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"CLOSE(D) TO MEET YOU"

(communications activities during museum renovation works)

May 2003

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AFTERWRD (November 2006)

Even recently museologists and experts have shown interest in this report. We thus decided to put it online, together with the report on the possible role of the Italian Cultural Institutes (only available in Italian language) in promoting the New Egyptian Museum as well as the system of the Savoy residencies.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Survey objectives

The renovation/expansion/upgrading of a museum of international standing, that is also the star attraction of a museum district in the historic heart of a major city, may cause problems in the short-to-medium-term. But such a project may also offer opportunities that, if appropriately exploited, may translate into long-term benefits.

Such renovation works not only inconvenience residents, but also deprive the community, wholly or in part, of access to the museum's cultural patrimony. At the same time, it may have a negative impact externally by impoverishing the museum's physical (and cultural) environment.

The damage done to a community by depriving it (even for a short time) of its cultural patrimony, is particularly significant in the case of museums that house ethnographic collections, whose origins reside in other countries. While, in general terms, the "repatriation" of ethnographic material held by Western museums to their "legitimate owners", may not be possible, still less desirable, it remains the ethical duty of those who hold such material, to recognise that the ethnographic patrimony we house is not ours alone, but ideally belongs to the entire world community, which is entitled to the reassurance that it is being conserved carefully and appropriately displayed[1].

For its part, any negative impact externally is particularly undesirable at a time of economic sluggishness and high unemployment.

That, anyway, appears to be the background to the renovation work planned on Turin's Egyptian Museum, which is the focal point of the city's museum system.

[1] Cf. Pinna G., *Il rimpatrio dell'obelisco*, in "Nuova Museologia", the Official Journal of the Italian Committee of ICOM (International Council of Museums), no. 6, June 2002.

An effective, targeted communications strategy that involves everyone - local residents, the rest of the city's population, tourists, the cultural establishment and the wider community - in the project, can transform an inconvenience into a resource.

A communications strategy can serve:

a) to explain the reasons for the inconvenience;
b) to make the local, national and international communities feel involved in the project;
c) to create a mood of complicity, curiosity and expectation, powerful enough to make the eventual official opening a high profile event, while also strengthening the identity of the museum and significantly and lastingly raising its international profile and prestige, with obvious benefits for its revenues, not to mention the quality and numbers of its visitors.

The primary aim of the present research that has been entrusted to Ires-Piemonte and conducted with assistance from the CRT Foundation and the Regional Government of Piedmont, was the identification of guidelines for a possible communications plan, to be adopted during the imminent expansion/upgrading work to be carried out on Turin's Egyptian Museum.

Communications activities during the renovation works

A substantial lack of specialist literature on this subject, led us to attempt an empirical approach which has produced results we consider positive, in terms of both the feedback received and at heuristic level.
Operationally, ours was a two-pronged approach: we contacted museum professionals in Italy and abroad and we also got in touch with Italian Institutes of Culture Abroad (IIC).
Specifically, we asked all parties if they could report on how museum communications were handled during renovation works. We also asked the Italian Institutes of Culture if they would mind completing a short questionnaire on Turin's Egyptian Museum.
From the museum professionals (most of them abroad) we very quickly received dozens of reports, many of them extremely interesting and pertinent. During the

subsequent phase of in-depth analysis, which involved museologists in Italy and abroad, we set up a discussion forum. Having applied a simplified variant of the Delphi method to the views expressed, we decided that the best approach would be to draw up and then analyse a list - if possible exhaustive - of best practice solutions or interesting ideas that had either been applied during museum renovation/expansion/upgrading projects in the past, or were soon to be trialled. Having done that, we identified five cases of real excellence.

Louvre: during the long drawn out (Grand Louvre) expansion works, the museum was never completely closed and all communications activities focused on the areas open to the public.
Centre Pompidou: this closed completely during the recent restoration work and a powerful communications campaign (*Hors les Murs*) was run in the vicinity of the museum and beyond.
New York MoMA: during the major expansion/upgrading work on the Manhattan museum, it has been entirely closed to the public. However, a selection of its most significant works, was put on display in temporary premises in the working class suburb of Queens, where they remain today.
National Museum of Switzerland: when this museum closes for renovation in the near future, it will still be "visitable", thanks to Virtual Transfer, a new virtual museum philosophy.
Museum of Asian Arts, San Francisco: when this museum was closed for expansion/upgrading work, part of the communications activities were undertaken by the Society for Asian Arts (a Friends of the Museum association that is very much *sui generis*).

At that point, we contacted the individual institutions, in some cases through the same museum professional*s* who had participated in our discussion forum and who themselves offered to set up the contacts we needed for our case studies. Right from the start, all these museums expressed their willingness to provide us with detailed information on their personal experiences; they also promised to supply us with basic data. This was followed by a series of meetings and in-depth interviews (the methodology for which is described in the next paragraph), with Directors and consultants at the Louvre, MoMA NY and Queens, the Swiss National Museum and the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg. While not demonstrating any particular example of excellence in the specific field of

communications during the renovation works, the Hermitage was judged to be of special interest. Apart from possessing an important Egyptian collection, it was, in fact, preparing itself - and a communications plan - for the international event of 2003: the celebration of the tricentenary of the foundation of St. Petersburg. We thought that experience well worth in-depth examination, convinced that it would offer useful food for thought, when we came, hopefully, to draft the research programme laying down the specific guidelines for our own Egyptian Museum communications, during the Winter Olympics in 2006, when renovation work on the Museum will very probably be under way.

In the case of the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, there were technical reasons, related to the museum's own emergency situation (it was about to reopen after major renovation work), why we decided, at least in this exploratory phase, to confine ourselves to an exchange of letters, telephone calls and e-mails, while also collecting material relating to the museum's communications activities during the closure, those operations being undertaken by both the museum and the Society for Asian Arts.

The extraordinary helpfulness of the Directors and staff of the museums we visited, enabled us to collect some extremely interesting internal communication material and documentation from them.

The Italian Institutes of Culture Abroad were equally helpful.

We e-mailed the Directors or Acting Directors of 50 Institutes. At over 40%, the answering rate was excellent, particularly considering the medium employed, and responses were prompt (in two cases, the directors actually telephoned us back first). Many of those Directors told us how delighted they were to hear that the Egyptian Museum in Turin was to be expanded and renovated. They said they were eager to help and expressed the hope that the museum would finally acquire the international visibility it merited, given the importance of its collection.

All the Directors, or Acting Directors, who responded to our e-mail, said they were willing to answer the questionnaire we would send them, as part of our research on the Egyptian Museum project. We did not tell them the purpose of the questionnaire, which was to discover how willing these Cultural Institutes would be to devote some of their cultural promotion work in their respective countries to Turin's Egyptian Museum, during the renovation works.

1.2 Research methodology

For our analysis of cases of best practice museum communications, we used qualitative techniques. And in identifying cases worthy of becoming actual studies, we used a simplified variant of the Delphi method in several rounds[2].

We began by posting an e-mail on the H-Museum network, that is reserved for museum professionals. We asked people to report recent, significant experiences in museum communications during museum expansion/upgrading works. We received over 15 reports, most of them from abroad. From these we selected the most interesting and presented them to a small group of Italian and foreign experts, who included museum professionals, experts in communications and museologists. We then selected the five best as our case studies.

In the course of this preliminary forum phase, we heard about one particular experience in museum communications relating to an event of international importance, the museum in question being the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.

The case studies chosen were the Louvre, Centre Pompidou, MoMA New York, Swiss National Museum, and Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. With the single exception of the Museum of Asian Arts, for the reasons outlined above, we visited these museums and conducted in-depth interviews with their Directors and Consultants.

Since all of these people were specialists, the majority of the interviews were actually free-form individual conversations and most of the questions asked were designed to elicit clarification and/or further information.

In the case of the Asian Art Museum, we conducted two telephone interviews, backed up by exchanges of letters and e-mails with both the Museum and its Friends' Association, the Society for Asian Arts. Those telephone interviews, too, were essentially free-form.

The Italian Institutes of Culture Abroad were contacted via e-mail in early October 2002, without any prior telephone contact. The names and addresses of IIC Directors (most of them up-to-date/correct) were taken from the Italian Foreign Ministry's on-line Address Book[3].

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[2] Cf. Adler M., Ziglio E. (ed), *Gazing into The Oracle*, London, Kingsley, 1996.

[3] These e-mails to Directors began by describing the aims of our research and underlining the significant contribution the IICs abroad could make and then asked the following questions: a) Would you be willing to answer a short questionnaire on the Egyptian Museum in Turin (no specific expertise required)? b) Do you know of any interesting initiatives (even on a purely local scale) that have been adopted in (name of country) during the partial or total closure or during restoration/expansion work on any museum or cultural institution open to the public? c) Can you supply the name(s) of any expert(s) or other individual(s) who might have useful experience to report?"

2. COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES DURING THE RENOVATION WORKS: BEST PRACTICE MODELS

2.1 Methodology: case studies

As described above, the cases selected for study emerged from an international forum process that involved the application of a simplified variant of the Delphi method and followed the posting of an e-mail on the H-Museum network reserved for museum professionals. Apart from allowing us to isolate cases of interest, that process significantly facilitated subsequent contacts, making it easier for us to meet managers and consultants at most of the museums we were investigating, in a less formal, more productive manner than would probably have emerged from a more "official" approach. Mostly, in fact, cases were reported to us by H-Museum subscribers, who had been directly or indirectly involved in the experiences they described. Moreover, in the subsequent forum phase, such informants generously and spontaneously offered to put us in touch with colleagues, former colleagues and friends.

That allowed us to set up a great number of meetings, especially at the Louvre and at MoMA in New York, some of which extended into highly enjoyable and extremely useful working lunches. We were also able to tour the MoMA site in the company of Stephen Rustow, the director of that colossal expansion project.

In all we had 26 such meetings[4] in October-December 2002.

Since all the people we spoke to were specialists, those interviews evolved spontaneously into unstructured individual conversations (followed, on three occasions, by group meetings with 3-5 interviewees, for follow-up purposes). The questions put to our interviewees were mostly designed to elicit clarification and/or further information. The conversations themselves lasted for more than 60 minutes, on average[5]. On those and subsequent occasions, we were also given invaluable informative material and documentation.

Over the next few pages, we shall be summarising the information we collected on the different approaches adopted during museum expansion/renovation/upgrading projects and on the museum's communications strategies or the options deployed during the period in question. In our view, the

[4] Including those with the managers of the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg.
[5] All interviews were conducted by Vittorio Falletti.

cases we describe are of particular interest, as examples of recognised excellence, or as examples of innovative, experimental best practice reported by several specialists.

The five cases reported, cover a fairly broad range of operational responses to the challenge of museum renovation. In the second phase of our research, we plan to assess how far our selected case studies offer comprehensive coverage of the possibilities, with the aid of qualitative analysis techniques and the involvement of museologists and other experts.

Interviews conducted

Paris

Jean-Pierre Biron	Centre Pompidou	Directeur de la Communication
Françoise Feger	Louvre	Direction Développement des Publics
Clio Karageorghis	Louvre	Responsable de la Division Signalétique-Graphisme
Anne Krebs	Louvre	Responsable du Secteur Développement des Publics
Georges Martin	Louvre	Chef du service du Développement des Publics
Françoise Mardrus	Louvre	Chargée de mission auprès de la Direction
Eric Pacheco	Centre Pompidou	Direction de la Communication
Matthias Waschek	Louvre	Direction de l'Auditorium
Françoise Wasserman	Direction des musées de France	Chef du département des Publics
Christiane Ziegler	Louvre	Directeur du département Egyptien

New York

Antonio Cosenza	Istitituto Italiano di Cultura	Acting Director
Peter Foley	MoMA	Director of Marketing
Katy McDonald	MoMA	Director of Government and Community Relations
Kim Mitchell	MoMA	Director of Communications
Stephen Rustow	KPF Associates	Director of MoMA's Expansion Project

Zurich

Harald Kraemer	Transfusionen	Project Leader of the Virtual Transfer

St. Petersburg

Vladimir Yu. Matveyev	The State Hermitage Museum	Deputy Director
Andrey O. Bolshakov	The State Hermitage Museum	Curator, Section of Ancient Orient
Marina Ikonnikova	The State Hermitage Museum	Visitor Services
Alexey Grigoriev	The State Hermitage Museum	Head of the Information Technology Department
Marina Ikonnikova	The State Hermitage Museum	Visitor Services
Boris Kravchunas	The State Hermitage Museum	Head of Painting Classes, Educational Center
Irina Kureeva	The State Hermitage Museum	Head of the School Centre
Leah Livshits	The State Hermitage Museum	Head of Computer Classes, Educational Center
Nina Silantieva	The State Hermitage Museum	Head of the Visitor Service Department
Anatoly V. Soldatenko	The State Hermitage Museum	Head of the Development Department

2.2 Grand Louvre

The Grand Louvre project was a huge challenge, architecturally, museologically and museographically. It took more than 15 years (1981-1999), and cost over 7 billion French francs. In the end, the Louvre's exhibition area had been doubled (to over 60,000 square metres), and the space assigned to Reception and Visitor Services facilities had been increased by more than ten times. The original area devoted to scientific, administrative and technical facilities was also made five times bigger.

