

PROVOKING MEMORIES, CREATING ATTITUDES

Nikola Krstović, Old Village Sirogojno (Serbia)

Museum must provoke people's memories. It means coming out of institutional frames, those secure and even seducing box thinking of curators and museum stuff. Everything is already in the museums, we (museum experts) just need to develop interpretative forms and marketing (to some extent) and people will come and be animated – “and our mission is fulfilled. But, in times when museum should be proactive social player and in function of public service for developing skills, knowledge, wisdom, awareness, empathy, tolerance and millions of other virtues, something sounds wrong when museums are satisfied with people coming. The numbers and figures are not everything, of course. The old division still stands: *we* (museum) and *they* (visitors), *we* (past) and *they* (present), *we* (giving) and *they* (receiving)... Actually there are too many *we* and *them*. If the museums are what they should be in 19th century then there must be more *all of us* in the story.

Museums have the extraordinary powers for engaging people and transforming them into treasurers of personal and collective memories, communities aware of the heritage that belong to all (regardless of being or not parts of the museum collections). The founder of the first open air museum in the world (Skansen in Stockholm), Artur Hazelius, brilliantly noticed: “The museum is all around; Skansen just has a public role to play”. Then, the essential question is: how to reconcile the “original” museum (life itself) which only constant is change, and the museum-institution whose only constant is tendency to eternal immutability? Let's try to answer, at least partly, to this question in the pages to come...

HISTORY OF “OLD VILLAGE”

The “Old Village” was established in 1980 and its primary structure resembled heritage site with loose management. In 1983, with almost 30 objects relocated to the site, “Old Village” became cultural heritage site of exceptional importance for Socialist Republic of Serbia (at that time part of Yugoslavia). Unofficial name was already in use – Museum of folk architecture¹. International recognition started in the same time, mostly through the AEOM – Association of European open air museums (affiliated to ICOM)². One of the most prominent theoreticians of a period was Jerzy Czajkowsky who stated that Sirogojno museum has interesting concept and mission³. He amplified the originality of establishing process and functioning of the new-coming institution as similar to the concept of ecomuseums. Indeed the role of founding mother,

¹ Ranko Findrik, “The Museum of Folk Architecture in Sirogojno, Yugoslavia”, “(summary in English), in: *Acta Scansenologica*, Tom 3, (Rzeszów: 1985): 80-81.

² www.aeom.org

³ „Generally, the situation in open air museums in Yugoslavia is rather difficult. Among all the museums coming to life now in Yugoslavia `Museum of Folk Architecture` in Sirogojno village (established 1980) has the best chance of development as well as the most interesting general conception. It is worth-mentioning that the idea of creating this museum was first expressed by a woman employed in one of the factories“, Jerzy Czajkowski, „Skansen Museology in Socialistic Countries in the Years 1945-1982“, in: *Tagungsbericht 1982* (Ungarn: 1982): page: 119.

Dobriša Vasiljević Smiljanić, was quite remarkable and specific at that time in one socialist country while architect, Ranko Findrik, did very precise operational work, yet quite imaginative, thorough and visionary⁴.

The official museum institution – Open air museum “Old Village” – was established in 1992. The programs and activities were gradually developed. During amplified national feelings, but disastrous politics and ideologies at the end of 20th century museum started to be the very popular, even though financial situation was rather bad. During the beginning of millennium museum started to be on the margins of the cultural sphere in Serbia but in the process of looking for its position away from the ideological premises.

TRANSFORMATION IN RECENT YEARS

From the very beginning of Old Village one aspect was cherished with special care: education of the staff. In the period of museum crisis years a lot of attention was paid to the strengthening the museum staff's capacities both in formal and informal way. Today we are proud on the fact that one small, regional museum on the mountain of south-west Serbia has very professional staff of 7 high educated people, among them two PhDs in anthropology/ethnology and one in museology, one MA in anthropology/ethnology; all of them being senior curators and four more curators with highest museum ranks: museum advisors. They took the leadership of the museum activities, especially in the times of frequent changes in the leading management due to the political reasons. Brain-storming(s), critical conversations and mutual supports or common projects additionally empowered the museum staff capacities and led to the changes in museum mission, strategies and long-term plans, ways of producing and managing activities...

