

Bye-Bye Boredom!

Join us in the *Virtual Museum has a Future Studio*

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Abstract:

The Museum Has a Future Studio (2011) is a real space for acquiring new knowledge, developing the skills, invention, imagination and critical historical thinking of its visitors. The entertaining form and visual design of the Studio complements Malvína, the ubiquitous cat that knows everything about the museum.

One of the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic has been that the unique form of education in the museum has been temporarily interrupted and moved online. The authors have created an alternative virtual educational and entertaining programme for children, parents and teachers. The existing successful cycle *How They Used to Play...* was replaced by *Bye-Bye Boredom! – Museum Online* in the series *Storytelling from the Museum*.

Every Friday from March to June 2020, the authors entered people's homes by appearing on the screen with a new story about toys from the museum collection and they introduced a video tutorial on how to make your own paper toy. The project also aimed to promote intergenerational dialogue through games and toys. The programme focused on creative activities inspired by toys from the museum collection.

Keywords: museum, museum pedagogy, museum education, virtual museum, toys, museum archival toy

Introduction

In general, a museum conserves natural landscape features, objects created in economic activities, and also all tangible and intangible cultural manifestations originating in a certain environment and effects resulting from the historical process and generational change. Their most important resource is a collection object. Each item in a museum's collection is unique and embodies in itself important attributes of its time and also stories. It even has its spirits that connect the past and the present.

The Bratislava City Museum and its Importance for Bratislava, the Capital of Slovakia, and for Slovakia

The Bratislava City Museum (BCM, 1868) is an institution with a high credibility. Without interruption for more than 150 years it has held the future in its mind and is the oldest museum in the country,

both in terms of when it was founded and especially in terms of its irreplaceable character and the range of thematic museums (11 in total) and activities. It conserves the history of the capital, Bratislava, which is manifested by rich collections (containing approximately 150,000 collection objects) from households of entire generations of Bratislava residents and also important offices and institutions with social, political, economic and cultural-historical roles.

Up to the so-called corona crisis, the museum's role in the informal education of its visitors was a "simple" one: To attract the audience to the museums. To convey to them all they can see behind the glass in the display cabinets, in the form of interactive objects, copies of objects, via engaging storytelling using, e.g. constructive method, object learning and especially the revived history and exploring the important memory of the location.

The COVID pandemic has significantly affected the activities of the museums. In particular, in education in the museum, the communication channel with the visitor has had to be drastically changed. Even in pre-pandemic times, many museums provided virtual tours to the museum or exhibits, or used the online form for their presentations. However, educational and interactive visitor-tailored programmes were arranged on the level of personal contact. It needs to be emphasised that, in terms of communication, the museum in itself is a specific medium, where a virtual tour can never fully serve as a substitute for a visit to the museum in person (Sobáňová, 2014).

From March 2020, the approach of the Bratislava City Museum to both knowledge-exchange and also towards its visitors has been changing on a daily basis on top of its routine operations. The museums were closed down to all, the public (9th March 2020), schools, for leisure activities. What was regarded as the Bratislava City Museum's main goal suddenly ceased to be valid: "To be as a child in the authentic space of the museum and to gain an experience which will be transformed in his/her recollections into a memory of the location which he/she will revisit".

1 Bratislava City Museum – Museum has a Future Studio and Bye-Bye Boredom!

From 1999, the Bratislava City Museum has been systematically practising informal education in the museum. Over almost two decades it has established a solid network of primary, secondary and tertiary schools (attendances in its programmes of approx.3,000 visitors per annum), with which it collaborates on a regular basis. Over the years, several generations of children and young people have attended informal educational programmes. Informal education carried out in the Studio has strong links with formal education and the state educational programmes. Publications issued as part of educational programmes within the frame of the *Textbooks revived* project (2016 - 2017) are

recommended by the Ministry of Education as supplementary reading. At the same time, the studio has a strong connection with the audience as part of leisure activities with community groups. By establishing the *Museum has a Future Studio* in 2011, this education has become sophisticated and based on the well-established concept of *All About the BCM Museum*.