The major part of the expansion and upgrading work lasted a decade. It began when the project was assigned to the architect Ieoh Ming Pei[6]. Work on first the Cour Napoléon, then the Cour Carré was completed in 1985. In 1989 came the turn of the Pyramid, the main entrance below it and the Auditorium. On November 18 1993, in celebrating the bicentenary of the Louvre, France's President Mitterand opened the Richelieu Wing (total area 22,000 square metres, with more than 160 rooms, housing around 12,000 works of art), which had previously been occupied by some 6,000 employees of the Ministry of Finance.

The colossal Grand Louvre operation represented a huge decision-making and organisational challenge. It involved seven departments, employing 65 conservators. Around 15 architectural studios and a thousand or so other firms worked on the project. The scale of the upheaval was unprecedented, unmatched by even the British Museum's or the Metropolitan's experiences. And yet every single deadline had been met by the time the project was completed.

Throughout the Grand Louvre works project, the watchword was *never close*[7]. That demanded meticulous scheduling and impeccable organisation. On the communication front, the fact that the Internet was still not in widespread use made things even more difficult for several years.

In terms of general strategy, the options adopted may be summarised as follows:

- constant team work;
- meticulous forward planning; every problem anticipated and every operation planned down to the last detail, well in advance;

[6] Supported by Stephen Rustow, who is currently in charge of the expansion work on MoMA New York.

[7] One much smaller museum that successfully adopted a similar approach during its renovation was, according to one expert from the Louvre, the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon (renovated in the Nineties).

- the setting of precise and meaningful deadlines the Louvre knew it could meet and could then highlight when they were in fact met.

Team work

During both the planning and the implementation phase of the Grand Louvre project, architects, conservators, engineers, museographic service people, transporters etc. engaged in constant discussion, in pursuit of solutions that would be acceptable to all, if at all possible.
There were dozens of meetings, large and small, both before and during the building work. Even highly specialised questions were widely discussed, since each department had appointed a "correspondent", who attended meetings and acted as a liaison officer between the departments' conservators and the specialists.
An enormous number of decisions had to be taken and problems solved, but the unswerving commitment of the museum's management; the mutual trust that had been established between conservators and architects ("the architect has to win the conservators' confidence"); the willingness to listen to suggestions from museum staff, who were in contact with the public, and the results of quantitative and qualitative analyses of public reactions, all helped to ensure that the project reached a satisfactory conclusion.

Anticipating and planning

A museum that decides not to close, has to find temporary storage space and, in the case of a lengthy project, a way has to be found to guarantee access to the collections. The Louvre's Department of Egyptian Antiquities was turned upside down by the project for five long years. Even so, there was only one year when its collection could not be seen. Egyptian artefacts were placed in display cases and moved to other departments that were still open to the public
Naturally, it was also vital to do everything possible to prevent theft and the museum also had to set up a team responsible for moving collections around.
And everything had to be discussed, analysed, argued about until a solution was reached that was acceptable to more or less all concerned. It all took time. It took

about two years' work to design the Grand Louvre logo and internal signage. I.M. Pei himself spent hours at a time arguing with the graphic designers. Before getting down to the actual construction work, they had to know exactly what they were aiming for and their organisation had to be just about perfect, before they started.

And even so, you still have to calculate for problems and delays and the consequent need to keep coming up with adequate solutions. Throughout the Grand Louvre project, a planning engineer was on permanent duty to deal with scheduling and handle problems as they arose, piloting the project through its critical moments, sometimes on a day-by-day basis. Another thing they set up at the start (and which still exists) was a Complaints Book for the public, whose comments were systematically analysed. Problem solving was made very much easier by the fact that the museum professionals were accustomed to being challenged, while management, architects and outside specialists were always more than willing to discuss matters with conservators and others.

Setting specific deadlines and sticking to them

The essence of the Louvre approach, was forward planning: the fundamental stages of the project were established in advance, on the basis of their compatibility with a works schedule that was moderately cautious, but absolutely mandatory. Even so, it took a huge effort to ensure that problems were solved as they arose and in the shortest possible time.

In the event, all deadlines were met, Cour Napoléon (1985) Cour Carré (December 1985), Pyramid, Reception Hall and Auditorium (March 1989), Richelieu Wing (December 18 1993), etc.

Such careful timing and compliance with all pre-set and published deadlines were essential, if the museum's image was to be protected and indeed enhanced, and in order to ensure the success of the communications strategy adopted.

Given their particular impact, that strategy focused on deadlines with a unique symbolic value. And in the case of the Louvre, what more symbolic date for the opening of the Pyramid than the Bicentenary of the French Revolution?

THE LOUVRE SOLUTION

The museum never closed and continued to display a significant proportion of its collections, so that it never lost its public appeal

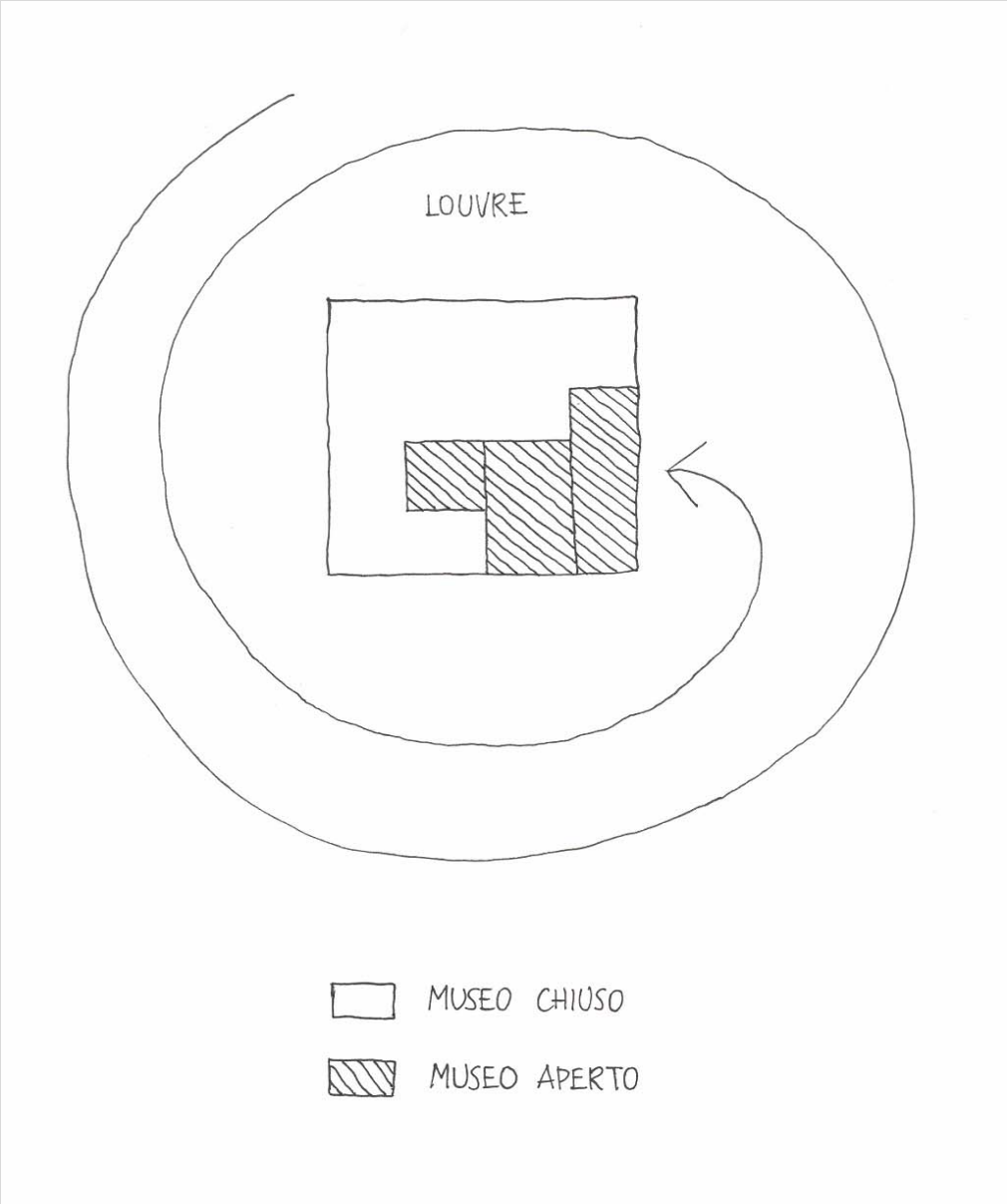

Immagine - Museo Chiuso/Aperto = MUSEUM CLOSED - MUSEUM OPEN

COMMUNICATIONS

The guidelines of the communications strategy adopted during the Grand Louvre project may be summed up as follows:

- *massive* publicity campaigns at key moments only;
- surprise effects;
- an ongoing communications programme;
- a standardised internal and external communications language;
- talking to the locals.

Massive advertising campaigns at key moments

While recognising the need for ongoing communications (see below), the organisers decided to avoid the risks of over-exposure and of information overload becoming more and more of a turn-off for the news media. High impact national and even international campaigns, involving TV, Radio and the Press, were scheduled to coincide with the completion of particularly significant stages in the Louvre expansion/upgrading programme, achievements that were celebrated in a festive way.
That demanded careful coordination between the company doing the reconstruction work and the museum itself. The most important of these events were the openings of the Pyramid and the Richelieu Wing (celebrated with a two-day, two-night party!). The initial reticence of some conservators, vis-à-vis these and other events (e.g. the restoration of the façade) was easily overcome, when the celebrations turned out to be such a spectacular success, widely covered in the media, in a way that was intensely gratifying for the individuals concerned.

Surprise effects

The starting point was the recognition, based on past experience, that ordinary people love the idea of being allowed to see things normally

inaccessible to them. That feeling was exploited and maximised by means of "Surprises": special events that were planned well in advance, but only announced at the last minute.
The carefully planned national and international media events benefited from the huge scale and spectacular character of the transformation: the latter aspect - consider the originality of the Pyramid - helped to create a communications climate that endowed those "surprises" with an unusually high profile.
The *colossal* scale of the transformation also helped to attract international media attention.
There were evening parties, when the museum was open to the public and special "infotainments" were staged. After the restoration of the façades, for example, a steel catwalk was installed, along which the public could walk right up to the restorers and ask them questions: it was a huge success.
The Auditorium was exploited to particularly useful effect, presenting a programme of innovative and unexpected events, both at the inauguration of the Pyramid and thereafter. There were readings, films, plays, concerts, as well as lessons in Art History. It wasn't easy to run such a programme inside a museum, but the public loved it. The Auditorium itself was closed for restoration work between June 2003 and January 2004. During that period, all sorts of interesting events (lectures, conferences, cycles of films produced by the Louvre etc.) were staged, in Paris, all over France and abroad.

Ongoing communications programme

Throughout the lengthy Grand Louvre renovation project, articles appeared regularly in the press; small temporary exhibitions were staged; dioramas, posters and film shorts were produced; and the public was kept regularly informed about what was going on and why. In particular, the museum produced maps and charts, that were regularly updated as the work progressed and distributed to the public.
Videomakers in Paris filmed operations in progress and produced videocassettes.