The transformation started slowly in 2007 and continued in more progressive way which led to the EU Heritage Award 2012 and special mention of the jury for raising the awareness about cultural heritage and Nomination for the European Museum of the Year, EMYA 2014. But, of course, crucial question is: what are the characteristics of our recent change? The simple answer is: openness and true willingness to adjust our professional mindsets to diverse voices coming from people.

Best way to explore the changes that took place in the “Old Village” is to go through some of the recent practices and projects in order to trace the changes in philosophy of the institution.

HOUSES OF Mt ZLATIBOR

Beside the temporary exhibition project “Kafanas” (Taverns) which was based on extensive field researches, engaging local community and introducing exhibition design that actually invited visitors to be the part of scenography, the project “The private houses of Mt. Zlatibor from 19th century till nowadays” went a bit further in its research methodology and

⁴ Bojana Bogdanović, “She-story of Old Village”, in: *International Yearbook 2014, Open air museums: Founding fathers* (ed. Nikola Krstović), Open air museum “Old Village” in Sirogojno, Sirogojno 2014, page 149, 163-174.

communication diversity. The project was planned to last for one year (2007-2008) but due (or thanks) to the pressures from local community and interests outside it was prolonged to 6 years deeply influencing the management and structure not just of the project but the museum work as well. But, in order to understand this project it's necessary to understand the context of mentality and general atmosphere of the museum environment.

Mt. Zlatibor is the tourist center of the south-west Serbia and one of the most renowned destinations in the country. The central place is a small 2.500 inhabitants town where the local identity is concentrated with all its diversities. During 90-ies and especially in last 14 years it became the field of "investment architecture and philosophy", primarily visible in the development of tourist apartment complexes. With no clear strategy of development new structures (or mega-structures) started to destroy not just the town landscape, but numerous traditional houses and villas, as well as the sense of local identity.

On the other side, the Open air museum "Old Village" (situated some 20km on the west from mountain center) has been seen as the institution which preserves and presents the traditional folk building and living patterns of 19th and beginning of 20th century. In other words, exactly up to the time when mountain development started. So, it was kind of artificial division that made museum mission completely irrelevant in contemporary environment. The first challenge was how to overcome this gap. The other was how to implement all our theoretical knowledge on the practical level and to make people become aware not just of the existing of the museum, but of great local building heritage around them.

We decided to forget about those chronological boundaries and to step out towards our own contemporary community. In that situation dealing only with traditional folk building was insufficient, but dealing and researching references in 20th century architecture and building all over the mountain was quite justified. We went into partnership with local ICT agency Krug (Circle) which managed most relevant web-portal of the mountain. It was kind of public-private partnership, even though we never called it like that. To be honest, we haven't even been aware of that. Our common mission was to put some new light on the representative examples of private houses' architecture especially in the context of their rapid disappearance. Thus, we started the extensive filed researches but not treating interviewed people as passive source of information. We wanted to create the network of those people, to make layered but fluid structure with everybody interested in own permanent or temporary place of staying. This approach has had some elements of initial ideas of Georges Henry Riviere and Hugue de Varain's new museology and ecomuseums, sociomuseology and museums of neighborhood... But, we liked to call it "door-to-door museology", because of being in situation to go from door-to-door literary, house to house in order to meet all those people and, through exchange of knowledge to produce the extensive database of collected knowledge and stories. That was our idea. But practice, just because it was *our* developed a bit differently.

Primary, we, the initial authors, photographed some 90 "representative" buildings and chose around half of it as the "final choice". The network of people that we had believed would be created had to serve for completing and fulfilling our "aesthetic" choices with further

information. Actually, it was obvious that in this very beginning phase we did not believe in people strength to decide in their own mind – we actually believed in power of the museum institution and curatorial authority about right academic choices. The most further that we could have gone applying this methodology was a kind of game for locals which aim was to develop the personal and intuitive *sense of place* – “mental mapping”⁵ similar to the principles of Common Ground. We asked the houses and villas` owners or users to draw their living spaces (interior, exterior and environment) by hand, just as they believed it looks like. It confirmed our presumptions that living and dining rooms, as well as the terraces, balconies, patios were ranked very high – on drawings they mostly were quite enlarged. The other accents were connected with local roads and streets leading towards shops, doctors, parks and recreational centers. But, even with this game which “melted the ice” of *our* and *their* communication we haven` t move far from the focus on houses and building design.

