



Educative visits promoted by the Pinacoteca's Education Department

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The educative visits developed by the Pinacoteca's Education Department¹ aim to establish a dialogue with the museum's public in all its variety and promote – using several methods, discourses and resources – the attribution of personal and/or collective meaning by visitors to the works contemplated during visits, the buildings and the concepts of preservation and heritage that involve the museum's actions.

Therefore, the Department chooses not to establish pre-determined routes and itineraries but instead creates visits that meet each group's explicit demands, transmitted by its leader/organizer or perceived by the educator during the visit. To enable this method it is necessary that the educator have a profound knowledge of the Collection's works in exhibition and the contents that he or she can transmit, and also the flexibility to implement, during the visit, different educative proposals that could result in a more positive experience for specific groups, differentiating content and form according to the group's physical, intellectual, emotional and interpretive responses.²

¹ The current team is formed by Andreza Luiza Calsavara, Eduardo Marques Vaz, Luiz Gustavo Voltane Lourençato, Rosana de Paulo Pereira, Solange Rocha da Silva, Tatiane Cristina Gusmão, Valéria Braga Ximenes and Victor Toun Murari.

² For more information about this specific issue, read the *Educação Líquida* [Liquid Education].



The challenges faced by the museum's educative visits program goes from lack of previous contact between educator and group, and mutual non-acquaintance, to physical and time-related limits, since it is necessary to get around the space during the visit, and visitors only stay at the institution for a brief period of time. More than that: these processes must also bring together the instances of leisure and knowledge, that is, they must be educative without being boring or too close to formal education models – many times already worn out –; but they should be fun without losing its meaning to the participation, interaction and entertainment's appeals.

To enable action and reflection on educative visits in museums, which, as we previously described here, is a quite complex activity, we've developed structures over the years, which are currently implemented at the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo's Education Department, and we'll share them at this text knowingly that these are mutable and result from both the transformations undergone by institution and the densification of our own practices and reflections.

The department has an exclusive team of educators in charge of developing educative visits to the Collection's main exhibition, for both spontaneous and prescheduled groups³. The educators are related directly to the Museum's coordination and are supervised by a technical assistant. These visits are available by appointment to any group of at least ten people with participants older than six years old.

When scheduling the visit, it's necessary to fill a questionnaire to help the Department identify the group's profile, with information like age group, if they are first time or regular visitors and what is the content they are interested in (themes, artists or specific works from the Collection). Along with the appointment confirmation, the person responsible for the group

³ On our daily work we differentiate the previously organized groups, that request the museum's educators support for deepening the educative advantage of their visits - referring to them as "prescheduled" - from the groups that, without previous planning, get to the museum and opt for visiting the museum with the educator's assistance - these are denominated "spontaneous groups".



receives an e-mail with clarifications on the duration of the visit, the limit of people per group or subgroups, the ticket's price, as well as our pedagogical process, the visit's "selection" of the museum's exhibition rooms, safety rules, regulation concerning the use of the parking lot and the possibility of teachers getting the support materials provided by the Department to help preparing the visit or complementing it afterwards.

There are three different daily schedules, from Tuesday to Friday, for one hour and forty and five minutes' visits, which means attending up to 480 people per day, and five schedules during weekend days, which are shorter, last only one hour.

The visits are developed based on a strategy of image reading, in which the educator leads a dialogue with the visitors, especially students, stimulating them to explore the meanings attributed to the artworks, besides its technical, formal and contextual aspects.

Having in mind that the duration of the educative visits is not sufficient to develop complex learning processes or even for the practice of a artistic technique, we don't consider to be pertinent the offering of workshops (denomination that induces to perceiving the educative visit as a space for artistic production). Therefore, we believe that it is important to make good use of the expressive and creative momentum generated by the encounter with art and associate it with the discoveries, interpretations, perceptions and constructions of knowledge obtained during the visit to the museum.

Thus, the educative visits we develop has also the goal of offering ludic and educational activities that can materialize the contents exploited during the visit's image reading, called Poetic Proposals. These practical activities can happen at the own exhibition rooms or at the building's intern courtyards, depending on its pertinence, space and/or time availability and interest for the groups. They can also be performed before, during or after the reading of images, working sometimes as a perception stimulus, as a promotion to the construction of knowledge or also as a summary for the developed proposals. Several materials and resources are utilized in these activities, such as: panels, memory games, games with words and with interpretative recreations of the artworks, fabrics, objects for tactile perception,



reproductions of the Collection's works for comparison exercises and simulation of exhibition's settings, geometrical forms for the building tridimensional objects, postal cards and art utensils, like crayons, colored pencils, colored paper and cardboards.

Having in mind the importance of a continuing training, all educators working at the Department have a parcel of time reserved every week for developing their own research. They can, besides other research activities, choose themes they are most interested in and develop thematic visits, propose support materials for the visits, create strategies and Poetic Proposals, talk to artists and curators about the exhibitions, as well as take part in workshops with specialists about interdisciplinary subjects, like children education and dance, for example.