While there was no systematic "back of the house"[8] policy, it was sometimes possible to watch restoration work in progress, since some of the temporary storage facilities were also used by restorers, as is the case in Rome's Musei Capitolini.

Homogeneous communications (graphic design)

An ad hoc international competition was organised for the signage and this was to play a major role in the Louvre renovation project. In the end, a team of 20 architects worked on this particular matter. Signage, of course, plays a major part in creating a standard image inside a large museum and in projecting this image to the outside world and here teamwork (involving architects, graphic designers and conservators) is vital.
Signage must also be designed to last at least ten years. In the case of internal communications, the Louvre adopted a rigorous approach. After in-depth studies that also took account of input from the general public, detailed rules were drafted about such matters as: logo, typeface, colour, order of information on labels etc. With 600 groups every day, the Louvre decided not to "adapt" to the groups, but to use its own Education Service – to *teach the groups how to access information*, and to provide them with the tools they needed to hack their way through the jungle of complexity. Six of the Louvre's own graphic designers worked on the signage project and 45 teams of external graphic designers were also briefed. One of their tasks was to ensure that any graphics used for external communications purposes obeyed the "house rules" on this matter, albeit with a little extra freedom[9]. Here, collaboration between the creative people and the conservators proved decisive.

[8] Allowing the public to see restoration work in progress.
[9] One of those rules is that on brochures, posters, advertising, etc. no wording should ever be superimposed on images of any works of art and that these latter should always be shown in full. In parallel with the signage competition, another was run for the design of museum merchandising graphics, the aim being to ensure that an excessively commercial approach would not be adopted at some future date.

Talking to the locals

The size and duration of the Grand Louvre renovation project certainly inconvenienced the local population. Shops, in particular, suffered from the restriction on access that went on for a very long time. The Museum responded by communicating with them.

However, the major part in this campaign was played by the construction company, which set up an on-site communications office and also printed a little newspaper for distribution, primarily to people living in the area.

The Louvre also communicated with the city as a whole and always successfully. Indeed, every time the Louvre "got in touch", the French were gratified, if incredulous.

2.3 Centre Pompidou

A closure can offer the opportunity to *go out and meet the people: to reverse the normal magnetic field and approach society rather than pulling it in*.
That is the philosophy behind the carefully crafted and effective HLM (*Hors Les Murs*) policy adopted by the Centre Pompidou in Paris, during a renovation/upgrading project that cost 576,000,000 French francs, lasted 27 months and ended in December 1999.
In actual fact, the *Hors Les Murs* (literally "outside the walls"), policy has been employed by many other museums; it was instituted by the Centre Pompidou before the closure; and it is still going on. However, for the closure period, the museum designed and planned a particularly sophisticated and original communications strategy. It began with a feasibility study, (the so-called *programme de préfiguration*), which was followed by a detailed *project programme*.
The guidelines for this communications campaign were three:

- to explain the reasons for the renovation;
- to keep the "empty box" of the museum alive and in the public eye, during its closure
- to set a highly symbolic date for the re-opening and make that opening a great event.

CENTRE POMPIDOU SOLUTION

the museum was essentially closed throughout, but was able to create the illusion that its "container" remained alive, its contents reaching the public in other locations (*Hors les Murs*)

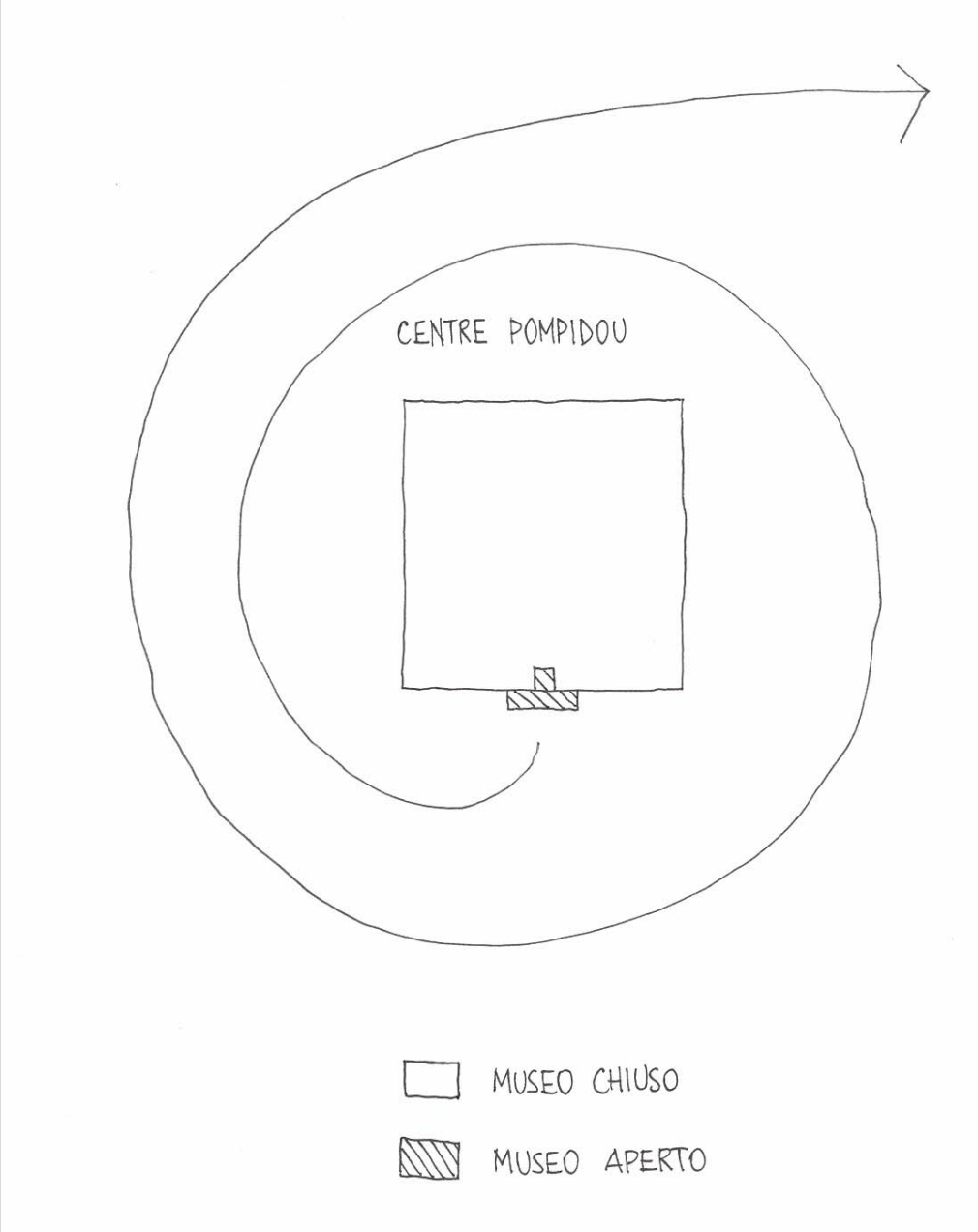

Immagine - Museo Chiuso/Aperto = MUSEUM CLOSED - MUSEUM OPEN

COMMUNICATIONS

Explaining the reasons for the renovation

All Gran Louvre communications focused on the colossal scale of the change (and on the originality of/conflict with regard to the Pyramid). The reasons for renovating and, above all, expanding the Museum were fairly obvious.
In the case of the Centre Pompidou, things were very different. This "nearly-new" building was about to be restored: scandal!
The Centre Pompidou, therefore, concentrated on explaining the reasons for the closure and for the building work, more or less as follows:

a) "The building is in good condition, but needs refurbishing"
b) "Closure allows us to double its exhibition space[10], thereby creating more room and improved conditions".

The idea of a refurbishment was acceptable in such a high-tech building. The campaign was also eager to emphasise the fact that the expansion which accompanied the renovation was *entirely visitor-oriented*: twice as much signage; colour-coding with a different colour indicating each functional element (transportation, water, electricity, air etc.); lower entrance charges; a new 3,000 sq.m. foyer; a bigger library and more space for the National Museum of Modern Art. Another message was that fewer items would be on display at any one time; they would be displayed to better effect; and with a faster turnover (exhibits changed every six months on average).
Also emphasised was the difference between the "Old" and the "New" (or nascent) Centre Pompidou. The museum also offered explanations for the inconvenience the locals were suffering. In fact, the district was constantly informed and engaged, as letters were sent out to residents on a regular basis.

[10] The extra space was largely obtained by relocating the Centre's administrative offices to other buildings in the same district.

Close while keeping visibility high and the container alive

During the two years and more of closure, the museum's permanent collection (over 50,000 works) was stored some 10 km outside Paris. However, major exhibition events were staged elsewhere in Paris and in the rest of France. These included: "Matisse" (Musée des Beaux Arts, Palais Saint-Pierre - Lyon); "Man Ray. Photography à l'envers" (Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais - Paris); "Georges Pompidou et la modernité" (Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume - Paris) and "Fictions Intimes" (Fondation Electricité de France-Espace Electra - Paris). But also temporary exhibitions abroad, like "Rendez Vous" and "Premises" (at the Solomon R. Guggenheim and the Guggenheim Museum SoHo both in New York).

Exhibitions and other events were also organised abroad, including the launch of the New Media Encyclopaedia Website[11] at the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels.

The Children's Workshops run in FNAC sales outlets were a huge success. The media campaign was constant: it focused on the latest developments in the restructuring operation, as well as the museum's new programmes and it intensified in the months preceding the reopening. The museum worked hard on Public Relations, Image, Advertising, the Press and potential Sponsors (especially big business): banks, Yves St. Laurent, etc.

In parallel with this powerful and diversified approach to the outside world, the strategic decision was taken to "create the illusion" ("like Italian churches do"), of a Centre Pompidou that was "alive" and fully present. This involved a bit of effective legerdemain:

- the small "Galerie Sud" stayed open throughout and housed five temporary exhibitions (most importantly on Max Ernst and David Hockney);
- the Library remained essentially operational;
- a highly visible Information tent was set up;
- Jean Pierre Raynaud's "*Pot doré*" was installed in the square in front of the Centre Pompidou;

[11] http://www.newmedia-arts.org

- huge information panels were hung from the façade of the Centre.

Set a highly symbolic date for the reopening and make it a huge event

In the case of the Centre Pompidou, they chose the epoch-making date of January 1 2000 and stuck to it. On the communication front, in the 3-4 months prior to the reopening there was a fully-fledged "Media Blitz" that included the announcement of cut-price tickets.
The aim was to raise expectations to a fever pitch; the message, delivered as forcefully as possible: that people had been deprived of something which really mattered and now they were getting it back (and even better than before)! And the response was spectacular: "incredible queues in the first two months"[12].
In actual fact, not all the Centre was visitable on Reopening Day: they spent the month of January reopening the rest.

[12] Following the reopening, the annual visitor numbers (while never reaching the historical peak of 8,000,000) rose to over 5 million (2000; 5.1 m; 2001; 5.3 m), which was significantly higher than the pre-closure figure.

2.4 MoMA Queens

Having already been expanded in the early Eighties, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, closed its Manhattan doors on May 21 2002, in preparation for a major expansion/restructuring project designed by Architect Yoshio Taniguchi, with the aid of Stephen Rustow. The reopening is scheduled for 2005. Having closed its main site, MoMA opened provisional premises: MoMA Queens was opened on June 29 2002, in the Borough of Queens on the East River. Over 600 million dollars have been set aside for the project[13], which involves expanding the museum's total area from 35,000 to nearly 60,000 square metres[14].

That strategic decision to transfer part of the MoMA collection to temporary premises was not part of the original plan. In fact, initially, it was not even certain that the Manhattan museum would be completely closed.

The decision to close the museum during the renovation works was taken in 1999 by MoMA's Board of Trustees and its Director, Glenn Lowry. They then tried, and failed, to find storage space for some 100,000 works of art in Manhattan: prices and rents were far too high and anyone who owned premises big enough, could earn much more outside the museum sector. What they did find and subsequently bought for a very reasonable price was a former nail factory at Long Island City, in Queens.

