



„Le musée est mort? Vive le musée!” Educational Museum of the New Bulgarian University (NBU), Museum Network in Bulgaria and Museum Information System (MIS) Project¹
<http://museum.nbu.bg/>

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1. Concept

Educational Museum of the NBU, Museum Network in Bulgaria and Museum Information System (MIS) are created according to the project „**LE MUSEE EST MORT? VIVE LE MUSEE!**”, funded by ‘**Scientific Research**’ Fund of the program „STUDY ON NATIONAL HISTORIC AND CULTURE LEGACY AS A PART OF EUROPEAN CULTURE HERITAGE AND ADVANCED METHODS FOR PRESERVING” during the period 2007-2010.

Educational Museum of the NBU was founded in April 2010. In its framework the following model has been developed and tested: ‘cultural heritage preservation, documentation, research and exhibition through education’. It is not a traditional historical or an art museum, although it performs all activities inherent to the museum - stock, research, exhibition and information. It is primarily a dynamic and flexible structure, which constantly experiments

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and implements new didactic approaches in the cultural history field as well as modern digital interactive methods. Museum focuses on the communication ideas demand that overcomes museum exhibition informational opacity for recreational visitor. Main driving force in Museum work are temporary ad hoc youth teams that bring together students from various University programs (Cultural studies, Thracology, Archeology, Art, Plastic arts, Photography, Computer design, etc.).²

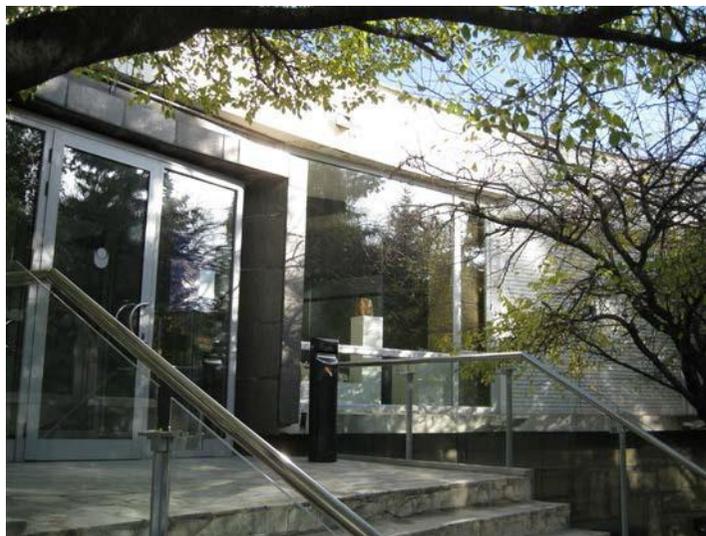


Above all, the Museum is a place to test new ideas in museology and mainly to test the methods of expansion of exhibition communication and information characteristics. Periodic thematic exhibitions (now 13), which are opened twice a year at the NBU Museum, sometimes they are even organized around a single piece and fully implemented by interdisciplinary student teams and they are focused on searching for new innovative exhibition solutions. Their ideological and artistic design is eye-catching for the museum visitors, who is not very well enlightened, but inquisitive, critical and youth, and therefore represents a modern corrective to traditional practice. Thus, in experiments and in a series of mistakes and successes, the Museum reaches to find good solutions, clarification of a new exposure methodology, which in many cases overcomes museum exhibition reticence and incomprehensibility, communicating mostly with the enlightened specialist. Only repeated and enthusiastic experiments of the interdisciplinary teams could break the established stereotypes - a task that NBU sets out in his activity. Simultaneously, students walked the entire complex and highly specialized way from conceptual design, through selection, processing and ensuring the protection of the exhibits to their arrangement and creation as well as publication of informational materials that are accompanying the exhibition. Now, 13 teams of students created their museum work, but the next generation will continue to educate in cultural memory values, respect and storage. Regardless of their social activity and situation in the future, they will carry a need to interact with art and cultural monuments.

² Logos courtesy Ivan Andres Saavedra, 2009



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All photographs courtesy Museum of the NBU, Dimo Georgiev

Museum network in Bulgaria is the first systematic collective step to put education as a museum work priority. It is a scientific information infrastructure that establishes scientific and educational ideas and products circulation.

Museum network organized and held a number of joint initiatives and target education activities. New forms are tested for learning in Culture studies and Art subjects: such as an external thematic training in museum, a system of individual practices to work in museum regarding preparation of Master and PhD these, combined scientific advices prepared by teacher and museum worker, selection of education collections for Museum funds, special thematic museum educational programs have been created targeting different social and age groups. Museum network members actively cooperate in the exhibition, which includes exhibits exchange, organization of temporary and travelling exhibitions within the museum network, joint thematic exhibitions organization (3). Valuable exhibits provided by museums to the Museum network regularly visit the exhibitions of the Educational Museum of the NBU.

Museum network operates through Museum information system which acts as data bearer and distributor of museum life: excavation, scientific forums, museum events, new finds and revenues, publications and editions.



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1. Reception

Main target group of the project are students of Humanities, Plastic Arts, Communications and Computing, but also the entire university community and civic community. In the exhibitions preparation (now 13) many student teams are involved in all stages: from the exhibition realization: exhibition concept creation, selection of exhibits and exhibition design, development and elaboration of models as well as creation of original works regarding exhibition topic to electronic materials preparation and print (photos, posters, catalogs, invitations), including participation and work with visitors (guardians and guides) and the media (interviews and announcements). Museum activity targets greater applicability of knowledge and practical skills acquisition in the work with artifacts even during training. It was here that students become familiar with the technology, iconography and style of the monuments of ancient culture and works of contemporary art. Here they acquire knowledge and skills in museum work, exhibitions organization and arrangement, as well as their media promotion. Here they are very close to the ancient culture in our land.

2. Design

Thematic exhibitions of the Educational Museum of the NBU always include various historical monuments from all eras. As a rule, the main theme is developed through three parallel texts: the ancient artifacts, works of famous Bulgarian painters, sculptures and photographs. Different approaches in the arrangement of text: opposition, supplement and illustration. Good results were achieved when according to designs of student's teams, models, collages, music, computer and video impressions have been created. There is an information environment that allows original exhibits understanding and deeper interpretation.



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3. Visitors Approach - Activation/Participation

Exhibition experimental nature, their periodic changes are the reasons for the increasing attendance at museums and the increasing number of students of different disciplines who wish to join the teams. In the showroom younger visitors often discuss, give ideas and participate as volunteers in museum activities.

4. Conclusion: NBU Museum in respect to the COP1 and COP2

Toolkit 1: Museum exhibitions are a good example of cultural heritage understanding, interpretation and reinterpretation through parallel visual and audio texts introduction - COP1

Toolkit 2: It enables young people to activate their role and thus learn more about the national cultural heritage and its regional and European dimensions - COP1

Toolkit 3: University students are not only the audience, they are designers and artists in all museum work stages - COP2

Toolkit 4: Museum became a place for creativity for students - COP2



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