In the Spring of 2020, the activities of the Studio altered dramatically and were curtailed. The question and the complex task arose: How to proceed from here? Up until then, the authors exploited the online environment predominantly as a means of trailers and invitations for real visitors to the museum with a certain degree of interactivity and without targeted paid advertisements. The authors, like other cultural workers and museum educators all over the world, had to shift from the museum premises to the virtual environment. The unique educational potential of the museum had to be substituted for virtual educational programmes. Surmounting the barrier which arose between the visitor, the audience and the museum staff in the Spring of 2020 became a great challenge. Literally, from one day to the next, the authors devised the ***Bye-Bye Boredom!*** project in which the authors' professional competencies, especially in museum pedagogy and flexibility, were fully manifested. (see Fig. 1, Fig. 2)

2 Background to the Bye-Bye Boredom! virtual project

How They Used to Play project... (2019 - 2020), tailored for the interiors of the BCM, and *The Museum has a Future Studio* was addressed in particular to families who had successfully responded in 2019 to a visit to community studios. The studios were focused on the selection and presentation of archival toys of about 2,500 objects in total. This project is a preparation for an important exhibition of toys *How They Used to Play ...* (2020 - 2021), to be opened to the public on 8th December 2020 with a variety of interactive entertainment activities, workshops and education in support of skills and intelligence: critical historical thinking and learning about historical periods through object learning about archival toys, reading with comprehension, development of mathematical-logical thinking, learning about the physical and chemical world through games and toys, fairy tales and puzzles. This part of the exhibition is also funded by the Arts Support Fund (FPU). Live Studios sessions with the audience had three interrelated blocks performed once a month: ***What Do the Toys Whisper?, Tell Me!*** and ***The Paper Museum***.

2.1 What Do the Toys Whisper?

The audience in the museum was presented with four stories featuring toys selected from the museum's archives. The audience was seeing and perceived them as real objects and allowed to take photographs with the toys. The collectables - toys - were assigned with historical accuracy to the

period in which they were created or what they represented. The information value of the toys was manifested in a direct demonstration of what households looked like, of the lifestyle that was, naturally, reflected in the toys presented. This nutshell visualisation through period toys elucidated for the audience the life of people in the 19th and 20th centuries.

During the pandemic, it was not possible to see the toys for real. Instead, the audience in the virtual environment was presented with photographs of toys, animations of photographs of toys or videos. (see Fig. 3 + Video 1; Fig. 4 + Video 2)

2.2 Tell me! Combining blocks into one *Storytelling from the Museum*

Connecting generations and comparing life in the 21st century with life in the 19th and 20th centuries is always inspiring. The authors invited into the project well-known artists of different ages to tell stories from their childhood, how they played games, spent their leisure time and what were their most favourite toys or books. The artists contributed to the popularity of the event, and aroused the audience's interest in history in the strictest and most authentic sense, of getting to know it.

It appeared that the only way to maintain the idea of the project in the time of the pandemic was to combine the blocks *What Do the Toys Whisper?* and *Tell Me!*, modify their content and present them under a new name *Storytelling from the Museum*; the talks with artists were no longer feasible. Hence it became essential to have a written story about the time when the selected toys were created and how children had perceived playing with a particular toy in the past. The combination of the blocks into one allowed the project's authors to involve the current young generation with recollections of the authors' own childhood and the games they used to play. The stories were aimed to demonstrate how children were thinking in the past, to confront the past time and to make a comparison between **the present** and **the past**. The written stories included the opinions and some features of the game with the period toys based also on talks with respondents. In addition to entertainment, each story was connected with history, with important events, the memory of specific locations. The stories entailed reading with comprehension. Since the stories are published on the museum's website <http://muzeum.bratislava.sk/stop-nude-muzeum-online/ds-1277/p1=7713> the audience can return to them at any time.

2.3 The Paper Museum

The Paper Museum took the form of an individual personal museum - a family album. It forms an overlap between the museum with its collectables and the visitor with his/her personal belongings and recollections. The intention was to create an interactive album of recollections complemented

with a hand-made functional toy of their own. The underlying idea was to imbue the toy with new dimensions in order to develop the imagination, creativity, manual and mental skills, not solely of the youngest generation. At present, a toy is sold as a finished product, which does not leave much for the child's own creativity. Nevertheless, it is not the intention of the authors to claim that the present toys are not creative or stimulating. The markets are so oversupplied with a great many varieties of toys so that children are not motivated to seek out other options for play.

Children are a good target group for marketing in that they would like to have whatever is "fashionable". In commercials, toys come to life, do things and move in ways which are not possible in reality. Many of these toys are not for real playing. What a toy does in the commercials cannot really be achieved in actuality.