The initial plan was to use the factory as a warehouse. Then came the stroke of genius: someone realised that the characteristics and the location of the old factory made it an ideal museum space. It offered a total usable area of some 15,000 sq.m. of which nearly 2,500 sq.m. was potential gallery space; it was quickly and easily reached from Manhattan with a subway station just a few yards away; and it was close to J.F.K. Airport, which simplified the transfer of art works. So, they created MoMA Queens, which displays a selection of masterpieces from the museum's vast collection, and also offers a library, a shop and a café, as well as workshop areas and underground storage facilities[15].

The strategy adopted by MoMA in order to remain in the public eye and keep both its public and its staff interested during a period of closure that was not excessively long, but long enough, may be summed up as follows:

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[13] About 10% from public sector funds, the remainder from private donations and the museum's more than 30,000 *members*.

[14] Including an increase in actual gallery space from 8,000 to nearly 12,000 square metres.

[15] Having opted to put the former factory in Queens to "active" use, MoMA deposited many other art works in suitable places, some of them relatively far from Manhattan (New Jersey).

- shifting attention to MoMA Queens;
- integrating itself into and raising the profile of its new location, in a way that rejects the elitism of the past by implementing policies that extended to other New York boroughs.

Shifting attention to MoMA Queens

As the Manhattan museum was transformed into an immense building site, very few managers and staff remained in their offices. Once the façade was covered in scaffolding and itself transformed into a construction site, a minimal reception centre at the front entrance, barely visible from the street, was set up with masses of information material, in various languages, on the transformation in progress and detailed instructions we made available on how to get to MoMA's temporary premises.

A huge effort was put into raising the profile of MoMA Queens, to make it clear that this was no mere appendage to the "real" museum, no makeshift solution, but a place that epitomised and represented the essence of the museum at every level (expositive, aesthetic, cognitive and emotive). That explains: the decision to display a selection of MoMA's greatest masterpieces of modern and contemporary art; the meticulous museography and staging; the intensive programme of activities[16]; the emphasis on communications activities, with the outside world, but also with MoMA's own staff.

Until 2005, *MoMA Queens is going to be MoMA*. In the run-up to the reopening of the Manhattan site, a new communications campaign will refocus attention on the museum's original home. That operation, will of course, be facilitated by the successful completion of MoMA's colossal expansion/upgrading project.

Integration into its new environment and raising its profile

Manhattan is Manhattan: in the collective imagination and for its own inhabitants (about 1.7 million of them). By subway, Queens is just 15-20 minutes away from

[16] Temporary exhibitions (notably "Matisse Picasso", in February-May 2003), conferences, lectures, debates, film shows at the Gramercy Theater in Manhattan, modelled on the standard MoMA programme.

Central Park, but less well known and rarely visited by non-residents. This is a working class borough and densely populated (2.2 million inhabitants). It is the most ethnically diversified borough in New York. It is also distinguished by the number of its cultural and artistic institutions, notably the effervescent P.S.1. Centre of Contemporary Art[17].

A great deal of preliminary work was done: the borough's socio-economic and cultural characteristics were analysed; contacts were established with the community, its institutions (government, schools, police, libraries) and with its artistic and cultural bodies.

Various partnerships and other activities were then launched in the borough. Before MoMA Queens opened, they designed a sort of "Art Tour" (slogan: *Seven Great Museums, One Easy Ride)* that took in MoMA, but also included and promoted P.S.1. and five other museums and art centres in the borough[18]. A lot of hard work was done with P.S.1 in particular, for the specific purpose of making people feel the same way about it, as they did about MoMA. The MoMA staff also worked with the police and the colleges in Queens. Meetings and lectures were organised in the borough's libraries and free tickets to its museums were handed out.

Later on, a similar effort went into making the borough better known and into delivering the message, especially to tourists, that there was more to Queens than "just MoMA[19]". It should also be pointed out that MoMA is doing the same sort of thing in other working class New York boroughs[20].

The results have been decidedly encouraging. A quantitative survey commissioned by the museum has shown that the Queens community is happy, even proud, to give house-room to MoMA. Indeed, the locals have become so fond of MoMA Queens that the original idea of using the building as a warehouse, after the Manhattan reopening, is now being reviewed.

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[17] Founded in 1971, the P.S.1 is a major centre devoted exclusively to contemporary art that has always been innovative and experimental. Apart from exhibitions, it also organises and promotes research projects, workshops, courses aimed at schools, teenagers and families etc. In January 2000, the P.S.1 was taken over by MoMA

[18] The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, American Museum of the Moving Image, LaGuardia Performing Arts Center, Centre for the Holographic Arts, etc.

[19] Promoting not just the "museum district" but also other places of interest, not all of them artistic or cultural (clubs, restaurants, etc.)

[20] For example, the "Sculpture from The Museum of Modern Art", that will run until 2003 at the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx.

THE MoMA NEW YORK SOLUTION

during the renovation works, the museum closed completely and opened a smaller, temporary branch to display its greatest treasures

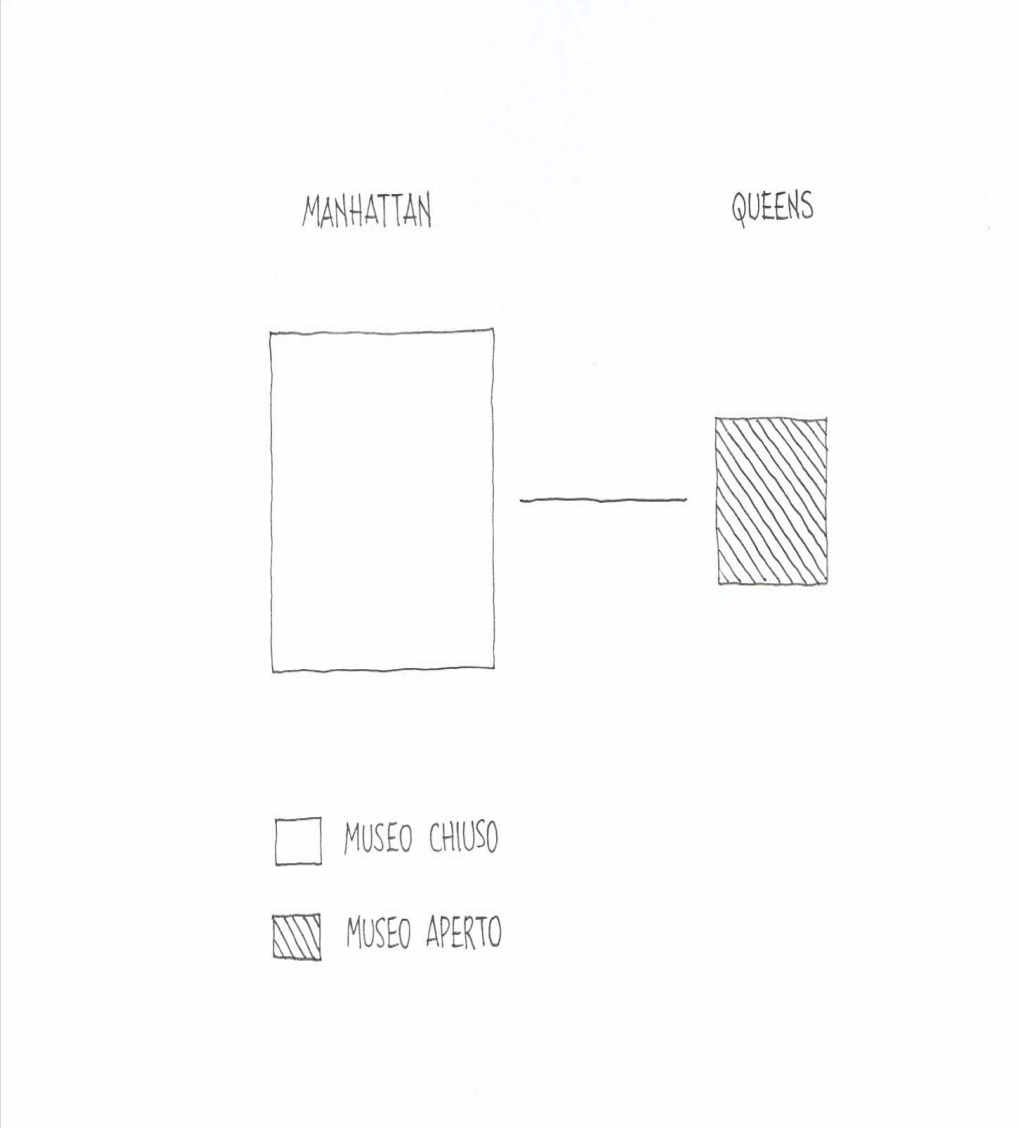


Immagine - Museo Chiuso/Aperto = MUSEUM CLOSED - MUSEUM OPEN

COMMUNICATIONS

The guidelines of the communications strategy adopted by MoMA New York for its current expansion/renovation project and the concomitant transfer to temporary premises in Queens, which demanded meticulous and lengthy preparatory work, together with endless meetings and informal reports (which are still going on) were based on key objectives which may be summed up as follows:

- to introduce MoMA to Queens;
- to introduce Queens and MoMA Queens to Manhattan and to tourists;
- to publicise the MoMA Queens operation in the USA and around the world.

Introducing MoMA to Queens

MoMA has worked and is still working hard to introduce itself to the Queens community, and win its affection. In focusing, in particular, on the young and on the multiethnic character of the borough, MoMA is also doing its best to destroy its stereotyped image as an elitist institution intended solely for educated, rich, white people.
At strategy level, they made a deliberate decision to "talk" to the community, not through media campaigns, but through their actions ("*actions speak louder than words*").
MoMA has made physical contact with the Queens community. In its schools and colleges and libraries, MoMA experts held lectures, discussion groups and conferences. In the libraries, they told an audience of adults what art, and especially contemporary art, is and explained why parents ought to encourage their children to visit MoMA Queens. They also handed out free passes.
They produced a 48-page comic book about MoMA and P.S.1, aimed primarily at the youngest inhabitants of Queens[21].

[21] Grennan & Sperandio, *Modern Masters-Tales from the Pinnacle of Culture*, New York, DC Comics, MoMA e P.S.1, May 2002.

The community responded exactly as they had hoped, showing real interest and accepting all the museum's invitations. Queens locals, as we have said, were proud to host MoMA. Significantly, not one act of vandalism on the building was reported and not a single graffitto.

Introducing Queens and MoMA Queens to Manhattan and to tourists

After long discussions and after analysing the results of surveys into public attitudes, MoMA set itself the following objectives:

- to make it known that Queens is easily reached and not dangerous;
- to point out that there's more to Queens than just MoMA;
- to create a climate of curiosity around the MoMA Queens operation and its new premises.

So they organised bus tours around the Queens museum district ("the Queens Artslink" project, a return trip from Manhattan with some 15 tours a day, on Saturdays and Sundays).
They printed huge quantities of maps and flyers (as well as high quality hard cover publications[22]) explaining how to get to MoMA Queens; providing information on other items of artistic and cultural interest and listing restaurants in the borough[23]. The same information appeared in such mass circulation magazines as the celebrated "Time Out" and in leaflets that were available in the museum and other public places (especially Manhattan restaurants) and were also inserted into newspapers.
The intention was to reassure the public that MoMA Queens was easy to get to; that Queens itself was user-friendly and peaceful; that there was a lot more to the borough than MoMA; that it offered good restaurants, as well as art. Above all, the message was that this was an enjoyably different trip well worth taking. Here is a summary of the message targeted at Manhattan's inhabitants and tourists:

[22] Cfr. Wegman W., *How Do You Get to MoMAQNS*?, New York, MoMAQNS, 30 pages with colour photos, in English. Cover price $7.95.
[23] Some of them offer a 10% discount to anyone who presents the map.

"MoMA's closed until 2005. But its best bits are on show in Queens! Oh well! I guess I could fly over there to see them. Oh, come on! Queens is a New York borough! I can get there on the subway. And here I am in a subway train. And I can already see P.S.1! This is great! It only took ten minutes. And guess what, there are restaurants in Queens too! Hey, this is gorgeous and those are real masterpieces on display/ And it couldn't be easier to get to, so I can come back any time I like!

At the same time, attention was shifted to the building, with the aid of powerful communications campaigns. They chose a world famous, high impact painting to represent MoMA Queens in *The Starry Night* by Vincent van Gogh[24]. They started distributing brochures (of various sizes and qualities) with pictures of the building on the cover and more illustrations of the inside. They also printed 1.5 million copies of a large leaflet for insertion in the "New York Times".