The supporting materials we develop arise from needs verified during the visits and may be, among other resources, amplified reproductions of images that can illustrate diverse subjects, such as the building's construction, the developing of the city, national and international referential works, as well as stimulate the perception of different painting styles, art schools, engraving techniques and so on. We also have canvas painted with different kinds of paint and textures, many frames and pieces of materials used in sculptures, like plaster, clay and marble, all of which are available for visitors to touch and feel the materials, and therefore "lose the curiosity"⁴ of touching the actual artworks – therefore helping preserve them.

Some visiting times are dedicated to partnerships established by the Pinacoteca. Since 2003, we have a partnership with the Education State Secretary for the development of teacher's training programs, production of support materials for teachers and for students and educative visits for high school students who frequent the state schools. The program was named "Welcome, teacher!" (*Bem-vindo, professor!*) in the beginning, and now, reduced to only the educative visits, is known as "Culture is curriculum Program – Places to learn: the school out of the school" (*Programa Cultura é currículo – Lugares de aprender: a escola sai da escola*). In 2010, 18,000 students visited the Pinacoteca as a part of this Program. During

⁴ This terminology arose at the Educational Initiatives at Fundação Iberê Camargo, at Porto Alegre.



these visits we performed a triple evaluation system, contemplating the educator responsible for the visit, the teacher in charge of the group and the students. These evaluations are accomplished by sampling and result in subsidies for us to reflect on our initiatives.

During the annual event *Virada Cultural*⁵, and currently during our late hour's Thursdays (that happens every two Thursdays and in which the museum stays open until 10 pm), we offer night visits to our Brazilian sculptures collection, which is displayed at the Parque da Luz, using only flashlights. With this initiative we propose to stimulate the visitors to pay more attention to the artworks' details, refining their perceptive sense, emphasizing the fascination of discovery through the mystery aura and playfulness caused by the night tour, besides widening the knowledge they have about the works comprised in our Collection.

We also have the Sao Paulo city hall as a partner, for ten years now, at the "Recreation Break on Holidays Program" (*Programa Recreio nas férias*), which offers to elementary school students the possibility of enjoying the Pinacoteca's Collection in playful and fun ways during the school breaks (July and January).

In 2010, in partnership with the Culture State Secretary's Department for museum heritage preservation (*UPPM - Unidade de Preservação do Patrimônio Museológico*) and with the support of the Municipal Secretary for Assistance and Development, we created a program for welcoming several groups of children and teenagers who are participants of social assistance reference centers (*CRECAS - Centro de Referência da criança e do adolescente*).

As it was shown here, the largest number of groups we receive come from schools, but we also welcome groups formed at NGOs, religious institutions, juvenile detention centers, police academy and seniors groups, among others. The diversity of visitors is also seen during weekend's visits, when groups form spontaneously by the reception for the one-hour guided tours.

⁵ TN: Event carried out by the city of São Paulo that comprises several cultural events during 24 hours and throughout the city.



Aware of the educational potential of being located geographically close to some museums, we also created a joint initiative with our neighboring museums and now our educators perform combined visits for the training of teachers. With the Portuguese Language Museum (*Museu da Língua Portuguesa*) we created the idea of *Image, Word and Identity*, in which are discussed the relation between both collections under the light of our national identity. In partnership with the The Museum of Sacred Art (*Museu de Arte Sacra*), based on a research performed by a Pinacoteca educator⁶ about sculpture, we approach together the history of sculpture in Brazil between the XVIth and XXth centuries, from figuration to abstraction.

With the creation of the Teacher's Club (*Clube do professor*), an initiative part of the project Museum for all (*Museu Para Todos*), supported by the bank Santander, 50 teachers were chosen (for attending more assiduously our actions) to receive advantages and preferential service. We recently performed our first differentiated educational visit for them, which was based on a Pinacoteca educator's⁷ research on the image reading process in the contemporary art.

The Educational Department' team also supports the activities developed by other departments of the museum, like performing visits to the Collection's exhibition for the training courses, welcoming the students of these teachers who participate on the training courses, besides conducting visits for the employees' children at the *Pinacriança*, an event that happens every year on the occasion of the Children's Day. The team also takes part in the training processes of "satellite teams", that is, educators that work on temporary exhibitions, and also of the educators that accompany the Pinacoteca's itinerant exhibits set in other cultural institutions of Sao Paulo.

The educators also participate on the continuing training of the interns hired by the Coordination, presenting them the Poetic Proposals and having them accompanying the visits.

⁶ Rosana de Paulo Pereira

⁷ Eduardo Marques Vaz



The team has one educator⁸ who is exclusively in charge of the Octagon Project (*Projeto Octógono*), and elaborates its Poetic Proposals, educative folders and conducts the educative visits to the contemporary works located at this central space of the building; and one bilingual educator⁹, who performs previously appointed guided tours in English or Spanish.

It is with these structures and systems that we perform our initiatives to improve the quality of our visitor's experience when in encounter with art, culture and heritage, making it meaningful and pleasant moments and reinforcing that the museum is a place to learn, have fun and live.

⁸ Valeria B. Ximenes

⁹ Tatiane Cristina Gusmão