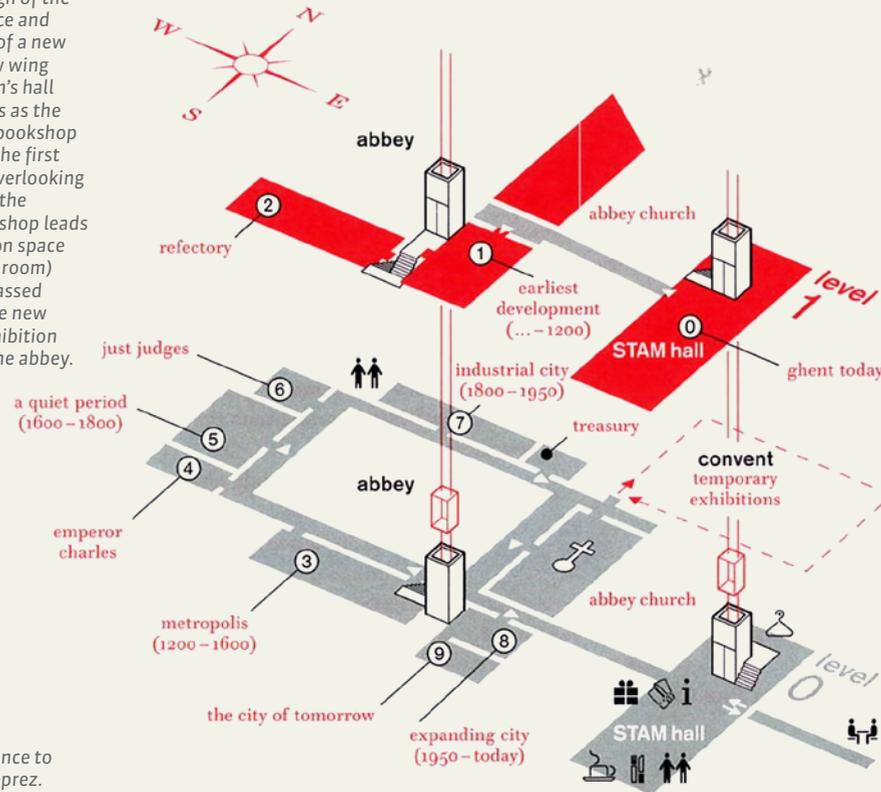
IMG. 5.89 — *Entrance to STAM. © Phile Deprez.*

→ CITY MUSEUMS AND CONTEMPORARY URBANISM: TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS AT STAM

STAM's permanent exhibition takes the form of a chronological circuit that tells the story of Ghent. For its temporary exhibitions, it was decided to take a very different approach. STAM sets out to expand its scope as a dynamic city museum devoted to Ghent by exploring the general theme of urbanisation past and present. In a world where over half of the population lives in cities, it is vital to increase understanding of the growth, development and functioning of urban centres. A quick look at recent temporary exhibitions shows how the topic has been addressed in very diverse ways since the opening of STAM. Ghent may be included at times, but not necessarily.

The opening exhibition *Belichte stad* (*Enlightened City*, 9 October 2010 – 1 May 2011) used documents, diaries, scale models, paintings, photographs and installations to explore how light and darkness influenced the development of the city and urban society.

STAM hosted two temporary exhibitions in 2012: *Edmond Sacré* and *The Graveyard*. These had utterly different subject matters and approaches to their subjects, which perfectly illustrates STAM's commitment to a broad spectrum of topics and media.

Edmond Sacré, Portrait of a City (18 November 2011 – 22 April 2012) showed the work of the multifaceted Ghent photographer Edmond Sacré. Sacré photographed the city around 1900, when the historic centre underwent a huge metamorphosis and the modern city of Ghent emerged. His photographs have had a major influence on how people perceive the Ghent of that period. For example, Sacré was the first to photograph the three historic towers of Ghent from the angle that has become so familiar to us and that is used to this day as the classic image of the city in tourist brochures.

The project ***The Graveyard. Cities on the Edge*** (17 May 2012 – 4 November 2012) by architect/artist Filip Berte links into this theme. Berte concentrated his project on three cities on the geographic fringes of Europe: Melilla, Tbilisi and Chișinău. The fourth city featured, Brussels, plays the role of symbolic landing place in Europe. Berte spent a long time in the four cities, speaking with asylum seekers, refugees, the homeless, border guards and so on. The project thus focuses on the role of cities in an era of migration, refugee influxes and globalisation.

