



# THE SOCIAL ROLE OF MUSEUMS

Art Museums as Spaces for Cultural Exchange

PROJECT: MUSEUMS FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGE

M4CE

DARIA CRISU

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DARIA CRISU

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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**CE** – Cultural Exchange

**DPICC** - Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Co-operation

**EU** – European Union

**ICOM** – International Council of Museums

**ICOMOS** – International Council of Monuments and Sights

**MAP for ID** – Museums as Places for Intercultural Dialogue

**M4CE** – Museums for Cultural Exchange

**MNAC** – National Museum of Art of Catalunya

**MUVA** – Museo Virtual de Artes el País

**NGO** – Non Governmental Organisations

**UDCD** – Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity

**UDHR** – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

**UN** – United Nations

**UNESCO** – The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**Key Concepts:** museum education, cultural exchange, international oriented programmes and activities for school visits, secondary school visits to museum, international partnership

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## ABSTRACT

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With the purpose of considering art museums as spaces for cultural exchange, in this project analysis I examine the potential role that art museums<sup>1</sup> could play in creating awareness about cultural heritage<sup>2</sup> at an international level by means of promoting educational programmes of cultural exchange. Due to the diversified structure of museum visitors, which ranges from different social and age groups, including tourists, I will only focus on educational programmes of cultural exchange for secondary school pupils. The reason for choosing this specific target group has to do with the active involvement of museums in creating educational programmes intended for school visits.

Although there are numerous pedagogic activities especially designed for this target group, what attracted my attention about these educational programmes was their great emphasis on educating pupils about local heritage, such as museums history and collection, without whatsoever offering pupils an insight into artistic collections of international museums and artworks exhibitions abroad. For this reason, the purpose of this project is to offer a broader approach to museum education, one that offers on the one hand, an insight not only into the local or national heritage but also into the international platform of the visual arts, and on the other hand, actively involves pupils in learning and appreciating the cultural vastness of the visual arts.

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<sup>1</sup> Museum(s) – in this project I generally refer to art museums

<sup>2</sup> Cultural Heritage – in this project cultural heritage or heritage is referred to the visual arts

As such, I take a look at current trends<sup>3</sup> in museum education with the purpose of establishing the existing position of cultural exchange programmes and the way(s) through which museums can participate and get involved in these programmes. What kinds of activities are taking place? Are museums collaborating at an international level in creating activities that promote cultural exchange?

I do not aim at making a critical review of museum's participation in cultural exchange programmes, but rather an analysis and indicate the advantages of the cooperation and partnership between museums as spaces for cultural exchange at an international level in order to determine the possible benefits that these programmes can bring to the educational field of museums as well as to the pupils involved in such activities. I will discuss some of the fundamental issues and significant changes in the museum world and centre on the participation of museums in educating and creating awareness about local and international heritage.


With this purpose in mind, I have developed and put into practice an educational programme of cultural exchange named Museums 4 Cultural Exchange (M4CE<sup>4</sup>), which is intended to serve as a concrete example for the practical realisation of such programmes. The project contains various activities created with the intention of bringing art museums closer to children, make them learn about local and international heritage and transform museums into spaces for cultural exchange. The project took place in the Netherlands (Maastricht, Limburg) and Spain (Barcelona, Catalunya) and it involved the participation of museums and secondary schools from both countries.

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<sup>3</sup> The data presented throughout this project reflects the trends of museum education in The Netherlands and Spain

<sup>4</sup> M4CE – Educational project Museums 4 Cultural Exchange - more information can be found of the Web Blog of the project: [www.wearart.nl](http://www.wearart.nl)





This project serves as a case study through which I examine the possible role that art museums could play when acting as spaces for cultural exchange and consequently establish the benefits between the collaboration of educational institutions and museums from different cultural regions as a means of realising projects that are intended for children who are to acquire knowledge through art and become aware of their cultural inheritance at a local and international level.

Before outlining the topics under discussion in the chapters to follow, I first want to explain what is meant by an activity of cultural exchange. For the purpose of this project, cultural exchange in museums refers to the activities available in museums with the intention of teaching pupils or making them aware, apart from a museum's own collection, about artistic diversity, international heritage and artistic exhibitions available in museums from abroad. Cultural exchange activities are considered to be the type of activities that develop in collaboration with other museums or around exhibitions of international collection exchange.

# INTRODUCTION

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Even though different and effective in their practice, educational programmes in art museums mainly focus on personal museum collections without further introduction to international art museum exhibitions. As such, in this project analysis we will further touch upon this subject and examine the possible advantages and benefits for the practical realisation of cultural exchange programmes in art museums intended for secondary school visits.

This project analysis is divided into four main chapters in which I touch upon several themes related to museum education and cultural exchange.

In the first chapter, *The Social Role of the Museum*, I discuss about the transformation of art museums from being private collections and socially exclusive spaces in becoming public spaces for information and learning. As Professor Eilean Hooper Greenhill maintains, this transformation meant that museums have had to “[...] renew their philosophies and practices and with it undertake a more central social role” (Greenhill, 2007, p.2). Hence, I want to further investigate into this central social role of the art museum and see whether museums can play as well a central role in creating cultural awareness through cultural exchange programmes.

In the second chapter, *The Educational Role of the Museum*, I discuss about the pedagogical function of the museum and look at current educational trends in order to make an impression about the educational role of museums. In this chapter I analyse as well various educational programmes and activities that are taking place in various Dutch and Spanish museums. For the purpose of this analysis I have made a selection of twenty relevant museums (ten museums in The Netherlands and ten museums in Spain) from both countries and researched their websites and online brochures for activities designed for secondary school visits. Through this analysis I want to find out whether

museums offer international oriented activities and how many museums engage in these types of activities.

The third chapter, entitled Cultural Exchange in Museums, revises the need for cultural exchange activities in art museums. Having as starting point the fact that in the past decade heritage education in an intercultural perspective has become a prominent subject in European political agendas receiving great support from such organisations as the ICOM, UNESCO, Council of Europe, and so forth, I rise the questions Why is it that only recently museums have started to give importance to this subject matter? Can museums play a more significant role in the future? In this chapter I take a look as well at schools preferences and interests in arts and cultural education and activities that take place in museums and introduce pupils into the cultural field and the visual arts.

In the forth chapter Museums 4 Cultural Exchange – Project Evaluation, I discuss about the M4CE project which has been developed as a case study for the practical realisation of cultural exchange activities in art museums. The project involved the participation of both museums and schools from The Netherlands and Spain, namely, Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht, Picasso Museum Barcelona, Montessori Basisschool Roermond and the IES Barres i Ones from Badalona, and consisted of five main activities that took place in the museum and at school and involved the active participation of more than 40 pupils from both schools. Furthermore, in this chapter I make as well an analysis of the final results from the practical realisation of the M4CE project. The project evaluation is based on a tree folded evaluation framework which consists in evaluating the performance of the project, experience of the audience members and finally the function of the project at the societal level.

The subjects discussed in each chapter build upon each other and analyse on the one hand, the current role of the art museum, and on the other hand, the existing social and cultural conditions as to determine the importance and urgency for museums to function as spaces for cultural exchange and develop as such activities for school visits through which pupils can learn about the artistic heritage available inside as well as outside the national borders.

# CHAPTER I

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## The Social Role of the Museum

### An Historical Overview

Before proceeding to discuss about the central social role of museums and their possible role in creating cultural awareness through cultural exchange programmes, an historical overview of the art museum will be necessary as any account of the social and cultural role of museums must include an account of the museum's formation due to the fact that throughout history the function of museums has been shaped and modelled according to the needs and circumstances of each epoch. As museums have been around for at least six centuries and dispose of a vast and rich historical legacy, an extensive historical overview is unlikely to be feasible here, therefore I will only refer to the formation of the art museum and emphasise on its social and cultural function.

The first European museum and collecting practices date back to the fifteenth-century Florence with the construction of the Medici Palace that emerged from the desire of the Medici Family to emphasise their dominant position in Florence. Though considered to be the 'first private art museum'<sup>5</sup> the Medici Palace was constituted for the sole benefit of the family, and the display of their wealthy possessions used as a means of positioning the family to a status of superiority and prestige within the city population. (Greenhill, 1992, p.23-77)

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<sup>5</sup> "The house (Medici Palace) was in reality the first museum of Europe and, so far as the art of Italy and Flanders of the fifteenth century is concerned, has never been equally since, nor can it be again" (Taylor, 1948, p.69)

By the “end of the sixteenth century collections and “museums” became fairly commonplace in Europe”. The main objective of these museums being that of “producing a cabinet”, a model of universal nature made private” (Greenhill, p.78). The German Wunderkammer or cabinet of curiosities, which can be described as a “heterogeneous collection of treasures, curiosities, and gifts of natural and artificial origin kept for their individual values”, functioned as a kind of universal cabinet whose collection of objects, if brought together and organised in a specific way, could represent a complete or partial understanding of the world. These cabinets of curiosities were meant for the enlightenment of the elite and celebrated the taste and refinement of those in power. (Hein, 2000, p.19)

If compared, these early museums can be characterised as private collections for the enlightenment and enjoyment of the elite, constituted as socially exclusive spaces they gave place to a new form of power and social dominance by means of collecting and exhibiting expensive goods and cultural artefacts.

In difference to these early museums, during the seventeenth and beginnings of the eighteenth century museums gradually transformed and included a certain interest in the public. During this period, museum visits were regarded as a privilege and visitors were demanded to show gratitude and admiration for the exhibitions while discouraged to show any type of criticism<sup>6</sup>. It was not till the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century that museums acquired their modern form as public institutions, with the purpose of collecting, preserving, researching and exhibiting materials of cultural and historical importance as a means of “educating” the public. One of these first public museums being the Louvre museum in Paris. In his book *Civilising Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*, Carol Duncan explains that the Louvre museum which was once the place of the kings, became a public space by the end of the eighteenth century when it was: “[...] reorganised as a museum for the people and open free of charge [...] the transformation of the “Louvre” into a public space accessible to everyone made the museum [...] a kind of public ceremonial

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<sup>6</sup> Hudson, K. (1975). *A Social History of Museums: What the Visitors Thought*. Macmillan Press. London.

space, the Louvre not only redefined the political identity of its visitors it also assigned new meaning to the objects it displayed". (Duncan, 1995, p.24)

I refer here to the Louvre museum not only because its transformation into a public art museum marked the end of an era and the beginning of the future of the museum but also because it acted as a transition point between the "decadence and tyranny of the ancient régime and the democracy and utility of the new, the Republic" (Bennett, 1995, p.89), due to its social and cultural relevance. On one hand, the museum served as a public space for diversion and entertainment, and on the other hand, it was used to redefine the visitor whom "was no longer the subordinate to a prince or lord" but "a citizen and therefore a shareholder in the state" (Duncan & Wallach, 1980, p.456). Therefore, the social role of the museum during this period can be described as that of a "utilitarian instrument for democratic education" (Nochlin, 1972, p.8).

