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**'Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits' (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 27)**

**GD/EAC 46/06**

# „ART FOR ALL“

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***Seminar and Workshop***  
**READER –DRAFT**  
**Bundesblindenerziehungsinstitut Vienna,**  
**22 – 24 September 2006**

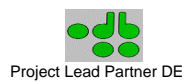


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## I. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<b>Experts</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Mr Cyrille Gouyette	Louvre Paris
Mr Matthieu Decraene	Louvre Paris
Mr Marcus Horley	Tate Modern Gallery
<b>Referenten</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Mr Siegfried Saerberg	Verein für Blinde und Kunst e.V. Köln
Anja Dörr	BLISTA
Ms Lorretta Secchi	Museum of Tactile Antique and Modern Painting, Anteros, Bologna
Mr. Markus Wolf	EBU (Europäische Blinde Union, France)
Ms. Asidera Dimitri	Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece (Griechenland)
Ms Brigitte Hauptner	Bundes-Blindenerziehungsinstitut Wien (Österreich)
Ms Daniela Mihaescu	Liceul pentru Deficienti de Vedere (Romania)
<b>Partner DE</b>	<b>Deutsche Blindenstudienanstalt e.V.</b>
	Headmaster
Mr Claus Duncker DE	
Ms Ulrike Schönhagen-Neumann DE	Teacher
Mr Wilfried Laufenberg DE	Teacher
Ms Waltraud Czieslik DE	Teacher
Ms Susann Haferkorn	Blista
Ms Irene Soltwedel-Schäfer	Blista
Mr Adolf Schäfer	Blista
Ms Tanja Biermann DE	Student Blista
Ms Annalena Knorrs DE	Student Blista
<b>Partner FR</b>	<b>L'Institut Montclair</b>
Mr Philippe Belseur	Teacher
Mr Vincent Brouard	Teacher
<b>Partner RO</b>	<b>Liceul pentru Deficienti de Vedere</b>
Ms Roxana Cziker	Teacher
Ms Liliane Birle	Teacher
Mr Bogdan Cristea	Student
Mr Viorel Micu	Student
Ms Florentina Popa	Student
Mr Ovidiu Tuduruta	Student
Ms Eموke Mate	Student



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<b>Partner EE</b>	<b>Estonian Foundation for the Visually Impaired</b>
Ms Ülle Lepp	Teacher
Mr Erik Loide	Teacher
<b>Partner GR</b>	<b>Lighthouse for the Blind - Tactual Museum</b>
Ms Zoi Geroulanou	Referentin
Ms Efi Ioannou	Teacher
<b>Partner AT</b>	<b>Bundesblinden-Erziehungsinstitut</b>
Ms. Susafne Cerepak	Österreichische Galerie Belvedere
Ms Susanne Alteneder	Headmaster
Mr Erich Schmid	Teacher
Ms Gerda Matthews	BBI- Teacher
Mr Horst Ganitzer	BBI Teacher
Ms Brigitte Andre-Schellner	Headmaster Museum
Ms Michaela Braunreiter	MAIN, Medienarbeit Integrativ, Journalist.
Ms Yasemin Acur	Student BBI
Mr Thomas Seidling	Student BBI
<b>Partner CR</b>	<b>TIFLOLOŠKI MUZEJ, Zagreb</b>
Ms Zeljka Bosnar Salihagic	Director



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## II. CONFERENCE READER

*Friday, 22th September 2006*

<b>18:00</b>	<b>Words of Welcome and Presentation of Participants</b>
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Ms Susanne Altenecker, Director of BBI Vienna welcomed the participants of the conference. Then Ms. Irene Soltwedel-Schäfer made a short summary about the project: "Art for All" , as well as the development , results and tasks that will be followed during the conference. Afterwards, each participant and institution in the conference did introduced themselves by a couple words.

<b>20:00</b> BBI	<b>Guided Tour of the Museum of Technical Facilities for the Blind in the</b>
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Saturday 23 September 2006

After a guided tour through the "Wiener Staatsoper" for Blind and partially signed impaired, the conference participants were invited to listen a nice musical piano play , which was made by the students of the BBI.

**11:00 am**

**Expert Presentations and discussions**

## **I. TOUCH TO DISCOVER: THE CULTURAL OFFER FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED AT THE LOUVRE MUSEUM**

[Mr Matthieu Decraene and Mr Cyrille Gouyette,  
Chargé du Développement des Publics Accessibilité/Handicap  
Louvre Museum , Paris](#)

This presentation aims to show that blind people can access three-dimensional (sculpture) and two-dimensional (painting) visual artworks if an interpretation -a "media-based experience"- is instituted. This is why the Louvre has searched various "enhanced" solutions, material as well as sensory, favoring the tactile modality to apprehend the collections. However, no matter what the mediation tools are, in compensating for access to the original sculpted artwork or paintings, the body remains the essential reference for the visually impaired. Not only their own bodies, with which they engage in the discovery of the artworks, but also the image that art gives them of their body. The primary theme is therefore that of the sculpted or painted body, through its numerous variations in art history.

I will first introduce the tactile space, which presents models - representations of the original - because sculpture offers the most significant tactile approach due to its three-dimensional nature. We will then see how we apprehend painting through relief drawings, and, in conclusion, we will see how the visually impaired can also produce images and recreate the artworks based on their tactile exploration of the artworks.

### **1. Experiencing a Sculpture**

Among the visual artworks presented at the Louvre, sculpture obviously offers the most adapted medium for the tactile transmission of formal, iconographic and stylistic information, because touching is done in the three-dimensional space. The sensory substitution of sight by touch provides cognitive information (transmission of shapes) as well as an aesthetic experience.

However, all of the sculptures in the collections cannot be touched for several legibility or conservation reasons:

- their monumental or miniature size



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- their lacunars aspect
- their fragile material or polychrome covering presenting a risk of alteration in case of contact of hands

This is why it is necessary to have recourse to the mediation of models, taking on a substitution role that gives access to the original work through a faithful reproduction.