In *The Graveyard*, Melilla, a Spanish enclave in Morocco, symbolises the outermost southern border of Europe. Together with Ceuta, another Spanish enclave, Melilla is a piece of Europe on the African continent. This relatively small city of approximately 76,000 inhabitants exerts a strong pull on refugees, adventurers and migrant candidates hoping for a better life in Europe. The city, and by extension Europe, is separated from the rest of the African continent by massive iron barriers. In 2005, this 'wall' was besieged at various times, resulting in reinforced border security.

Chișinău is the capital of Moldova, a country with 3.6 million inhabitants and one of the poorest countries in Europe. This former Soviet republic remains in an unstable state of transition and reform. Insecurity is partly due to the unresolved conflict on its territory concerning the breakaway region of Transnistria. This area was part of the former Soviet Republic of Moldova, but in 1991 refused to declare itself independent along with Moldova. Transnistria is only recognised by a few other dissident and unrecognised states, such as Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia and Nagorno-Karabakh, the disputed region between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Tbilisi is the capital of Georgia, also a former Soviet republic, and home to 4.5 million souls. The key concepts of transition and transformation inform Filip Berte's approach to this city. Georgia is another state in a fragile transitional period. Two unresolved conflicts, in the dissident regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, have left many refugees living in the former Soviet hotels, Abkhazeti and Amirani. Following the implosion of the Soviet Union and the fiercely fought civil wars around Ab-

IMG. 5.90 — *Ground floor plan. Courtesy of STAM.*

KLOOSTER

Binnenkoer

ABDIJ
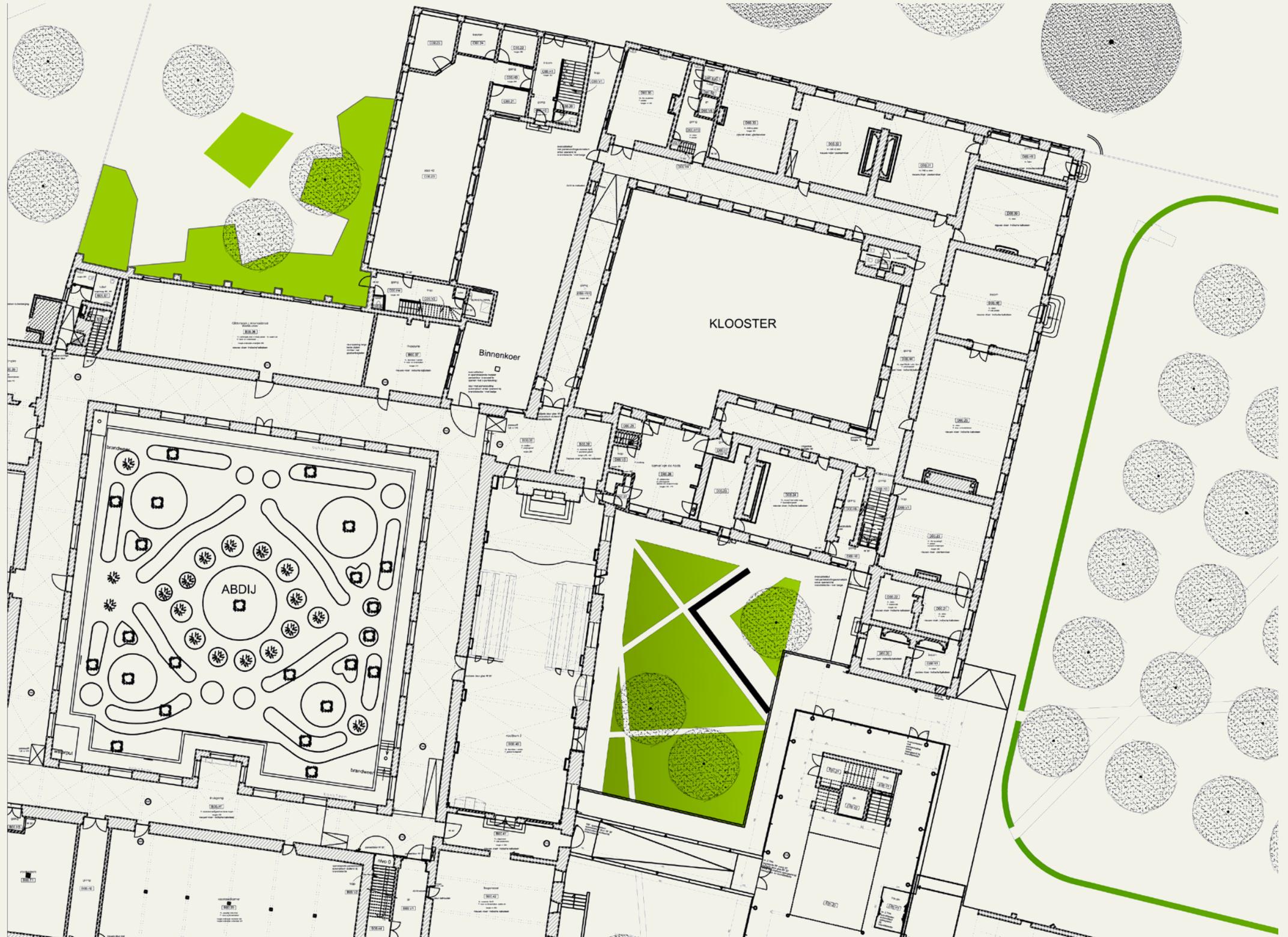
IMG. 5.91 — *Photo of the Middle Ages exhibition room. © Phile Deprez.*