The underlying idea of the *Paper Museum* and the whole project was to emphasise the importance of toys and games in the child's life and its importance in choosing a profession. In the past, toys were miniaturised copies of objects from everyday life. By playing with them, children were preparing to deal with everyday-life situations. *The Paper Museum* is a physical object that a visitor created in the *Museum has a Future Studio* on the basis of inspirations resulting from leisure-time programmes in the museum.

This was the intention prior to COVID, since the environment of the museum and the conditions of the museum presentation have a strong socio-psychological and educational effect on both children and adults. They provide a venue for the socialisation and enculturation of children, young people and adults.

The Paper Museum is based on the museum's collection of objects, archival toys. A toy and its presentation in the museum assumed the major role. Four toys were selected for each weekend event. Each toy had its own story and some toys were provided with stickers to substitute for the real toys displayed in the programme. The children attached the stickers into the albums where they remain as an attractive image of a real collection object. (see Fig. 5)

A model *Paper Museum* album - (see Fig. 6, 7) was pre-prepared for children and young people. Double-page sheets of paper formed the basis of the album which were put together to form a valuable archival resource for families who visited the studio. For each toy, a museum visitor could make an individual double-page which contained his/her recollections of the archival toy in question, a toy sticker and a paper toy. He/she not only created a functioning paper toy but also was able to add his/her own recollections or the recollections of his/her loved ones to this album.

A doll in a pram and a horse (the 19th century) – two of the museum's oldest archival toys – on the first two double-pages served as an example for children (see Fig. 8, 9). In addition to instructions for

making a paper doll in a pram, a model double-page was supplemented with an author's personal photographs – a photograph of her with a pram, which she had received as a gift on her first birthday. The album included not just a period photo but also recollections of the author's mother and grandmother which added to the value of the album and enhanced its archival significance. The *Paper Museum* album captured the memory of the location and highlights a specific event in the family. (see Fig. 10)

When the project was realised in the museum prior to the pandemic, two toys were always selected and accompanied with a manual for their creation. The instructions for the manufacture of these "paper" toys related to the museum archival toys and inspiration originated in the authors' recollections of their childhoods, of the toys they had found under the Christmas tree, of the games they had played with their friends. No social networks or mobile phones existed at that time, and commercials were less aggressive. It was a childhood with friends, games were played on the streets, courtyards, playgrounds. Many toys were made in their entirety or were completed or modified by children themselves. Dolls can serve as the best example.

Nowadays, dolls are provided with a whole set of clothes with many more available for purchase. The dolls can eat and even perform some biological functions. The dolls from the authors' childhoods had just one dress. The wardrobe of dolls was enriched by clothes crocheted, knitted or sewn by inventive, creative and skilful mothers or grandmothers. Children were usually involved in these activities, thus acquiring skills naturally; over time they became capable of making the clothes themselves. Through the game the children were enhancing their manual skills and developing fine motor skills. It was not just clothes for dolls; toys were made out of other materials. Paper, as one of the most popular, provided an almost infinite creativity. The authors' favourite paper toys included paper dressing dolls, paper cut-outs and paper models. Older generations recall the *ABC magazine*, a bi-weekly publication with a technical and scientific focus for young people. It was superb with paper models - paper copies of real objects.

All the authors' recollections of their childhood played an inventive role in addressing an important question: *How to transform real historical toys from a museum collection into functioning paper toys?* The trial and error method resulted in a unique solution - the Paper Museum. For some toys it was possible to make a functioning paper model for children to play with. Step by step, the toys came to life. The paper doll in a pram was sleeping or peeping out of the pram, the paper horse was rocking, the paper bear moved his hands and feet, and cutlery could be accommodated in a paper sideboard.

During the pandemic, the whole project had to be transferred to the virtual environment. As a consequence, the personal contact with a visitor was lost; the creative-activity time the children

spent with their parents or grandparents, who regularly visited the project with them, was no longer possible. A vacuum formed without any personal stories and recollections. Nevertheless, the *Paper Museum* remained as part of the virtual form of *Storytelling from the Museum* and continued to provide the story of selected toys with instructions, the so-called paper models of the museum's archival toys. In the online version, video tutorials, recorded at home by one of the authors of this article and her children, were made available. Based on these videos, the children with their parents could make a paper toy and play together.