### 1.1 A Mediation Through Modeling

Presentation of the Tactile Space:

The tactile exhibition space for the blind and visually deficient was instituted in 1995, within the Sculpture Department of the Louvre, on the initiative of its general curator, Mr. J.R Gaborit, and of the Cultural Department. This specific environment is accessible to all visitors, as it is integrated within the collections. The gallery is about 20 meters long by 4 meters wide, presenting plaster and resin models to scale. For the individual visitor's personalized choices, a specific ergonomic has been thought of:

- *Relief map at the entrance,*
- *Brail cartel in big characters,*
- *Sample of the original material,*
- *Handrail, pedo-tactile strip,*
- *Various presentation media* are put in place according to the size and type of sculpture
- *Turning plinths* for small and lighter sculptures, with a double access through a platform for taller sculptures,
- *Picture rails* for bas-reliefs,
- *Pedo-tactile areas* for monumental works. The shape of the sculpture is reproduced as a shadow on the floor, to delimitate a pedo-tactile space making it easier to define the volumes as one walks around it.
- *Special lighting* has been conceived to accentuate contrasts for the visually deficient. In addition, audio guides or specific group visits are offered as mediums for a better visit.
- *n accessible theme:* « Sculpted movement», presents the human body as essential reference. For a better “reading” of the shapes, bodies are chosen nude. The theme provides a repertoire of movement and gesture: *effort, running, dancing, taking off and falling.*
- *An approach to sculptural techniques* (marble hewing, bronze melting) and difficulties created.
- *Diversity of the destinations of sculpture* (exterior, funerary ...)
- *A selection of the museum's emblematic artworks:* Michelangelo's *The rebel slave*, Giambologna's *Mercury* or Houdon's *Diane*.

### 1.2. Reminder of the Modalities of Tactile Interpretation of a Volume.

Tactile interpretation is three-dimensional and done in close proximity to the artwork, inducing mobility around it. This investigation is *limited in space* because it depends on the body. It depends on the hand and arm span and body height. The work is experienced by approaching it from different angles, in relationship to one's own body. This interpretation is also *temporal* because it is successive and sequential, not simultaneous. Thus, understanding the shapes is not immediate but requires a certain lapse of time. An efficient experience of the work must be done in two stages :



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a. *global and synthetic* : the aim is to delimitate the artwork's volume with the span of one's arms and find points of references that will lead to recognize the shape and identify its subject, in reference to one's body.

b. *detailed and analytic*: the goal is here to go back to details and linger over them to refine the interpretation and apprehend the style.

These constraints on interpretation suppose a presentation of the artworks in a *limited space* where the works are close together. Only a few works can be experienced in this way because of how exhausting and time consuming tactile reading can be.

This *necessary proximity* of the viewer to the artwork induces a *more direct* and *objective* experience. It also enables to discover invisible details and can provide evidence regarding the making of the artwork such as tool marks indicating the sculptor's work, marks of fabrication reminding that it's a molding or alterations revealing the age of the original work.

*The first level* of interpretation consists in recognizing the shape. To do so, the blind visitor seeks reference points such as the feet or head of the figure, which constitute anchoring points from which the viewer can place the rest of the body. This calls for his/her capacity to reconstruct the shape in reference to *his/her own body*, to recognize the general attitude and to examine muscle or bone details. To make sure the visitor has understood perfectly well the model, it is preferable that he/she *mimes* the position.

*The second level of interpretation* supposes a detailed investigation, obliging an analytic interpretation of the overall surface, detail after detail. After having perceived the position and movement, hands try to understand the *stylistic characteristics*.

*For example, the Venus de Milo: the examination of the face conveys, In addition to the expression, the style of a realistic or idealized work. The straight nose of the Venus connects her to the classic style. The comprehension of this motif is easy to verify on the visitor's own nose to understand its idealized morphology.*

Perception of all these details is necessary to understand the artwork and its place in art history. This analysis requires time and a tactile skillfulness connected to the habit of touching. This habit enables the blind to retain the shapes and constitute his/her artistic references. But that requires a perfect recreation of these details and supposes the availability of real facsimiles.

### 1.3. Expected Qualities of Models

Thus, emotion rises from the replica of the shape, substitute of the original artwork. The *fidelity of the reproduction* is therefore essential. It must try to reconstitute with precision the age, history and even the original material of the work. The visitor should feel if a piece has become *altered* or is *perfectly preserved*, if it is *restored* or *fragmentary*. Accidents of the artwork, in this way restituted, enable to understand its history and stages of creation. The relief of Michelangelo's *The Rebel Slave* informs us on its incompleteness and the various tool marks enable us to follow the creation process, from the cutting of a stone block to making the flesh smooth. Yet, the problem of the reconstitution of the original materials remains because the epidermis of models isn't sufficient. The temperature of a bronze or marble sculpture cannot be evoked by plaster or resin. Trying to compensate for this lack, a sample of the original material is placed next to the model. A color patina restitutes the original material for visually deficient.

However, the possibility of a sensory substitute doesn't account to the fact that these facsimiles reproduce visual artworks, conceived to be seen more than touched. Transmission of the shape cannot be an exact equivalent because of these two modalities.

The *mediation of a seeing person is necessary* for the interpretation of a bas-relief. On bas-reliefs, figures are only partially represented, sometimes superposed to the point of overshadowing themselves because the composition obeys to visual codes considering a scene from only one point of view. This notion of point of view and presentation to the viewer is something the blind visitors can't get because they approach the artwork in the same way from either side. Thus, the goal is to explain to the person who doesn't see the conventions of two-dimension representation. In offering this diversity of representations, the tactile space tries to give the tools to understand representation in its two most current forms: two and three dimensional.

## 2. Interpreting an Image

Contrary to sculpture, paintings, drawings or engravings don't offer a tactile experience capable of transmitting information, because of their *two-dimensional nature*. It's why its access needs a tactile mediation, calling for a graphic line: relief drawing. *Thus, the tactile experience is digital*, essentially with the index.

### 2.1 Mediation through tactile medium

Mediation through relief drawing presupposes the translation of a painting, drawing or engraving into a graphic reproduction. *Variation in line relief substitutes to color variation* or degradation. Thus, it only reconstitutes formal aspects of the artwork, clarifying the composition. The outline alone shows volumes and space.

The *modality of tactile interpretation of relief* is digital and implies that :

- line is more informative than variation in color
- relief is more legible than hollow surfaces.

Unlike three-dimensional touch, *touch* is not here associated with an *aesthetic pleasure* linked with a texture, but *only to the recognition of the shape*. Texture must provide cognitive information and not substitute for a material, which explains the arbitrary codification of the materials.

There are several ways to put something into relief: thermo-inflation and serigraphy, which provide only two levels of relief, and embossment, which allows up to five and is closer to a bas-relief. Their use changes depending on their qualities : Thermo-inflation for an internal use, as empirical material, of a quick and cheap production but short-lived because *not very resistant*. Embossment and serigraphy for the publication of books, are more expensive but *durable*.

Unlike molding, relief drawing is dependent on various technical, syntactic and iconographic parameters.

*Techniques*; for an effective interpretation :

- Thermo-inflated drawings only allow two levels of relief
- two types of line: linear or dotted

- Two textures : smooth or weft
- Interrupting the line at every intersection

*Syntactic*; for a synthesis of the composition:

- *Line of the frame, primary, to delimitate the scene and to view proportions*
- *The outline, silhouette, to make the shape*
- *Hierarchy of the relief to distinguish the main shapes from details*
- *Reconstitution of the main lines by removing elements hiding others more important*

*Iconographic*; for a simple subject :

- The theme of the body, privileged element of reference, presented nude for an easier appreciation.
- Selection of the legible elements only, those essential to iconography.
- Simple composition: few figures, space without perspective.