Somewhere during the door-to-door research approach situation changed dramatically. We concluded that our knowledge (three curators – two of them acting like associates and two members of Krug) was too strict, predetermined and full of prejudices comparing to the constantly growing network of people with different backgrounds (architects, artists, lawyers, professors, teachers, crafts people, builders, furniture makers, politicians, “ordinary” people with great memory of their neighbors, relatives, friends, parents and grandparents...). They collected some 150 original and usable sources: items, architectural plans, drawings, photos, documents...The amount of oral stories about houses grew rapidly and many of data were checked out in the local archives, private documents, Geodetic Institute... It was the self-organized team that started to question our “curatorial” 30-and-something “final” choices as well as our approach. The human “network” consisted of some 50 directly and 350 indirectly, introduced one obviously more relevant approach – more local, more human and more intimate. They wanted to speak not just about building qualities and architecture, but about social changes that happened during time, intimate and private destinies, relationships with the local government(s), ideologies and wars, migrations of people to and from mountain... For locals, the houses were not a final goal but just the perspective through which they could put a new light cultural landscape of the mountain. At the same time it was a fresh air for our traditional curatorial approach. To be honest, that perspective was much more challenging – it was a kind of hypertext in which the buildings were just a front-page.

This was the crucial shift. Suddenly “our” practice became the practice of all of us involved. It was the moment when team of authors gave up the authority of being right just because of institutional background. The another idea of Artur Hazelius became so alive and usable: “The museum is not a creation of the scientist, but poet, artist and dreamer”⁶. Of course, five of us who initiated the project haven` t been none of latest three mentioned in

⁵ This was promoted by two scientist in field of geography, Gould and White, through the questionnaire which aim was identification of interests of local community for the most important categories of cultural heritage. The result was that locals value their “own” ends and local environments very high – equally or even more than national heritage. Ideal locality is of the size which most of the people can perceive as their own. See more in: Peter Gould & Rodney White, *Mental Maps*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974): 22-33.

⁶ Artur Hazelius (utg), *Bilder fran Skansen*, Stockholm, 1900/1901, page unknown

Hazelius statement, but we felt the energy of many dreamers that wanted to be involved into movement of raising awareness. In this moment it surely looks like as romanticized story, but actually feelings and nostalgia were a driving force of all the actions.

Collected (and in some cases classified) material was disseminated to the available people from the network (some 180 of them). The reason was the very simple and attractive game – “voting for the most interesting/beautiful/notable houses of Mt. Zlatibor”. “Network” people as well as five of us (experts) were in charge for engaging as much people as possible (anyhow connected to the mountain). Considering the fact that we knew that we had three ways of further communication of future exhibition (catalogue, web-portal and museum exhibition in the Museum itself) we gave to all the “voters” a chance to decide which houses (and narratives) would be in which category. We considered the Museum’s exhibition as the most ephemeral model thus mostly dedicated to the tourists visiting the museum - it could have host 24 panels with some photos and short texts; exhibition catalogue as something of bit longer communicative duration thus being appropriate for diverse stakeholders, but still with potential of a limited outreach especially because of number of pages possible to be included in the printed edition – 16 houses could have found their place in publication; web-portal has been considered as a long term model with very diverse communities to be potentially involved. The “voters” understood our demands very well. After the month of voting mostly via our 10 especially hand-made and copied dossiers some 900 votes were collected. The results were very interesting. For instance, the house of Duke Jovan Mičić⁷ from the beginning of 19th century and destroyed during WWII operations was selected for all forms of representation. The few surviving photos, small scale model from the local library and magnificent wood-carved door (now part of the collections of Ethnographic museum in Belgrade) are the only material artifacts connected with its existence. But, collective memory of the historic person and significance of his house were (are) still so alive and important for locals. The other house important for locals was so called President Tito’s villa, which is proclaimed as architectural cultural heritage with ridiculous name still in use today: House of President of Presidency of SFRY (in other words, Josip Broz Tito). The locals do remember and the legitimate heirs of house confirmed by donating all the documents that house was built in 1937 by Belgrade businessman Aleksandar Pavlovic and his wife, the French, Andre. The architect was one of the most prominent Serbian architects of a time, Milutin Borisavljević, who made his carrier lecturing aesthetic on Parisian Sorbonne. The house was confiscated in 1947 and then assigned to national broadcast service (RTS) in 1974 being, altogether with huge backyard, closed for public up to today. Many myths about Tito and his staying(s) in the house during and after WWII are still very interesting. They could not be documented even though many stories and memories confirm that in slightly different manners. Anyway the stories of this and many other houses and villas (mostly from between war period) started to be initial point for many others. Some of