3 Bye-Bye Boredom! virtual programme

The primary target group of the Bye-Bye Boredom! virtual project was the community groups that regularly visited the live *Museum Has a Future Studio*. The community groups showed a genuine interest in the programme and gave positive feedback.

The authors of the project were surprised to find out that, as well as support from community visitors, school teachers used the project and recommended it to their pupils and students as an additional resource for online education, for example, in national history, art or technical education during the pandemic.

The authors also noted another cohort of visitors via the campaign of the Aupark Shopping Centre. The Centre expressed support and on its own online network provided a link to the virtual programme *Bye-Bye Boredom!* to render it accessible to a large number of families and individuals.

(<https://www.facebook.com/AuparkShoppingCenter/posts/10157949553666287/>).

The virtual programme also received attention from special programme websites, e.g. Where with children. It was broadcast on TV and radio channels: TA3, RTVS, Regina Radio, Slovak Radio and disseminated via important city organisations Bratislava Cultural and Information Centre, Bratislava Tourist Board.

4. Goals and Methodology of the Bye-Bye Boredom! virtual programme

Based on the target groups, the authors opted for a consistent approach for the online programme, which facilitates understanding of the meaning of the collection object - the toy - in the main role and can readily achieve the intention and the goals set.

The main goal: to strengthen historical critical thinking in the virtual sphere and to direct attention to the significance of the museum at the present time with regard to the statement: *The Museum has a Future*; the understanding of the significance of a collectable as the basis for the perception of the cultural and historical heritage of museums through the museum's archival toy.

Other goals: layering of history, orientation and seeking out historical contexts and associations, establishing a rank-order of positive values, diminishing intergenerational differences and comparing the present with the past.

From the methodological aspect, using a toy as a historical object, the understanding of history in general is based **on a synthesis of visual-narrative-artistic features, i.e. a multi-level perception of the collection object and its place in history.** The appropriacy of the authors' approach was confirmed by the feedback received by the programme: interest in the programme increased naturally in the target groups and also in the media as documented in the previous text. The media understood and appreciated the underlying concept of the project.

The synthesis of visual-narrative-artistic features means that the audience is presented with an object around which a story evolves with the intention of setting the object in a historical period. In the final phase, the audience identifies with it through an original artistic creation. This **three-level** synthesis of the perception of the object results in the audience becoming accustomed to the object, the period of time in which the object was made, and expressing the knowledge acquired through an artistic activity.

Skills developed within the frame of the project were mainly visual perception, reading a story with comprehension and ultimately artistic self-reflection on the part of the audience. An individual from the audience transformed the collection object into his/her own creation and identified with it, thereby developing critical thinking, creativity, initiative, invention, his/her own understanding of the story's significance.

A museum collection object also requires the synthesis previously referred to from a professional perspective. In the past, what was an everyday item gained the status of a collectable which presented a certain historical period (a clear function, which does not primarily favour imagination). The object automatically tells a story from history and reflects a specific lifestyle and other features subject to the fashion of the period.

Researchers, professionals – historians, art historians – first focus on the visual design and the period features and characteristics of an object and, with the help of these, they assign the object to the historical period. Subsequently, they evolve a story around the object: what purpose it served and how, about the origin of the object, the material it was made from and its design.

In the museum, therefore, everyday objects are presented which, over time, increase in their value, including artistic and visual values, in the eyes of contemporaries.

An inexperienced researcher, audience, a child, young people – appreciate an object visually and evaluate it according to their own criteria - *I like it, it is interesting, indeed, I saw such a toy at my grandmum's, my mum has such a toy* - but they are unable to comprehend the object. This is where the importance of the synthesis of visual-narrative-artistic features applies:

1. visualisation of the object – a photograph of the archival toy,
2. story of the object – assigning it to a period of time, identifying its artistic style, fashion,
3. artistic reflection of the object - a model to serve for developing one's imagination.

Another aspect of the synthesis of visual-narrative-artistic features is that it educates and encourages respect for a toy as a collection object that connects the present with the past.

Hence, in order to help children and young people better understand the historical context and disclose the history for them, this synthesis is absolutely essential.