*Goal*: stay as close as possible to the artwork and respect its representational conventions, stylistic characteristics of a civilization at a certain period of time.

However, the drawing alone remains a tool not easily accessible and cannot be left without commentary, which helps to decode it. Codes of two-dimensional representation are visual, thus unknown to blind people, and need to be explained to them.

Two possible interpretations:

- Guided interpretation: descriptive visit with tactile support in the museum
- autonomous interpretation: books for an access to the artwork outside the museum.

## 2.2 A Necessary Oral Description

### 2.2.1 Descriptive Visit

For the past two years, **tactile and descriptive presentations** of paintings, entitled « Around an Artwork », have been developed at the Louvre. The blind visitor is faced with the artwork for an hour in company of a lecturer. Conditions are those of the ordinary public, within the collections and during the opening hours of the museum. The goal is to allow the blind to constitute a **mental image as faithful as possible** to the painting in front of him/her. However, the description starts from a **representation** and not reality, which supposes that codes or conventions that govern it should be transcribed. It isn't enough to understand what is represented but **how** it is represented. The significance of verbal description lies within its **plastic analysis**. It enables to understand the nature of the image, its composition, lines or main shapes. But the verbal reconstitution isn't enough and it is necessary to add to it tangible and objective data that only touch can provide.

Three stages are necessary:

- Description through a guided discovery of the tactile drawing
- Plastic analysis of, and scientific commentary on, the artwork
- Reconstitution through mime

#### a. Description via a Guided Appreciation of the Tactile Drawing:

The lecturer helps locate the **key elements** of the artwork. They provide, on a reduced scale and in a **synthetic way**, the essential elements of the composition: main figures and some



significant details of setting. She/he completes the description of the artwork adding elements not present on the drawing, including colors. Verbal description supposes a choice of **precise and detailed**, as well as **analogical, vocabulary** in order to find references in the visitor's daily life. An example : Degas's *La Sortie De Bain*. After setting forth the subject, painter, date and dimensions of the artwork, the lecturer starts a description based on the relief drawing and not the original work. His/her **description begins with the plastic** and the composition of the image. He/she starts from a **point in space** and, in a **continuous and sequential way**, conducts the fingers and thoughts of each participant along the image's surface to assist them in mentally reconstituting space, depth and figures.

b. Commentary on the Artwork :

Next, the lecturer comments on the historical, technical and stylistic aspects of the artwork. Putting the work in its context is very important because it connects it to more accessible media such as literature.

c. Mime:

Lastly, if necessary and if the subject allows it, participants are invited to **mime the artwork**. With the lecturer's help, they take turns getting into the figures' position. This step presents the participants' own bodies : it calls for them to play a role in mimicking the gesture, expressions and attitudes of figures, transcribed in two-dimensions and governed by representation codes. Thus, they are introduced to notions of foreshortening, ellipses or masking. This presentation in situation is decisive for evaluating the comprehension of the artwork. However, if the interpretation of the lines of the relief drawing can only be done in an autonomous way, one can easily understand that **speech without a tactile media** couldn't explain the shapes either. Thus, one of the specificities of the image is the particular angle and centering chosen by the artist, which determines the viewer's place and what he/she sees. That's the subjective part presented by the artist. These visits correspond to a real demand of the public and turn out to be essential in a museum where painting collections occupy more than a third of the exhibition space. Unlike the models in the tactile space, accessible individually, this experience of painting necessitates the mediation of a conference-visit with the time contingencies and group dynamic that ensue from them. This is why the access of artworks through publications can offer another mediation.

2.2.2 A New Book Series For The Blind And Visually Impaired : « Another Regard »

This series approaches the museum's artworks through complimentary paths. The three modes of interpretation; visual, tactile and auditory, are indeed associated and enable the viewer to choose his/her way of accessing the contents of the book. The text is printed in large characters and in braille, but also recorded on a CD, placed at the end of the book. The relief image has a privileged place in the discovery of artworks or elements of a civilization, different than words. This access to ancient writings, using signs without brail equivalents, is established through touch. The first two titles of this collection are dedicated to two essential ancient writings, Mesopotamian and Egyptian, that the Louvre keeps numerous examples of within its collections.

The goal is not to learn to decipher the ancient characters but rather to understand the logic of how they work, and the history of their development, in order to know better two major antique civilizations at the origin of our western civilization. Thus, the first book « From Verb to Writing: The Invention of Writing in Mesopotamia » explains how a writing system, the cuneiform, was established and adopted by several cultures. Its evolution throughout three thousand years, leading to phonetic characters, forms the basis of our alphabet. With simple examples, the second title, « Hieroglyphs: Words of Gods in Pharaonic Egypt" provides an



understanding of how the Egyptian language works, where image substitutes for word. Thus, this book constitutes an approach to a civilization in its coherence and permanence.

These two titles couldn't be considered without images, for only they can reconstitute these signs of writing. However, the simple shapes of these signs lend themselves perfectly to a transfer in relief, because they are either engraved (cuneiforms characters), or sometimes engraved in relief (hieroglyphs). Presenting these signs in relief is therefore in accordance with their three-dimension nature.

In addition, these books constitute a parallel to two workshops, where participants put into practice the discovery of these writings. Participants make clay tablets where the relief drawing of hieroglyphs enables them to experiment writing gestures and to manipulate the different materials that are required.

The third title is on the representation of the human body, through the example of Olympic athletes on antique Greek vases. In effect, the human body is reduced to a silhouette with a simple line that enables an easy tactile apprehension of the work. The original line on clay is already in relief and requires a simple translation from clay to paper for its printing in a book. In addition, the athletes' nudity in Ancient Greece makes the apprehension of the body easier. The richness and precision of muscular details provides this iconography with landmarks that facilitate interpretation.

The fourth title is about the sculpted body, in correlation with the artworks presented in the tactile gallery. The objective is here to represent artworks from various angles: front, back, sides and top, in order to consider the volume. Following the example of the book on Greek vases, bodies are put into silhouettes, thus giving arbitrary outlines of three-dimension works to represent them synthetically in two dimensions.

A fifth title that will come out at the beginning of 2007 will be on the representation of nudes in French paintings from the XVIIth to XIXth century.

### 3. Making an Image

A training course in partnership with the Cité des Sciences of Paris and the CNEFEI offers blind people an aid in the appreciation of images. Conceived in four levels, it aims to provide the visually deficient the tools to identify and understand the visual codes that govern two-dimension representation. The first level explains codes of orthogonal representation; the second introduces human body representation in art, the third facial expressions and the fourth caricature. This program lasts two days and is offered both at La Villette and the Louvre.