The permanent exhibition has a chronological layout, which uses a combination of historical documents, orginal objects, multimedia contents and interactive devices.

IMG. 5.94 — *Insolation simulator at the "Enlightened City" exhibition. © Phile Deprez.*

IMG. 5.92 — *The permanent exhibition. © Phile Deprez.*

IMG. 5.95 — *Edmond Sacré, "Portrait of a City." © Phile Deprez.*

IMG. 5.93 — *The use of ICT in the permanent exhibition. © Phile Deprez.*

IMG. 5.96 — *Tbilisi waiting room.© Phile Deprez.*

IMG. 5.97 — *Photographic installation by Filip Berte photo of Chișinău, Ulmu, Cultural Centre. © Phile Deprez.*

IMG. 5.99 — *The courtyard of the convent. © Phile Deprez.*

IMG. 5.98 — *Waiting room in "The Graveyard." © Phile Deprez.*

IMG. 5.100 — *Installation with film of Chișinău. © Phile Deprez.*

khazia (1993 and 2008) and South Ossetia (1991-1992 and 2008), hotels and abandoned buildings were occupied by groups of refugees and IDPs (internally displaced persons). The impossibility, to date, of returning to their native countries has led to these temporary refuges gradually becoming permanent homes for these people.

Brussels, in many respects the European capital, occupies a special place in The Graveyard. The city not only functions as the European capital but as a symbolic landing place in Europe. With its large numbers of homeless and shelterless people, asylum seekers, would-be migrants and refugees, it represents the social fringes of European society. By introducing this perspective, the link between Brussels and cities such as Mellilla, Tbilisi and Chișinău is made perfectly clear.

The Graveyard is a highly personal art installation that makes use of urban environments (images and sounds). The phenomenon of urbanisation is approached from an artistic, architectural perspective in order to generate a discussion about this topical issue. The architectural is infused into his work. In the film *Melilla*, the barrier wall between Europe and Africa plays a pivotal role. A wall is the most basic element of a house, but here the wall determines who belongs in Europe and who does not (Koen Van Synghel). The exhibition at STAM forms part of Filip Berte's larger project Eutopia, which he began in 2006, and which is also an architectural concept. The title is a contraction of 'utopia' and 'Europe'. The project's full name is *The House of Eutopia*. As the title implies, Europe is the working area for a project that interprets its subject's diverse geographical, political, historical and cultural background from a primarily intuitive perspective. The final stage will involve the construction of a European house in a symbolic setting, that is, the European Quarter in Brussels. The house will consist of five installations, each telling a different tale and focusing on life in the Europe of today; it reflects on notions of place, territory and identity. The rooms are mobile and can travel to exhibitions throughout Europe. The first two rooms of the House (*Protected Landscape and Collective Memory Mass Grave*) have already been shown several times. The third room, *The Graveyard*, is in the garden of the House and was on show to the public for the first time at STAM. Berte is currently in Berlin working on the fourth room: The Blue Room. *The House of Eutopia* project will be completed by the summer of 2013.

→ **SETTING UP THE GRAVEYARD BY FILIP BERTE IN STAM**

In comparison with most other museums, where the artist has an 'empty box' at his or her disposal, the STAM exhibition spaces are relatively small (the majority approximately 50 m²) and rather imposing. There are nine spaces around a cloister that are sometimes accessed from the corridor, but which can also be reached from an adjoining room. There are many prominent, original features, such as fireplaces and ornate plaster-work on the ceilings.