During the later half of the nineteenth century museums undertook a drastic turn in their social and cultural function. Although there is a common criticism about their role during this period, as museums were considered to be "torn between their educational goals and a more elitist, exclusive tradition", the social changes that were put forward by a rapid industrialisation, a growth of the population in the cities and the responsibilities that governments took for offering social services and education for the masses, transformed the museum into a "type of institution that could educate and help people to better themselves and appreciate the value of modern life" (Hein, 1998, p.4-5). As Professor George E. Hein points out: "Museum exhibitions [...] were mounted in support of public campaigns for health education; to show off magnificent developments in industry or advances in technology; or to exhibit curiosities, marvels or wonders for public entertainment." (Hein, 1998, p.4)


As such, by the end of the nineteenth century, museums were recognised as competent institutions able to educate the population and influence the public manners as to generate a more cultivated and socially aware population.

What is important to consider at this point is that a closer look to the social role of the museum proves that it mainly functioned as a malleable instrument adaptable to each given situation, such as, maintaining or emphasising a certain social status, creating a level of superiority above the rest of the population, accentuating an equalitarian society, or constructing a certain social model by means of educating the public, malleable functions still preserved in contemporary art museums as they adapt and change according to the needs and necessities of society.

## The Contemporary Art Museum

Similarly to earlier museums, contemporary art museums continue to adapt their role to the changing situations of our modern society, as Hooper Greenhill remarks, "at the beginning of the twenty-first century, museums are re-orientating themselves through imagining afresh what they can become; familiar practices are being reassessed and tried philosophies are being overturned" (2007, p.1). The question to be asked at this point is What are the social and cultural functions of the contemporary art museum? According to the ICOM Statutes, adopted in 2007 during the General Conference in Vienna, Austria, the museum is considered by the international community as: "[...] a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment." (ICOM, 2007)

The rules related to the mission and ethics of museums emphasise the context in which they are placed, in this case, we can see that museums are "non-profit making", in the "service of society and its development", and "open to the public" with the "purpose of education, study and enjoyment". Indeed these functions appear to be revolutionary if compared with earlier museum features, what changes now is that their social dimension is much more accentuated.



Given these characteristics of the contemporary museum, for the purpose of this project I will only call attention to two of them which in my opinion involve the museum's public, namely, the function of the museums as an institution for the service of society and its development and its purpose of education, study and enjoyment. In the next lines however, I will only discuss about the function of the museum as an institution for the service of society and its development leaving to elaborate later on about the second function of education, study and entertainment. From this last function I will select and emphasise more specifically on the educational purpose of the museum, function which will become my main concern in the next chapter in which I consider the Educational Role of the Museum.

By taking into account the previously mentioned characteristics of the contemporary art museum, we can understand that museums should actually become an integral part of the societies and cultural systems of the different countries and regions around them, and consequently, elaborate educational programmes able of representing the cultural and artistic value of all people in the global village, but are museums doing that?

## Museums in the Service of Society and its Development

Let us first consider the function of the museum as an institution for the "service of society and its development" and look at the current condition of our modern society as to determine whether museums succeed in adapting to these conditions. Although there are many factors contributing to the shaping of our modern society, there are none more significant than globalisation and multiculturalism, which, to some extent, influence and determine the educational and social responsibilities of contemporary art museums.




## Globalisation and the Museum

The advancement of technology and communication which has occurred during the past decades has brought the world into a state of globalisation that is affecting all aspects of our modern life. This global phenomenon has led to a “social fragmentation” that is not only affecting individuals who are experiencing a “growth of inequality and social exclusion” but also cultures which despite of being integrated in the global community tend to mostly focus on personal identity and own heritage. In this respect the Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells argues that “few people in the world feel identified with the global, cosmopolitan culture that populates the global networks [...] in contrast most people feel a strong regional or local identity” (2009, p.xxxiv). These circumstances being defined by Castells as the collectivist Net and the individualistic Self or the Net and the Self, theory in which Castells argues that “our societies are increasingly structured around a bipolar opposition between the Net and the Self” (p.3), the Net being the network organisations that have been established as the principal form of socialisation and consequently influence and shape the cultural environment, and the Self being the individual as such, in search of reaffirming his/her social identity and meaning in a rapidly changing cultural surrounding. The optimal condition between the Net and the Self being a twofold relationship in which one participates in the other and vice versa. Arguing about this subject matter Castells defines the consequences in the case the Self is excluded from the Net:

“When the Net switches off the Self, the self, individual or collective, constructs its meaning without global, instrumental reference: the process of disconnection becomes reciprocal, following the refusal by the excluded of the one-sided logic of structural domination and social exclusion”

(Castells, 2009, p.24)

As such, individuals and cultures are faced with two options, on the one hand, be part of the large global society as a whole or at some extent, or on the other hand, ignore its relevance and risk being socially excluded.



In the midst of this global situation, and as a means of integrating individuals (Self) in the global platform of the visual arts (Net), museums have had to reach beyond their walls and national boundaries and expose their audiences to a broader overview of artistic heritage in order to integrate and blend the local/national identity to the social and cultural identity of the global community.

The critic and curator Hou Hanru asserted in one of his essays that “the question of the global versus the local is now the central issue in artistic and cultural debates. However, the global and the local are not separate entities positioned to fight against each other. Instead, they are two sides of the same coin” (Hanru, 2010, p.381). In this respect, various museums have already engaged in international exhibition programs through which their collections are exchanged and exhibited abroad. An example of such museum internationalisation can be seen in the ever-expanding branches of The Guggenheim museum which in the past years has expanded to seven different countries around the globe. The Guggenheim museum appearing to be the archetype of the universal or global museum, a contemporary Wunderkammer in which the material objects are used as means through which the world is mediated and understood, as such, acting as a significant institution for the global diffusion of artistic objects.

Although nowadays “museums are becoming more centrally involved and connected with the process of globalisation”, various “museums are becoming more strongly influenced and mediated through local and national concerns” (Karp, 2006, p.16). Therefore, despite of being considered a model of global expansion and having a high international profile in the museum scene, it still remains doubtful whether art museums might choose to follow the steps of the Guggenheim museum.

In one of his essays Professor Tony Bennett argues that: “[...] in some respects, museums now seem self-evidently to be parts of more globalised flows of information, people, and ideas [...] It remains the case, however, that public museums are largely, and probably entirely, the administrative creations of national, municipal, or local governments or private organisations [...] More to

the point, perhaps, there are a number of ways in which museums are now arguably less globalised". (Bennett, 2007, p.48)

Bennett refers here to the fact that the mere characteristic of the public museum as being a governmental institution, determines from the beginning its main function, that of fulfilling in the first place its municipal, local or national obligation. Due to their governmental responsibilities, such subjects as the ones under discussion in this project analysis, namely, cultural exchange activities or activities around international exchange of collections are at times placed in a secondary position above other duties that museums have to accomplish, such as, making their collections known and appreciated by the local or national public.

Eventually, the engagement of art museums in cultural exchange or international exchange of collections depends on their capacity to deal, first of all, with the local or national requirements of their governments. As for the development of educational programmes for school visits about international collections which usually tend to be temporarily exhibited, museums are placed in a position in which pupils can only rarely be exposed and take part in activities developed around international exhibitions, as the temporariness of those exhibitions do not always allow the educational staff to plan and execute activities related to the new and transitory collection.

## Multiculturalism and the Museum


Similarly to globalisation, multiculturalism, if not conscious of and appreciated can cause "social exclusion", that is to say, by ignoring and being unaware of the cultural diversity and differences brought about by our multicultural society, individuals can wrongly judge and misinterpret other cultures consequently considering their culture to be superior to others. In this sense Professor Bhikhu Parekh argues that in the case that a wider society: "[...] has an assimilationist trust, or if the dominant culture is overpowering and respects and rewards only those who conform to it, members of other

cultures would lack the capacity, the confidence and the incentive to retain their cultures, leading over time to the withering away of cultural diversity. It is therefore not enough to grant them the formal right to their culture. Society should also create conditions conducive to the exercise of that right". (Parekh, 2006, p.166)

Let us consider for instance the multicultural unit of Europe which is filled with different nations, languages and vast cultural diversities and cultural differences. In fact, the coexistence of different cultural societies as equals in a shared culture is a rather new phenomenon in European history and brings with it various divergences that disrupt the process of integration and cross-cultural understanding in the European context, such as, nationalistic tendencies, failed integration and interaction between different cultural groups, excluded communities, etc. Professor Parekh states that any society that involves several cultures must have a shared culture that can only "[...] grow out of their interaction and should both respect and nurture their diversity and unite them around a common way of life" (2006, p.219).

It can be said that a multicultural common culture still has to be shaped in Europe and I believe that museums as well as schools can play an important role in this process as museum exhibitions and school lessons can offer pupils the chance to get acquainted with and learn about other cultures and their artistic heritage. That is not to say that a multicultural education does not exist at school or at the museum, in fact, multicultural education in schools is considered to be of great importance, not only for children that are to learn how to coop with the multiculturalism of their classroom but also with the different circumstances and situations in life, such as, communication and interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds. As what concern the multicultural education in museums it could be said that the mere plurality of museum collections (belonging to multiple cultures) can teach pupils about multiculturalism and therefore transform school visits to the museum into activities of multicultural education.

When discussing about the educational role of the museum, Greenhill suggests that multicultural education is first of all "[...] a process through



which individuals develop ways of perceiving, evaluating and behaving within cultural systems unlike their own” (Greenhill, p.105). Therefore, a school visit to the museum can in fact help pupils to become aware of the different cultures around them by means of analysing the vast array of artworks available in the museum. But is the simple visit to the museum enough for pupils to appreciate such differences? How are museums participating in teaching and making pupils aware of the multicultural vastness of artistic creations available not only in their own culture or region but also abroad?

In fact, numerous museums are busy designing immigrant integration programmes as a means of helping new citizens to adjust to and learn the traditions and heritage of their adopted countries. For example, the Openluchtmuseum in Arnhem disposes of various activities in which children can learn on the one hand, about old Dutch traditions and ways of living, and on the other hand, about different clothing styles, culinary recipes and traditions of the major immigrant groups in the Netherlands. In difference to the activities offered by such museums as the Openluchtmuseum, art museums tend to focus their educational programmes inside the museum’s collection leaving children with only a small taste and knowledge about the artistic heritage of other cultures and art exhibitions in museums from abroad.

In the next chapter I will further discuss about the educational role of the museum and consequently make an analysis of current activities available in Dutch and Spanish museums. The intention behind this analysis is that of researching whether museums offer activities through which pupils have the opportunity to learn and get acquainted apart from the local heritage, with the heritage available at an international level.


## CHAPTER II

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### The Educational Role of the Museum

As we have seen, museum education has been around since the creation of the public museum. As professor Hein explains, the public museum as understood today, namely, an institution in which objects are “displayed for the edification and the entertainment of the public”, is in fact, “a product of the eighteenth century, with a major expansion of museums into significant public institutions occurring in the nineteenth century” (1998, p.3). In the previous chapter we have seen that earlier museums were primarily used for the personal enlightenment of the elite, public access to these museums being limited and at times even dismissed. It was not till the later half of the nineteenth century and due to the rapid industrialisation and population growth that museums started to place their attention on education and the public. The educational practices developed during that period of time (lectures, didactic labels, special courses, public events, educational exhibitions and programmes for school visits) being still in use even in today’s museum education, of course, the purpose and approach behind such practices being radically transformed and adapted to present needs and requirements.

Nowadays, museum education has become a discipline in itself, and as such, a significant element rarely absent from museum curriculums. Due to the challenges brought forward by new “policy initiatives and ideas about culture and society”, museum education has become a field of constant evaluation and renewal, in which, educational purposes and pedagogies have been adapted and modified as to improve and transform at the same time the public’s necessities, experiences and learning possibilities in the museum.