The method consists of going from the tangible to the conceptual, or of apprehending three-dimension objects by understanding their representation in two-dimensions. During the program, exercises of reconstitution confirm the comprehension and assimilation of codes. Through mime, manipulation of a puppet, assembling magnets and finally drawing, participants are invited to recompose and conceptualize the three-dimension body representations they discovered. Drawing on three-dimensions (models) or two-dimensions (relief drawings) is experienced as both difficult, because new, and creative, because it allows a freedom in the line and the appropriation of the space of the sheet of paper.



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#### 4. Conclusion

Representation of the body remains the most accessible theme for visually deficient visitors because of the diversity of the Louvre's collections, sculptures, paintings or art objects and the relative directness of using one's own body as reference. With facsimiles, the blind visitor can apprehend artworks and reach artistic knowledge and aesthetic emotion. The sensory substitution of vision by touch doesn't offer a direct equivalent in the aesthetic apprehension but enables the appropriation of knowledge and pleasure from the contemplation of artworks. In addition, the mediation becomes profitable to all. Solutions imagined making up for the absence of sight brings to the rest of the public an additional approach to artworks. The tactile modality offered in a specific space and the oral description refined with a detailed vocabulary, enrich the perception and attention that visitors and employees of the museum give to artworks. This is why the Louvre hopes that it's tactile exhibition travels; so the greatest number can have access to it and also to benefit from reactions to the exhibition in order to make tactile mediation richer.

Mr Decraene went on with some facts about France. There are between 80.000 and 100.000 visually impaired people living in France. He further mentioned that the Louvre museum is closely linked with an Organisation working in this field. They are also trying to build up a network (with restaurants etc.), so that visually impaired people can get a better access to public buildings. They further developed a mailing programme, to help blind people get information about the programme/ the guided tours into the Louvre. They also try to support small museums that have only small resources, and get in touch with them in order to exchange experiences and knowledge about the issue with visually impaired people.

*Discussion after the presentation:*

Mr Gouyette pointed out that the Louvre has a couple of sponsors that make it possible to do all these different projects and give the visually impaired people the needed access. That is why sponsoring is a very important point.

## II. METHOS USED BY TATE MODERN MUSSEUM TO MA BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND ACCES TO ART

*Mr Marcus Horley, Tate Modern,  
London (Curator of Access)*

Horley spoke about the architecture from the Tate Gallery and he pointed out that the builing is very accessible for disabled people. He mentioned that the Tate Gallery have "touch-tours" by guides who are very firm with the Gallery and who have to pass a training section into the gallery. The Touch-Tour introduces visually impaired visitors to the thematic arrangement of the displays and engage with ideas, materials and techniques of art since 1900. That way there will be given a better understanding and access to all pieces of art, paintings, sculptures, new media, etc.



The Tate Gallery provides 5 methods to get a better access and interpretation for the people.

### 1. Touching original sculpture :

The blind people are able to touch the sculptures with special gloves.

### 2. Verbal description :

The guides are using their verbal skills to make a description and give the people several information, that can lead them to interpretate the art pieces correctly.

### 3. and 4. Simulation/ Handling objects

They use simulation and handling objects, for example with texture to give the blind people are better access to art.

### 5. Computer Animation :

They have a computer programm, called "i-map", where people can get access over the internet. That way they can change for example the brightness or the contrast from a picture and give so especially partially blind people a better access to the paintings. Further they use a multimedia-system (PDA-like) that can guide the blind and partially sighted people through the gallery and provide them with information, like subtitles.

He also pointed out that it is important for Tate Modern to bring a wide palette of art closer to blind and partially sighted people and not only one aspect of art. That is why they developed the five mentioned methods.

## III. INTERDISCIPLINARY AND INTEGRATED COMPREHENSION OF A WORK OF ART

*Dr Loretta Secchi,  
(Curator)*

*Museum of Tactile Antique & Modern Painting,  
Bologna*

### 1. Abstract

Reading an image endowed with aesthetic value for both sighted and partially sighted people (congenital, belated blind people and partially sighted people) means facing the problem of the form endowed with aesthetic value by means of recognizing that it performs several functions: poetic-expressive, educational, narrative, informative, cultural-historical, psychological and speculative. Formalism and content analysis, from the late XIXth century onward, have both discussed over the value and importance of interdisciplinary and integrated comprehension of a work of art, over the cognitive role of the interpretative act as well as over a history of art conceived as a science, as a history of ideas, as a display of the creative thought as well as a history of the experiential and cognitive relationship between men and the world and with its transfigured representation. On the basis of these



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principles it is possible to follow a process which depicts the individual and collective nature of the relationship existing between men and art and the usefulness of an experience having psycho-rehabilitative potentials which are able to strengthen the imaginative processes of man leading to the refinement of intuitive faculties and to oriented internalization of the aesthetic contents of art. The starting point of this process is education to constant improvement of visual, tactile and ideally synaesthetic senses, by taking into account all inevitable variations and corrections aimed at partially filling the visual deficit. In reviewing the interpretative methodologies applied to didactics directed to blind and partially sighted people at the Anteros Tactile Museum of Ancient and Modern Painting inside the F. Cavazza Institute for Blind one perceives the comparison between the cognitive-perceptive experience generated by the retinal vision and the haptic-perceptive experience generated by tactile vision. This is not meant to find a simplistic equivalence between optic and tactile perception but rather to identify some common ground between the organisation of optic and haptic visual processes. From this will originate the observation on the usefulness of a progressive reading of the work of art and on the mediation offered by the reproduction of the work of art thus becoming a didactic tool, a mould and a technical relief for a systematic approach towards the tactile exploration of the plastic model and towards the overall comprehension of the image, in order to instill an aesthetic experience by integrating the sensorial and intellectual experiences.

## 2. Presentation

At the Anteros Museum one can perform tactile explorations adjusted to the different needs of visually impaired people. The methodological application of integrated and progressive reading of the plastic model reproducing the painting, imposes different types of tactile exploration as well as targeted adaptations of reading paths (trajectories of the hand). Autonomy has to be guaranteed by reading simultaneously the relief model and the description of the work of art which explains the position of hands and describes the content of the work itself. Each work of art being transposed into a relief model is described three times (this means three different levels of understanding of the work of art: basic level, average level, and advanced level). Educating tactile recognition is of a paramount importance: when it comes to aesthetic experience of the blind the approach is to choose both hands, a synchronous reading and an integrated tactile and oral technique. In this manner, blind people manage to have a mental vision by integrating several sensorial perceptions, by using the tool of synesthesia and knowledge of the concepts governing the visual act intended as a cognitive and interpretative act.

