



## **‘Typically Landsberg!’, City museum Landsberg am Lech**

**Partner 1: University of Augsburg, Germany (Coordinator) > Susanne Popp**

### 1.Exhibition Concept

The *Neues Stadtmuseum Landsberg* has implemented its first user-generated exhibition by realising *Typisch Landsberg* in Landsberg/ Lech from November 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 till January 31<sup>st</sup> 2013. Frameworking the cities 850<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the museum initiated this exhibition, consisting of three projects, each set up with the participation of the Landsberg’s citizens.

1. Faces of our city: Young people took photos of the ‘faces of our city’ at the city festival, using the ‘youth-medium’ mobile phone. In a next step, the photos taken had been processed into a 6 metre wide picture of the city-skyline, which in turn represented the start of the exhibition. In addition, the citizens had the opportunity to see each picture separately in a slide show.
2. The second project of the exhibition made up the main part: Prior to the exhibition, the citizens of Landsberg/ Lech had been asked to hand in private items, being typical for the city and a personal story, associated with them.
3. The third project was realised in schools. According to the slogan ‘My Landsberg’ pupils portrayed their own specific view of Landsberg by using art (collages, photo work, movies, etc. ...). The outcome was presented in the project’s final exhibition.

# I.

## »Projekt 2 1/7« Gesichter unserer Stadt

Wolfgang Hauck (Photokünstler)  
Sonia Fischer (Leiterin Städtische Museen)



# II.

## »Typisch Landsberg!«

Sonia Fischer,  
Leiterin Städtische Museen



# III.

## Beiträge der Schulklassen

Eva Schatz, Referatsleitung Presse,  
Marketing, Internet der Stadt Landsberg



1-3: Pages of the catalogue 'Typically Landsberg' © Neues Stadtmuseum Landsberg am Lech

## 2. The centre of the exhibition: *Typisch Landsberg*

In total, 35 items of the citizens of Landsberg/ Lech have been displayed during the main part of the exhibition, each containing personal information on why this item is 'typical' of Landsberg. Taking this into consideration, it is noticeable that the majority of these items represented sports and association's work (including music). Sonia Fischer associates this with their voluntary work to be an important participatory force regarding the city's social community.<sup>1</sup> Items, which can be related to buildings of the city (cobble stones, nails, etc.) or had rather been part of the individual family's history, which in turn have been closely connected to the city, were also more frequent. Moreover, the exhibition provides access to a number of everyday objects, where it is only possible to relate them with Landsberg/ Lech due to their owner's statement – thus corresponding with the concept.



4-6: Objects handed in for the exhibition 'Typical Landsberg': Hamper, boxing gloves, cobblestone © Neues Stadtmuseum Landsberg am Lech

<sup>1</sup> Fischer S. (2012), *Typisch Landsberg! Eine Bürgerausstellung*, Landsberg am Lech: Neues Stadtmuseum, 16.

### 3. Conclusion: temporary exhibition 'Typically Landsberg', City museum Landsberg

Especially with regard to the Change of Perspective between experts and visitors addressed in COP 2, the exhibition in Landsberg/ Lech is gaining more interest. In cases of user-generated exhibitions, visitors themselves supply museums with visions regarding the concept of the exhibition and develop ideas about the respective section's definite content. Additionally, the curator of the exhibition is rather trying to put the visitors' ideas into practice than pursuing his position as the museum's expert.

The intended aim of Landsberg's exhibition was to increase the citizen's participation at their city's anniversary and to give them creative freedom. The philosophy behind this is to strengthen the identification of the citizens with the museum's contents and enable them – in sense of the participative approach – to express and articulate their personal feelings, connected to the museum.

Therefore, the three projects of the exhibition can be regarded as best practice and stimulants for participative museum's work (Toolkit 3). However, Sonia Fischer, who was in charge of the Landsberg exhibition, has stated some further thoughts concerning user-generated exhibitions in the exhibition catalogue:

1. The fact, which has to be taken into consideration is, that the request for items, although repeatedly mentioned by local media, has not been a great success in the beginning<sup>2</sup>. Even though a number of items had finally been handed in, this example points out that user-generated exhibitions are not an immediate success. In fact, this form of exhibition requires close contact to the possible target group already in the run-up and has to be intensively promoted. Finally, only a small fraction, regarding the number of inhabitants, participated at Landsberg's exhibition (about 0.1 per cent)<sup>3</sup>.

2. Dealing with 'user-generated' exhibitions, the items displayed represent an interesting selection, reflecting the personal view of the respective citizen. Especially the individual stories, connected to the items contain personal experiences and thus cannot be granted to have universal validity. Consequently, the visitor is not seeing an exhibition carefully realised by an expert, and can therefore not raise the claim, that the exhibition has to cover many aspects of the topic. Yet, that makes the charm of this kind of exhibition, the museum's visitors have to be actively referred to this issue.

3. Looking at the preceding note, finally, the particular difficulty of this kind of user-generated exhibitions becomes more obvious: Sonia Fischer emphasises, that the objects and the personal views on the objects do not contain any negatively connoted memories.<sup>4</sup> It is definitely in compliance with the human psyche, not to keep items related to bad experiences. However, as a consequence of this, there are several items missing, e.g. referring to the city's past during the Nazi era. According to this we can take one important aspect into consideration especially with regard to the further development of ideas within the EMEE project

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<sup>2</sup> Fischer S. (2012), *Typisch Landsberg! Eine Bürgerausstellung*, Landsberg am Lech: Neues Stadtmuseum, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Fischer S. (2012), *Typisch Landsberg! Eine Bürgerausstellung*, Landsberg am Lech: Neues Stadtmuseum, 18.

<sup>4</sup> Fischer, S. (2012), *Typisch Landsberg! Eine Bürgerausstellung*, Landsberg am Lech: Neues Stadtmuseum, 18.

(Toolkit 3): Museum experts still play an important role at this kind of user-generated exhibitions. For example they could implement additional platforms into the exhibition, which are not connected to the user-generated content. With the help of those, museum experts can emphasise on gaps in the collective memory, which can in turn be discussed and evaluated by the exhibition's visitors.

#### 4. Bibliography

Fischer S. (2012), *Typisch Landsberg! Eine Bürgerausstellung*, Landsberg am Lech: Neues Stadtmuseum.

<http://stadtmuseum-landsberg.byseum.de/de/museen/neues-stadtmuseum>.