⁷ Duke Jovan Mičić was founder of nearby local village Čajetina which is now the administrative center of the mountain and county. On the other hand small town/village Zlatibor (named same as mountain) is tourist and cultural center even they are just 4 km away from each other. The name of town/village, Zlatibor, is recent. Since 1893, when Serbian king Aleksandar Obrenović founded the fountain stating that mountain Zlatibor is perfect area for collective tourism, up to the WWII and during nineties of XX century it has been named as King’s Waters. In the period 1945-1990 the name has been Partisan’s Waters. These changes clearly represent the social and state orientations through time.

the stories have put completely new light on the life of (at) the mountain. Like, for instance, about five beautiful wooden houses of Jewish families completely destroyed and burned during WWII and about Jewish customs and suffering as well. These stories aroused the question of meaning and today's significance of the spot named Jewish Hill; then, stories of local aero-club; about presence of Nordic skiing as common practice altogether with the story about Henrik Angel, Norwegian, who taught locals this very specific discipline; or, more serious questions about confiscations of property, nationalization and communist politics after the WWII; complete devastation of tourism potential due to the political decision that Mt. Zlatibor is perfect place as "quarantine" for those suffering from tuberculosis 1950-1955; new waves of investments 1960-1975 under the leadership of one of the most prominent urbanism expert, Ms Jovanka Jevtanović, who perfectly organized development of the mountain center as a chess board; and tens of other "small" narratives...

After the museum exhibition and catalogue that "vanished" almost immediately, the web-portal became the mean of communication⁸. The "human network" started to fade out slowly after several workshops held with children and adults in the museum. The museum exhibition panels could have been seen on the Zlatibor's most popular promenade and served as a gathering and starting point for free-tours during summers of 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011. Some of the members of the network have gathered on the promenade acting as the guides. By the end of 2008 web-portal obviously started to become more visited and many people contacted the administrator in order to tell new stories, offer some other documents and corrections of the information published on web. These new inputs were named *Re-Action* and added as a new link. Of course, all the new information were checked as much as possible, or added as a potential source (or as we used to call it "trivia").

In 2009 something new happened. *Garmin*, international company for navigating, via its representative Info-team in Belgrade for SEE, decided to include this project as free-to-download application into their system. It was a kind of new perspective of observing the exhibition: like car or pedestrian route for tourists. One could have (and still can) easily download the application and walk or drive and visit all the houses having some of the texts and images while approaching to the house. The application was named *Notable houses of Mt. Zlatibor*.

The common atmosphere in the mountain center started to be more and more electrified due to the rapid speed of investment. It was clear to many that situation is approaching the condition of a real-estate balloon. The first signs of economic crisis shocked the people. The commercials for selling the apartments and flats were everywhere but investment agenda and building paradigm haven't change clearly enlightening the future that could easily transform a place of 2500 people (but with tourists in high seasons up to 100.000) in a ghost-city in off-seasons. Contradictory, the web-portal became increasingly popular having some 1000 visits per day. And, of course, some misunderstandings came with popularity: people started to ask if they can sell their house/villa via web-portal because "it's one of the

⁸ www.zlatibor.rs/kucezlatibora

most beautiful or prominent”, or if they can add info about their residence “because it’s a good commercial”.

