

As a result of these efforts, a document reflecting the information gleaned from all facets of the front-end evaluation (interviews with the lay public, the expert focus groups, and the creative brainstorming) was written to direct the planning and design of the exhibition "Baffling Beauty." Because the integration of evaluation is central to the raison d'être of the pilot project, the general goals for the exhibition itself were so formulated that they could be tested during the formative as well as the summative evaluation. The results of the formative and summative evaluation of the exhibition should be made available sometime after the July 1995 opening of "Baffling Beauty" in the Forum der Technik in Munich.

The Institut für Museumskunde

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Institut für Museumskunde

The Institut für Museumskunde (Institute of Museum Studies) was founded in 1979 and, as a division of the Staatliche Museen (State Museums) in Berlin, was put under the command of the general director there. It is a federal organization devoted to research and documentation in the various areas of museum work, traversing the themes of actual museum collections. Its research work is defined by the scientific disciplines relevant to the individual project (sociology and social sciences, psychology, education, engineering and natural sciences, information and computer science, law, etc.).

The work of the Institut für Museumskunde concentrates largely on the following tasks:

- * It conducts research on development of the museums and museum visiting (annual collection of figures on visits nationwide and updating the institute's databank).
- * It furthermore investigates possible alteration in the structure of the museum-going public and performs effectiveness analysis of certain didactic and medial offerings in the museums (trend analyses of museum visits; polls of visitors at selected museums; additional studies on public relations, advertising, educational museum work, etc.; conducting of model projects introducing new media into museums).
- * It organizes and participates at research colloquia on the above subjects.
- * It carries out the entire range of economic research, including the gathering of administrative and personnel data from the museums, in cooperation with the Deutscher Städtetag (German association of communes), which participates in the data collection, and with the Ifo-Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (Ifo Institute of Economic Research), which is partly financed by the federal and state governments via the cost-sharing model "Blue List." In contrast, questions of museum management and proprietorship are

now being more intensively investigated.

- * In the Department of Computer-Supported Museum Documentation, extensive investigation into the use of new programs and new technology, as well as implementation of those found suitable, is a major task in the areas of documentation and cataloguing. Where no software appropriate for museums is available, some development work in collaboration with a qualified research institution will continue to be undertaken.
- * In the area of museum technology, research takes the form of cooperative projects. However, because basic physical and technological research can be done only by highly specialized personnel with complicated, expensive equipment, the chief assignment of this department is to report on extramural results that may be applicable to museum work. In such reports, independent research by our department is clearly distinguished from the accomplishments of other institutions, such as the Bundesanstalt für Materialprüfung (Federal Institution for the Testing of Materials), individual professorial subdepartments at the technical universities, or the Rathgen-Forschungslabor (Rathgen Research Laboratory).

Additionally, certain research topics are investigated under the aegis of the head of the institute. Museum-related legal questions, to name just one example, are studied in a project supported primarily by the Robert-Bosch-Stiftung. *The Handbuch des Museumsrechts*, of which four volumes have already been published and two more are under way, is edited by Prof. Kufner-Schmitt (see the list of publications by the Institut). In addition, individual experts are sometimes consulted on questions that are hard to classify legally (the legal status of museum volunteers, the granting of manufacturing contracts, privatization of services, etc.). The Institut für Museumskunde itself does not offer counsel in specific legal cases; however, it does help potential legal clients find a lawyer with the necessary qualifications.

Among the other services of the Institut are a comprehensive technical library with international collections and an information service, which searches for bibliographic information and book reviews, and compiles technical bibliographies at the request of any museum.

Beside the technical library, the Institut für Museumskunde also works on and adds to the archival holdings on the national and international history of museums. The primary collections on which this work is based are the archive of the Deutscher Museumsbund and the archive of the European Museum of the Year Award (EMYA). Sometimes research projects on the history of museums, inspired by these archives, are planned and carried out either independently or in cooperation with other institutions.

The Institut works closely with the Deutscher Museumsbund. On behalf of this countrywide association of museum professionals, it not only collects the annual visit

figures but also answers technical questions from foreign and domestic museums and organizations.