Special attention is given to the training of guides who must have an interdisciplinary knowledge of History of art and master the psycho-perceptive, psycho-cognitive, formalistic and iconographic-iconological fundamentals of art pedagogy.

The guide's role is very important but it has to be discreet and his/her intervention has to be careful and limited.

An essential role is played by the integration between sighted and blind people towards knowledge of the work of art and educational integration.



Consequently, it is necessary to understand the meaning and function of life-long education to senses as well as to a balanced development of perceptive and semantic components implicit in the understanding of the work of art.

We supply all museum staff members, teachers and researchers with basic information on relief techniques for different age groups and different severity of visual impairment.

Cognitive process controls are carried out by observing autonomous tactile readings performed by blind people who have autonomously rebuilt the setting by visualizing and describing it verbally, starting from a tactile reading and the simultaneous description of subjects and/or modeling with clay the mental image formed.

The different tactile behaviours observed and filed lead to evaluate the different needs and requests of all visitors and require a constant improvement and correction of tactile exploration techniques as well as a constant review of all methods used in tactile translation of pictorial forms; in doing this we must consider tactile thresholds and partial equivalences between optic visual behaviours and tactile visual ones.

The training nature of a previously instinctive and later cognitive approach carries out several functions:

- \* the consolidation of cognitive and intuitive-imaginative processes endowed with psycho-rehabilitative value;
- \* the stratification and memory conservation of mental images and of their informative and poetic content.

In order to fully understand a work of art both sighted and blind visitors have to activate cognitive processes originated by senses and bound to being emotionally and rationally processed by our brain. Consequently, reading a work of art means approaching it not only instinctively but also rationally. The problem linked to the understanding of the form and the informative, expressive, poetic and spiritual role of art, have originated, in the course of history, questions to which psychology of art, psychology of perception, aesthetics, critics and methodology of historic-artistic research, have tried to give possible answers. Disciplines such as art didactics and psychology have concentrated upon the possible ways of approaching a form endowed with aesthetic value and the theoretical nature of the connection with art. Such disciplines can choose to extract and summarize many of the interpretations offered by comparative and interdisciplinary study of artistic image.

These different approaches, of psycho-perceptive, formalist, stylistic, historical-content related, semiotic, iconographic-iconological nature ideally draw the many faces as well as the proteiform nature of an artistic expression, thus unveiling that stratification of meanings and interpretations residing in all visual arts. To the individual and collective function of making and visiting art one has to add the possibility for an individual to create a mental image of the work of art enjoyed as a series of several elements: a synthesis of sharable conventions and creative functions of the observer's thought.

If we are to understand the form, we have to perceive its morphology first: contours, outline, volumes, surfaces, by taking into account the observation point of the subject involved. The substance of the form is the symbolic content of the form itself, whereas the communicative-informative content is a conventional one. The surrounding and recognizable content is a feature of art as well as the symbolic and intimate content

that we can perceive in it. In art we can recognize the primary subjects endowed with conventional contents and culturally sharable to finally understand the deepest archetypal contents. In the same way, the understanding of an artistic image, intended as an expressive-poetic form, requires us to consider the concept of idea which allows ideal and real to meet in the way it takes physically place.

The present historical-artistic methodology, supported by pedagogic-cognitivist choices adopted in the didactics of arts, recognizes the essence of differentiated methods which are nonetheless linked one another as a useful contribution to the theoretic and technical nature of critical tools, in terms of knowledge and distinction. Formalist approach, whose nature is linked to pure visibility, joins a panofskian-related aesthetic and content reading which is divided into three different levels of reading and in-depth study of the image: the preiconographic level, the iconographic level and the iconological level.

As theoretician of pure visibility Hildebrand argues in his famous essay *Das Problem der Form* that "All our experiences originate from touch: even though it is actually a simultaneous touch performed by hands and eyes. By touching, we draw some movements corresponding to the shape of objects and the representation of some given movements (in other words a whole of specific movements) is tantamount to a plastic representation."

Tactile qualities should not lead to saturation by accumulating information (an excess of texture) the result being a tactile overexcitement which would, in turn, lead to an incoherent and chaotic overlapping of perception and images corresponding to the emotions provoked by the tactile experience. This explanation specifically concerns the problem of transposing not only a painting into a relief model but also the substance intended as a coding of different tactile qualities made of different materials.

Such methodological criteria underpin not only optic and tactile vision but also aesthetic-intellectual understanding of the work of art by sighted, partially sighted and blind people. Following the same reasoning, with different perceptive behaviours though, sighted and visually impaired people are given a didactics specifically designed to fit to the real conditions of sensory, cognitive and cultural access. Visitors suffering from a visual impairment are proposed a relief model reading which has been adjusted and designed to fit to individual reading times, clearly emphasized, to synesthetic integrations and specific personalizations of all descriptive methods and mental reconstruction of the work of art involved.

Hands can then follow privileged eye trajectories (lines of force, essential schemes) by rebuilding them thanks to the haptic experience in order to achieve the same hermeneutic objectives as those of image understanding in sighted people.

Hildebrand defines touch and vision as the two opposite ends of visual activity and considers them as being antithetic. He insists on the fact that these are two types of pure visual activity (this is where it becomes essential for our purpose) which are nonetheless inseparable and present in any perceptive experience of the image.

Visual activity consists in an optic-synthetic vision as well as in a tactile-analytical one.

These two moments coexist within the visual experience and in their succession they fully determine the act of vision.



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Seeing the whole means then restoring the composition architecture, its internal, hidden or sometimes bearing structure.

Hildebrand defines tactile the vision which follows the representation of plastic forms by means of lines witnessing, even if encoded, the ordinary and “ideal” (because they are to be preferred) movements of the eye (pupil) in order to understand the composition as a whole.

For congenital blind people, reading a work of art (in form of a painting transposed in relief model) is an experience which stimulate the understanding of the form structure in painting and which is here intended as a composition made of direction schemes, relationships and single features of forms, thus neglecting colour and atmosphere. Colour, even if with a certain degree of approximation, is considered in optic and tactile reading by a partially sighted observer in choosing a relief presenting appropriate chromatic features.

This is the reason why such an analytical and realistic sensory tool as touch, used to especially perceive full relief shapes without considering the point of view, is asked to create haptic movements and memories of tangible outlines and contours of the composition aimed at setting up a graph and at overlapping, by grafting, of more detailed information related to single aesthetic and morphologic formal qualities of all subjects reproduced in the composition from a single or several perspectives (perspective analysis as a symbolic shape, artifice or natural perspective). Consequently, if we are to understand a path of progressive reading of an image endowed with aesthetic value, it becomes of a paramount importance to offer an example of optic and haptic reading.