Making reference to Zygmunt Bauman's approach of modernity which is understood as an "endless and incomplete processes of modernisation", Eilean Hooper Greenhill considers that nowadays museums have been "[...] subject to innumerable calls to modernise as their purposes and performances have been scrutinised, analysed and critiqued" as such, she suggests that the "post-museum" needs a more "[...] sophisticated understanding of the complex relationship between culture, communication, learning and identity that should support a new approach to museum audiences" (Greenhill, 2007, p.1). The evident search for new understandings of learning and education, as well as the continuous development of new methods and practices, demonstrate not only the malleability and adaptability of the post-museum, but also the constant search of new approaches to museum audiences.

In difference to traditional methods of learning in which the educational process was designed around the "acquisition of knowledge from teacher to learner and implied a high level of concentration and effort", museums are now developing and introducing into museum education new learning styles and theories as to facilitate the learning process of their visitors. Nowadays, learning being understood by educational theorists as: "A process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve increase in or deepening of skills, knowledge, understanding, values, feelings, attitude and the capacity to reflect". (Greenhill, p.32)

As such, learning is not only the acquisition of new knowledge, but also the acquisition of new values, behaviours, attitudes and development of personal identity. Given the influential role that museums have through their exhibitions and collections, the process of learning can be actively shaped through museums. Undoubtedly museums recognise their social and educational position and actively shape and model their educational programmes.

Museum education is of course intended to the entire museum audience and changes in function and intention according to each target group. In terms of educational programmes for school visits, museums offer a wide range of activities that introduce and apply various learning approaches. Some of the




common theories of learning mainly used in museum education are the Learning Style Inventory of David Kolb, the 4MAT System of Bernice McCarthy, the Educational Theory of John Dewey and the Multiple Intelligence of Howard Gardner. The introduction of such theories of learning into the field of museum education has facilitated museums to learn and understand the learning requirements for school visits and consequently plan and execute exhibitions, projects, activities and programmes specially oriented towards the learning necessities of each pupil.

Another relevant approach towards education in museums can be understood in terms of integrating at the same time education and entertainment (edutainment) in museum activities. Professor Greenhill suggests that the term edutainment “implies that education is rarely enjoyable, concerned only with serious intellectual matters, and carried out in formal, self-contained circumstances [...] edutainment, is the bringing together of education and entertainment and the recognition that learning and enjoyment work very well in conjunction with each other” (2007, p.33,34). The concept behind edutainment is that of “bringing together two different concepts which traditionally have been understood as opposing and unlikely to fit together under one teaching method”. The learning process through edutainment is understood by contemporary museums professional as an essential part in everyday life due to the fact that the process of learning occurs at any given time and in difference to traditional belief, enjoyment can contribute to a better learning and understanding of things.

Another approach towards contemporary museum education is the digitalisation of museum collections and the creation of the virtual museum as a means of making the artworks available to a wider public. Digitalisation, a new term in museum terminology, refers to the actions taken by museums as to change their traditional approaches to management, display and museum audience by use of computers and the internet. In the past decade museums have made use of the World Wide Web with the purpose of offering a virtual presentation of their collections to a broad audience around the world. Although virtual exhibitions have been used to attract the audience to visit the museum and get acquainted with the original artwork, some museums choose





to become totally virtual, a good example of such museums being the MUVA museum which was created with the purpose of exhibiting contemporary Uruguayan art due to the lack of unavailable exposition spaces in Uruguay.

The digitalisation of the museum and mainly the virtual museum has been a subject of great debate. On the one hand, numerous experts maintain that the “virtual museum can fulfil many new functions that the traditional media and the museum itself cannot: the virtual museum is accessible 24 hours a day, is interactive, can give detailed information of the museum’s collection and activities and is easy and cheap to maintain” (Noordegraaf, 2004, p.205). While on the other hand, virtual museums as well as the digitalisation of museum collections tend to be considered by professionals as an enhancement of museums, unable to create and/or offer authentic experiences to museum audiences.

Indeed museums have developed new approaches to education and museums audiences. As discussed in previous lines, museums have reach beyond their traditional approaches and changed, if not revolutionised, the conventional understanding of museum education. The introduction of new learning theories and methods of approaching the public have made the museum collections more reachable and available to a greater sector of society that now can enjoy and learn from these collections. Even though museums have adapted to some extent to the social and cultural demands of contemporary society, any research will proof difficult to find programs or activities intended for school visits in which pupils are able to learn and get acquainted, apart from local museum collections, with international exhibitions or artworks available in museums from abroad. Even though there is a great demand in society for a multicultural education, cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue, museums have postponed their participation in these fields, and only recently are they found to take part in programmes with these purposes in mind.

Getting acquainted with the European culture and passing on the cultural heritage to future generations, is a subject of great importance not only to the European Commission but also to numerous NGO’s that support and promote such initiatives. The participation of museums in such programmes

could (due to the multicultural dimension of their collections) help promote values, knowledge and attitudes towards a better understanding of society, as well as towards a better appreciation of the artistic value and vastness of the international European heritage.

Of course, the digitalisation of museum collections and the development of the virtual museum are in fact means through which museums are making their collections accessible to a wider sector of society and consequently to the global community. Although available and easily accessible, the challenge that these approaches have to offer deal at some extent with the participation or interest that pupils/children have to offer at the moment of surfing a museum's web page. A recent research about children's use of internet has proven that "93 percent of European children between the ages of 9 and 16 use the internet at least once a week", the purpose of their use being mainly for "schoolwork (85%), playing games (83%), watching video clips (76%), instant messaging (39%), post photos (39%), use webcams (31%), blogs (11%) and file sharing sites (16%)" (EU Kids Online 2). A closer look at the results, demonstrates that the probability for children to surf museum internet pages are small, and unless they have schoolwork or personal interests about such topics as art or museums, the digital collection or the virtual museum are not per se a choice destination for children.

Furthermore, school visits to museums can be considered as a great opportunity for pupils to get acquainted and learn about art and museum collections at an international level. On the other hand, the interest of school visits in permanent exhibitions (as the activities for these type of exhibitions are most of the time exercised and put into practice in previous visits, making the museum visit more flexible and easier to plan for schools) does not always facilitate the engagement of pupils with the international platform of the visual arts. That is not to say that school visits to temporary exhibitions and international collection exchange do not take place. In fact, Chantal Thomassen, the education manager of the Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht, argued in one of our discussions, that "although there are times in which schools choose to take part in activities (mostly guided tours) related to temporary exhibitions or international collection exchange, most schools

prefer to plan their visit around permanent exhibitions, due to the presence of highlights of the museum's collection and due to the facility to choose from different possible activities developed around such exhibitions" (Thomassen<sup>7</sup>).

With the purpose of making an impression of what kind of educational programmes are taking place in museums and how many of these programmes or activities are oriented towards promoting or creating awareness about international art exhibition in museums from abroad, in the next lines I will analyse various educational programmes and activities that are taking place in various Dutch and Spanish museums.

## Analysis of Intercultural Programmes in Museums

In general museums offer a wide variety of educational programmes for school visits which differ in content and approach. With the intention of determining to some extent the purpose behind general educational programmes and most importantly to find whether museums engage in educational programmes with an international orientation, I have examined the websites and online brochures of twenty different museums both from The Netherlands and Spain.


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<sup>7</sup> The quotation does not offer the exact words used during the conversation (is a rephrase)

## Museum Research – Web Site and Online Brochures

MUSEUMS IN SPAIN	MUSEUMS IN THE NETHERLANDS
Picasso Museum - Barcelona	Bonnefantenmuseum – Maastricht
Guggenheim Museum - Bilbao	Rijksmuseum – Amsterdam
Museo del Prado - Madrid	Van Abbemuseum – Eindhoven
MNAC - Barcelona	Kunsthall – Rotterdam
Museo Reina Sofía - Madrid	Hermitage Museum – Amsterdam
Museum Carmen Thyssen - Malaga	Kröller-Müller Museum – Arnhem
Fundació Juan Miró - Barcelona	Van Gogh Museum – Amsterdam
Museo Del Greco - Toledo	Boijmans van Beuningen – Rotterdam
Sorolla Museum - Madrid	Stedelijk Museum – Amsterdam
Museo de Bellas Artes – Valencia	Groninger Museum – Groningen

The research has been carried on online due to the availability of computers and internet at schools, as “almost all European schools have internet access – in most countries the penetration rate being slightly below or at 100%, in no country being below 90%, and in Europe with an average with 96% use of



internet at schools and in the classroom” (European Commission, 2006, p.20). Furthermore, the use of “internet has become an important tool for teachers to update their own knowledge for use in their lessons (90%), to prepare handouts and material (89%), and to search for teaching material (87%)” (European Commission, 2010, p.39). The statistics show that a majority of school teachers prepare their teaching material, being for class lessons or for extracurricular activities such as museum visits, by means of consulting the information available on internet. As such, a research of museum websites can reveal the amount of information that teachers would find when searching for extracurricular activities to be carried on in museums.

In general all museum web sites dedicate a special page for museum education and special activities. The content of these pages differ in relation with the emphasis that each museum places on its educational purposes. While some museums offer a great deal of information about different educational programmes and activities developed for specific museum audiences, other museums keep the amount of information to the minimum and prefer to get personally in contact with the interested schools as to explain and facilitate information about programmes of interest.

The activities offered in museums vary from guided tours, activities specially designed for school visits (primary, secondary and college), activities for family and children, teaching and drawing classes, etc. Although in all researched web pages and online brochures different activities have been found, various museums, such as, Museo de Bellas Artes in Valencia, El Museo del Greco in Toledo and the Sorolla Museo in Madrid, do not offer specific programmes or activities designed for school visits.

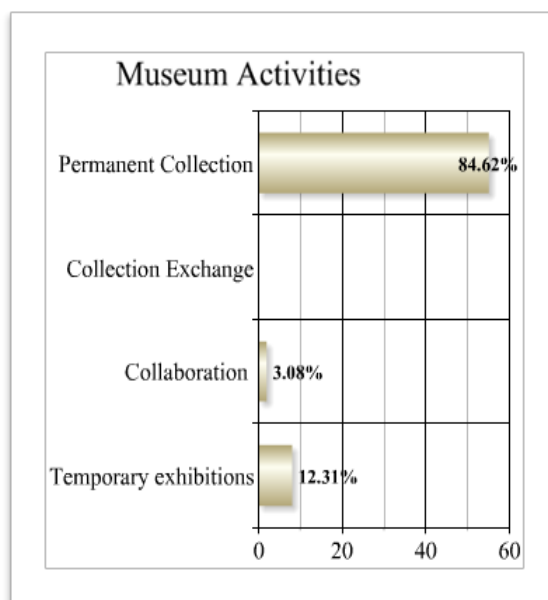
From the researched museum websites, about 82,62% of museum activities were developed around permanent or long lasting exhibitions, as such, leaving no taste to the pupils about artworks available in international museums. The activities for school visits tend to remain alike for long period of time and consist of different learning possibilities from which schools are free to choose. For example, various activities take place only in the museum or at school while other can be prepared at school and realised in the museum. Most activities

about permanent collections or long lasting exhibitions tend to be guided tours that differ in both subject and objective of the visit. Apart from activities developed around permanent collections, a range of activities for school visits evolve around temporal exhibitions (made form own museum collection). These activities constitute only the 12,31% of the activities offered in these museum. A small percentage if considered the quantity and quality of artworks that these museums could make accessible to schools and consequently to pupils. The activities available for temporary exhibitions are most of the times planned with some months in advance, in order to offer schools the possibility and time to get acquainted with the artworks and decide whether a school visit would be of interest to the subjects discussed in class. Although special activities about temporary exhibitions are not always available, museum offer most of the times a variety of guided tours about such exhibitions which are available as well to school visits if requested and planned in advanced.