Thus, the Institut für Museumskunde in Berlin sees itself as a partner to the federal government, the states, and the representatives of towns and villages in all questions of museum planning, documentation, and cultural statistics.

**The Work of the Department
"Besucherbezogene Museums-
forschung und Kulturstatistik"
(Visitor-Related Museum Research
and Cultural Statistics) at the
Institut für Museumskunde
(Institute of Museum Studies)**

M. Hagedorn-Saupe
Staatliche Museen zu
Berlin-Preußischer Kulturbesitz

Collection of Data on Museum Visits and Related Projects

One of their chief activities of this department is the annual gathering of figures on visits at all museums in the Federal Republic of Germany, a practice begun in 1981.

In addition to the standard questions, the museums are surveyed on a special topic every year. Topics include the changing of long-term exhibits, education in museums, and public relations work. These question sets are repeated at intervals of several years, so comparative data are available on many of the questions.

The results of these questionnaires are published in a series called *Materialien aus dem Institut für Museumskunde* and sent to all museums. Simultaneously, this publication makes statistically reliable data available to the museum proprietors or holders, museum associations, and cultural offices. The results are included in the official statistics of the federal bureau of statistics every year and are published in the statistical *Jahrbuch der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Yearbook of the Federal Republic of Germany). Likewise, a number of state statistics bureaus request the data for their state so they can include them in their statistics.

In order to carry out the visitor data collection, it was necessary to compile a data base of addresses, information on main collections, and museum holders. In 1981, this data-bank encompassed 2,247 museums; as of 1995, the number has risen to 5,097. The regular gathering of data from all museums makes it possible to continually update and expand the "institutional documentation."

Now that full statistics exist for a series of years without interruption, the yearly results must be accompanied by interpretive research. If one considers only the results of the annual collection of figures on visits, one finds a steady increase in the number of visits from year to year. However,

the investigations and trend analyses undertaken in conjunction with the University of Bochum (Profs. Treinen and Kromrey), which began in the late 1980s and still continue, show distinct development patterns for different groups of museums. For instance, museums that have closed for moving, total overhaul of exhibits, or major remodeling and then reopen experience a clear increase in visits at first. In the following years the number of visits decreases somewhat but normally stabilizes at a higher level than that recorded before closure.

Visitor Research Projects and Collaboration with Other Institutions

In recent years, a number of visitor research projects on various subjects, some of several years' duration, have been carried out in conjunction with external partners. Let us take two of the bigger projects as examples: First, the empirical study "Trend Analysis of Visitor Structures" was initiated by the department together with the museum offices of Rhineland and Westphalia-Lippe, and was conducted by the Department of Sociology of the University of Karlsruhe. In nine campaigns distributed over a period of three years, at a total of 40 museums, more than 55,000 questionnaires were filled out by museumgoers. The results of this extensive project were published by Prof. Klein in the series "Berliner Schriften zur Museumskunde," brought out by the Institut für Museumskunde, under the title "Der gläserne Besucher" (The Glass Visitor). Second, the evaluation project "New Methods of Exhibition Planning in Museums" was also carried out by the University of Karlsruhe. It is described elsewhere in this volume.

The results of the Institute for Museum Studies work are disseminated partly through publications and colloquia, but the primary channel is the advising of external projects and institutions. Of special interest is a bibliography covering museology, museum education, and visitor research, which was first published in 1987. In 1993 the third edition appeared, expanded and enriched with key words. The research for this bibliography is an ongoing task.

Long-Term Research Topics: Perspectives

In future the principal assignment of this department will remain the annual visit figure collection. In addition, the continuation of the accompanying interpretive research is an absolute necessity. As in the past, this will require the following:

- Time series analyses of the individual years. The final results (by Treinen and Kromrey) have already shown that more in-depth analyses may yield information relevant to planning that can be used by groups of museums, museum holders, and cultural management bureaus.

- Polls of visitors at permanent and temporary exhibits and special exhibits. These should illuminate the visitor structure and monitor acceptance of certain kinds of exhibits