Between logic intelligence expressed by means of rational cognition of the form and sensitive intelligence expressed by means of emotional understanding of the form there is an intersection along with a functional complementarity.

The interpretative act which involves the vast majority of sensory and mental activity of man is symbolically reintroduced in front of a work of art and reflects the behaviour of an individual with respect to culture, reality, research of sense.

Those who have been taught to touch with eyes the pictorial composition reading will not consider it anymore as a perfunctory experience but a well-balanced synthetic and analytical one. Cognition will not be considered as fragmentary decomposition but integration of parts, the emotional experience will not be considered as reveries but consolidation of psycho-rehabilitative and cognitive-interpretative functions of imagination coupled with the understanding of all phenomena perceived and visualized, and the image understanding the activation of a process applicable to the many faculties and competences involved in the interpretative process of man. The link with history of art and the pedagogic-interpretative methodology aims at expanding the imaginative and reconstructive possibilities starting from the knowledge of a proteiform and versatile reality similar to human nature and to the intuitive and rational expression of cognitive behaviours.



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### *Discussion after the presentatio*

During the presentation there were a couple of miss-understandings between the blind and the seeing participants of the conference. So some detailed explanations/ descriptions were necessary to give the blind a better understanding/ access to the art shown in the presentation.

#### Questions:

- How do you want to show the blind an atmosphere with a relief?

*Expert:* She says that blind people can understand lines and space but no atmosphere because it can not be described/ translated through materials.

- Is it ok for the experts that the pieces of art are not replicated 1:1 to make them accessible for visually impaired people?

*Expert:* It is not possible to make a one to one copy from the pieces of art. But they have to make them accessible to the blind and that way you have to accept also small changes from the original. But they are trying to show the original as good and close as possible.

#### [Ms Dimitra Asideri, Manager of the Tactile Museum for the Blind, Athens](#)

It is a great pleasure for us to attend this seminar and share our experiences with all of you.

The accessibility in the field of art and cultural life is very important for the blind and partially sighted people. In Greece the last years we have made a great progress in this field. We must admit that the fact that we have organized the Olympic Games 2004, gave us the opportunity to proceed programs that had as a aim to satisfy the special needs of blind persons and give them the opportunity to realize the richness and the aesthetic perfection of the treasures of cultural heritage and the richness of art.

I will present you the tactual museum in Athens which was founded in 1984 by the Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece. The idea was born of the new perception that the great personalities of pictorial art and international organizations had shown in order to pay attention to the education and the development of the sensations of visually impaired people aiming at reassuring their accessibility to the richness of the classical art treasures. That is how tactual museums with replicas from the most representative creations of art, were created. Our country with its exquisite cultural heritage could not be excluded of this praiseworthy international effort. That was only the beginning. All these years we try to bring new ideas and new sculptures to give the possibility to the blind and partially impaired people to explore more and enjoy new items.

Due to the earthquake of 1999 the tactual Museum was closed for four years and opened again in March of 2004.

Lighthouse for the blind is an association of private initiatives and it operates under the legal form of a specially recognized non-profit association. It was founded in 1946 and it is under supervision of the Ministry of health and welfare. It's main goal is the provision of social services to the visually impaired people, their support through multiple activities and



development of their other skills to the higher possible degree in order to succeed in their private, professional and social rehabilitation.

The tactual Museum of the Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece disposes a rich collection of statues made of plaster, bas-relief statues, vessels and useful artifacts. They all are exact copies of the original works made of marble and copper which are displayed in the museums of Greece, such as the National Archaeological Museum, the Acropolis, Delphi, Olympia, Heraklion Museums and the Museum of Cycladic art monuments at the 5th before Jesus age, in mould and the 3 different columns, Corithian, Dorik and Ionik style.

Blind people of the country and from overseas, but also groups of children and adults, can tactually realize the greatness, the beauty, the richness and the aesthetic perfection of the treasures of our heritage. At the same time the seeing visitors, especially children, become sensitive to subjects of blindness.

The children are urged to touch and feel the exhibits and try to conceptualize the sculptures by touch. The use of masks during the educational programs help the sighted children to have a better understanding of the problems visually-impaired individuals encounter.

It is very important to try and touch a sculpture. With the fingerprints you can explore all the details of the sculpture, details that mostly the eye cannot catch. Sighted individuals have learned to pass through a museum quickly giving the minimal attention required to see the object at hand. Most of the sighted people haven't learned how to use their hands and especially their touch.

The last years we have tried through collaborations to pass the idea to other museums in the country to try and give the possibility to blind people to touch exhibits of different periods. Most of the museums have several items of each period. Giving the opportunity to touch some of them, the feeling of touch is great. It is quite different to touch an original piece than to touch replicas.

In 1988 the tactual museum recieved the "Prize of the European museum of the year" among 70 other European museums. In 2004 it received the "Award for realizing programs of accessibility" among 12 organizations and other museums from the Greek federation of the associations of friends of the museum.

### Discussion after the presentation:

**Question 1:** Do you also show the exponents for seeing children?

**Answer 1:** Yes. We want to make the seeing children/ people also sensible for the way blind persons experience art.

**Question 2:** Are the same materials used for the replicas as used in the originals?

**Answer 2:** No. It's plaster. Otherwise it would be too expensive. But for example, if a piece of art is made of marble, they put a little piece of marble next to the replica and explain that that's the material the piece is made off. It's naturally not the same feeling, but this way they are trying to make the experience as close to the original as possible.

**Question 3:** Do you also use masks ?



**Answer 3:** The blind visitors sometimes do not accept a guide that is not blind. They want that the guide is "in the same situation". That's very important for them.

[Ms. Zeljka Bosnar Salihaqié, Typhological Museum, Zagreb](#)

At the start, I would like to say that I visited Museo Tattile in Bologna last weekend and met with Mrs. Loretta Secchi, who let me know about the holding of this conference. There were only a few days to prepare for this trip, along with all my other obligations, but I would like to present the Typhological Museum in Zagreb and its activities to you at this time.

**Typhological Museum in Zagreb**

The TM is a special museum which holds, collects, researches and exhibits materials related to people with special needs, especially those with visual impairment. The gathering of this collection was started by the first Croatian typhlopedagogue Vinko Bek at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A great crusader for the rights of blind people, he founded the first Institute for Blind Children and was the editor and author of the first Croatian magazines dealing with typhological issues. He named his private collection the "Croatian Blind Museum" even though it was not a museum.

The Museum was founded in 1953 in Zagreb as the Typhological Museum of the Association of the Blind of Yugoslavia, and from 1991 its founder is the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia.

The Museum is located in the centre of the city and stretches over 650 square meters. It employs ten staff members including curators, a museum pedagogue, a documentation specialist, an archivist, a museum technician/photographer and administrative personnel. The majority of professional associates are experts from the fields of special education, orientation and mobility, museology and art history.