Publicising the MoMA Queens operation in the Usa and around the world

Part of the communication strategy adopted in pursuit of this particular objective had already been given a trial run, when the museum was closed for building work in the early Eighties. This time, however, the operation was so much vaster, the closure period so much longer and the solution to the problem was, of course, unique. For all those reasons, MoMA had to invent a more diversified range of responses with a much higher impact.
They got a lot of help from the Ruder Finn Agency, which planned and implemented key events in the communication campaign.
It all began when the "satellite" operation in Queens was announced, in December 2000. At this point, the emphasis was on sensitising the press and the foreign TV correspondents, rather than local stations.
Over the following nine months various initiatives were undertaken. Information material was sent out to any number of architects. Audiovisual material was also produced: the MoMA Chairman and Director, together

[24] There could be no more ideal choice for the working class borough of Queens: in the Seventies this famous masterpiece had inspired a hit pop song "Vincent", by singer-songwriter Don McLean ("Starry, Starry Night...").

with two architects talked directly from Queens. Bus trips were arranged for the press.

In October 2001, they started running hard hat tours[25] of the construction site guided by site managers with lunch on the bus. Magazine writers in various specialised fields (architecture, fashion, travel, etc.) were contacted.

The international campaign choreographed by the Ruder Finn Agency, was launched in January 2002.

There were ultra-formal press briefings in London, at which the showing of audiovisual material was followed by question and answer sessions.

The tone was decidedly less formal in Berlin. The same audiovisual material was used, but the meeting with 45 journalists was held in a renovated former factory.

The return on this media investment was satisfying, with 18 newspaper articles published.

Yet another approach was adopted in Los Angeles, where key people were invited to a briefing.

The original plan had been to produce several versions of the video, each adapted to the cultural style of the country addressed. Then they had second thoughts and just "toned down" the original a bit

Before hanging the works of art in their new home, MoMA took various specialist reporters (on art, finance, etc.) on a tour of its new building in Queens.

The official opening of MoMA Queens came in June 2002. This was a three-day invitation event attended by important journalists and architects, most of them from Britain, Germany and Switzerland. The Finn Agency took charge once again, sending out the invitations and arranging the events. Some contacts: (private meetings with architects; dinners; meetings with Stephen Rustow, the man in charge of the MoMA renovation project), had already taken place in March and April.

The day before the opening, MoMA ran an all-out media blitz. Three hundred journalists were invited to the Press Day. A new video (VNR-Video News Release) was shown, on which the speakers included the Director of MoMA, the mayor, a College President and a businessman. MoMA had deliberately eschewed celebrities, wishing to avoid anything

[25] Guided tours on which visitors are obliged to wear protective headgear.

too "showbiz". They also set up a website reserved for the press (but with no need for a password).

MoMA worked very hard on its national and international mailing lists, sending out information packages on the MoMA Queens exhibitions and facilities to some 3,000 journalists.

They also created and distributed special *press packets* to a select number of reporters as well as "*Museum in a box*", videoconference preparation material for schools.

On the media front, it was noticeable that on Opening Day, the event got far better coverage in Europe (almost all European countries covered the story) than in the United States. The press coverage in Los Angeles was fairly good. The real problem was television. The New York channels offered good coverage; the national channels dreadful, some of them didn't even mention it at all!

MoMA's communication experts got the impression that US television rarely takes much interest in architecture or art, especially the contemporary kind. Perhaps they view it as an elite interest. Apart from that, the MoMA makeover seemed to be perceived as an essentially New York affair.

Activities in the new museum at Queens were launched with the utmost attention to internal communications. And partly to demonstrate that MoMA Queens also does research, it was decided that all its guides should be PhD students. And all the time public reactions were analysed, mostly by means of exit surveys.

It is also worth pointing out that the decision to put a shop for museum merchandising inside this temporary museum was more for image purposes than inspired by any desire to make money. And in fact, the big MoMA merchandise shop on 53rd Street in Manhattan opposite the main museum, has remained open throughout the renovation period.

2.5 Swiss National Museum: Virtual Transfer

A museum that closes for building work can carry on by physically transferring its collections - or at least the "best bits", as in the MoMA Queens operation – or they can arrange a virtual move. *Close the main site and open a (temporary) virtual one.* That was the thinking behind the strategy adopted by the Swiss National Museum in Zurich that is currently in progress: the creation by Konrad Jaggi (of the Swiss National Museum) and Harald Kraemer (from Transfusionen[26]), of the Virtual Transfer that is the key element in a communications strategy which also involves other media.

The Musée Suisse Group is a network of eight museums located in various Swiss Cantons. The biggest is the Schweizerisches Landesmuseum (taken into Federal ownership in 1972) in Zurich. Built in 1898, the building itself is a monument to the Historicist Movement, designed to look like a castle or fortress, in a mixture of Gothic and other architectural styles.

Inside, it houses a series of original interiors from various historical periods (Baroque and Rococco rooms, an eighteenth century pharmacy and so on). They come from various Cantons, having been removed from the original buildings and carefully reconstructed inside the museum. The museum also owns a vast collection of other artefacts and finds that make up the country's most comprehensive illustration of Swiss life, culture and history (paintings, engravings, sculptures, archaeological finds, toys, costumes, clocks and technological instruments etc.).

Between 2005 and 2008, the Zurich museum will be closed to the public, expanded and renovated. The reopening is scheduled for 2009. During the entire closure period, however, the museum's collections will be accessible to visitors in cyberspace.

The term "virtual museum" has been much used and abused in recent times, to mean digitalised collections or interactive installations or websites or portals. Which is why Jaggi and Kraemer have preferred to call their project Virtual Transfer, as if to underline the fact that this is something very special. Because the Virtual Transfer Museum is no mere replacement or shop window for the Zurich museum. It will have a life of its own, its own agenda and its own attractions like gallery spaces, a *Wunderkammer*, exhibitions, as well as a conservation department, education programmes, its own teaching staff, even its own trustees!

[26] Harald Kraemer (PhD) - Transfusionen, PO BOX 391, Vienna (www.transfusionen.de).

This is the anticipated schedule:

2002	feasibility study
2003-2004	storyboard, planning, implementation
2004	opening of Musée Suisse Virtual Transfer
2009	reopening of Musée Suisse

The Virtual Transfer aims to be a dynamic laboratory, a medium able to guarantee high level communication between the virtual museum and its virtual visitor; a tool for the transfer of knowledge that is different from, and far more powerful than any digital collection or virtual space.
The key features of the Swiss plan are: open-mindedness, flexibility and attention. Namely *open* to the use of new (and future) technologies; *flexible* in developing content that is adaptable to emerging needs; *attentive* in scripting a "drama" of primary and secondary "scenes".
The strategic objectives behind the Zurich option are:

- to maintain and strengthen interest in the museum;
- to create a new public for the new museum.

Maintaining and strengthening interest in the museum

When a museum closes for 3-4 years, like the Swiss National Museum in Zurich, ways have to be found to keep the museum's public and community interested in the institution. Its inventors believed that, partly because it was so original, the Virtual Transfer solution was eye-catching enough to attract attention and to draw people into an exciting and informative interactive game that would win hearts and minds. Unlike the vast majority of museum websites (or so-called "virtual museums") Virtual Transfer, was to be no mere database or on-line brochure, i.e. a self-referential, visually standardised, didactic product. On the contrary, what its designers had in mind was a kind of evolving theatre with the ability to stimulate genuinely interactive communication.

Creating a new public for a new museum

The Virtual Transfer project is not intended simply to be an effective, original means of communication. It also forms part of a global strategy, which identifies it as the key tool for the promotion of powerful positive synergies.
Apart from being a powerful PR tool during the renovation period, Virtual Transfer's Internet location makes it a forceful marketing tool that will not only retain a hold on the museum's existing public, but will also create a whole new public, eagerly awaiting the reopening in 2009. It will also help to enhance the visibility and prestige of Switzerland's seven other national museums, all members of the Musée Suisse Group[27].

[27] Chateau de Prangins; the Swiss Customs Museum; the Swiss History Forum; the Museum of Musical Automata; Chateau de Wildegg, Baerengasse Museum, the Zur Meisen Guild Hall.

THE SWISS NATIONAL MUSEUM, Zurich SOLUTION

during construction work, the physical museum will close and its contents will temporarily transfer to a new virtual site.

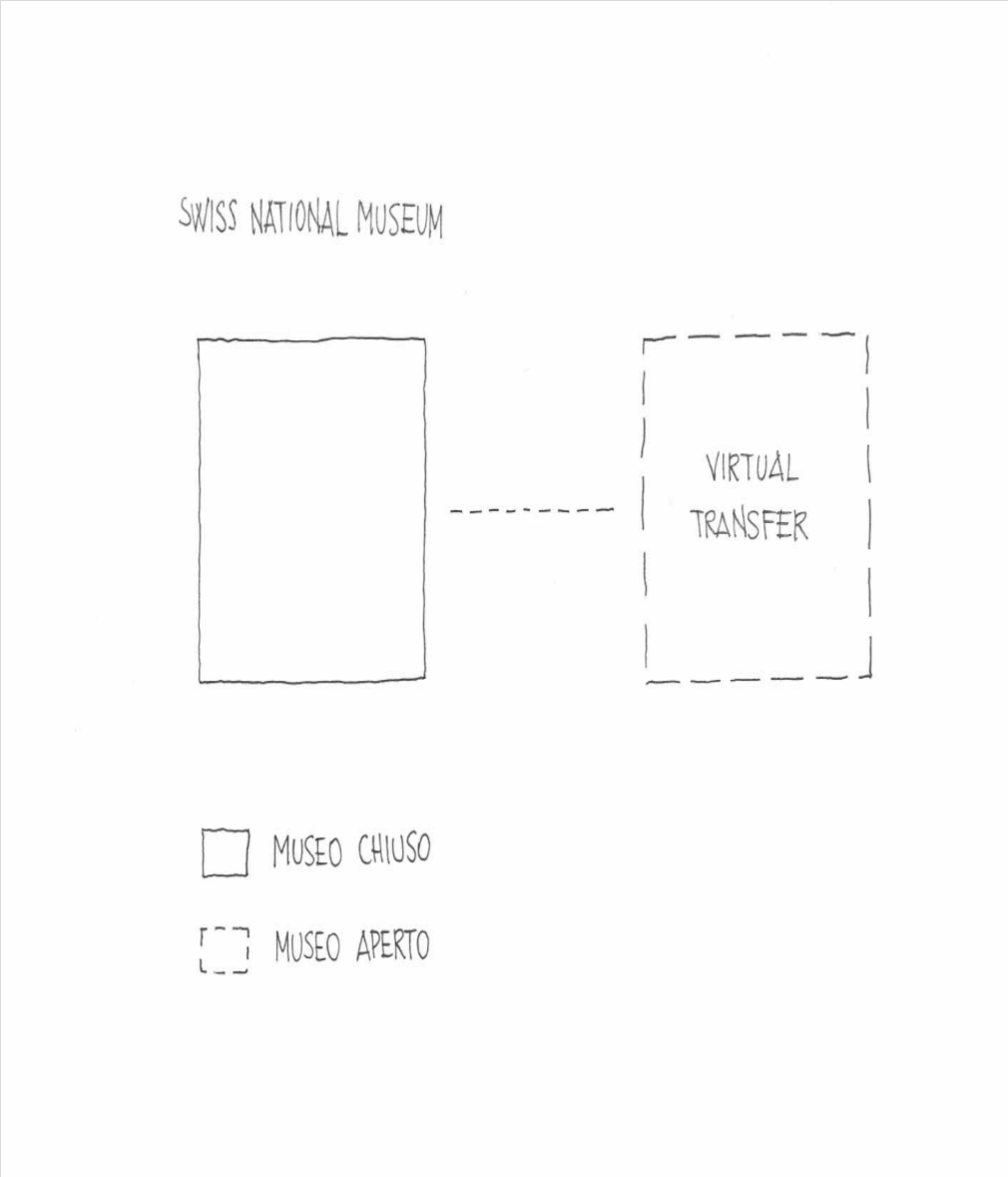


Immagine - Museo Chiuso/Aperto = MUSEUM CLOSED - MUSEUM OPEN

COMMUNICATIONS

The communications guidelines for Zurich's Virtual Transfer may be summarised as follows:

- interactive;
- dynamic;
- rigorous.

