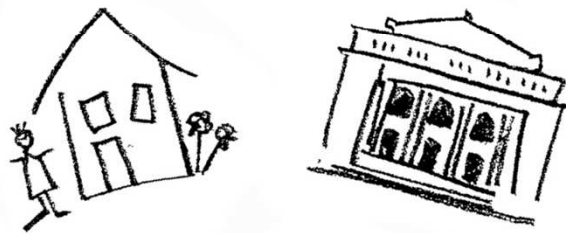


Cooperation between Children's Museums and National- or City-Museums



Claudia Haas, Elisabeth Menasse

BORDER BETWEEN TWO CULTURES

- During the 20th century there has been a clear border, dividing children's museums (CMs) and traditional museums (TMs)



- In the museum landscape TMs had a higher esteem than CMs. Generally TMs looked down on CMs



DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO CULTURES

Children's Museum:

- Visitors are the focus
- Learning is central
- New learning methods based on needs of visitors
 - Small and flexible organisation
 - Depending on self-earned income



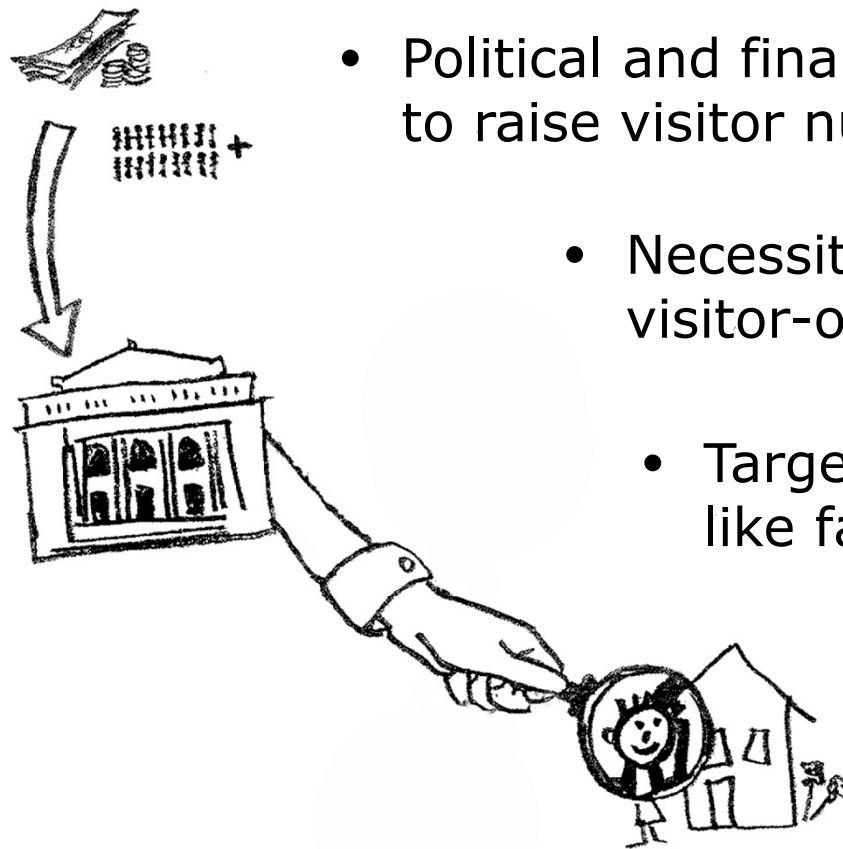
Traditional Museum:

- Collections are the focus
- Objects are central
- Curator is authority of knowledge
- State or city subsidized
- Hierarchical and inflexible structure



LOOKING ACROSS THE BORDER

During the last years increasing interest of TMs on CMs caused by



- Political and financial pressure to raise visitor numbers
- Necessity to be more visitor-oriented
- Targeting of new potential audiences like families, children, school-groups

LOOKING ACROSS THE BORDER

- CMs are excellent showcases how to best serve families, children and schools
 - TMs establish educational departments and create their own children's programmes often modelled after CM programmes.
 - TMs change their mission and objectives and start to see themselves as learning institutions

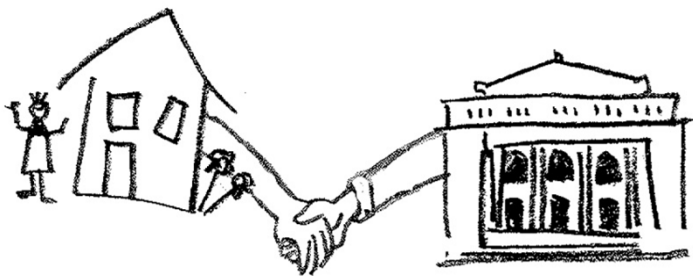


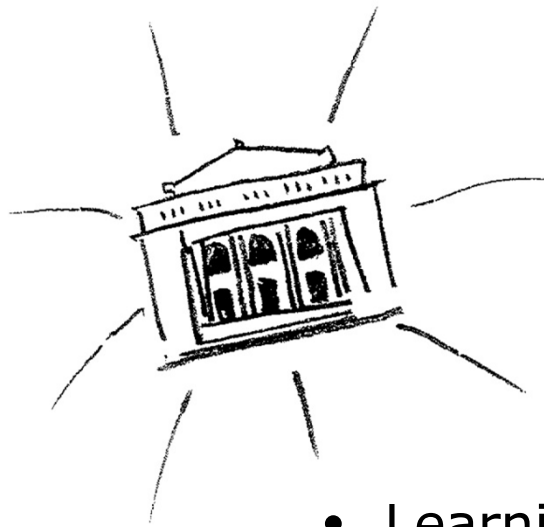
CROSSING THE BORDER

Interest for cooperation of TMs with CMs increases.

Different ways of cooperation:

- TMs are renting exhibitions and workshops designed by CMs
- CMs offer consulting for TMs
- CM staff members facilitate workshops in TMs
- CMs establish branches in TMs





TWO CULTURES WORKING TOGETHER

Benefits for TMs:

- Learning from the expertise on child-adapted content
 - Learning from their methods how to attract their target-audience
 - Using their network of exhibition designers, architects and artists
- Access to the CM audience-databases



TWO CULTURES WORKING TOGETHER

Benefits for CMs:

- Higher prestige in the museum-field
- Gain of new visitors
- More exhibition space
- Higher visibility
- Winning of new partners and networks
- Using collections and expertise of the TM-curators
 - Strengthening of the brand

TWO CULTURES WORKING TOGETHER

Drawbacks for CMs:

- Loss of visitors in the original CM
- Loss of monopoly and uniqueness in the eyes of the audience
- Competition between original CM and branch
- Differences in organisational culture leads to clash between the two staffs
- Weakening of the brand



TWO CULTURES WORKING TOGETHER

TMs have only benefits and no drawbacks from cooperating with CMs



HOW WILL THE TWO CULTURES DEVELOP IN THE FUTURE?

Three possibilities:

- Overcoming the obstacles and creating a strong partnership between CMs and TMs on equal terms
 - Cooperation fails – back to start



- Friendly or unfriendly takeover of CMs by TMs