It lasted up to 2012 when we decided to apply almost the same methodology used in 2007 to produce exhibition *Zlatiborer for a while* which dealt basically with shifts of mountain identity. This identity shift could have been sublimed top-list of key-words: instead of *holiday, air, nature, skiing*, new key words became *investment, apartment(s), property, nature*. Just a word *nature* reappeared. The idea was to deal with uncontrolled investments and building plans, disrespect to the environment and nature, disparagement of local still living traditions and habits, as well as with “importance” of real-estate trading, fake social status based on owning the property in desired environment...in other words with pseudo-urban psychology of creating own habitus.

Zlatiborer for a while was a shocking exhibition and catalogue dealing with many contemporary phenomena that rapidly change (and destroy) the social structures and sense of place. It is based on documents, evidences of wrong choices, questions about political and economic decisions, doubts in ongoing models of development as well as on personal stories of people who sold the properties and those who bought their own “piece of paradise”. The exhibition was opened in the Open air museum “Old Village” in Sirogojno in 2013. Paradox was that at exactly the same time, due to the celebration of 120 years of organized tourism of Mt. Zlatibor, the exhibition *Houses of Mt. Zlatibor from 19th century till nowadays* was opened in center of Belgrade. These were two sides of the same medal and part of these discussions was transferred to local parliament as a quite serious issue.

LOVE AFFAIRS

The exhibition *Love affairs* from 2012 was a provocative collection of local stories with universal message. Two curators from “Old village” and the scientist from Ethnographical Institute Belgrade were project leaders. The project did not establish the networking model of people, but all the experiences from *Houses of Mt. Zlatibor* and previous museum project *HerityFair – My personal heritage – my secret treasure* through which the network of institutions of south-west Serbia was established were taken into consideration. It was also the example of inter-institutional cooperation of all the museums from *HerityFair* network and Ethnographical museum from Belgrade. Some 120 people directly or indirectly participated in creation of the content. Again, all those involved have been great source of inspiration and ideas.

The final output of the exhibition and general outreach of the whole idea and concept were quite successful. The idea was that museum deliver strong and provocative messages about many contemporary issues dealing with love, emotional relationships and marriage, marital fraud and betray by using unofficial but typical Serbian concept of paradox “laugh and cry at the same time”. The museum Educative center was in the phase after the adaptation but before final furnishing. Due to the gap in financing the building was empty for several months and as such perfect to be used for this exhibition because it consist of huge space on the ground floor and five separated rooms on the upper one. It was an excellent space for

development of the exhibition narrative. Project team had to think and act quickly and it resulted in one of the most visited exhibitions of “Old Village” ever, with excellent evaluation response and feedback.

The scenario and messages

The exhibition “started” with a dark room with provocative Kinsey⁹ statistic about “how faithful we are” in the relationships. It was for purposes of “just keeping in mind” the statistic. After dark room, next step was huge white space in which one could have entered through a pair of sheets with hardly visible blood stains. Evidence of first wedding night in traditional culture was the symbol of entering “sacred” space of marriage. The white exhibition space consisted of several areas, all dealing with diverse aspects of culture connected with love affairs. But the evidences (artifacts) were all hidden behind the white curtains and could be seen only through tiny holes in the fabrics. Those evidences were of different kind – symbolic item, object connected with someone’s story or complete scene made of models. These last were particularly interesting and funny for visitors because they have been based on real situations and circumstances and they represented real life – intimate and personal memories. The models deliberately looked like enlivened 3D illustrations and were made by Serbian-French artist based in Paris, lecturer at one of the most prominent fashion schools – Parsons¹⁰. Many situations and stories were revived, but the most interesting ones were so called church situation with priest arranging meeting with local widow while saying the Mass and city woman seducing young peasant. Altogether with improvised movie hall where several cult Serbian films were streamed and small screen where the scenes from numerous TV shows and theatrical plays were focused on “crucial moments” the atmosphere was quite unique and “seductive”.

One of the most controversial part of this section was huge public exposing of erotic records of traditional short “tricky” oral poems documented by founder of modern Serbian language and very specific because of their extremely explicit language. The other is new reading of three most famous and still very prominent folk epic-poems from medieval period¹¹.