The Museum's holdings are organized in several collections:

1. collection of objects – comprises objects which were used by blind people in education, rehabilitation and everyday life
2. art collection – artworks made by blind amateur artists or academically trained artists
3. photography collection
4. ophthalmology collection (from the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century)
5. archives

We have also a library with 7000 items.

**Specific features for exhibiting museum items and adaptation of publications for people with visual impairment**

When exhibiting objects we pay attention in particular to the special needs of people with visual impairment which includes the following:

- catalogue published in enlarged print
- catalogue published in Braille alphabet
- catalogue available in auditive form
- inscriptions belonging to exhibits published in Braille alphabet and enlarged print



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- audio-guide through the exhibition
- the exhibited items are connected by floor stripes with a texture different from the rest of the floor in order to enable blind persons to move through the exhibition independently
- some of the exhibits also have large-size photographs (1 meter) to enable the visually impaired to gain a better insight into a particular work, etc.

## Accessible art at the Tactile Gallery of the Typhlological Museum

The exhibitions of the Tactile Gallery series – as a special form of the Typhlological Museum’s exhibit activities – are intended not only for the blind and visually impaired, but for everyone. Beginning with the 60s of the twentieth century, the Tactile Gallery of the Typhlological Museum has endeavoured to show the artistic work of the blind, self-taught, as well as of sighted sculptors from the art academy through its series of exhibitions that focuses on the approach, adaptation and ways of making art objects accessible to the blind. The space itself, the ways of communicating with the museum object on display, the manner of exhibition as well as the publications that are issued here are all adapted to persons with visual impairment, and for whom this type of approach is especially important and necessary. The museum standard of “You may look, but don’t touch!” does not apply here as every object is set up to be accessible by touch.

A multisensory approach allows for an awareness of art adapted to people with special needs and the spectrum of biopsychosocial structures for those who cannot see the opportunity of enjoying a world of different perceptions by using tactile/kinesthetic senses through direct contact with the exhibited objects. What remains for us to do is to find new ways in bringing the *visual piece* closer to those who cannot see, giving the gift of *music* to those who cannot hear, giving *information* to those who cannot understand.

Sculpture itself elicits an intensive tactile impression through the obvious message of objective reality. In a certain way, it allows for a connection between the creator of the artwork, the artwork itself and the person who is touching the artwork and it can serve as a specific media in therapeutic communication. Thus in contemporary somatotherapeutic and psychotherapeutic approaches this can be viewed in the function of creative therapy. Our first contact with the world, before we could even see, hear or taste, was tactile – through our own bodies or with that of the mother. This type of contact is, undoubtedly, significant even in the satisfying of the needs for so-called psychosocial balance, inclusion, as a psychosocial doctrine for rehabilitation and the values of self-realization. Through the enabling of direct contact with the artistic creation of the sculptor, the various areas of blind creation are presented, as well as the possibility of experiencing and interpreting an artwork.

## New permanent exhibition at the Typhlological Museum in Zagreb

Due to the very successful presentation of the museological concept and concept of a permanent exhibition and also thanks to the skills and capabilities of the Museum’s management team, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia accepted the Concept and began financing the Adaptation and Renovation Project of the Typhlological Museum. Work on the building itself was begun in September 2006 and is expected to be completed by the end of 2007.

The aim of this work is to bring the public’s attention to the only Croatian museum and one of the rare museums of its kind in Europe involved with people with special needs, especially with the visually impaired, and to the strategy of its development.

The Typhlological Museum in Zagreb, founded in 1953, is planning on opening its fourth permanent exhibition on the occasion of the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding. In keeping with

new museological tendencies, in the Statement on the Museum's Work we have conceived the museological concept and the concept of the permanent exhibition as being modular and interactive.

The new permanent exhibition will be shown through two thematic entities of which the first is related to visual impairment and is intended for sighted visitors. Its integral part, a dark room, through the simulation of blindness will evoke the inability of receiving visual information. The second entity, Care of the Visually Impaired, is intended for all visitors and will be presented through the following modules:

- Origins of the care of and development of institutional caring for the visually impaired and the role of the typhlopedagogue Vinko Bek
- Everyday life at the Institute for Upbringing of Blind Children in Zagreb (film reconstruction)
- Development of script for the blind (items from the Museum's holdings)
- The visually impaired and art (works by blind amateur artists, items from the Museum's holdings)

The interactivity of the exhibition will be achieved with the placing of information points with every thematic unit which will enable the active participation of all future visitors.

Finally at the end, I would especially like to thank Mrs. Loretta Secci, the reason I am here today, Mr. Cirille Gouyette who made it possible to show a wonderful exhibition of items from the Louvre's Tactile Gallery at our Museum in Zagreb and which we adapted to make it accessible to the blind and visually impaired, and finally to Mrs. Irene Solweder-Schafer who gave us all the necessary information connected to this conference in the shortest time possible.

At the end she was showing around some materials they work with, for example relief pictures.

### [Mr Siegfried Saerberg, Verein Blinde und Kunst e.V., Cologne](#)

Mr Saerberg wants to talk about the projects he did over the last 10-15 years.

His organization tries to go new ways in making art accessible for blind people. One idea was to present pieces of art in the dark ("Sinnenfinsternis" as eclipse of the senses). He pointed out that this exhibition was a big success because it was a new way to experience art and strengthened cognitive skills beyond the limits of the eyes. He further pointed out some aims they are after: To make art more accessible to blinds and also to integrate them in a better way into the society. Generally, he said that you have to combine methods to be able to reach these goals. "Art of all" seems to him better than "Art for all" because it better expresses the goal of the integration of visually impaired individuals into the society, for example as an artist. Another project they initialized was making art accessible over the ear. They tried to show the content of a painting for example over sounds. He also mentioned to go on with the work together with blind artists and try to have a sustainable benefit for the society, especially for the visually impaired.

**Es fehlt die lange Fassung von Herrn Saerberg**

### [Discussion after the presentation:](#)



As an answer from Ms. Soltwedel-Schäfer he gave the following advices for the planned exhibition in Marburg in may next year:

- find a curator
- find pupils that are interested
- find people to join the project, who are blind

[Mr. Markus Wolf, European Blind Union, Vienna](#)

He said that we heard some great speeches/ presentation from the experts today. But he also pointed out that that is not the general case in Europe. He made a survey throughout 7 countries (D, F, UK...) and can tell that there a very big differences between the museums and the way and quality they gave access to art for the blind and partially impaired people. He said that it would be a great step to spread out the possibilities which give blind and partially sighted people a better opportunity to get the access to art in a sufficient way.