Although collaboration between museums could be found in most of the researched museums, only two activities have been found in which museums offered schools and pupils the chance to learn about the artistic collection of other museums. These activities did not involve a visit to the museum but only a practical realisation of the activities in the class room. One of these activities was offered by the MNAC museum in Barcelona. The activity Això és Surrealisme! (This is Surrealism!), consisted of various exercises and readings about the Surrealist movement. The activity involved

the art collection of the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Quimper.

The other activity, although not necessarily in collaboration with another museum, was offered by the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, and consisted of a class meeting in which one of the educational staff of the museum would come at school and have a general discussion with the pupils, for one and a half



hours, about contemporary art and artistic creations (discussion that introduced, apart from the contemporary collection of the Stedelijk museum, the contemporary collections or artworks of other museums). As far as it concerned the practical realisation of activities for school visits especially designed around international collection exchange exhibitions, and although, various exhibitions were taking place, such as, René Daniëls: An exhibition is always part of a greater whole in the Reina Sofía Museum in Madrid which was an collection exchange with the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, no specific activities for school visits around such exhibitions could be found, except for guided tours which were designed for the general public and available as well for school visits on request.

The online research shows to some extent the available activities that both museums from The Netherlands and Spain have to offer for secondary school visits. The activities available for this specific target group are numerous and vary in purpose and approach. Although numerous, a great amount of these activities tend to concentrate around permanent exhibitions or long lasting exhibitions of a museum collection. The amount of activities developed around temporary exhibitions, in collaboration with other museums and around exhibitions of international collections exchange constituting only a small part of the available activities for school visits. As such, after a school visits to the museum pupils might leave without having an overview about the vast platform of the visual arts available at an international perspective.

Furthermore, when surfing the web pages of these museums in search for extracurricular activities and school visits to museums, teachers would only find and have the possibility to choose from activities that concern own museum collections without further introduction for pupils about exhibitions or artworks from other museums. But what are the benefits of activities in museums that offer pupils a broad overview of the artistic heritage? Why should museums participate or develop activities for school visits that have as a final result teaching or learning pupils about artistic collections in museums from abroad? These questions as well as other subjects related to cultural exchange activities in the museum will be discussed in the next chapter in which I consider the advantages and benefits of such activities in museums.

## CHAPTER III

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### Cultural Exchange in Museums

In recent years such themes as, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, cultural exchange, heritage education in an intercultural perspective and the promotion of culture as an important element in the process of fostering international relationships, have taken a prominent position in European cultural agendas, giving place to numerable projects and cultural programmes with this purpose in mind.

The interest in such cultural themes has been strongly expressed by the “European Commission (Culture Programme 2007-2013, European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue) as well as by several transnational organisations such as the Council of Europe (Europe From One Road to Another), UNESCO (Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions), ICOM (Museums and Cultural Diversity: Policy Statement) and ICOMOS (Ename Charter for the Interpretation of Cultural Heritage Sites)” (MAP for ID, 2007, p.2).

Although a growing interest is being shared about the importance of heritage education at an international level, museums have only recently started to get involved in these kinds of projects and develop programmes about heritage education in an intercultural perspective. The vast majority of educational programmes that museums have to offer with this purpose in mind emphasise most of the times the importance of educating the adult public and especially



the immigrant community. Furthermore, various researches<sup>8</sup> show that these kinds of programmes do not develop at an international level but most of the times at a local level. As such, museums are busy with “[...] training cultural mediators with an immigrant background to explore a more dialogical and “narrative” approach to interpreting and mediating collections; some are using collections to support language learning; others are involving migrant communities in the interpretation of collections, or assisting them with preserving and presenting their own cultural heritage” (MAP for ID, 2007, p.2). Similar approaches can be encountered in The Netherlands and Spain, where museums are developing intercultural activities for local immigrants as a means of helping them adapt and learn in the same time about the culture and artistic heritage of their new adoptive country. One such programme being Stad en Taal (City and Language), project developed between the collaboration of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Amsterdams Historisch Museum, the aim of this project being that of introducing the immigrant community to the artistic heritage and history of the city of Amsterdam and furthermore help them integrate and facilitate the process of learning the new language.

I refer to these programmes of heritage education in an intercultural perspective that are currently taking place in art museums because I want to introduce the existence of a certain interest in promoting artistic heritage and cultural differences through museum collections. Although a certain interest is visible, what concerns the development of cultural programmes for school visits through which pupils can learn and get acquainted with the diverse and unique qualities that each museum collection has to offer, it could be said that museums have restrained to some extent their participation in these fields.

During the “European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008” a group of researchers from the University of Novi Sad in Serbia conducted a project

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<sup>8</sup> Researches and Trans-National Surveys – ERICarts, Sharing Diversity, Culture Shock: Cultural Identity, Cohesion, Citizenship and Museums, National Approaches to Intercultural Dialogue in Europe, , Campaign for Learning through Museums and Galleries, Lifelong Learning in Museums: A European Handbook (MAP for ID, 2007, p.2)

about Intercultural Dialogue in Education through Museums. The idea behind the project was that of validating the participation of art museums in activities of intercultural dialogue that could facilitate children to gain knowledge through art and “develop competences as to become aware of their cultural inheritance as an aspect of global civilisation”, the project being “based on an intercultural perspective as a principle that inspired both the curricula and the learning process in museums” (Gajic & Milutinovic, 2010, p.152).

The project devised and put into practice the educational programme Feel Art which consisted of various activities in which children had to make use of their five senses in order to analyse an artwork. The activities were carried out in Serbia (Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad) and Italy (Diocesan Museum, Palermo) and had the purpose of introducing children to an intercultural experience through museums as an attempt to promote the value of historical and artistic heritage at an international perspective.

#### THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES DEMONSTRATED:


1. “the potential role of museums as learning organisations to transform the educational system of a particular community and help schools abandon traditional methods of teaching”
2. “build an international partnership that actively cooperated in the development of valid teaching methods and good practice”

#### AND FURTHERMORE,

3. “contribute to a better understanding and appreciation of the historical and artistic heritage of the territories involved”

(Gajic & Milutinovic, 2010, p.162)


In relation to the results of the Feel Art project we can assume to some extent that museums can certainly contribute in both, facilitating the



development of an awareness of the local cultural heritage as well as the development of a better understanding and appreciation of the artistic heritage at an international level. Furthermore, the educational programme of the project “(1) made children aware of the culture in their territory and realise the existing differences between Serbia and Italy regarding culture and religion, (2) help develop social competences through cooperation and communication, (develop imagination, creativity and critical attitude by contrasting different cultural identities), and (3) develop of a new concept in museum education that facilitated the exchange of experience and cooperation” (p.156).

Drawing attention to the subjects discussed until this point, it becomes visible that there is an existing need for museums to act as spaces for cultural exchange. But why should museums act as spaces for cultural exchange and what are the benefits when acting as such? First of all, due to their character and nature to collect and display, museums can facilitate their public the means to learn and become aware of the multiple dimension of the artistic and cultural heritage across time and space. The collaboration between museums at an international level and the development of cultural exchange activities for school visits can stimulate children to gain a deeper interest in art and museums across their national borders, develop a greater understanding of the various and diverse world views and practices and moreover promote tolerances, respect and curiosity in other cultures and artistic creations.

The importance and urgency of making culture accessible to everyone is a fundamental right recognised both in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) “everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life [...]” (Article XXVII), as well as in the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UDCD) “cultural rights are an integral part of human rights, which are universal, indivisible and interdependent [...]” (Article V). Hence every individual has the right to have access to knowledge and enjoy the arts and cultures of all people. Although a fundamental right of all individuals, the access to culture can constitute at times a certain restraint to those with economic or social challenges, in this respect, the development of cultural exchange activities in museums can facilitate the access to culture to both the general museum




public as well as to those with economic restraints that otherwise would not be able to gain an overall approach of the artistic heritage at an international level.

Apart from facilitating access to culture to all individuals the UN actively supports international cultural co-operation which is recognized in the Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Co-operation (DPICCC). The co-operation between cultural institutions at an international level is considered to be highly important in “all aspects of intellectual and creative activities relating to education, science and culture” (Article III) as well as in the process of developing a “moral and intellectual education of young people in a spirit of friendship, international understanding and access to art and literature of all people” (Article X).

Although museums are by no means the only institutions entrusted to create cultural co-operation and promote access to culture, they precede other cultural institutions due to their “cultural authority” through which they can bridge the different cultures and raise awareness about the common elements to be found in the artistic heritage of all cultures.

Moreover, the advantages of using museums as spaces for cultural exchange can also be encountered in the complex relationship between museums and schools. In a conference about cultural education in European schools, celebrated in 2009 in Brussels, 130 educational specialists and policy makers from 24 EU member states discussed for two days the current and future position of arts and cultural education in schools. From the conference it can be deduced that cultural education should have a more preeminent place in European school curricula as it can serve many different purposes that can range from “developing knowledge of art history and creating awareness of national cultural heritage, to stimulating the development of individual expression and self-confidence” (Conference, 2009, p.1).

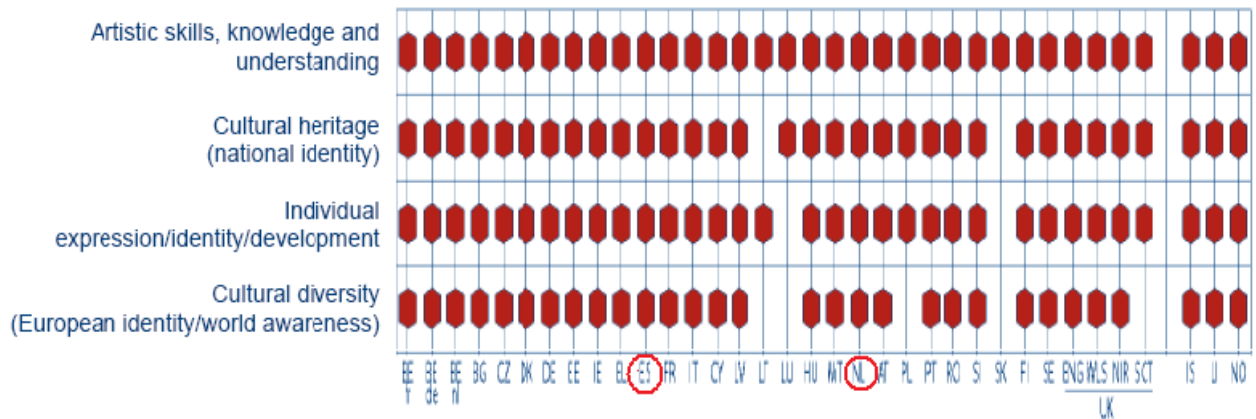
From the debates held throughout the conference it has been demonstrated that cultural education should take a more central role as to ensure that children have equal opportunities to get acquainted with the artistic heritage



at an international level. Furthermore, educational specialists have argued that culture and the arts can stimulate “understanding of one self and the world”, “stimulate individual expression and self-confidence” which is “essential for children to become positively involved in society” as well as “offer children more stability in a social changing environment”, “transmit the notion of heritage to future generations” and “serve as a bridge across borders to reach other cultures and artistic creations” (Conference, p.03-12). Furthermore, the collaboration between museums and schools at an international level can help prepare children to acknowledge their role in an increasingly globalised and multicultural world, develop a secure sense of themselves as individuals as well as members part of various groups within a society that shares and appreciates the variety of cultural differences and artistic heritages.