⁹ Alfred Charles Kinsey was an American biologist, professor of entomology and zoology, and sexologist who in 1947 founded the Institute, now known as the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction. Kinsey's research on human sexuality, foundational to the field of sexology, provoked controversy in the 1940s and 1950s. His work has influenced social and cultural values in the United States, as well as internationally.

¹⁰ <http://www.newschool.edu/parsons-paris/faculty/?id=99051>

¹¹ The folk-poems summaries: *Banović Strahinja* (Strahinjić Ban) is dramatic and powerful feature where the husband forgives her wife infidelity with Ottoman noble who kidnapped her while he was out of the city. After being kidnapped she falls in love with Ottoman noble and betrays her husband in the sense of love and during the rencontre between man staying on the side of her new love. Even being betrayed on many levels (national, religious and emotional) Strahinja forgives her wife in front of her and his family being thus elevated to the status of a hero and symbol of person's struggle against conservative environment; *Hasanaginica* is powerful story of a calvary of women: Ottoman noble wife has been expelled from the city by her husband who forbidden her seeing their children just because of Hasan-aga suspicion of her being unfaithful. In the moment of Hasanaginica's new wedding (arranged by her family in order to cover up the shame) she begs to see the children while passing nearby the city where she lived during her previous marriage. Hasan-aga allows this, but she dies of sorrow in the arms of her children; *Ženidba kralja Vukašina* (The marriage of King Vukašin) is very controversial folk-poem even today. The rich king Vukašin makes a serious of plots with noble Močilo's wife Ljuba offering her “gold, silver and silk” in order

All three poems put the universal light on characters` actions, thoughts, fears and dilemmas. These poems are perfect catalyst for questions of ethics connected with emotional relationships in contemporary societies: they provoke us to think of ourselves, to evaluate our systems of values and believing(s), our stands about love and trust. But, the general values and character`s emotional statuses have been per/in-verted by deliberately accented generalizations – main characters were labeled by oppositions like: hero or coward, whore or saint, manipulative or honest... Of course, we knew that general public was aware that none of these terms fit the truth but point out the existence of huge space (“of grays”) where the polemics and debates should be concentrated.

The upper floor was divided into several rooms dealing with different social phenomena. The rooms were designed as scenes from everyday life with labels explaining the context. Unlike the ground floor which have had a bit witty and funny atmosphere, the upper floor was emotionally demanding and quite affective. One of the rooms dealt with early 20th century prostitution and brothels referring to the modern trafficking problems; the other was dedicated to the family violence and its devastating impacts to societies and its values; the subject of the third room was love magic and which crafting during 19th century but with its reminiscent in 20th; the fourth room was dedicated to the specific custom of mountain areas of Balkans where the husband have had “exclusive right of killing his wife in cases of discovering her infidelity”¹². There are no proofs that this custom existed in the past, but the custom of “lapot” (deliberate murdering of elder members of society) did. It was used as an exaggerating image or scenery for pointing out the gender positions and exclusively masculine points of view during 20th century and survival of some of those stereotypes till today; the fifth room was inspired by personal story of one couple from 50-ies of 20th century and their passionate but secret relationship that destroyed the lives of everybody else close to them – the labels used for the exhibition were transformed into the SMS, FB and e-mail messages in order to contemporize the context.

Through the exhibition installation *Love affairs* many of the local and national stereotypes, opinions, but social and cultural interpretations as well, were questioned. The reason why the team of authors felt so free to make these attitudes public was great support by people who were involved in the content creation process during the researches – some of 300 hours of audio recorded materials were a back-up. A lot of colleagues from the museum, locals and people familiar with the future concept were concerned about reactions and feedbacks. Those fears were shattered by the extensive evaluation fulfilled by the public (867 exhibition visitors): the great majority of them expressed the satisfaction by museum`s courage to speak about everyday life issues that are current today. Very small percent of visitors were offended

to marry her and conquer the city. Ljuba murders her husband and betrays the whole city defense. When king conquered the city and compared himself with the former ruler through some personal status-symbols (helmet, boots and sword), he realized that he defeated the better hero only thanks to the betray of a woman. Scared that he could become an object of betray one day as well, or through having the moral enlightenment he gives the orders for Ljuba to be killed.