Discussion after the presentation:

**Question 1:** Mrs Soltwedel-Schäfer thanked Mr Wolf for being here. The European Commision set up a high level of anti-discrimination. We also want to take this topic seriously and already won members of the European Parliament, for example Ms. Lissy Groener. She pointed out that the European Parliament will discuss the aspects he was talking about, also concerning the financial support. And she is glad to invite Mr. Wolf to the European Parliament in Bruessel to have an efficient discussion with the politicians about the topic Blinds and Art.

**Answer 1:** Mr. Wolf thanked Mrs. Soltwedel-Schäfer for the invitation and said that he will be pleased to share his knowledge and support her in any way he can.

**Closing words by Mr Wolf:** A picture can speak more than thousands words. So paint a picture and make it accessible.

Sunday 24 September 2006

10:00-11:00

Resuming the results of the two discussions



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## Ms Irene Soltwedel-Schäfer, EU-Project Coordinator of the Blista (EUCOM)

At the beginning Mrs. Soltwedel-Schäfer gave a short overview about the program for this day. Further, Anja Dörr gave a summary about the essay "Design for everybody concrete" from Rüdiger Leidner, Commission Brussels.

### **Design for all concrete – possible ways for implementation at exhibitions and museums**

The concept of barrier - freeness was originally directed at equal access of disabled people to social life and only during the whole discussion it was recognized that the creation of more barrier – freeness also serves other groups in society. One formative sentence in this context is:

A barrier free accessible environment is compulsory for 10% of society, necessary for 30 – 40 % and comfortable for 100%<sup>1</sup>.

This ranking needs to be reversed if you take a look at the access of disabled people to designed spheres of life, to buildings, as well as to products and services.

- (1) the main goal is the usability of designed spheres of life through all members of society.
- (2) to reach this goal, they need to be physically accessible as well as – which is important especially for blind/visually impaired or learning-disabled users - findable.
- (3) if they are not like this a priori, then barrier – freeness needs to be created through the reduction of barriers or the establishment of contrastive and tactile orientation guides.

If you apply this approach to exhibitions or museums, it implies that all information needs to be offered over two channels – visually and acoustically - for blind/visually impaired and deaf visitors.

Good beginnings for that could be found lately in the Sandworld 2006 in Travemünde/Germany, as well as in the special exhibition "Understand Egypt" (Egyptian Museum Munich). In both cases, audio tours were offered which contained special information for particular visitor groups. In addition, exhibits were equipped with transmitters that activated an announcement as soon as the visitor approached the sample. In Munich, the exhibition was also equipped with a tactile leading line on the ground which guided the visitor along the exhibits. Without needing a blindman's

stick, the visitor could use both hands to touch the samples or read the Braille information. Another positive effect in Munich was that the exhibits were copies that had been enlarged or minimized in order to give the visitor an impression of the overall picture through touching.

Organizationally, it is recommended to appoint an accessibility coordinator who takes over the following important tasks preparation of an accessibility plan initiate and maintain an exchange of experiences between members of staff organize seminars for staff e.g. how to interact with disabled visitors represent the museum and exchange experiences with similar institutions active in this field.

<sup>1</sup> Neumann, Peter: Barrierefreier Städtetourismus; www.neumann-consult.com.



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These are just a few examples but absolutely necessary. Are these experiences you share – What is your point of view?

### Discussion afterwards:

Mr Horley pointed out that a lot of businesses are interested in sponsorship of the topic accessibility because they also get something in return, publicity for example. Mrs Soltwedel-Schäfer said that this could be an important point for the discussion at the European Parliament in Brussels. Because at the one hand they want that the museums implement projects/ programs for more accessibility. But on the other hand the financial framework is always very small. So sponsorship might be an important way or possibility to get financial support and to make the better access to art/ museums for visually impaired people possible.

### Statements from the partners/ participants about the conference:

Mrs Zeljka Bosnar Salihagić from Croatia pointed out that it was a pleasure for her to be here at the conference and that she is looking forward to come with her colleague to the conference/ exhibition in Marburg in May next year.

Mrs Asideri said that the conference was a great possibility to exchange knowledge and ideas and that she would be glad to go on with the work.

Mr Horley pointed out that combining methods for giving visually impaired people a better access to art is very important, like Mr Saerberg already mentioned the day before. So this conference might help to learn from each other, exchange ideas and select the best methods.

Mr Decraene mentioned that it was very good to get to know other ideas/ methods, developed by the participants of the conference how to improve the accessibility for the blind. He pointed out that the communication between the partners from the project is very important to get the best out of the project and give the best possible access to the visually impaired people.

Mr Saerberg pointed out that the integration of blind people is necessary and very important to make the project/ accessibility successful.

**11.00 am: Coffee break**



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After a short coffee break three pupils from Romania and the BBI said a couple of words and gave back their impressions about the conference. They were really impressed and were proud to take part in the conference. For them it was the first time to work in the framework of EU-experience and they want to continue this process and bring the experience to their schools .

After that Mrs Ülle Lepp from Estonia also said some words about her impressions from the conference. She added that she would be glad to continue the work on the important topic the conference was all about. She is also looking forward to the exhibition in Marburg next year and mentioned that the estonian Minister is supporting their work about accessibility.

### Mr Dunker, BLISTA

thanked Eucom for organizing the conference and added some words about the next steps in the project. Organizing the conferebce : May 2007 , 11.-13./ to bring together the pilot exhibition "Art for All"

He further said that the speeches on Saturday were very impressive and inspiring. And that he is really looking forward what the partners of the project will build up until next year to the conference/ exhibition in Marburg. He mentioned that there are two possible locations for the exhibition, either the "Kunsthalle" or the museum of the university. But he also mentioned that there is only little time left until May 2007. He said that it will be a kind of a pilot-exhibition that might only be the beginning and that way it has such an important character.

Ms. Soltwedel-Schäfer added that we got the confirmation from the Museum in Munich and the partner in Italy of the partication in May 2007 in Marburg . The date for the exhibition will be **11th to the13th of May in 2007.**

Mr Horley said that the Tate Gallery will be glad to support the exhibition. Also the partner from Croatia said that they will give some materials for the exhibition. The greek partners also want to give some replicas and touchable pieces to the exhibition, for example the Hill of Acropolis. Mr Gouyette mentioned that they are also glad to give some materials.

Mrs Soltwedel-Schäfer thanked the partners for being at the conference and the working together. She said that the goals of the project are very well implemented now and that she is looking forward to the following tasks.

### **11:45 Final speech**

### Mrs Alteneder, BBI

said that she is very glad that everybody had a good time in Vienna. Accessibility is a very important topic and that maybe through the project some opinions can be changed and people will get more sensible for visually impaired people and society can put down barriers for these people.



The project is supported by the  
European Union