Interactive

Communications, participation and feedback, are the watchwords in Virtual Transfer's campaign to establish an ongoing dialogue with its visitors. That dialogue will be reinforced by the use of the following instruments: a newsletter, a chat room, a forum, on-line events, quizzes, games, on-line courses, guest books etc.
In order to generate lively dialogue, the website has to be able to speak to a diversified public: from children to adults; from the uneducated chance visitor, to the scholar. The Virtual Transfer approach is not encyclopaedic or apodictic, but rather hypertextual (to offer the possibility of multiple information layers) and based on a thorough understanding of cognitive processes[28]. It addresses the visitor in a light-hearted, often comic tone, blending itself into the latter's personal style and transforming each virtual visitor into the star of his or her personal show, by offering a choice of routes, stimulating the visitor's curiosity, giving each one something to think about, as well as the opportunity to establish a dialogue with other visitors and to become a member of the Virtual Transfer community, if that appeals[29]. Virtual Transfer speaks several languages, without ignoring minorities[30], and in various registers, adopting a variety of approaches to its different topics. Virtual Transfer offers amazement in the

[28] On the advisability and desirability of an approach like Virtual Transfer's, which takes due account of the "culture consumer's" cognitive processes, see Trimarchi M., *Dentro lo specchio: economia e politica della domanda di cultura*, in "Economia della Cultura", Bologna, Il Mulino, no. 2, 2002.
[29] A similar approach is adopted by the site of San Francisco's de Young Museum, which is currently being renovated and has set up a virtual gallery: on that site the visitor is offered the opportunity to become a curator, and to choose which of the museum's 82,000 works to put on display, thereby creating his or her own gallery, to share with other visitors to the site (www.thinker.org).

Wunderkammer; discovery (there is a picture album illustrated by the curator and the "traveller" can choose which to investigate further); education by adopting a didactic approach that involves Socratic question and answer sessions and "edutainment"[31] with a strong anthropolgical slant.

Dynamic

The Virtual Transfer approach is not static. On the contrary, this is an on-going, evolving project: work in progress and constantly on the move, highly dynamic (and original): "liquid" architecture, updates, links, etc.
This kind of liquid architecture involves creating a structure and then enriching and expanding it. The Musée Suisse Virtual Transfer will be an integrated virtual space that may incorporate a chat room along the lines of "Cospace" (http://cospace.research.att.com/) or "Blankspace" (http://blotto.research.att.com/blank). The spaces on Musée Suisse Virtual Transfer can be rented out to other Musée Suisse Group museums or to Friends of the Museum (individuals or groups). But they can also be used by external partners, for their own purposes.
Updates are ongoing and frequent, (in some sections, weekly[32]), and focus on "real life": announcements of exhibitions (on-line) created ad hoc in response to upcoming events (and also gossip, life-style stories, politics). In this respect, the communications philosophy is radio-style (there's a lot of it), but also quite like a newspaper's (suggestions, proposed links to other sites). They also plan to make extensive use of filmed material.
At least 60% of future events on the site have probably already been decided on and programmed.

Rigorous

Virtual Transfer is a laboratory focused on creativity, originality and on a non-pompous communications style. It is, however, totally committed to

[30] Five languages: German, French, Italian, English and Romansch, which is spoken by about 10,000 people in Switzerland
[31] Edutainment = Education + Entertainment.
[32] Some 300 masterpieces are to be posted on-line over the three-year period.

the utmost scientific, graphic and methodological rigour. That rigorous approach pervades the entire operation, which demanded a huge planning and development effort and the involvement of the museum's curators.
All concerned were meticulous in their attention to content and the commitment to providing interdisciplinary links between information and training. The team also put an enormous effort into the (always lightly done) use of different registers (visual and otherwise), including humour; and into visualising and communicating the "aura" of each work of art[33]. This sometimes involved playing games with its intrinsically meta-historical character, in order to position it in a new ultra-topical context, but not in such a way as to make it less fascinating to visitors, especially the younger ones.
Here are a few examples from the demo package that is still being completed:

- a vintage car from the museum's collection is digitalised and presented as if in a newspaper "small ad": "*Car for sale: good condition* […]"; another: "*Bargain: car with chauffeur available on request*!"
- a syncretic cross that combines the symbols of two different religious beliefs. Beside it, the picture of a man, who is asked the following question: "*Which religion do you give to God*?".
- a picture of an antique vase decorated with opulently female forms to symbolise fertility and beside it, a question "*Did you know that the same hieroglyph can mean either "woman" or "breast"*?".
- pictures of dragons, demons, monsters, mythological characters (often no more than tiny details), taken from items in the collection that visitors can click onto, in order to find out which of them are poisonous, which have voices (e.g. sirens) and so on.
- a picture of a skateboard prototype produced in Switzerland and now in the museum collection. Pictures of kids who had been invited to the museum, photographed later, skateboarding along the street (the youngsters indicated by the usual fantasy nicknames of the skateboarding fraternity).

[33] Cf. Benjamin W., *L'opera d'arte nell'epoca della sua riproducibilità tecnica*, Turin, Einaudi, 1967 (orig. ed. 1935).

- a picture of writing taken from a tapestry in the museum's collection. The sentence is the translation into Old German of the Latin *memento mori*. It accompanies a film featuring a stage actor, who says: "*While I was alive, I bought indulgences*! *They told me that in this way I could buy myself a reduced term in Purgatory. And now that I'm dead, I've found out that Purgatory was an XIth century invention!"* Visitors can also download the full text of a real will written in old German from the site.
- pictures of pitchforks and the possibility of activating a sound track of extracts from plays dealing with aspects of peasant culture.
- the museum hosts a prototype bedroom from the Thirties that was sold in kit form for home assembly (like IKEA today): the site shows a picture of the bedroom and offers the possibility of clicking onto a film short produced at the time, which explains how the brand's products are assembled!
- an on-line course (for children, but also suitable for grown-ups) that mingles fact and fiction. The course features Playmobile puppets (well known to all children in Switzerland). For example, the film shows a Playmobile knight puppet in dialogue with a knight from a tapestry in the museum's collection. Or again, two couples (a knight and his Lady from a work in the museum and a Playmobile man and woman) hold a conversation in old German each line accompanied by an accurate translation. These dialogues were carefully scripted and selected for relevance and pedagogic value. The course ends with a (far from easy) test on what has been learned.

On the graphic design front, strict rules were set, particularly on the use of colours. For example, red is used for artefacts; blue for course material and learning; green for emotional aspects[34].
Documentation was equally rigorous, with a special archive created for all activity materials.
As we have said, the Virtual Transfer project demanded a vast amount of preparatory work, which included the design of a communication strategy

[34] In work done for another museum in the past, Transfusionen had used red for a renovated museum and orange for its original state.

that may very well have a significant impact on the museographic activities of the renovated Zurich Swiss National Museum.

2.6 Asian Art Museum of San Francisco: Museum-Society synergy

A museum that decides to close for renovation may also *rely on its friends* to keep it in the public eye and most importantly, to keep its friends informed during the "dark period". San Francisco's Asian Art Museum offers an interesting example of this strategy. The case is interesting and unusual, since the museum's Friends' organisation, the Society for Asian Arts, had so much to do with the creation and hence, to a certain extent, the very nature of the museum.

The Society for Asian Arts was founded in 1958 by a group of devotees of Asian art and culture and it was set up for the specific purpose of persuading Avery Brundage[35], to donate his own extraordinary Asian art collection to the city of San Francisco. They succeeded and the result was the creation of the Asian Art Museum. Thereafter and for many years, the Society was the museum's only support organisation.

Today, the museum directed by Emily J. Sano, owns some 13,000 items from all over Asia, covering 6,000 years of history. In October 2001, the museum closed, while it moved from its original home in Golden Gate Park to new premises in a historic building (1917) which used to house an important library (the Mail Library). Following an extensive renovation/reorganisation project designed by Gae Aulenti, and costing $160 million, the museum now has 75% more space (over 15,000 square metres) than it used to. Its museography has also been comprehensively overhauled, in a joint effort by designer George Sexton and the museum curators.

The museum reopened on March 20 2003.

The Society for Asian Art is a voluntary association that supports, but is independent of the museum[36]. The society works closely with the Asian Art Museum's Education and Development Departments, with the primary aim of promoting a passion for Asian art and culture. The Society has 1,200 members, a President, (Vincent Fausone), two Vice Presidents and a highly diversified management structure. The Society has its own website of superlative graphic and technical quality[37].

Though it is not a professional organisation, the Society's particular history and 50 years' experience have made it very different from many other "Friends of the

[35] American financier (1887-1975), and for many years Chair of the International Olympic Committee.
[36] Only members of the Asian Art Museum are eligible for membership of the Society for Asian Art.

[37] http://www.societyforasianart.org

Museum" associations, whose members often have far more enthusiasm than planning or operational expertise[38].

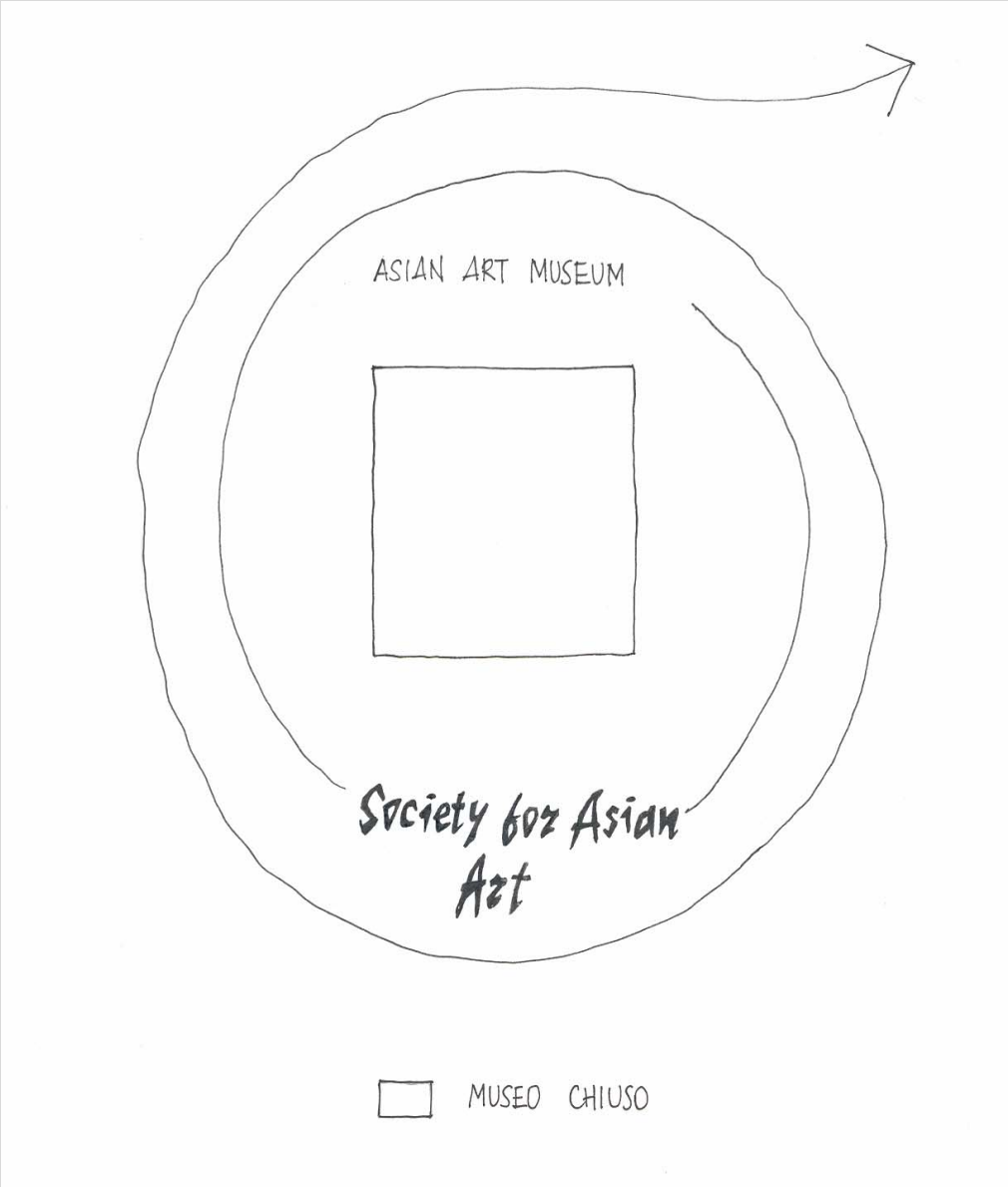
During its relatively brief period of closure, the Society sought the collaboration and assistance of other organisations and institutions in staging a series of targeted events (this is still going on and is mostly aimed at the Society's own members), which significantly enriched the museum's communication programme[39]. This Museum-Society Synergy did help to raise the museum's profile and promote emotional and intellectual involvement in its fate. It certainly kept the Asian Art museum in the public eye.