In a report about the aims and objectives of arts and cultural education in European schools, provided by the European Commission in 2009, it has been confirmed that even though “the formulation of the learning aims/outcomes of arts and cultural education differ from one country to another, in some cases, being expressed more globally and in others more specifically”, there is an increasing interest in schools to integrate in their curricula more arts and cultural education. (2009, p.1-18) Although all European countries analysed in the report, had numerous and distinctive aims and objectives for setting out the learning outcomes to be achieved through arts and cultural education in schools, in the subsequent table I have selected four learning outcomes that are to be found in almost all the arts and cultural education curricula. The main aims and objectives of the educational curricula in European schools stress upon the importance of different artistic skills, knowledge and understanding that can be achieved through art and cultural education as well as upon the awareness that a cultural education can create about cultural diversity and heritage at a national and international level and furthermore gain individual expression, identity and development.

## Aims and Objectives of Arts and Cultural Curricula



(Arts and Cultural Education in European Schools, 2009, p.19)

Taking a look to the previously discussed topics we can certainly determine that there is an existing need for museums to act as spaces for cultural exchange. The benefits of museums when acting as such extends to different levels and includes the promotion of the artistic heritage at an international level, development of a greater awareness of the cultural inheritance, international partnership and collaboration both between museums and museums and schools from different cultural regions and countries, as well as the development of a better understanding of the different cultural identities in Europe.

In the next chapters I will further discuss about the role of the museum as a space for cultural exchange as I will analyse and discuss the results, purpose and significance of the Museums 4 Cultural Exchange project which has been carried out as a case study for the practical realisation of cultural exchange activities in art museums.

## CHAPTER IV

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### Museums 4 Cultural Exchange - Project Evaluation

In the previous chapters we have discussed various topics with the purpose of introducing on the one hand, the current social and educational functions of the art museum, and on the other hand, emphasise the necessity and relevance for developing cultural exchange activities in museums as a way of redefining the museum experience, promote collaboration between museums and consequently make the artistic heritage more accessible at an international level.

With the intention of examining the potential role that museums could play when acting as spaces for cultural exchange, and for the purpose of the research for this project, I have developed and put into practice a cultural project which has been realised as a case study for the practical realisation of cultural exchange activities in art museums. Through the project, Museums 4 Cultural Exchange, I want to examine whether cultural exchange activities can bring the museum closer to children, make them learn about local and international heritage and consequently transform the art museum into a space for cultural exchange.

The activities of the M4CE project function as concrete examples of cultural exchange programmes in art museums from which an analysis can be made as to determine the possible role that art museums could play in acting as spaces of cultural exchange. The project took place in The Netherlands and Spain and it involved the participation of museums and secondary schools from both countries. The project consisted of five main activities that took place in the classroom and in the museum, and it involved the participation of more than 40 pupils from both schools.

## Methodology

The developed project stands as a pillar of my interest in museum education and reflects my concerns regarding museum pedagogy as being most of all orientated towards educating pupils about local museum collections and heritage without whatsoever offering an extensive overview about the artistic heritage available in international museums. Furthermore, through this project I want to express the significance and benefits when creating and putting into practice educational programmes through which art museums can perform as spaces for cultural exchange.

The evaluation approach of the project is based on the evaluation framework developed by Quirijn Lennert van den Hoogen in his research *Performing Arts and the City: Dutch Municipal Cultural Policy in the Brave New World of Evidence-Based Policy*, in which he searched for ways to “ameliorate the evaluation of Dutch municipal cultural policies”. Although the evaluation framework has been developed for the assessment of the performing arts in society, the project will be evaluated in relation to this framework which has been adapted to the need assessment of the M4CE project. The evaluation framework proposed in the mentioned research emphasises the importance of addressing three different levels through which a “cultural activity” can create values and functions in society.

THE THREE LEVELS INVOLVE THE ASSESSMENT OF:

1. “the performance of the “cultural project” itself”
2. “the experience of the audience members during the “project activities”
3. “the functioning of the “cultural project” at a societal level”

(Hoogen, 2010, p.387)



The experience of the project activities as well as part of the project function at a societal level will be assessed through a quantitative analysis of questionnaires<sup>9</sup> which have been answered by the pupils that participated in the project activities. The results of the questionnaires will be used as a means of assessing the pupil's experiences during the activities as well as their interest in participating in similar activities in the future and/or gained interest in visiting museums from abroad (especially gained interest in visiting the Picasso and the Bonnefanten museums).

The questionnaires consisted of eleven questions which made reference to the pupils own experiences when visiting museums, their interests in museums and art as well as their impression about the activities carried out during the project.

An evaluation framework table has been developed in relation to the three levels of assessment discussed previously (project performance, audience experience and functioning of the project at a societal level), the assessment of these levels will analyse the project intentions and its successful realisation in teaching and creating awareness and interest in pupils about the local and international heritage, and furthermore, predict its benefits and function at a societal level.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK	
PROJECT PERFORMANCE	PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT  PROJECT - PURPOSE OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance</li> <li>• Effectiveness and Impact</li> <li>• Efficiency</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> A model of the questions used in the questionnaires can be found in the Project Information CD

<p>AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE</p>	<p>EXPERIENCE GAINED THROUGH THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaction and interest of pupils in the project activities</li> <li>• Analysis questionnaires</li> <li>• Did pupils gain interest in the international museum? (Picasso Museum and Bonnefantenmuseum)</li> </ul>
<p>FUNCTIONING AT A SOCIETAL LEVEL</p>	<p>BENEFITS AND STAKEHOLDERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits of the Museum 4 Cultural Exchange project</li> <li>• Why should museums engage in these kinds of activities?</li> <li>• Possible stakeholders for future cultural exchange activities</li> </ul>

## The Project - Museums 4 Cultural Exchange

“Ik vond het de leukste dag van mijn leven”

“Ik hoop dat ik nog een keer naar het museum ga!


Het was Super Leuk!”<sup>10</sup>

The project consisted of five main activities that took place in the Netherlands and Spain and involved the active participation of secondary school pupils in various cultural exchange activities that took place in the classroom and in their regional art museum.

The cultural exchange activities took place first in Barcelona, in the Picasso Museum and it involved the participation of 15 pupils from the Barres i Ones

<sup>10</sup> Quotation (Devi and Tom) from the questionnaires answered by the pupils from the Montessori

Basisschool after taking part in the project activities during the school visit at the Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht – the questionnaires can be found in the Project Information CD



school from Badalona, and after in Maastricht, in the Bonnefantenmuseum and it involved the participation of 28 pupils from the Montessori Basisschool from Roermond.

The project included five activities which were developed specifically with the purpose of offering pupils the opportunity to get acquainted both with the collection of the visited museum as well as with the collection of the international museum visited by their colleagues in the other country.

The first three activities of the project were executed in the respective museums and included a presentation, a guided tour and a drawing activity. The fourth and fifth activities were executed at school and consisted of a museum collage (that each pupil had to prepare and exchange with the pupils from the other country) and a museum collage exchange exhibition that took place in both schools.

## The Participants

### Bonnefantenmuseum

Bonnefantenmuseum<sup>11</sup> is one of the most important art museums from the province of Limburg, The Netherlands. The collection of the museum consists of Contemporary, Modern as well as Medieval artworks which are being constantly exhibited in the long lasting, temporary and changing exposition rooms. The museum disposes of a great array of educational programmes and activities which differ in purpose and objective according to the needs and expectations of the public.

The activities available in the museum range from activities for children, families, students, art courses, school visits and high school students. As for activities

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<sup>11</sup> More information about the Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht can be found online at [www.bonnefanten.nl/en/](http://www.bonnefanten.nl/en/)

especially designed for secondary school visits, the museum offers five main activities, namely, De Kunstwerkenfluisteraar, De Grote Landschap Show, Ogen op Steeltjes, Ontdekt Het Bonnefantenmuseum and De Stad van je Dromen. Although various from which to choose, all activities evolve around long lasting exhibitions or around the architecture of the museum. No activities for secondary school visits about temporary exhibitions or collection exchange could be found except for guided tours.

## Picasso Museum

The Picasso Museum<sup>12</sup> in Barcelona is the only Picasso museum created at request of Pablo Picasso. The museum holds a collection of 3.800 artworks of Pablo Picasso and is a great reference centre about the formative years of the work of Picasso. Although being around for almost fifty years, the museum only recently added to its service an education department which is in use for only three years.

The activities available in the Picasso Museum place great emphasis on school visits and develop mostly around the permanent collection of the museum. The museum offers six different activities for secondary school visits, namely, Why do artists paint in different ways?, Picasso's Social Context, The Construct of the Modern Artist, Picasso and Barcelona Exterior Landscapes, Interior Landscapes and Barcelona-Paris-Barcelona.

## Montessori Basisschool

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<sup>12</sup> More information about the Picasso Museum in Barcelona can be found online at [www.museupicasso.bcn.cat/en](http://www.museupicasso.bcn.cat/en)

The first Montessori<sup>13</sup> school in The Netherlands opened in 1914 and since then grew up to 160 schools situated in various cities around the country. In difference to most Dutch schools in which children are subject to a specific training and learning curriculum, in the Montessori school children are free to choose their own learning material and study topics. The concept behind these teaching methods being determined by the conviction that children can better learn and perform under circumstances of free study choices.

### IES Barres i Ones

The Barres i Ones<sup>14</sup> school was created in 1986 and functioned as a high school till 1989 when it was transformed in an institution for secondary (ESO) as well as high school (Batxillerat) education. The name of the centre comes from the emblem of the city of Badalona which consists of bars (Barres) and waves (Ones). In this centre pupils are free to choose from a variety of courses according to their specialisation that can be in Science and Technology or Humanities and Social Sciences.

Both, the Montessori Basisschool and the IES Barres i Ones are open to extracurricular activities and support the participation of the pupils in various scientific and artistic projects and activities performed both inside and outside the centres.

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<sup>13</sup> More information about the Montessori Basisschool can be found online at

[www.montessoriroermond.com](http://www.montessoriroermond.com)

<sup>14</sup> More information about the IES Barres i Ones can be found online at [www.barresiones.com](http://www.barresiones.com)

## Project Performance

The Museums 4 Cultural Exchange project has been developed with the purpose of examining the practical realisation of cultural exchange activities in museums, as well as with the intention of involving pupils in intercultural activities with the means of creating interest and awareness about the artistic heritage available at a local and international level.

The activities of the M4CE project have been put into practice with the purpose of bringing the museum closer to children, create curiosity in other cultures and stimulate interest in art and museums. Each activity has been developed with a specific purpose in mind and invited pupils to use their imagination, creativity as well as their critical thinking.