A museum object - a museum collectable - is not to be narrowly understood simply as a visual piece of work with artistic value. Museum collectables, toys, in this case, were primarily purpose-made items that had their practical uses in the daily life of a child. In the past, the toy itself was intended as a means for preparing children for their future life and profession: a good housewife, a good mother, a father, a brave hero, a skilled craftsman, a farmer. The toys taught children how to live a life as adults and to be prepared as far as possible for such a life and to be prepared to create further values in their future life. This was to maintain and to hand on the common opinions of past generations, identifying with a certain prescribed stereotype and adhering to the accepted values.

At present, a toy often serves to alleviate boredom, or as a reward for good results at school and so on. At this juncture, the authors would like to deliver some remarks on such a reduced role for some current types of toys and children's relationship with them. In the present-day family, a large number of toys are accumulated and become "consumer goods". Children reach maturity earlier and are no longer interested in toys. Toys are replaced by computers, mobile phones – action devices in comparison with traditional static toys.

Was it also like this in the past? In the past, toys were passed down from generation to generation and were disproportionately more expensive than today's toys. Childhood lasted longer and some aspects of life were regarded as taboo.

Hence, it is important to distinguish between different approaches to games and toys, and it is probably the right time to set out new values and to draw on past experience. As is currently happening in other areas, e.g. healthy diet, use of natural materials and the like.

5. Methods Deployed in the Bye-Bye Boredom! virtual programme

Museum pedagogy as a scientific discipline has developed well-established methods which were deployed in the online *Bye-Bye Boredom!* virtual programme. By using archival toys the programme

was developing critical thinking, an understanding of historical events, the principle of creation and the artistic features. It was also developing skills and imagination which materialised in hand-made paper toys as objects in the resulting personal paper museum.

Object learning

The most important object in the museum is its collectable, onto which attention is focused when a new programme is under preparation. In the case discussed in this article, the collectable in question is an archival toy. All aspects related to the toy are examined in the project with the audience not being wholly aware of it; that was because the format of an entertaining story is deployed.

In fact, however, it is object learning, developing in the story, in which the object was described in detail and in an interesting way: from its design, the material used, its creation and manufacture up to assigning it to a particular period of time and describing this period.

Learning through Art

Historical toys reflect the time of their origin, fashion and lifestyle. Learning through art has proved to be a method of choice for some objects. A toy sideboard can serve as an example: it has Art Deco features, and the word sideboard is derived from the Italian word credenzzone. The story indicated some characteristics and features of the period in which the toy was made, especially influences on its design and artistic representation. The audience came to better understand how toy manufacturers worked (predominantly hand-made toys) in the specific period of the 1920s - 1930s. It became clearer why collection objects - toys of the same kind - toy cars, toy sideboards, dolls, are similar, have common features in a certain period of time, hence a historian can assign them accurately to the centuries or years in which they were made. The stories also revealed information about material which is no longer in use today (e.g. rubber) or what clothes designs were fashionable in a certain period (this will be referred to in the upcoming exhibition).

Learning through art was most evident in self-made creations. On the basis of models, children could observe changes in collection objects - especially in design and colour with the help of photographs of collection objects. They learned, e.g. what a doll of a grandmother, a mother and a contemporary doll looked like. It has always imitated its own period of time and the world of adults.

The revived history was fully reflected in the stories and examples by individual respondents on how children played in the past and today.

Oral history was reflected in experiences and stories of the authors of the project and respondents who shared their experiences from childhood.

The memory of the location was often linked with the stories of toys - a construction set and the Old Bridge in Bratislava, a locomotive and the first horse-drawn railway in Bratislava, etc.

This project, in which various learning methods embedded in museum pedagogy were applied, serves for the overall personality development of children and young people; this is also confirmed by the project outputs - paper toys and a paper museum.

5.1 Examples of Stories

Rubber Doll

Do you know that dolls have been with us from time immemorial? They were made of all sorts of materials: clay, rags, bones, husks, grasses, later from wax, celluloid, porcelain; their bodies were also made from leather. Much later, actual women's hair decorated the heads of dolls. You may have heard that some dolls had their heads made from biscuit. Do not confuse it with a cake. This word also means biscuit porcelain, an unglazed form of porcelain. Some dolls were even made just for display. They were watching the residents from their privileged places in the house or were seated in state on the beds and children were forbidden to touch them.

In the past, it was not very usual to buy a doll in a shop, because it was expensive. If this did occur, a girl had then to look after the doll almost as if it were a "living being" and preserve it for the coming generations. This certainly holds true for the Anička doll, the heroine in the story that follows.