When it came to setting up *The Graveyard* in STAM, Filip Berte abandoned the usual circuit layout. Where other exhibitions had followed a logical, clockwise circuit around the cloister, Berte chose to close off parts of it to make this impossible. Upon arrival, the visitor was immediately obliged to go outside and cross the central courtyard to where the exhibition began. A panel with an introductory text stood in the open air and visitors experienced a surround soundscape of noises from the four cities. The contrast between 'inside and outside (Europe)' repeatedly occurs in Berte's work, and here it was extended to the layout.

Each city had a separate room devoted to it where a film was projected. To enter the room, the visitor had to pass through a waiting room where viewing boxes with photographs and matching soundscapes were set up. For every two cities there was one waiting room. The visitor could choose when to visit each city; there was no mapped-out route or chronological order for visiting the exhibition. Starting times for the films were timed so that the visitor had plenty of time to move from one room to another without missing the beginning. The exhibition also included a room with graphic works and a viewing box. There were two desks, one where the visitor could consult Filip Berte's blog and the other with a film of Koen Van Synghel, a renowned architecture critic, giving his interpretation of *The Graveyard*.

Berte did not hide the exhibition spaces behind panels or sheets. One could enjoy the architectural details of each room yet without these features impinging on the exhibition. Some alterations were made, with the placing of some walls and door frames, but the exhibition consisted mainly of free-standing elements. Everything was built in such a way as to leave the evidence of construction and assembly visible. The concept of *Eutopia* and *The Graveyard* were not developed with the spaces at STAM in mind. The artist rose to the challenge of fitting his story into a 17th-century building by making a few discreet and thoughtful modifications.

→ **WHY HOST THE GRAVEYARD IN A CITY MUSEUM?**

It could be asked if an exhibition such as *The Graveyard* really belongs in a city museum. It is certainly not as straightforward a subject as the photographs of Edmond Sacré.

Filip Berte trained as an architect. His work shows a spatial approach to topics. There are no spoken words in his films – no testimonies, interviews or eyewitness accounts. What you do see are the buildings in which people live, the interiors of small apartments, crowded or empty public spaces and so forth. The photographs displayed in the exhibition had the same aesthetic; there was hardly a soul to be seen. Soundtracks accompanied the films and photographs. Sound artist Ruben Nachtergaele, who accompanied Berte on his travels, made field recordings and then transformed them into soundtracks for the films and soundscapes for the photographs. Berte took four cities as the starting point for his project, a line of approach that immediately interested STAM. By bringing together images and sounds from these cities in an ingenious way, Berte draws the audience into the experience and, as one journalist put it, '*fills your head with questions about the sense and the non-sense of Europe, about trends in the world and what, if any, the solutions may be.*' (Griet op de Beeck in De Morgen).

In many respects, the two exhibitions are the complete opposite of each other. While Sacré's consisted of original period documents that, at times, provide a nostalgic image of Ghent, *The Graveyard* cast its gaze further afield, with artistic and architectural images of other cities employed to tell a troubling story. But what they have in common fits the STAM mandate for temporary exhibitions – the city in the broadest sense of the word.

Maria De Waele and Lars De Jaegher

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Luca Basso Peressut, Architect, PhD in Architectural Composition (IUAV, Istituto Universitario di Architettura, Venezia), is Full Professor of Interior Architecture, Exhibition Design and Museography at the Politecnico di Milano, and coordinator of the PhD in "Architecture of Interiors." He is co-founder and director of the Level II Master course "IDEA in Exhibition Design." He is Director of the International Workshop of Museography and Archaeology "Villa Adriana-Premio Piranesi" held in Tivoli and Rome since 2003. He is member of the Scientific Committee for the National Conference of Interiors 2005, 2007 and 2010, and member of the Scientific Board and co-organizer of the international conferences IFW-Interiors Forum World. He is member of the Scientific Board of Museography of Edifir Publisher and consultant for the architectural magazine *Area* since 1997. He has carried out several researches and projects in the museums field.

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Francesca Lanz holds a PhD in Interior Architecture and Exhibition Design and a MS in Architecture. Since 2006 she has been collaborating to several research projects and teaching activities, teaming up with different departments of the Politecnico di Milano. Since 2009 she teaches interior design at the School of Ar-

chitecture and Society of Politecnico di Milano and collaborates as post-doc researcher with the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies. She's currently involved in the EU-funded project "MeLa," serving as Assistant Project Coordinator, Dissemination Manager and appointed researcher.