¹² The story of peculiar “custom” was introduced in the cult movie of great Montenegrin director Zivko Nikolic “The beauty of vice” (Lepota Poroka), from 1986, <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0091398/>

by the context and used language (2,13%) – most of them thought that language used for labels and descriptions is authentic and doesn't beautify the reality but depicts it just as it is. More than 70% of visitors thought that exhibition is actually educative, giving the general mark 4,53/5.

“OLD VILLAGE” AND PATHS FOR MOVING FORWARD

The new ways of the Open air museum “Old Village” in interpreting heritage and approaches in public develop innovations are focused on several things in near future. Firstly we started new system of guidance throughout the permanent exhibition by completely including our web-portal via QR codes (both in Serbian and English language). That frees some space for new concepts of real, human, guiding and developing diverse stories and narratives to be told through first or third person interpretations. At the same time it opened up the space for our web-portal to be considered as a media for disseminating information about contemporary issues connected with local communities and societies in general. These issues are going to be analyzed through blogs and texts of many interested parties which cooperated with museum during 2014 or are in the museum plans for 2015 and 2016. The main focuses are on contemporary false dilemmas rural/urban and private/public, but ecology, green building and organic agriculture and cousin as well.

Some of the projects have already started during 2014 like artists-in-residence project *Frontiers in retreat* in partnership with Foundation KC Grad (Belgrade) and partners from Scotland, Spain, Lithuania, France, Finland, Norway... The idea is to develop eco-awareness of people through contemporary art and its involvement with environment problems. During September/October 2014 four artists from Barcelona, Helsinki, Marseilles and London responded to our permanent collection delivering the art installations which questioned human relationship with nature, small floral or fauna details that we take for granted, food animals...

The other program started in 2014 is *Tradinnovation/Faces of rurality* which consisted of two segments. First one is open air exhibition in front of (and about) seven houses relocated to the museum during 80-ies of 20th century mostly used for accommodation of participants of summer schools, programs, conferences... They have modern interior design while exterior is authentic – typical mountain cottages of different original usage. Their function and existence was always considered as secondary and the aim of this project was to put them into the museology and heritage perspective. In collaboration with Faculty of Architecture from Belgrade and EAT Knowledge¹³ the exhibition *7 houses, 7 villages, 7 stories* was developed referring to the contexts and values of diverse mountain areas, connecting past and present, usage of eco-materials in contemporary building... The other segment was 10 days workshop of MA students of architecture who gave their *seven* interpretations of exhibition executed several months before in the first phase of project.

TO CONCLUDE, OR TO PRELUDE (AGAIN): Museum OFF Boundaries

¹³ [www.http://eatknowledge.org](http://eatknowledge.org) and <http://blog.eatknowledge.org/>

Creating attitudes refers both to the local communities and museum's roles in local, regional and (inter)national environment. It's not only about building the audience or constant empowering of the staff for new tasks. It's about permanent introspective process which leads to objective positioning of the institution in the society. Being the small museum primarily oriented towards local communities and tourists we need to be aware that day-to-day contact with our natural and human environment is essential in order to hold our feet on the ground, mindsets in present and hearts among people. On the other hand, by being mandated to take care of cultural monument of exceptional importance our message must be universal. Universal means that we have to focus on developing models of transferring values: from past to present and future with holding a line of organic connection (even if we deliberately make occasional disconnections), from personal to collective and vice-versa, from intellectual to emotional and vice-versa, from real to virtual and vice-versa, from usable to just beautiful and vice-versa... In order to deal with those transfers we should not be (and are not) afraid to ask for all the help – from our first neighbors and local supporters all the way to the international scene. The most important is to question our traditional boundaries and institutional limits, to go out of our secure museum backyard (depots) and meet people in their own environments, stimulate diverse common grounds (inside or outside the institution), provoke or inspire diverse thoughts, ideas and initiatives. And, not to worry: they'll all be the part of institution mission, eventually - one way or another.