Anička was born in the 1940s, in the throes of World War II. Those who were born earlier may remember the outbreak of the war eighty years ago. Try asking in your family if someone can remember it. Dolls similar to Anička can mainly be found in museums, but maybe some grandmothers still keep some somewhere, well-concealed. (see Fig. 11, 12)

The Anička doll is made of moulded rubber. If you pressed it against you, you would feel how fragile it is – like an eggshell. Her blond hair is painted and she has blue eyes. She wears a blue dotted calico dress. It was a thin, cheap cotton fabric affordable by poor people.

And do you know what rubber is? The period from 1939 to 1945 can be considered as a turning point in the development of rubber – a plastic material. Due to its excellent properties, e.g. hard to burn, it was used extensively during the wartime in the manufacture of many products. Natural rubber or latex is a sap that runs from an incision in the trunk of a tropical rubber tree. Since supplies of natural rubber were inadequate even prior to the Second World War, researchers were seeking to develop its substitute - synthetic rubber. This resulted in the invention of neoprene. Without our noticing it, we have become trapped in the age of plastics, a tide which is currently rising over our heads ...

Since you will not be making anything out of rubber because you do not have it, Martinka will teach you how to make a doll from a wooden spoon. It is made from wood and so is paper. Hence, we are still continuing the topic. Children really used to make dolls from wooden spoons. We believe that your mother will give one up to you and in doing so your museum collection will be extended by one

more item no 2 – an original wooden spoon doll. And what do you record on the catalogue card? The truth! You will record when your mother bought the wooden spoon and when you made a doll from it. You will describe what material you used. (see Video 3, Fig. 13)

More on: <http://muzeum.bratislava.sk/povedacky-z-muzea-27-3-2020/d-7182/p1=7713>.

Teddy Bear, circa 1900

Winnie, little bear, beary, boo boo, pooh, teddy bear – these are names given to the toy but these are just a few of the names given to this toy. Many children do not leave their rooms without their teddy and do not fall asleep until they have him in bed next to them. That is why I decided to write you a story about bears.

Have you ever wondered when these cute plush toys came into our lives? It was a long time ago but, from a historical perspective, only recently.

Once upon a time Margarete Steiff (1847 - 1909) lived in Giengen an der Brenz in Germany. When she was just over a year old, she fell ill and was confined to a wheelchair for the rest of her life.

Nevertheless, she was kind, cheerful and surrounded by many friends. She grew up to be a successful woman who loved children above all. She learned to make not only clothes, but also felt toys.

Margarete Steiff has become a recognised brand of success and quality.

In 1902, she made her first plush teddy bear that could move its arms and legs. There is no place in the world where the people would not be familiar with this toy. In the U.S., it was named teddy after the then-President Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt. The Americans, influenced by Margarete Steiff's company, later began the mass-manufacture of their own teddy bears.

In our depository, the bears are healthy and well. They have excellent living conditions there to keep them with us for a long, long time ... One of them was made by some skilled hands in about 1930. Tiborko from Bratislava was the last child to play with it. It became a museum object only much later, in 2017. (see Fig. 14, 15)

Given so much inspiration, a drawing and video, you will definitely easily make at home a teddy bear from paper. I trust you will give it an original name. It will be another, number three, collection item in your paper museum collection. It will represent an archival teddy bear. And again you can make a catalogue card for it. (see Video 4, Fig. 16, 17)

More on: <http://muzeum.bratislava.sk/povedacky-z-muzea-3-4-2020/d-7183/p1=7713>.

Art Deco Sideboard, Made Between 1930 – 1940

Do you know whereabouts in households the most confidential conversations take place? Of course, in the kitchen. It has always been the heart of every household and the place where we can reliably satisfy our hunger. Kitchens today are modern, equipped with sophisticated units with large drawers.

But this has not always been the case. As people's lives have improved over the centuries, so has their furniture. In the past, the basic pieces included chests and small chests. They were closed with a lid on the top and everything was stored within them. They were embellished with various decorations and had different names, for example: a wedding chest for the bride's trousseau, a travel chest with handles. Households were equipped with wooden boxes to store linens, but also grain. Just imagine how many chests must have travelled with kings and queens in the past when they were moving to their summer residences. A lot of water has flowed down the Danube over the time that chests have been transformed into various cabinets, cupboards, sideboards and more sophisticated sideboards.