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Gennaro Postiglione is Associate Professor of Interior Architecture at the Politecnico di Milano. Researches focus mainly on domestic interiors (questioning relations among culture of dwelling, domestic architecture and modernity), on museography and on preserving and diffusing collective memory and cultural identity (connecting the museographic issues with the domestic ambit). In this field he carried out several research projects amongst wich: "The Atlantic Wall Linear Museum," "Abarchive – archivio borghi abbandonati," "One-hundred houses for one-hundred architects of the XX century." Besides, he has a specific interest in the architecture of Nordic countries. From 2004, he is promoter of PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE @ POLIMI, an interdisciplinary research & operative group that puts the resources of Architecture in the service of the Public Interest and from 2006 of IFW-Interior Forum World, an academic network and a web platform for research edited by the PhD in Interiors at POLIMI.

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Dr. Joachim Baur is an independent curator and museum expert, based in Berlin. As co-founder and partner of the museum consulting firm "Die Exponauten" (www.die-exponauten.com) he currently develops the master plan for a new museum at the historic site of the famous Friedland refugee camp and curates an exhibition on 19th century globalization at the Museum of Communication Berlin. He teaches courses in museum studies at NYU Berlin and HTW University of Applied Sciences Berlin and lectures widely on contemporary museum-related issues. Dr. Baur holds a Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology (University of Tuebingen, 2009) and an M.A. in Modern European History (University of Stuttgart, 2001) and Museum Studies (New York University, 2004). He is the recipient of numerous grants and scholarships, among others from Fulbright, the German Historical Institute Washington DC and the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation and has published on the history and theory of museums, migration history, representations of multiculturalism and the trans-/nationalization of memory.

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Lorraine Bluche, Dr. phil., studied French Studies at Free University Berlin. Since 2010 together with Frauke Miera she designs and realises exhibition and collection projects, especially with respect to the idea of an inclusive museum (www.miera-bluche.com). Within the project "Migration macht Geschichte" (funded by Hauptstadtkulturfonds) at Bezirksmuseum Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, Berlin, she curated the exhibitions: "NeuZugänge. Migrationsgeschichten in Berliner Sammlungen" (New in stock. Migration histories in Berlin Museum collections), 2011, and "ortsgespräche.stadt–migration–geschichte. vom halleschen zum frankfurter tor" ("local chats. city–migration–history. from hallesches to frankfurter tor"), 2012. She also worked in exhibition projects at the German Historical Museum Berlin (exhibition "Migrationen 1500–2005. Zuwanderungsland Deutschland", 2005–2006), at

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Anna Chiara Cimoli graduated in History of Art from Università Statale in Milano, and specialized in Museology at the Ecole du Louvre in Paris. She holds a PhD in History of Architecture and Town Planning from Politecnico di Torino.

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Lars De Jaegher studied history and environmental planning at the University of Ghent.

He joined STAM in 2009 focusing on urban history, city development and also multimedia projects. Previously, he worked as a spatial planner at the town and country planning department of the Provincial Government of West-Flanders, as a cultural technologist in the Ename Centre for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation and as a multimedia designer at Visual Dimension.

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Dr. Maria De Waele studied contemporary history at the University of Ghent. She also worked for several years at this university, as a researcher and later as an assistant-professor,

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Simone Eick

Simone Eick is the Managing Director of the German Emigration Center at Bremerhaven, where she previously has operated as Scientific Director and Deputy Director. From 2003 to 2005, she has participated to the scientific conception of the museum at Studio Andreas Heller in Hamburg. Her studies in History and Philosophy at the University of Hannover were concluded by a dissertation on "American emigration in the 19th century."

Jan Gerchow

Jan Gerchow is a German historian and director of the Historical Museum Frankfurt. He studied history, German language and philosophy at the Albert-Ludwigs-University of Freiburg and the University of Durham. In 1984 he received his doctorate in Freiburg on the memorial tradition of the Anglo-Saxons. Between 1985 and 1990 Gerchow worked at the Freiburg Chair of Medieval History I, as a research assistant. In 1990 he moved to the Max Planck Institute for History in Göttingen , where he served until 1993 as a research consultant. In 1993 he took the position as head of the Department of History of the Middle Ages and the early modern period on Ruhrlandmuseum, Essen. Since April 2005 Gerchow is director of the Historical Museum of the City of Frankfurt.