[38] Even so, the success of a museum often depends on the small but significant assistance of its "friends". Museums, like people, survive "*with a little help from their friends*": cf. "ICOM News", Newsletter of the International Council of Museums, no. 4, 2002.

[39] During the closure period, social and educational events were also organised for their own members by donor support groups like the Connoisseur's Council and the Jade Circle.

ASIAN ART MUSEUM OF SAN FRANCISCO SOLUTION

during the renovation works, the museum closed and made contact with its public in other places, with the help of the "Friends of the Museum" association



MUSEO CHIUSO = MUSEUM CLOSED

COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout the closure period, the Asian Art Museum and the Society for Asian Art formed an essentially united front in communication terms, promoting Asian culture and art, along lines they seem likely to adopt even more forcefully in the future. It is an approach based on:

- edutainment;
- visitor-care.

Edutainment

This means explaining, informing, demonstrating in a rigorous and serious-minded fashion, based on high profile cultural and educational programmes, while also seeking to intrigue, enthuse, amaze and entertain.

On October 3-7 2001, before the closure, the museum organised "*Five Final Days of Fun"*. This offered free access to the museum and to various high quality events designed to suit a variety of tastes: from concerts (Asian American Jazz), to ballet; from story-telling to workshops and guided tours[40].

During the actual closure period, the museum undertook a variety of outreach activities: it took part in several exhibitions in California, as well as the opening of Napa's Copia-American Center for Wine, Food & the Arts. Off-site and with support from various foundations, it was also able to continue offering educational activities to schools, community centres and offices, either on its own initiative or in response to phone-in requests[41].

The public could also phone in or order on the Internet a variety of education materials (kits containing videos, CDs, slides, interactive educational games and so on). These had been prepared by the museum's educational service staff, with the assistance of scholars and experts in oriental art.

[40] The *Five Final Days of Fun* also offered the public its last chance to see two highly popular exhibitions: "Zen: Painting and Calligraphy, 17th-20th Centuries" and "Empire of the Sultans: Ottoman Art from the Khalili Collection".

[41] The telephone number (415 379-8839) is also advertised on-line.

Another big success was *Passport to Asia* (Spring 2002): with the help of teachers, the museum created interactive courses at various levels that were then used in schools, each focusing on a particular theme. Examples include: an audiovisual with a narrated commentary on the myths and legends of China, the Himalayas, S.E. Asia etc.; body language in India; spirit of the Samurai. Teachers were also supplied with follow-up materials, so that their pupils could learn even more about the subject.

Most of the museum's outreach activities were targeted at individuals and groups in the San Francisco Bay area and were supported by various foundations[42].

The Society for Asian Arts and other support organisations did significant work, during the dark period. There were also get-togethers for members; weekly lectures by university academics and other experts (some of them members of the museum's own staff); the sponsorship of a conference on Shintoism at the University of San Francisco; the promotion of the *China and Beyond*, art exhibition (May-August 2002), curated by Clarence Shangraw, Senior Curator Emeritus of the museum, which displayed works from the collections of several society members.

The society also intensified the pace of its normal activities; there were lessons in Asian literature; study groups of 30 people at a time, led by eminent experts in specialist fields (Tibetan tankas; Chinese snuff bottles; Japanese woodblock printing; Indonesian textiles etc); evening meetings and presentations devoted to various aspects of Asian art and culture; trips to exhibitions and museums, not just in the USA, but also in Cambodia and Iran.

Members also held meetings, often in the homes of local collectors.

The Society for Asian Arts had prepared something special to coincide with the reopening of the museum. This was a fee-paying course (with discounts for members) on *Painted Tales: Art and Narrative in Traditional Asia*, which covered visual narrative in China, India, Japan, Korea, Persia and South East Asia and was taught by lecturers from various universities (Stanford, UC Berkeley, Washington, etc.). The Society's programme was also publicised in high quality brochures and flyers.

[42] Wells Fargo Foundation, Freeman Foundation and others.

Visitor-care

The museum's approach is to offer each visitor a "guided tour" through its exhibition, educational and cultural activities, that is individually tailored, as far as possible. The museography of the new museum will be forcefully slanted in that direction. In order to offer the visitor the greatest possible help in exploring topics of specific interest to him or her, an Education Resource Center, is to be established and this will provide access to information and study material, some of it audiovisual. The museum will also run group and individual courses, provide space for temporary exhibitions, live performances and workshops, all of them, naturally, concerned with Asian art and culture, but contemporary, as well as ancient.

The Society for Asian Art adopted a similar approach, but with greater focus on the needs of its own members. These represent a special section of the museum's public, since they are all enthusiasts, collectors, specialists or scholars, whose expertise and interests reside in niche aspects of Asian art and culture, to which the Society devotes a highly diversified programme of activities.

3. THE NEW EGYPTIAN MUSEUM OF TURIN: COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

3.1 Introduction

At this preliminary stage of our research there is still too little reliable, detailed information on the future project for the renovation of Turin's Egyptian Museum for us to set out any precise communication strategy.

Our analysis of the various solutions and communication strategies adopted during other construction projects, as well as the ideas put to us by the experts responsible for those strategies do, however, allow us to suggest certain general guidelines and some possible options. In the light of early results from a qualitative survey based on in-depth interviews, these may, at least, represent a useful platform for discussion, and a basis for the decision-makers' assessments.

3.2 Communications guidelines

GENERAL STRATEGY

A) To identify the strengths (or preferably a single key strength) of the new Museum.

Several strengths are emerging from the qualitative survey. Above all, obviously, the collection. But also the site (the museum building

itself) and its fame. Actually, Turin's Egyptian Museum, could and should have a far higher international profile[43]. In order to achieve that, its strengths have to be identified and communicated. Ideally, the campaign needs a single, easily communicated strength that is powerful enough to arouse the interest of the international media.

B) To start in good time, anticipating and planning as much as possible, working in teams and paying maximum attention to all aspects of communication (internal and external)

Good communication demands extensive preparatory teamwork, with the direct involvement of designers, curators and specialists. It would also be useful to survey public attitudes and to adopt a trial and error approach, but with no more than minor adjustments along the way. The internal and external communication strategies should be coordinated and clear-cut, right from the start; they should also be targeted at the creation of a new public for the museum. It might also be useful to invite tenders for signage and graphic design.

C) To set key deadlines and stick to them

It will be vital to announce a (possibly limited) number of significant moments in advance. These should be related to easily communicated targets, which must, of course, be met (closure and reopening dates, completion of the façade, or a particular gallery, completion of the new layouts or part of them and so on).

[43] Over 90% of the museum professionals (not including conservators of Egyptian antiquities, obviously) and experts encountered in the course of the present study, were unaware (some could hardly believe) that the collection owned by the Egyptian museum in Turin was at least as important as those of the Louvre or the British Museum. And three of our

D) To make the closure and the reopening high profile events

The closure and reopening of any museum offer two major opportunities for high profile events that can be used to reinforce the loyalty of the museum's existing friends and win it new ones. It would be best to plan for celebrations lasting 3-5 days and featuring different aspects each day. These might well be rather "over the top" and backed by a communications "blitz". It is also essential that the reopening coincide with some symbolic date (New Year's day; the City's Patron Saint's day; some other special day).

E) To keep people interested throughout the renovation process

As our case studies reveal, there are several possible solutions. However it's done, the museum has to be kept in the public eye, while at the same time avoiding the ever-present risk in any long-term project, of over-exposure. This can be achieved if an ongoing, low-key flow of information/communication is maintained and interspersed from time to time with massive campaigns (possibly to celebrate the completion of key stages in the project). At such moments, international communications agencies could usefully be brought into play. Still on the international front, a significant role might be played by the Italian Institutes of Culture Abroad, an aspect we intend to investigate more thoroughly in the second stage of our research.

F) To create a climate of curiosity and expectation

It is important to tickle the collective imagination; to offer a foretaste of the future, in a way that convinces the public that the new phase in the museum's history is to be something unique and extraordinary.

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interviewees said they only came across it by chance, when they spent time in Turin for personal reasons (as students or on holiday).

This means inventing ways of preparing the public for a museum that still does not exist[44]. In addition, surprise events (designed and programmed well in advance) should be deployed to make the public feel privileged to be participants in something very special.

G) To use a variety of communication registers and media

The museum community is increasingly vast and composite. And any museum's communication forms an integral part of its "product" that has to evolve at the same pace. A great European museum that is expanding and updating itself against a background of erratic growth in cultural tourism[45], has to anticipate a public that is increasingly diversified (in age, socio-cultural background etc.), and one, moreover, that is international. Any communication has to relate to this public, or rather these "publics" (both visible and invisible[46]). At the same time, it has to focus as carefully as possible, on the culture consumer as an individual, with his or her own specific cognitive and emotional characteristics.

Any properly designed, effective communications approach to this reconstruction project will therefore require the use of various media and a diversity of methods. These might include local events, image campaigns, the activation of celebrity sponsors etc. Any such

[44] One noteworthy example is offered by the Musée des Arts et des Civilisations du Quai Branly, in Paris, designed by Jean Nouvel. This new museum is still under construction, but has achieved a sort of "pre-birth existence" because items from its (future) collection have been put on display in various Paris museums in order to stimulate a climate of expectation and curiosity!

[45] Cf. Maggi M., *A.muse: l'innovazione nei musei*, Turin, Rosselli Foundation Technical Report, 1999.

campaign must also be able to maintain an interactive dialogue with the visitor, in a variety of languages and registers. A constantly updated mailing list (postal and e-mail) is also vital. It might be useful to involve a major computer company, which could provide the know-how and technologies required for a high quality website[47]. A properly designed website might also do much to attract significant numbers of the disabled community to the museum[48].

H) Telling the story

It is vital to document the entire museum transformation process, using a variety of media and supports. Reputable professionals might also be brought in to produce things like audiovisual material.

POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO THE RENOVATION PERIOD

1) **The Louvre solution**: the museum never closes and continues to exercise its centripetal force, attracting visitors even during the renovation work.

2) **The Centre Pompidou solution**: the museum is substantially closed but gives the impression of remaining operational. During the

[46] Cf. Santagata W., Falletti V., Maggi M., *Il pubblico invisibile: indagine sui non utenti dei musei*, "Quaderno ARPA", 2000.

[47] One significant example is offered by the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg. As sponsor, IBM not only supplied technology and know-how, but also joined forces with the museum's own computer department in running its excellent website (http://www.hermitagemuseum.org).

closure period, it focuses on the outside world, using various outreach methods to contact visitors (*Hors Les Murs*).

3) **The MoMA New York solution**: the main Manhattan museum closes completely, but relocates a small selection of extraordinary art works to new premises (MoMA Queens) for the duration of the closure.

4) **The Swiss National Museum solution**: the museum closes and moves into cyberspace (Virtual Transfer).

5) **The Asian Art Museum of San Francisco solution**: the museum closes and focuses on the outside world, with the help of its "Friends Association" (the Society for Asian Art).

INITIAL WORKING HYPOTHESIS FOR THE TURIN EGYPTIAN MUSEUM RENOVATION PERIOD

We feel that none of our five cases is applicable in full to the Egyptian Museum.

The **Louvre solution** would present timing or technical problems. Expansion and refit operations could certainly be finished more quickly, if the museum were totally closed. It is also fair to point out that Turin's Palazzo dei Nobili is not the Louvre and keeping part of the museum open would run into critical problems, when it came to getting visitors into, around and out of the museum.