A kitchen without a sideboard was something unimaginable when our grandmothers were young. The name of the sideboards has its origin in the Italian word credenzone dating from the 14th century.

The Bratislava City Museum stores in its depositories many toy sideboards. We chose one - tiny drawers, doors, many shelves behind the doors, decorated with green ornamental arches on the doors. It dates from the 1920s – 1940s. (see Fig, 18, 19)

It is made and decorated in the Art Deco style. You will definitely encounter this complex word at least once in your lifetime.

Artistic style generally means that at any particular period of time an object is of a particular design and is decorated with the same elements and bears characteristic features. An expert needs merely to glance at our sideboard to conclude – Art Deco. At different times, people have used different artistic styles. Everyone wanted to be modern in their day, so they started buying the fashionable style products, just as we do today.

Unfortunately, you will no longer be able to play with this sideboard, since it is in the museum, but at least you can imagine what kitchens looked like in the past. In order to have at least some sort of sideboard in your hands, make a paper one. Extend your personal paper museum with object number six. Fill in the catalogue card. If you happen to make more than one, you can play a paper antiques shop. And you probably already know what an antique is from the previous story. (see Video 5, Fig. 20, 21, 22)

More on: <http://muzeum.bratislava.sk/povedacky-z-muzea-24-4-2020/d-7264/p1=7713>.

VB Patrol Car, 1966

Today's storytelling will revolve around police cars. Martinka very much liked a blue toy car in the toy depository. She asked curator Martuška if she could borrow it for a while. You must surely know that strict rules apply in the museum; one just cannot come in, take what they like and walk away.

But to return to the toy car. It dates from 1966, the 20th century. It was made in national enterprise Tatrasmalt Pohorelá n. p. from pressed sheet-metal. And imagine it is a police car which bears the inscriptions: VB on the front of the car body and VB Patrol on the sides. (see Fig. 23)

Why was that? In the 1960s, not the police but the members of the VB kept the country and the streets in order. As older generations will recall, they operated during the socialist-communist period, when the title *police officer* was not in official use. And now comes the most important thing. What did VB mean? Let's try together - V meant public and B meant security. Hence, in the past, when people saw a VB car nearby, they preferred to avoid encountering it. At that time, police officers were also officially addressed as comrade public security officer, or in short, comrade officer. These words may be familiar to you from old movies.

A question for you. What signs do police cars display these days? You know that, it's surely an easy answer for you.

My dear ones, now get started making your first collection item to file it in your personal paper museum. (see Video 6, Fig. 24, 25, 26)

More on: <http://muzeum.bratislava.sk/povedacky-z-muzea-20-3-2020/d-7184/p1=7713>.

Conclusion

The Bratislava City Museum had no problems in replacing a real studio with a virtual one, thanks to the flexible approach of the authors of this article and their professional competencies. The present authors made records from "live" studios and video trailers (2019, the museum's official website, facebook, instagram, youtube) (see Video 7). An experience like this helped create *Bye-Bye Boredom – Story-telling from the Museum* virtual programme.

The 21st century has technologies at our disposal that allow us to move in time and space. However, it needs to be noted that the museum, like everyone else, was not prepared for the Covid 19 epidemic and its impacts. The museum activities had to be transferred to the virtual environment from one day to the next. Virtual programmes have been reduced due to insufficient personnel, and technical equipment (e.g. for programmes streaming), and also due to lack of funding for 2020. The BCM, too, has to order the production of professional videos externally; alternatively, these are made by family members of the museum staff who are willing to help in these activities.

It may be concluded that, despite these shortcomings, the museum has prepared quality virtual programmes much appreciated by visitors, as documented by the numbers of visitors to the official social networks.

The adjustment of live programmes intended for a real studio to a virtual environment has given the authors a completely new perspective on education in the museum; under the circumstances, they applied a specific form of methodology in combination with established methods of museum pedagogy. It may be expected that even greater demands for quality virtual online programmes will come from society. This, undoubtedly, will result in a demand for specifically-specialised permanent museum personnel and for technical and material equipment in the museum.

Bratislava City Museum is founded on a mission: ***Holding the Future in our Minds for 152 Years*** and a vision which remains valid: the Museum has a future even in the virtual world. However, museum educators feel uneasy without having the option of working with real collection objects and visitors in real historical premises.

"This article and its parts have not been published and have not been submitted for publication in any other journal, proceedings or monograph."

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