

ABSTRACT

The work addresses the issue of design exhibition projects. Design exhibitions are displays of particular form, which utilise objects on display to provoke aesthetic reactions or formulate narratives about functional and other aspects of their exhibits through their positioning within a wider narrative and intentional expansion of the context. By developing this context, exhibition designers provide the viewers with information, thus broadening their knowledge.

Exhibition design is a broad and complex subject. The basic ambitions and functions of exhibitions, as well as their typology, are determined by the timeframe, the extent to which museum collections are involved, as well as by the type of hosting institution. Equally important is the educational purpose of exhibitions, linked with the notions of interpretation and context. Of considerable significance is identification of the viewers' profile, understanding their behaviours and respecting their needs.

As far as design exhibitions are concerned, relying upon the specific features of this field, one may specify their subject matter and function, and criteria for assessment of exhibits, as well as identify viewers' behaviour. The general objective of such displays is to change the consumer habits of looking at products merely as objects of commercial transactions. Analysis of exhibiting institutions explains how the profile of given institution shapes the perception of design exhibitions. Analysis of exhibitions within Polish and international (primarily European) exhibiting institutions, festivals, and fairs identifies solutions that help highlight design-related aspects.

Exhibition design for *The Other Side of Things. Polish Design After 1989* is realised within the frameworks of the doctoral project and constitutes a practical application of previously formulated conclusions. The exhibition will be on show at the National Museum in Krakow, from April to August 2018. It will illustrate the changes that occurred in Polish design after 1989, transformations within design practices in the first decades after the political transition, as well as tendencies and trends that have emerged recently. The exhibition will be located in the largest space for temporary exhibitions within the museum's Main Building. Objects on display will be grouped thematically and distributed within the space divided with temporary partitions. The leading idea for the display refers to the image of a white sheet of paper, seen as a materialised moment when all creative processes begin. Exhibition design will involve expositors with backlit countertops. This solution is meant to provide separate space for relatively small objects (in relation to the size of the room), to present them in a way different from their usual environment, and additionally to direct the viewers' attention away from the spotted marble floor. Each of the objects will be signed and accompanied by a description of its titular "other side". Selected objects will be complemented with additional visual materials. The exhibition will also feature video footage developing selected topics and solutions highlighting significant issues in the field. Viewers will be invited to touch selected exhibits. There will be a special (guided) tour developed for the visually impaired, as well as special materials for children.

Keywords: design exhibitions, exhibition design, significance of design exhibitions, display solutions, design in museums, art institutions, design in Poland, exhibition space

Anna Zabdyrska