The project activities took place in the museum as well as in the classroom. The final outcome of the project activities resulting in an international exhibition of museum collages in schools. All activities took place in both museums and schools and only differentiated in the discussed topics which were related to the art collection of each museum.

The activities that took place in the museum had the purpose of introducing the pupils to the project as well as to the art collection of both museums (Picasso and Bonnefontenmuseum). The activities at school were developed with the purpose of stimulating collaboration between pupils and create interest in each others feelings and thoughts about the collection of the visited museum as well as the museum visited by their colleagues in the other country.

The reason for carrying out the project in The Netherlands as well as in Spain is reflected in the importance of promoting cooperation between (1) museums and consequently engage museums in developing activities of cultural

exchange, (2) pupils from both countries in the process of learning about each others artistic heritage, (3) between schools as well as between museums and schools when working together as to offer pupils an extensive overview of the artistic heritage available locally as well as in the other country.

## Purpose of the Activities

### I. Presentation

The first cultural exchange activity consisted in a presentation<sup>15</sup> that took place in both museums. The presentation informed pupils on the one hand, about the purpose and the steps of the activity, making them aware of the fact that the same activities were to take place both in The Netherlands and in Spain, and on the other hand, introduced pupils to the artistic collection of the museum that their colleagues in the other country were to visit. The presentations functioned as a means of making the pupils acquainted in fore hand with the artworks exhibited in the other museum and consequently facilitate their understanding of the exchanged museum collages when exhibited at school.

During the presentation pupils were invited to ask questions and discuss the artworks exhibited in the museum from abroad. In order to create interest in the other museum the presentation contained a message from the colleagues in the other country (video<sup>16</sup> message taped during the activities in the museum).

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<sup>15</sup> The presentations that took place in both museums can be found in the Project Information CD

<sup>16</sup> Video Message – the videos used in the presentations can be found in the Project Information CD (Activity Videos)

## Presentation Picasso Museum

The presentation in Spain was held in the Picasso Museum and introduced the pupils from the Barres i Ones school to the collection of the Bonnefantenmuseum and the Augenspiel<sup>17</sup> exhibition. During the presentation pupils were invited to ask questions and participate in various discussions about the “game of eyes” that could be found in various paintings. The artworks presented during the presentation being to some extent the same artworks that the pupils in The Netherlands were to visit and have a guided tour about. The artworks discussed in the presentation representing some of the highlights of the Augenspiel exhibition, namely, the Census at Bethlehem by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, Adam and Eve by Master of Paul and Barnabas, The Girl in White with Trees by Peter Doig, Untitled by Laura Owens, Journal by Robert Ryman, and finally Wavy Brushstrokes by Sol LeWitt.

## Presentation Bonnefantenmuseum

The Presentation in The Netherlands was held in the Bonnefantenmuseum and introduced the pupils of the Montessori school to the collection of the Picasso Museum. The presentation served as an introduction to the guided tour that the pupils in Spain had over the relationship between the artwork of Picasso and the city of Barcelona.

The artworks discussed in the presentation were related to the places where Picasso lived, worked and had his ateliers during his residence in Barcelona. Some of the discussed artworks were, The Harbour of Barcelona, Barcelona Beach, Balcony Handrail and Water Thank, The Mecé Church, Closed Window Overlooking a Balcony, Carrer de la Riera de Sant Joan, Lola, Mother and Child as well as paintings made for the exhibitions in the tavern Les Quatre Gats.

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<sup>17</sup> Augenspiel exhibition in the Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht of the highlights of the museum's collection containing Contemporary, Modern as well as Medieval art



## II. Guided Tour

If the presentation introduced the pupils to the collection of the museum that their colleagues in the other country visited, the guided tour introduced pupils to the collection of their regional art museum. The pupils from Holland having a guided tour in the Bonnefantenmuseum about the Augenspiel exhibition and the pupils from Spain a guided tour in the Picasso Museum about the relationship between the artworks of Picasso and the city of Barcelona. The guided tours offered an insight into the collections of each museum and invited pupils to discuss and share their opinion about the artworks.

The intentions behind the guided tour were those of presenting to the pupils the artistic heritage of their local museum and furthermore make them think about their emotions and thoughts when viewing an artwork for the first time. During the guided tour pupils were asked to take notes about what they considered to be of interest and pay attention at the same time to their feeling and thoughts when viewing the artworks. The purpose of the notes was that of helping pupils decide which artwork they liked the most and finally choose for that artwork for the purpose of the following activity.

## III. Drawing

After the guided tour, each pupil had to make a drawing of their favourite artwork exhibited in the museum they visited. The drawing activity took place in the Rossi room in the Bonnefantenmuseum and in the activities room in the Picasso Museum. The drawings were created with the purpose of inter-exchanging them between the two groups of pupils.

In their drawings pupils had the task of portraying the way in which the artworks spooked to them and depict the thoughts or feelings that came to their mind when seeing the artwork for the first time. Although pupils had to choose one artwork, make a drawing and make visible their local heritage to the pupils abroad, many pupils choose and got inspired in their drawings in two or even three artworks which were combined into one drawing.

The reason for integrating a drawing activity into the project activities was based in the conviction that through drawing, which is one of the basic forms of children's expression, pupils should be able to express their emotions and thoughts, and furthermore reflect their perception of art and the environment around them.

Considering the level of expression through their drawings, they mostly made re-drawings of their favourite artworks in which we can observe original objects, figures and ideas which have been transformed and presented through their memory and imagination. The use of colours, shapes and forms being most of the times connected to the authentic colours and shapes used in the original artworks. The final outcome of the drawing activity being a visual and imaginal description of the artworks presented in the visited museum collections.



#### IV.Museum Collage

In order to make the collection of the international museum known to the pupils as well as to the school in the other country, the project consisted as well of an activity in which each pupil had to make a museum collage which was to be interchanged and exhibited in the respective schools.

The museum collage activity consisted in making a museum collage<sup>18</sup> in which pupils had to integrate (1) the drawing they made in the museum, (2) a picture of the artwork depicted in their drawing, (3) and an information text that described their reasons for choosing that specific artwork and the feelings and thoughts represented in their drawing.

The drawing and the informational text functioned as personal contact between the pupils from both countries and consequently as a method of creating awareness and interest through collaboration and personal exhibition about the local and international heritage - the photographic image of the original artwork functioned as a means of connecting the drawings to the authentic artworks part of each museum collection.

Example Museum Collage:

DRAWING	INFORMATION TEXT	ARTWORK PHOTO
	<p>I choose for this painting because...</p> <p>The first feelings and thoughts that came to my mind when I saw for the first time Peter Doig's painting Girl in White with Trees where ...</p> <p>Name of the Pupil</p>	 <p>Peter Doig Girl in White with Trees</p>

<sup>18</sup> Photographs of the museum collages from Spain and Holland can be found in the Project Information CD

## V. Museum Collages Exhibition

The final outcome of the project activities consisted in exhibiting the museum collages in both schools (the collages from the pupils in Spain being exhibited in the Montessori Basisschool and the collages of the pupils in The Netherlands being exhibited in the IES Barres i Ones).

The purpose of the museum collages exhibition was that of bringing the museum as well as the artworks closer to children through a personal reference and understanding of the drawings and texts made by someone to whom they could connect. The intention was to create interest and awareness in the artistic collection of an international art museum which otherwise could not have been known and possibly visited.

More insight into the exhibitions of the museum collages in schools will not be possible at this point as the exhibitions have been postponed due to preparation of collages and time management.

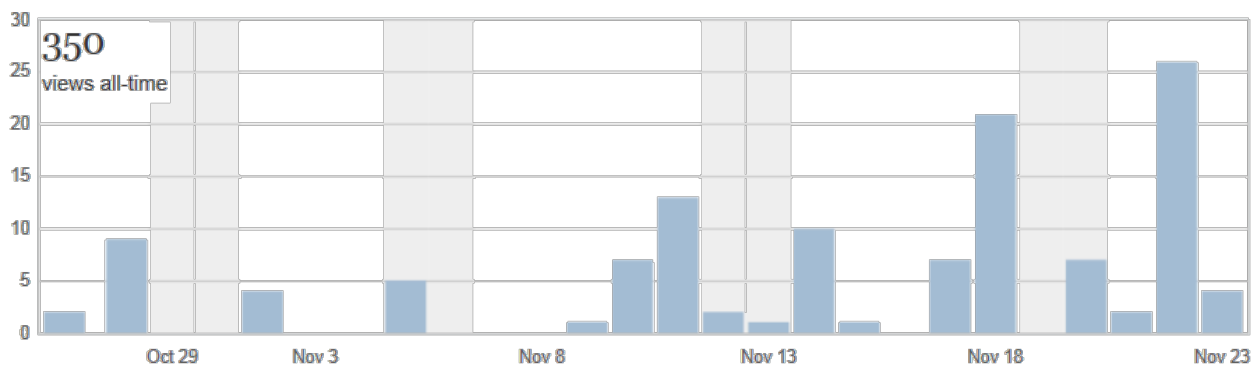
### Project Web Blog

Apart from the cultural exchange activities developed during the M4CE project, a web blog has been created with the intention of promoting collaboration between schools, museums and pupils, as well as with the purpose of creating interest during the process of developing the project. In the web blog participants could find useful information about the purpose of the project, be up to date about any schedule modifications and have a visual impression about the development of the activities.

With 350 visits throughout the entire development of the project, the web blog maintained pupil's interest in the project mostly through the presence of

photographs of their work done during the activities and the results of their museum collages. Teachers have made use of the web blog in order to show pupils photographs of the museum collages and project activities of both groups of pupils from The Netherlands and Spain.

M4CE Project Web Blog Views



Web Blog: [www.museums4culturalexchange.wordpress.com](http://www.museums4culturalexchange.wordpress.com)

A further evaluation of the project performance in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability will be realised through the analysis of the project's objectives, purpose and results<sup>19</sup>.

## Relevance

The project was initiated with the purpose of creating interest and awareness (to pupils) about the artistic heritage available at a local and international level through cultural exchange activities in museums (for school visits). Furthermore, the relevance of the M4CE project reflects the necessity of

<sup>19</sup> The evaluation of the project's performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability has been outlined in the LongFrame Matrix which can be found in the Appendix – Table 1

creating cultural exchange programmes in museums as a reflection of the visible interest that the European cultural agenda as well as the European Commission and various transnational organisations offer in such themes as cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, cultural exchange and heritage education in an intercultural perspective.

The purpose of this project being reflected in the assumption that the practical realisation of the cultural exchange activities have improved the cultural and artistic interest of both the pupils that took place in the activities as well as of their colleagues at school through the museum collages exchange and their consequent exhibition in both schools from the Netherlands and Spain.

### Effectiveness and Impact

The project contributed to the development of cultural exchange activities in museums and raised attention to some extent about the importance and significance of a close collaboration between different museums as well as between museums and schools with the purpose of realising cultural exchange activities and educate pupils about the artistic heritage available at a local as well as at an international level.

### THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT HAS BEEN VISIBLE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS:

- create cultural exchange (CE) activities in local and international art museums
- participation of schools in CE activities - collaboration between schools (museums collages exhibitions)
- involvement of pupils in CE activities - interest in international art and museums
- awareness about local and international heritage

- promotion of understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and artistic heritages
- bringing the art museum closer to children
- increase awareness for the practical development of cultural exchange activities in the future

Considering the results, the assumption can be made that the project has successfully helped pupils to learning about international museums, in this case, about the Picasso and the Bonnefanten museums, raised the interest in international heritage as well as interest for schools and museums to participate in future cultural exchange activities.