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Marie-Paule Jungblut is a Luxembourg historian, philologist. She studied History and German literature at the University of Luxemburg and at the University of Göttingen. From 2004 to 2011 she was chair of the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Archaeology and History (ICMAH) and of the International Association of Museums of

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Jack Lohman

Jack Lohman, is an educator and museum administrator. He is Professor of Museum Design and Communication at the Bergen National Academy of the Arts in Norway (since 1997) and Chairman of the National Museum in Warsaw, Poland (since 2008). He is Editor in Chief of UNESCO's Museums and Diversity publications series and a member of the International Advisory Board of the National Institute of Museums in Rwanda. He has been Chief Executive Officer of the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria since 26 March 2012. Lohman is a former Chairman of the International Council of Museums UK (2002-2008) and a former member of the UK National Commission for UNESCO Culture Committee (2002-2010). In 2000 he was appointed the Chief Executive Officer of Iziko Museums of Cape Town, South Africa, an organization consisting of fifteen national museums including the South African Museum, the South African Maritime Museum and the South African National Gallery where he led the creation of a new museum institution and the transformation of the national museum sector. Before taking up his present appointment, Jack Lohman had been Director of the Museum of London since August 2002, and was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the Queen's 2012 Birthday Honours for his work at the Museum of London.

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She also worked at the German Historical Museum Berlin (exhibition „Migrationen 1500-2005. Zuwanderungsland Deutschland", 2005/2006), and at the Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn; as well as at European University Viadrina, Frankfurt/Oder, and at the Social Science Research Center Berlin. Main themes of her publications are Migration, Integration, Diversity, Inclusive Museum.

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Elena Montanari is architect and Ph.D. in Interior Architecture and Exhibition Design. She graduated from Politecnico di Milano, where she is currently Temporary Professor of Interior Design at the School of Architecture and Society, and Research Fellow at the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DAStU). Since 2005, she has been collaborating to didactic activities and contributing to various national and international research projects, developing a versatile, multi-scaled and interdisciplinary approach to the investigation of different fields.

MeLa* - European Museums in an age of migrations

Research Fields:

RF01: Museums & Identity in History and Contemporaneity
examines the historical and contemporary relationships between museums, places and identities in Europe and the effects of migrations on museum practices.

RF02: Cultural Memory, Migrating Modernity and Museum Practices
transforms the question of memory into an unfolding cultural and historical problematic, in order to promote new critical and practical perspectives.

RF03: Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions
investigates coordination strategies between museums, libraries and public cultural institutions in relation to European cultural and scientific heritage, migration and integration.

RF04: Curatorial and Artistic Research
explores the work of artists and curators on and with issues of migration, as well as the role of museums and galleries exhibiting this work and disseminating knowledge.

RF05: Exhibition Design, Technology of Representation and Experimental Actions
investigates and experiments innovative communication tools, ICT potentialities, user centred approaches, and the role of architecture and design for the contemporary museum.

RF06: Envisioning 21st Century Museums
fosters theoretical, methodological and operative contributions to the interpretation of diversities and commonalities within European cultural heritage, and proposes enhanced practices for the mission and design of museums in the contemporary multicultural society.

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EUROPEAN MUSEUMS IN THE 21ST CENTURY: SETTING THE FRAMEWORK

This book grew out of the earliest work of the MeLa Research Field 6, "Envisioning 21st Century Museums," aimed at exploring current trends in European contemporary museums. Analysing their ongoing evolution triggered by this "age of migrations" and with specific attention to their architecture and exhibition design, the volume collects the preliminary observations ensuing from this survey, complemented by the some paradigmatic examples, and further enriched by interviews and contributions from scholars, curators and museum practitioners.

With contributions by Florence Baläen, Michela Bassanelli, Luca Basso Peressut, Joachim Baur, Lorraine Bluche, Marco Borsotti, Mariella Brenna, Anna Chiara Cimoli, Lars De Jaegher, Maria Camilla De Palma, Hugues De Varine, Maria De Waele, Nélia Dias, Simone Eick, Fabienne Galangau Quérat, Sarah Gamaire, Jan Gerchow, Marc-Olivier Gonset, Klas Grinell, Laurence Isnard, Marie-Paule Jungblut, Galitt Kenan, Francesca Lanz, José María Lanzarote Guiral, Vito Lattanzi, Jack Lohman, Carolina Martinelli, Frauke Miera, Elena Montanari, Chantal Mouffe, Judith Pargamin, Giovanni Pinna, Camilla Pagani, Clelia Pozzi, Paolo Rosa, Anna Seiderer.

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MeLa–European Museums in an age of migrations