

WORKSHOP

The Power of Museums: Preserving Heritage, Interpreting Past, Shaping Identity

as part of

Summer school

Connecting (to) Histories: Engaging with the Urban Pasts and Displaying Jewish Heritage

Center for Urban History, Lviv, Ukraine

July 10 – August 4, 2017

THE LVIV HISTORICAL MUSEUM

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE EXHIBITION & EVALUATION OF THE CURRENT EXHIBITION “The History of the Western Ukraine in the 19th through the 20th Centuries” (Rynol Square, 6)



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE MUSEUM EXHIBITION SPACE

1. Create welcoming and accessible entrance to the museum space, and provide information about the exhibition content and museum plan, including the orientation film.
2. Consider to use the staircase walls as part of the exhibition space by applying the illustrative Timeline of the Lviv's history, beginning from the earliest historical period up to today.

3. Put to use the exceptional building, underline the history of the “Black House” and its architecture.

4. Capitalize on the Museum's location at the heart of the Market Square - by integrating the Market Square's visual story (enlarged photos & art) into the exhibition about Lviv's history.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE EXHIBITION CONTENT

1. Consider making the most of the Lviv's historical legacy as the commercial hub with the market place as the major unifying & interactive core of the multicultural metropolis, by using available expressive visual sources & historical footage.

2. Consider applying theatrical methods, for example, use a narrow walking path as a metaphor for the route of the famous Lviv's streetcar/ tram, traveling through Lviv's multicultural and multiethnic neighborhoods.

3. Consider to present the city's history from different angles by reflecting multiethnic character of Lviv - Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, Armenians, etc.

4. Consider focusing on social interactions between city's residents rather than discussing politics. Include information about the educational and cultural institutions that served all the Lviv residents (e.g. Hospital, Public library, theatres)

5. Consider using interactive maps, demographic graphs, family photos, street scenes photos, historical footage, amateur videos, historical documents, oral history, selected quotes from memoirs, letters, newspaper headlines/ mastheads, and art.

6. Consider creating special multimedia studio booth at end of each thematic/ chronological sections of the exhibit, containing additional information (not included into permanent exhibit) with additional information, such as photos, maps, etc, so those who are interested in learning more about certain subjects / events could have an opportunity to do so.

7. Consider creating media program / touch-screen monitor with an interactive map containing information about previous names of Lviv's streets at different times, identifying historical origins of these names (e.g. by crafts, professions, famous residents, etc).

8. While dismantling the existing exhibition, organize proper cataloguing of the removed historical documents and artifacts, for the centralized museum catalogue and future exhibitions.

SUMMER SCHOOL STUDENTS FEEDBACK AFTER THE GUIDED TOUR

- Great collection - unclear narrative.
- Collection is amazing, lots of great objects, building has a unique atmosphere, but the exhibition is messy and way too military-oriented.
- Collection seems rich, meanwhile exposition is chaotic and confusing.
- Too many pictures of "unidentified" people. I can see them, but I can't learn about them.
- Too many displays. Few originals that are lost among replicas. Many exhibits just on the floor or in dark corners. Too hot in rooms. Dark and dangerous stairs.
- The building itself is a museum object. It gives the sense of time, but doesn't correspond much to the existing exhibition – even opposite, it is rather hidden behind this exhibition. The windows are covered instead of being used for its nice view. The exhibition seems to be rather a messy collection, which doesn't tell any clear story. Many interesting exhibits are not visible because of incorrect location. A foreign tourist will easily get lost in the multitude of unexplained persons and events presented.

SUMMER SCHOOL STUDENTS RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To have fewer objects; 2. To display various sides of each historical period, including controversial, negative and positive; 3. To make the narrative more understandable for visitors who want to learn the history of Lviv from the scratch, i. e. to present the most important information and get rid of unnecessary details, not overload the public with them; 4. To make exhibition more visitor-oriented, i. e. to present the whole history of the city (as this is the future concept) as the history of its actual residents, instead of repeating information from the history schoolbooks.

- 1. Less soldiers, less guns, more social history and every-day life of Lviv. 2. Exhibition should definitely use its location -- it should start from describing where we are: in particular building with specific history, located on the market of Lviv etc.

- Introduce "people-oriented" narrative: more social history, less military and state narratives. Emphasise on the changes of city nature - from vibrant modernisation of the beginning of XX to provincial vegetation in Soviet time.

- Get away from the well-known personalities, tell stories about the ordinary people and the life of the whole city and its multi-ethnic and multi-religious contacts.

- Use affordable and effective methods - 1. space out the exhibition 2. clean the museum from dust 3. take out fences around "every-day life" displays 4. remove terrible chairs with rags 5. make timelines on display cases 6. invite historians for public lectures.

- Display only those objects that serve the best to illustrate the story, don't put on display everything, which is available in the museum's collection for the presented time period.

- Make use of the building so that it will become an active part of the exhibition. Perhaps, it is possible to tell the story of the city with the help of the story connected to this particular building. Present the story in such a way that it will be understandable for those who are not acquainted with the history of the region and of Ukraine, and to make it working without guide.

- Make the museum "user-friendly", including access for people with special needs. Show the variety of narratives, do not concentrate only on the national history of Ukrainian Lviv. It would be great to overcome the borders of the official historiography, i.e. not to focus on well-known facts and figures.

RECOMMENDED USEFUL EXAMPLES OF SIMILAR MUSEUM MODELS

Rotterdam Museum

<https://museumrotterdam.nl/en/>

Helsinki City Museum

<http://www.helsinginkaupunginmuseo.fi/en/>

Museum of Warsaw

<http://muzeumwarszawy.pl/>

Museum of Liverpool

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol>

National Museum of History of Ukraine

<http://www.nmiu.com.ua/>

Kyiv City Museum

<http://www.kyivhistorymuseum.org/>

Teather NN - Brama Grodska - Lublin

<http://teatrnn.pl/>

Dom Spotkan z Historia

<http://dsh.waw.pl>

DDR Museum - Berlin

<https://www.ddr-museum.de>

Museum of history of Yugoslavia in Belgrade

<http://www.mij.rs>