#### Efficiency

The overall impression about the development of the project activities can be characterised as satisfactory due to the interest and enthusiasm received during the project implementation as well as after the activities took place.

What turned out to be challenging was the process of finding schools in The Netherlands interested in participating in the project. The common reason for postponing their participation was related to time management, budget for extracurricular activities and transport facilities. While various schools have had to be contacted and informed about the project activities before receiving an affirmative response about their participation, the search for museums interested in taking part in the project turned out to be efficient as their interest was immediately visible.

## Sustainability

The M4CE project has been successfully implemented and consequently helped positioning the art museum as a space for cultural exchange. As what it concerns the sustainability of the project for future cultural exchange activities in museums I would argue that at this moment of time museums do not share a great amount of interest in participating in these types of activities. There still remains some resistance to change which must be overcome in order for museums to keep up with the changes in society and consequently act as spaces for cultural exchange.

In order to further evaluate the sustainability of the project, a SWOT analysis has been made with the purpose of considering the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and treats of the M4CE project. The analysis shows that although the project has various strengths and opportunities that can help to a further development of cultural exchange activities in the future, it will be a matter of time before museums would consider integrating in their educational programmes activities of cultural exchange.



SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create awareness of the artistic heritage available both at a local and international level</li> <li>• Involve pupils in different cultural exchange activities that stimulate their interest in cultural differences and intercultural heritage</li> <li>• Promote collaboration between museums as well as between museums and schools</li> <li>• Involve schools in participating in museums activities</li> <li>• Improve the cultural knowledge of the pupils and in the same time create a more cultural aware population</li> <li>• Stimulate cultural diversity, cultural differences and intercultural dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Planning the activities and getting museums and schools involves takes much time</li> <li>❖ No proper collaboration between the different institutions</li> </ul> <p>MUSEUMS ARE CONCERNED WITH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fulfilling their governmental as much as their local and national obligations</li> <li>• Making own collection known</li> <li>• Planning activities for the general audience</li> </ul> <p>SCHOOLS ARE CONCERNED WITH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding the budget to travel to museums and pay for the activities</li> <li>• Schedule appointment and planning the time to visit the museum</li> <li>• Time and materials handling is inefficient</li> </ul>

OPPORTUNITIES	TREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing interest in projects, educational programmes or activities that promote cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, foster international collaboration</li> <li>•</li> <li>• Themes that have taken a prominent position in European cultural agendas, giving place to numerable projects and cultural programmes with this purpose in mind</li> <li>•</li> <li>• Interest expressed as well by the European Commission and various transnational organizations such as the Council of Europe , UNESCO, ICOM and ICOMOS</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At this moment museums do not share enough interest in cultural exchange programmes</li> <li>•</li> <li>• Museums do not show interest in collaborating with other institutions for the planning of CE activities or educational programmes</li> <li>•</li> <li>• Not enough staff members and budget for the practical realisation of CE activities</li> <li>•</li> <li>• Schools share more interest but suffer from budget costs and time to plan and participate in extracurricular activities</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

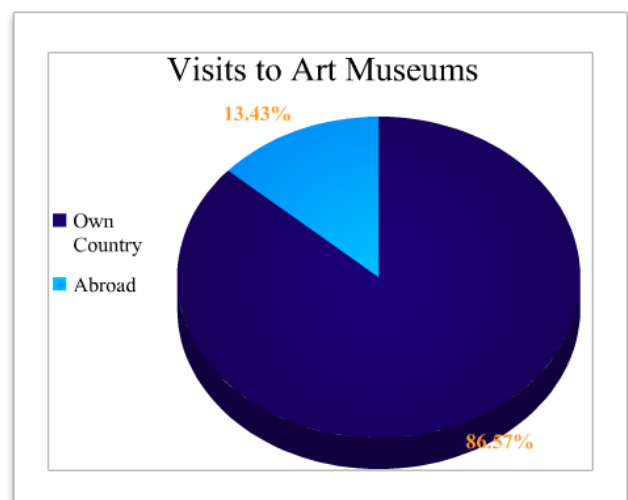
### Audience Experience

The overall reactions and impressions of the pupils throughout the entire process of the project activities can be characterised as, enthusiastic, willingness to learn about art and local/international museums, curiosity in the other country as well as in the culture and drawing of the other group and interest in participating in similar activities in the future.

Through the analysis of the questionnaires filled in by the pupils that participated in the project activities it turned out that most, if not all pupils enjoyed the activities and at least 86% of the pupils would like to take part in

similar activities in the future. Some of their favourite project activities being the guided tour and the drawing activity due to their active involvement in the learning process and the extensive use of imagination and free choice when making the drawing.

Although asked whether they remembered the name of an artist or artwork seen during a museum visit they made before, most pupils could not remember any names and mostly referred to the artists or artworks discussed during the guided tour and 56% of the pupils referred to the artists or artworks presented during the presentation. The names of the artists that were most of the times remembered were, Pablo Picasso, Sol LeWitt, Peter Doig, Tal R and Ray Smith. These results demonstrate that the project activities helped pupils to learn, apart from the collection of the visited museum, also about the collection of the international museum.



When questioned about their personal experience in art museums and the number of art museums visited during extracurricular activities at school or with their parents, the results showed that all pupils visited at least once or twice an art museum (most of the times in their own region). When asked how many museums they visited abroad, only 13.43% of the pupils had visited a museum in a different country, while the remaining 86,57% answered that they never had the chance but would like to visit a museum abroad. Here the results show that a vast majority of the pupils involved in the project activities have never had the chance to visit an international museum and consequently get acquainted with the artworks or the artistic heritage available abroad.

The question Would you like to visit art museums in other countries? In which countries and which museums? has proved that the project activities have been a total success as 73% of the pupils affirmed that they would like to visit the Picasso Museum in Barcelona or the Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht. In fact, in a discussion with one of the teachers from the Montessori school in

Roermond, it turned out that during a school brake of one week, one of the pupils went in vacation with his/her parents to Barcelona and explicitly asked to visit the Picasso Museum because he/she had had a special activity in the Bonnefontenmuseum in which he/she learned about Picasso and wanted to see the artworks in first hand.

As for their personal comments about their experience during the activities in the museum and their willingness to participate in similar activities in the future, I would like their words to speak for themselves:

“Ik hoop dat ik nog een keer naar het museum ga! Het was Super Leuk!

Ik vond het de Leukste dag van mijn leven!”

“Ik vond het super leuk in het musea! Sol LeWitt is mijn idool vanaf nu!

Dit schilderij is gemaakt door een toekomstig kunstenaar!”

“Va ser molt interessant i molt divertit. El que més em va agradar va ser quan vam fer un dibuix sobre un quadre. També vaig aprendre a interpretar alguns quadres”

(It was very interesting and I had a lot of fun. What I liked the most it was when I had to do a drawing about an artwork. I also learned to interpret artworks)

As far as for the involvement of museums and schools and their experience with the project activities, it can be said that their overall impression was positive and their interest present during the entire process of developing and putting the project into practice. Both schools and museums participated in developing and adapting the activities to their own interest, as well as in facilitating the space and materials needed for the activities to take place.

The impressions that the teachers shared about the project activities were directed towards the experiences and motivation of the pupils. Teachers characterised the pupils as, interested and enthusiastic about the activities, motivated to learn and ask questions as well as interested in the other country and progress of the other group. The overall collaboration between the institutions can be characterised as satisfactory.

## Functioning at a Societal Level

The function of the M4CE project at the societal level can be perceived through different stages. First of all, the project contributed to the collaboration between the Picasso and the Bonnefantenmuseum through the activities that took place in both museums, such as the presentations that introduced to the pupils the artistic collection of an international museum.

Furthermore, the project made possible the collaboration between museums and schools as well as between both schools. The collaboration between the museums and schools has been visible in the interest and enthusiasm in facilitating the materials, guided tours and time planning for the activities. The collaboration between both schools has been achieved through the international exchange of museum collages and their consequent exhibition in both schools.

Moreover, the project has created interest and awareness about the importance of cultural exchange activities in art museums that can help children to get acquainted with the local as well as with the international heritage. The results of the questionnaires as well as the perceived reactions of the pupils during and after the project activities have proved that there has been a certain interest created in the artistic platform of the visual arts available inside as much as outside national borders. The development of the museum collages as well as their exhibition in both schools is expected to attract the attention of other pupils about the art available in international museums and furthermore make them aware of cultural differences through the intercultural exchange of drawing and texts from children living in a different country.

The overall assumption is based on the conviction that the results of the project activities have contributed to improve to some extent the pupil's interest in learning and participating both in the local and the international

heritage. Additionally, the development of future cultural exchange activities in museums can attract the attention of such stakeholders<sup>20</sup> as, museums and schools as well as national governments and the European Union.

Although museums do not appear to share much interest in this moment in participating in cultural exchange activities, it still remains visible that the European commission as well as various transnational organisations promote and share certain interest in programmes that touch upon such subjects as intercultural dialogue or heritage education in an intercultural perspective. As such, it would only be a matter of time before museums will start developing programmes with such purposes in mind. The interest that museums will share in cultural exchange programmes will be visible in the potential that such programmes have in attracting schools, promoting coloration between museums at an international level when developing and putting into practice cultural exchange activities and furthermore make museum collections known at an international level.

In difference to museums, the project evaluation has showed that schools share more interest in cultural exchange programmes as it is considered important for pupils to learn and get acquainted with the art and heritage at a local and international level. Furthermore, a multicultural education thorough school visits to museums offer pupils the opportunity to become aware of cultural differences and appreciate at the same time the vast heritage of the visual arts.

The future development of cultural exchange programmes in museums could be of great interest to national governments as much as for the European Union as these programmes meet various objectives such as, create awareness in schools about cultural diversity and intercultural heritage, work towards a more cultural aware population, create interest in art, museums and culture, facilitate a better understanding of cultural diversity in schools, work towards a more cultural aware population and promote awareness about the European artistic heritage and cultures.

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<sup>20</sup> An analysis of the stakeholders can be found in the Appendix - Table 2


## CONCLUSION

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We have now arrived to the final part of this project analysis. In our journey we have discussed about the social and educational functions of the museum and touched upon the potential role that art museums could play when acting as spaces for cultural exchange. Each chapter has build upon each other and illustrated first of all, the development of the museum and its changing roles as to reveal the existing need for art museums to undertake a broader approach towards developing educational programmes of cultural exchange with the purpose of offering pupils an extensive overview of the local as well as of the international platform of the visual arts.

The historical account of the art museum has proved that the role of the museum has constantly changed and adjusted to each changing social condition, function still perceived in contemporary art museums. As we have seen, the social and educational functions of the art museum have been shaped and modelled through time and consequently transformed into two relevant and indispensable elements part of any museum curriculum. These distinctive features of the contemporary museum being not only revolutionary in comparison with the mission attributed to earlier museums, but also significant in terms of the considerable role that art museums can play when acting as spaces for cultural exchange through which pupils can learn and become aware of the cultural and artistic heritage around them.

