

Cooperation between Museums and Galleries for Achieve a Complex Teaching about Architecture

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Abstract

Architecture as a phenomenon plays an essential role in the complex and life-long learning of man. As a subject of study, it links the natural, technical and human sciences with art. Interdisciplinarity also takes an integral part in the field of education, which we call informal or leisure time learning. The meeting with architecture in the framework of school education is still most often done in the form of sightseeing excursions to architectural monuments and exhibitions. In this sense, it is just a museum-type organization that has a longtime central position in educating about the architecture and its associated topics. Between years 2011 and 2015, four family villas were open to the public in the city of Brno. These buildings represent outstanding works in the area of private family housing, in the period of modern times and Art Nouveau to the interwar avant-garde. The cooperation between these institutions in creating the educational offer for schools could represent a new dimension in familiarizing students with important aspects of cultural and social life in the early 20th century with the overlaps to present days.

Keywords

Architecture, history, educational programmes, house museums, mutual co-operation, school education.

The following contribution will focus on the potential of gallery education in house-museums, to support complex teaching in schools. In its diversity and overlaps to everyday-life experience, the architecture represents the ideal cross-cutting issue. Not only in education for children and adolescents but also for lifelong learning in general. As a constant measuring tool of the civilization's standards, it is a representative of our cultural heritage, spiritual heritage, emotional and social life.

As a product of civilization, architecture is a phenomenon firmly linked to the existence and action of humankind. The human being, by its nature, strives to find a user-friendly and aesthetically pleasing environment. The material, spatial and visual perception defines the physical aspect, the psychical element is experienced primarily by feelings. Sensory perception and sensitivity to space are the essential life experiences. We are surrounded by some "area" always and everywhere. Architecture, urbanism, spatial planning, interiors, and design give the form and shape to all our environment, in everyday life. All of this is the primal expression of our culture. In spite of this, we often perceive them only subconsciously and consider them to be self-evident.

The importance of architecture for education is accented especially in the context of its overlaps into many spheres of practical life. This potential should be exploited and promoted so that it becomes a standard part of general education. Currently, many initiatives of professionals appear, which are supporting architecture education from the earliest age. But we can also still perceive, how the formal school education represents more isolated aspects with no mutual consequences.

It could take a long time to summarize the importance of architectural themes concerning the development of human physical and psychological ontogenesis. For example, the question of spatial perception and the movement, motoric skill. The spatial feeling is continuously shaping. Children naturally deserve the space that they can use, transform and develop. That is a reason because the construction of tree houses, sand castles or other works made from many available materials still belongs to the elementary needs and interests of children.

However, I would like to present this topic by the view of the gallery educator in a house-museum. Concretely, over the hundred years old family house built by the famous local architect for himself. The issue of a private family housing proposes plenty of useful questions, as a choice of the living environment and its ongoing cultivation, or manifestation of personal taste influenced by the style and trends, place and time. It's also closely related to the urban development, conditioned by growing industry and economy, demographic composition, social structures, personal or family ties. All of this offer a wide range of opportunities for interconnecting information. Education "on-site" also provides an excellent meeting space to communicate across study disciplines and professions. During ten recent years, four famous villas were successively open to the public as „house-museums“ in the city of Brno. Each of these historical monuments represents the specific model of „ideal“ family building at the beginning of the 20th century (from art nouveau to functionalism). Each building belongs to the different museum institution and has its special educational offer providing a unique cross-over between the school education subjects (history, social sciences, literature, art and music education, geography). By the previous attempts to closer cooperation in pro-active promotion between the object the vital question arose. What could bring a combined supply of educational services for schools? This question led to the idea of the thematically freely-related educational block „tour around four villas" designed for the second grade of elementary schools and high schools. The aim is to give pupils a comprehensive view of cultural and social life at the beginning of the 20th century

through architecture. The first step is always the mutual acquaintance of educators and lecturers with the detailed content and focus of their educational programs. Through a joint project, we can present and explain the local history through individual tales and destinies taking place within the "great" entire world.

The educational trail between villas starts at Villa Lów-Beer, mapping the times of transformation of Brno into the modern metropolis. It reflects the close cultural connection to Vienna, existence of large circle of German-speaking community or the highly developed local tradition of the textile industry. Textile production is connected with a massive population influx but also with a rise of rich Jewish family enterprises. It reflects the essential moments in the formation of contemporary urban infrastructure, like the demolition of the old city walls, construction of the web of luxury boulevards, parks, and first suburban residential colonies. The progressive architectural style of Viennese modernity (Otto Wagner's School) influenced for example architect Dušan Jurkovič, who combined it with the elements of local folk architecture (his own family house included) and laid the foundation for a so-called "national style" after the first world war. Gradually, the decor of the facades disappeared under the influence of purism. The most famous building boom in the city took place in the inter-war period, with the emergence of independent Czechoslovakia. Brno became the administrative center of Moravia and the seat of many new political and economic institutions. Interwar Brno became the showcase of current architectural trends. Villa Stiassni belongs between the iconic buildings representing this period. There was a growing sympathy for the avant-garde, which organized lectures, attended by famous personalities like Le Corbusier, Pieter Oud, Theo van Doesburg, or Walter Gropius. The ultimate symbol of modern luxury living became Vila Tugendhat designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. The tragical destiny of Jewish families completes the historical frame of our architectonic excursion trail for schools, during which students should acquire a fair and inclusive notion about the lifestyle, taste, social structure and diversity of the local environment during the first decades of

the last century. Whatever this project could be beneficial for effective collaboration between formal and non-formal education system, its successful implementation lays not only on the close cooperation between lecturers but it mainly on the willingness of the leading management and marketing representatives.

References

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