[48] Cf. Bowen J., *Tackling Web Design and Advice on Accessible Website Design*, in "Museums Journal", n. 101, September 2001, presented as *Disabled Access to Museum Websites* to the Museum Association Conference (London, October 2001).

The **Centre Pompidou solution** would deprive Turin's museum district of its key attraction, a particularly serious problem were the makeover operation to extend over a significant number of years.

The **MoMA New York solution** might be very expensive and hardly practicable, unless planned well in advance.

The **Swiss National Museum solution** deprives the community of access to the real collection. Moreover, while it might be an extremely powerful way of reaching one section of the public (schools and young people, in particular), it does exclude all those who are not computer literate.

The **Asian Art Museum solution** is impossible without the services of professional volunteers or a Museum Friends association with well-honed organisational and planning skills.

It would be possible to take the best bits out of the various solutions and blend them into a single practicable, effective solution.

We therefore propose the following operating strategy:

Preliminary operations

- An international tender for the design of the logo, graphics and signage.
- The selection of a major IT company to sponsor the project's

Website.

- The selection of an international communications agency.
- Informing and involving the media (press, TV and radio stations).

Closure

- Massive communications campaign:

– national;
– local (Region, City, District);
– 3-7 farewell days to precede the closure: the organisation of high profile events and festivities (e.g. the exhibition of some special item, possibly from some other Egyptian museum or collection; music and dance, etc. [49].

During the renovation work

- Total or almost total closure of the museum, but with the retention of internal or external information spaces; possible use of the façade as an information space.
- Ongoing communications with the local population (possibly handled by the construction company) and with tourists visiting Turin: regularly updated information material about the museum, the city and its tourist attractions (including Culture, Wine and Food)[50].
- Regular communication with the national and international media to provide them with updates and information on items of interest.

[49] Cf. the Five Final Days of Fun, cit. Another excellent instance of combining attention to the various publics, entertainment and rigour is the programme of events put on by the San Francisco De Young museum in the week prior to its closure (set at the symbolic date of December 31 2000; re-opening is in 2005).
[50] Including quality printed metter.

- On-line Virtual Transfer which would convert into the Museum's website after the reopening.
- The placement of exhibits from and information on the Egyptian Museum's collection and its renovation programme in other museums/galleries, in the museum district (even a single work or a high quality virtual presentation in each venue) or even in the suburbs.
- the identification of temporary premises that could be used for exhibitions (thematic or otherwise) during the closure period, with real items from the Turin or other Egyptian museums or collections in settings that might be real or virtual. A suitable building might have room for:
  - an Egyptian Museum HQ;
  - a press room;
  - a hall for conferences, seminars and educational activities;
  - the temporary storage of part of the museum's collection.

A room in such a building might also be set aside for the use of volunteer museum support associations. Any temporary exhibitions might also be used as trial balloons, to test the public's reaction to museographic concepts, signage, virtual displays etc.[51], and also for experiments with new teaching approaches[52].

As a sort of mini-MoMA Queens, the new building could be offered as part of a tour including Savoy residences[53].

- the organisation of conferences, debates, seminars on Egyptian topics, at local, national or international level and held in Turin, other

[51] This could be analysed by means of *exit surveys*, but particular aspects could also be assessed automatically. At the Intercommunication Centre in Tokyo, for example, visitors are issued with smart tickets that are "read" by machines scattered around the Centre, thereby providing information on visitor behaviour (which items they look at and for how long, which they ignore and so on).

[52] This could be done in partnership with departments at other museums that have developed excellent ideas, such as the extraordinary "Little Painters' School" set up by the Hermitage Museum School Center in St. Petersburg.

[53] One building that might be suitable belongs to the Società Promotrice delle Belle Arti. Ideally positioned in the city centre's Valentino Park, this has already housed Ancient Egyptian exhibitions in the past.

Italian cities or abroad.

- the production and distribution (in partnership with experts and teachers) of audiovisual material for schools (*Museum in a box*, CDs, slides, videos, etc.), but also TV and radio broadcasts[54].
- Specialists on the Egyptian Museum could produce material for, or deliver talks in schools, university faculties, adult education centres etc.
- Massive communication campaigns to spotlight 2 or 3 major completion stages in the renovation project[55].
- A Blockbuster exhibition during the 2006 Winter Olympics.

Reopening

- At least 3 months before the reopening, a massive communications campaign should be launched, first internationally (with special events abroad), then nationally: the press (specialist and general) should be sensitised, celebrity sponsors activated etc. Intensive distribution of press packages, containing detailed information; CD-ROMs for use by the press; e-visit cards. This media blitz should reach fever pitch in the last fortnight before the opening.
- The opening event should be of worldwide importance. Top quality e-visit should be cards produced and distributed.

[54] The Hermitage recently created a series for young (even pre-school) children that is soon to be broadcast on a national TV channel. It features a puppet well known to all Russian children, as well as conservators from the museum who describe the museum, its history and its collections in simple, accessible language.
[55] Or other major events, e.g. twinning with some other Egyptian museum or collection of antiquities.

From pre-closure to reopening

Video and photographic documentation of the museum before, during and after renovation. Involvement of well-known directors, photographers, videomakers. Make this a contest with prizes (with a section for young film-makers and photographers and beginners)[56].

[56] Possibly in partnership with the Turin Film Festival and/or other organisations and film companies; the Italian Photography Foundation; etc.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Close(d) to meet you. Both "close to" = ("soon to"); and "closed for". Either way, the key player is the museum community, an increasingly vast and international one, composed of different "publics" and countless individuals, each with his or her specific characteristics and sensibilities, both cognitive and emotional.

A community of actual or potential culture consumers, who are the principal beneficiaries of any museum expansion or renovation project. These are the people, who still have to be addressed, conversed with, during the renovation work, however long it lasts.

There are several possible ways of pursuing that dialogue during the renovation process, in order to transform an inconvenience into a resource, an opportunity to raise the local, national and international profile of the museum, in preparation for its reopening.

Properly conducted, the expansion/renovation of Turin's Egyptian Museum will make it easier to portray its character, highlight its strengths and rectify its weaknesses (as will emerge from the research programme).

If it is accompanied, as it must be, by an adequate effort to transform the museum into a powerhouse of activities and scientific education that possesses the ability to converse and interact with the scientific and museum community[57], and, at the same time, an appealing user-friendly visitor attraction, the communication (during the renovation period and after the reopening), would be much easier to conduct, as well as being more useful and effective.

That demands good will, commitment and a cooperative spirit. It also demands real awareness, among stakeholders and the local community, that the Egyptian Museum is one of Italy's most important cultural assets. From this angle, it is worth reporting the reassuring impression we ourselves have gained. The feeling we get is that the focusing of scientific attention on a museum of international importance that had rather been forgotten, is producing a sort of beneficial Heisenberg effect: this time, the observer is helping, not damaging the thing observed![58]. It is, in fact, "*causing Egyptian fever in the city and in the country as*

[57] The ICOM-International Council of Museums defines a museum as a non-profit-oriented institution that "conducts research into the material evidence of the human race and its environment; that collects, conserves, reports on and, above all, exhibits that material for the purposes of scholarship, education and enjoyment.

[58] Heisenberg W., *The Physical Principles of the Quantum Theory*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1930.

a whole[59]", in a way that will create a mood likely to attract the attention, planning skills and resources required if the Egyptian Museum is to acquire the international fame it merits.

Another positive sign comes from the extraordinary feeling for the Egyptian Museum demonstrated by many of the directors of Italian Cultural Institutes Abroad whom we contacted and their interest in considering the role their own institutions might play in promoting the museum renovation project, in their respective countries.

[59] That hope was expressed by one of the people we spoke to in the course of the cycle of in-depth interviews we have been conducting (and have now almost completed) with *stakeholders*, the directors of cultural institutions and other key witnesses in Italy and abroad.

Appendix 1

THE EXPERTS RECOMMEND

During our conversations with Christiane Ziegler, Françoise Mardrus, Georges Martin, Anne Krebs, Clio Karageorghis, Matthias Waschek, Françoise Feger (Louvre); Françoise Wasserman (Direction des Musées de France); Jean Pierre Biron, Eric Pacheco (Centre Pompidou): several opinions and operational suggestions emerged for the New Egyptian Museum in Turin, which we report here, in no particular order:

"The Turin Egyptian could become a Louvre guest: events could be organised, works exhibited, conferences promoted, a programme published to showcase your museum".

"Before the closure, the Egyptian Museum could stage its own exhibition and lend a masterpiece for display elsewhere".

"Analyse your public. Identify the most appropriate media for the "New" Egyptian Museum and for its various publics".

"During the closure period, the Turin Egyptian Museum could set up something in some outlying district along the lines of our Egyptian Temple in Paris[60]".

"*It's vital to create your public before you reopen! Temporary exhibitions just before and during the initial stages of the renovation project can be useful trial balloons that allow you to assess the public's expectations of*

[60] The reference is to the transformation into an "Egyptian Temple" of a derelict site in the troubled "satellite town" of Grigny-Essonne (cf. Mangez C., *La Cité qui fait peur*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1999), 30 km south of Paris. They call it "Grigny sur Nil" and it is a project supported by the Louvre and the authorities in Grigny, that was undertaken by 80 Grigny teenagers) coordinated by sculptor, Marc-François Rouxel. The dilapidated site, a rectangle 2.5 m long, was restored by the youngsters in 1999 and decorated inside and out with motifs borrowed from works in the Louvre collection, including 11 sculptures (Anubis, Nefertari, etc.). It is worth noting that the "Temple" has never suffered a single act of vandalism.

the new museum and its displays. Communicate! Arrange temporary experimental events ("action préfiguration"), assessing responses as you go: a trial and error approach. Given the structure of the Turin museum, it would be hard to keep part of it open. Temporary events would be better. The museography of the current Egyptian Museum prevents decent access to the exhibits and is in no position to provide the keys to any understanding or appreciation of them. It could be telling visitors a lot more: about art history, scientific research etc. I also feel a lot of "cultural mediation" work has to be done on the signage. Here, the text is vitally important: conservators, museographers and semeiologists need to work on this together: focus groups are one possibility. Temporary exhibitions offer an ideal opportunity to try out signage, making adjustments as you go".

"Turin's Egyptian Museum deserves a far higher international status among its peers than it currently enjoys".

"Translate the Egyptology text, so everybody can understand it".

"The museum's old-style museography holds visitors at arm's length. Some conservators claim that exhibits "speak for themselves and make their own emotional or aesthetic impact". In actual fact, some visitors will have a sensibility that allows this to happen. But they are a tiny minority! We also need to recognise that young people are constantly bombarded with images: they need to be introduced to, invited to think about the exhibits. Then again, individual responses are infinitely varied. I might like a statue because it's a cat and I like cats. A museum is not a book: it has to choose its messages carefully. On the subject of signage, I think it's useful to test the public's reaction to both their content and their graphic design!"

"Turin's Egyptian Museum and the Egyptian collection in the Louvre are soul mates. There's a sense of shared feeling between Turin and the Louvre".

Advance planning is vital and so is common sense. Find the right balance between different interests and different skills. However, there has to be some authority at the top to take the decisions and accept the responsibility for them".

"During the closure, the Egyptian Museum might exhibit perfect replicas, perhaps without even telling people they're not the originals. So replicas lack the "aura" Benjamin talks about. Who said so? Our own Mona Lisa*, might, theoretically, be a replica but all viewers claim to feel its aura!".*

"Focus on the public. The Louvre now has a permanent observatory focused on the public. And, in an increasingly internationalised world, in-depth analysis of a museum's various "publics" becomes a priority issue. Some systematic way of accumulating quantitative and qualitative data is a valuable aid to adaptation in a period of change: the Louvre, for example, is still a touch too French".

"Find out whether the public is going to be more national or international and then act accordingly: use railway stations, airports etc.".

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[61] Since 2006 founder of SRA Consultancy, New York
[62] Since 2004 Chairman of the Associazione Italiana di Studi Museologici (www.studimuseologici.org)
[63] Since 2005 co-founder of Experientia (www.experientia.com)
[64] www.nicefestival.org