



Long-term Pinacoteca's Collection exhibition

Educational proposals

Relational artworks

Introduction

Following the political, social and economic changes, the museum role and its attributions have been transformed over the years and now it assumes a more determinant social role. It is possible to understand the museum as a institution that has safeguarding and communication attributions, purposes that involve study, education and leisure for the whole society, from the cultural material it preserves. However, we believe to be crucial the development of initiatives that can materialize these conceptual definitions, that is, that transform, for real, the museum in a institution for all.

It is common to find within and outside the museum's field a vision that overlaps the preservation, documentation, research and communication *attributions* as the ultimate *goals* of the museums. According to Sandell, "many museums keep seeing the collecting, preserving and exhibiting processes not as the attributions through which the institutions generate social values, but as goals in themselves¹."

In this perspective, it is the cultural institution's responsibility to offer to the public, in all its diversity, the access to the cultural assets they safeguard and communicate. It is, still, fundamental to comprehend the concept of access as something beyond the physical aspects. If access is only understood as a matter of admittance, than the entrance gratuitousness would assure a larger afflux of visitors and diversity of audiences to cultural institutions, an assumption that was already proved wrong more than once.

¹ SANDELL, Richard (ed.) *Museums, society, inequality*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002, preface.



Currently, the words access/accessibility, although excessively used to designate conditions and actions focusing on the physically disabled, are also relevant when concerning social rights and policies. Redefined, it means that we would need to incorporate to the idea of access the means of approximation and reach of something distant, by which permeate - in the case of art - the chance to decipher the specific codes of the art languages, to understand the discourse of the art systems, to develop meaning and personal relevance about the discourses, processes and objects of art.

But also include the possibility of developing identification with the production and enjoyment systems, in order to recognize the individual identity and yet to develop confidence and enjoyment by being inserted in the museum's space.

Summarizing, we believe that the access to culture and art should be understood as a basic need (as well as the access to health, education, work and safety), that is, it constitutes a right of every individual, and is the responsibility of the whole society.

Thus, we understand that museums have a fundamental role in the processes of social development and that, as public institutions, they should be in the service of the entire population and of not just certain socially privileged groups.

As it is stated at the third volume of the *Coleção Cadernos de Políticas Culturais* (Cultural Policies Notebooks), called *Economia e Política Cultural: acesso, emprego e financiamento*² (Economy and Cultural Policies: access, employment and financing), 70% of the Brazilian population never visited a museum. According to the study, one of the main reason for such number would be the reduced number of institutions and cultural assets offered for the population's broad access. Most of the cultural consumption is made in the

² The series *Cadernos de Políticas Culturais* is published by the Ministry of Culture in partnership with Ipea (Institute of Applied Economic Research), from the data collected by a IBGE research in 2003, called *Sistema de Informações e Indicadores Culturais* (Information Systems and Cultural Index). SILVA, Frederico A. Barbosa da. *Economia e Política Cultural: acesso, emprego e financiamento*. Brasília: Ministry of Culture, 2007.



private spheres, mostly in the home environment (particularly through television and radio), which poses a challenge to public spaces for socializing culture.

Reinforcing this position, and with even stronger index, according to the Cultural Exclusion indicators used by Ministry of Culture's "More Culture Program", 92% of the Brazilians have never attended museums, and 93.4% of Brazilians have never went to an art exhibition.

These studies point out to the education as of one of the most powerful means to improve access to culture, since it can create fondness, develop abilities for the enjoyment of the cultural goods and the understanding of the cultural codes, and is able to assist the expansion of the public's symbolic elaboration.

Summarizing, we understand that it is fundamental that the educational processes are an active and permanent axis in the museum's conception and structure, making more concrete its role as a catalyst for social development.

Proposal

The present proposal was structured from our new long-term exhibition speech, elaborated by the Pinacoteca curatorship.

In its conception, the Collection's artworks are presented in three different spaces, being the Luz building destined to the 19th century works.

According to the exhibition project, each room or rooms set will show works that represent a specific historical concept, in a mostly temporal approach.

The project proposed by the curators and the assumptions presented in the introduction above encouraged the Educational Initiatives Department to propose the insertion of works - in



some rooms - that are different to this universe, aiming to provide to the general public a greater potential for developing new speeches and relations.

On the walls painted with colors distinct from the curatorial route, it would be placed the works that we call relational, alluding to the Relational Aesthetics, a term coined by Nicolas Bourriaud.

This theoretician proposed the Relational Aesthetics as processes of artistic creation and also as a method of analysis of this creation, characteristic after the 90s. Formulating this concept from the analysis of poetics developed by artists in the 80s and 90s, he defined the relational aesthetics thinking of works constructed collaboratively, which shared a concern with the interactivity and the relationship between the artist, the social space and the public. Certainly, in the sense we adopt here, the concept is not applied to the creation or analytical processes, but is extended to the mediation and interpretation processes of the art object. However, more than his theories, the idea of a relational art was even more emphatic in the moments he led the direction of the Palais de Tokyo, in Paris, from 1999 to 2002. At that time, some relevant steps were taken to bring the institution closer to its surroundings, like the extension of the institution's operation hours (which would then be open until midnight); more affordable tickets, coffee and museum shop's products, as well as the enhancement of the mediation program, among other initiatives.

Although far from being an ideal proposal for us, when considering the relationship between the institution and its surrounding community, these initiatives show a broader concern with the approximation to the visitors and the audience that could become visitors.

The word "relational" alludes also to the works of Neoconcretist artists, who proposed a interaction with the viewer, a shared construction of the work's meaning.

Furthermore, we based this initiative on the concepts of educational theoreticians important to the Educational Initiatives Department, particularly the proposals of the American



philosopher John Dewey, who affirms that the encounter with art can be an experience of such significance that it is capable of constituting a reference for life.

Therefore, according to the prerogatives explained above, and in consonance with the theoretical and practical propositions of the New Museology, and mainly based on our daily mediation practice with the museum's general public, the Relational Works have the purpose of:

- Amplifying the interpretive potential of exhibited works;
- Enlarging the visual repertoire present at the exhibition;
- Generating empathy and identification with the visitor's cultural backgrounds;
- Promoting in the visitors a sense of belonging to the collective culture universe;
- Encouraging diversity and multiplicity of educational activities;
- Promoting speeches that are parallel and complementary to those offered by the curatorship.