Furthermore, when discussing about the social function of the contemporary art museum, such factors as globalisation and multiculturalism have been considered of great importance – not denying the existence and/or importance of other factors – having a major influence in our society, capable of shaping not only individuals but also cultures. We have seen that in the




midst of a globalised society where the familiar becomes the unknown and the conventional environments (cultural and social) are being restructured, individuals are faced with the task of reaffirming their identity and consequently accept their pertinence to a greater global community. Furthermore, the multicultural facet of Europe, apart from being a positive feature, presents as well an apparent threat to individuals and cultures, in the sense that a misunderstanding and a failure in appreciating and acknowledging the value and importance of the existing cultural diversities and differences can lead to an under appreciation of the artistic heritage, a lack of a shared culture and the arts, and consequentially a possible segregation between individuals, cultures and artistic heritage. As such it has been recommended that museums should consider these factors in the process of developing educational programmes through which individuals (Self) can learn and get acquainted with the heritage available at an international level (Net).

The constant search for new ways of redefining the social function of the museum stands as a proof of the malleability of the contemporary museum, and the development of new approaches towards education, demonstrates the interest that museums have towards improving the learning experiences of their audiences.

The integration of different learning theories into exhibition rooms and learning materials, the merge of entertainment and education into one single activity (approach traditionally dismissed), and more recently the incorporation of new media and the digitalisation of museum collections as well as the virtual museum, are some of the approached that museums have undertaken as to improve the audience experience in the museums and furthermore make their collections accessible at an international level. The doubt about the digitalisation of museum collections was directed towards the availability of such collections to pupils whom, in general surf the net in order to prepare schoolwork or due to personal interests. Unless their schoolwork or interests are about art or museums, the digital collection or the virtual museum will not necessarily be a choice destination for children.






Although abundant in their educational practice, museums tend to restrain to some extent their participation in activities or educational programmes through which pupils can learn and get acquainted with the artistic heritage available at an international level in museums from abroad. The analysis of the social and educational role of museums as well as the research for educational programmes of cultural exchange available in Dutch and Spanish museums, has exposed to some degree the tendency of museums to focus their attention towards elaborating activities for school visits related to own artistic collections without further introduction into the international platform of the visual arts available in museums from abroad.

Furthermore, the received interests in such themes as, cultural diversity, cultural exchange, intercultural dialogue and heritage education in an intercultural perspective, which have been present in European cultural agendas, demonstrate the existence of a certain need for the development of international oriented activities in museums with the purpose of creating awareness about the artistic heritage of all people.

We have argued that although there are signs that museums have acknowledged their role as institutions through which individuals can learn and look up to as to obtain an overview of the art world, as museums have expanded their branches and joined programmes of collections exchange and international exhibitions, it still remains visible that at this moment in time museums do not offer enough activities for school visits through which pupils can learn and get acquainted with such international exhibitions and collection exchanges. The research has proved that, although numerous organisations (UNESCO, the European Commission, ICOM, the Council of Europe and ICOMOS) actively promote intercultural dialogue between different cultural groups and express the importance of programmes that encourage heritage education in an intercultural perspective, museums have only recently considered developing educational programmes with such purposes in mind.

As for what it concerns the approach of schools towards arts and cultural education, we have seen that schools around Europe are becoming more interested and involved in the arts and cultural education due to the great




potential of helping pupils to develop themselves as well as their interest and knowledge about art and culture.

As such, the Museums 4 Cultural Exchange project has been developed and put into practice as an example for the practical realisation of activities in museums through which pupils can learn and get acquainted apart from the local heritage, with the heritage available in international museums. Furthermore, the project examined the potential role that art museums could play when acting as spaces for cultural exchange. The purpose behind the project activities being that of bringing the museum closer to children, make them learn about local and international heritage, create collaboration between museums as well as between museums and schools, engage museums in cultural exchange activities and create interest in other cultures and cultural differences as well as in the artistic heritage that such cultures have to offer.

Realising the project in the Netherlands and Spain and consequently involving museums and schools from both countries has helped create a sense of collaboration between the different institutions not only at a national level but also outside the national borders.

Through the project activities pupils have had the chance to get acquainted with the artistic heritage available at an international level through their local museum, as the activities have been developed with the intention of introducing pupils on the one hand, to the collection of their regional museum and consequently helped them appreciate the local heritage, and on the other hand, to the artistic collection of an international museum that has been made available through the exchange of museum collages and their consequent exhibition in the Montessori Basisschool Roermond and the IES Barres i Ones from Badalona.

The successful realisation of the project activities shows to some extent the potential role that art museums can have when performing as spaces for cultural exchange as through the results of the activities it has been visible a close collaboration between the different institutions, a shared interest and



enthusiasm about the project activities, gained interest about art and museums as well as about culture and cultural differences, successful introduction to both museum collections as well as gained interest in pupils to learn and be aware of and appreciate the local as well as the international heritage. The surprising visit to the Picasso museum in Barcelona during a school vacation by one of the pupils from the Montessori Basisschool demonstrates the impact of the project activities in creating interest in pupils about the artistic heritage available in different museums as well as in different countries.

Although museums continue to have a certain resistance to change when developing activities with an international perspective and in collaboration with other museums, it will only be a matter of time before museums start considering cultural activities for school visits and consequently act as spaces for cultural exchange.

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## APPENDIX

TABLE 1 - LONGFRAME MATRIX

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	INDICATORS	SOURCE OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p><u>Overall objective:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate interest and create awareness (to pupils) through cultural exchange activities in museums (for school visits) about the artistic heritage available at a local and international level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest in recent years in cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, cultural exchange, heritage education in an intercultural perspective</li> <li>Themes that have taken a prominent position in European cultural agendas, giving place to numerable projects and cultural programmes with this purpose in mind</li> <li>Interest expressed as well by the European Commission and various transnational organizations such as the Council of Europe , UNESCO, ICOM and ICOMOS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(2010). Cultural Statistics. Creativity in Schools: A Survey of Teachers in Europe</li> <li>(2008). Report: Sharing Diversity National Approach to Cultural Dialogue in Europe</li> <li>European Commission for Culture: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/culture /index_en.htm</a></li> <li>Programmes and activities related to: cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, access to culture, culture and youth...</li> <li>(2007). MAP for ID – Museums as Places for Intercultural Dialogue</li> </ul>	

<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of the local and international artistic heritage</li> <li>• Involve museums and schools in cultural exchange activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create awareness of the local and international heritage to pupils</li> <li>• Help pupils appreciate cultural differences</li> <li>• Increase awareness for the development of cultural exchange activities in the future</li> <li>• Create collaboration between museums and museums and schools at an international level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Museums 4 Cultural Exchange</li> <li>• Project Activities in museums and schools</li> <li>• Project – The Social Role of the Museum: Museums as Spaces for Cultural Exchange</li> <li>• Project to be found on website: <a href="http://www.wearart.nl">www.wearart.nl</a></li> <li>• Questionnaires</li> </ul>	<p><u>Killer Assumption I</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The project has improved the cultural and artistic interest of both the pupils that took place in the activities as well as of their school colleagues through the exchange of Museum Collages that took place in both schools from the Netherlands and Spain</li> </ul>
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<p><u>Results:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration between museums / museums and schools</li> <li>• Pupils benefit from intercultural education</li> <li>• Cultural exchange activities promote cultural awareness</li> <li>• Interaction between pupils from different cultures and countries with art and museums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural exchange (CE) activities in international museums</li> <li>• Participation of schools in CE activities</li> <li>• Collaboration between schools (Museums Collages exhibitions)</li> <li>• Involvement of pupils in CE activities</li> <li>• Interest in international art and museums – awareness about international heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of the M4CE project</li> <li>• Results of the project activities</li> <li>• Analysis of questionnaires</li> <li>• Discussion with museum staff members and school teachers</li> <li>• Development of the project activities</li> <li>• Reaction of the pupils (interest + curiosity)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Killer Assumption II</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The project has successfully raised the interest and international heritage</li> <li>❖ The project has raised interest for schools and museums to participate in future CE activities</li> <li>❖ Pupils have gained interest in learning more about the Picasso / Bonnefanten museums</li> </ul>
<p><u>Activities:</u></p> <p>➤ M4CE project - for the practical realization of cultural exchange activities in museums</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentation</li> <li>2. Guided Tour</li> <li>3. Drawing Activity</li> <li>4. Museum Collage</li> <li>5. Exchange of Museum Collages</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation of both museums and schools from The Netherlands and Spain</li> <li>• CE activities in museums</li> <li>• CE exhibitions of international Museum Collages in schools</li> <li>• Participation and interest of pupils in the activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of the M4CE project</li> <li>• Results of the project activities</li> <li>• Analysis of questionnaires</li> <li>• Development of the project activities</li> <li>• Reaction of the pupils (interest + curiosity)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The project as well as the project activities have been successfully realized</li> <li>❖ The project activities have contributed to create awareness and interest in art and international heritage</li> </ul>

TABLE 2 – STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

STAKEHOLDERS	INTERESTS AND HOW AFFECTED BY THE PROBLEMS	CAPACITY AND MOTIVATION TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS TO ADDRESS STAKEHOLDERS INTERESTS
MUSEUMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract schools to visit the museum more often</li> <li>• Offer a variety of different programmes</li> <li>• International collaboration between museums</li> <li>➤ Not enough emphasis on the international heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the necessary materials and space for the practical realization of cultural exchange programmes</li> <li>• Financial investment in cultural exchange programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create attractive cultural exchange activities and educational programmes to attract school visits</li> <li>• Make cultural strategy planes for the successful implementation of such programmes</li> </ul>

<p>SCHOOLS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create awareness and interest in pupils about art and heritage both at a local and international level</li> <li>➤ No activities available for school visits in which pupils can learn about the artistic heritage from abroad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take place in cultural exchange activities organized in museums</li> <li>• Collaborate with museums in the development of new and creative programmes of cultural exchange</li> <li>• Fill in questionnaires</li> <li>• Offer their opinion about things that should be improved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in cultural exchange activities</li> <li>• Financial contribution</li> <li>• Promote similar activities to different schools of museums</li> <li>• Collaborate with various schools</li> </ul>
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<p style="text-align: center;">NATIONAL GOVERNMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create awareness in schools about cultural diversity and intercultural heritage</li> <li>• Work towards a more cultural aware population</li> <li>• Create more interest in art and museums</li> </ul> <p>➤ Not enough/ sufficient understanding of cultural diversity in schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial investment in culture and museums to create more educational programmes of cultural exchange</li> <li>• Facilitate necessary resources</li> <li>• Create and make necessary research programmes for the practical realization of such educational programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make culture more accessible</li> <li>• Create more opportunities and obligations for schools to participate in cultural exchange activities</li> <li>• Organize special courses or lecture days (about cultural exchange) for museums as well as for schools</li> </ul>
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<p>EUROPEAN UNION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight diversity of the European Union</li> <li>• Promote cultural cooperation</li> <li>• Create more access to culture</li> <li>• Foster European citizenship</li> <li>➤ Not enough awareness in schools about European cultural diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial investment in museums and schools</li> <li>• Facilitate the resources for research and development of future activities and educational programmes of cultural exchange</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsor research teams</li> <li>• Promote cultural exchange activities</li> <li>• Create awareness of cultural exchange activities that take place in museums and schools internationally</li> </ul>
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