

ARTS OF

FREEDOM



A NECESSITY OF
ART IN PRISON

COLLECTION OF NEW IDEAS AND PRACTICES FOR
PRISON STAFF, POLICYMAKERS, AND PUBLIC

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ed.
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INTRODUCTION

Art has an unlimited effect and offers countless possibilities of bringing about positive changes in the living environment of all of us. Artistic activity and advocacy can help transform our lives, including the lives of prisoners, but they can also improve the working environment for prison staff.

The relationship between prison and art in this handbook is developed by shifting the perspective of art towards the therapeutic effect it has on perpetrators of criminal offences serving their sentence and shifting the perspective of prisons towards their humanisation, which can, among other things, help improve the working conditions for the staff. It is known that many of the prison staff spend their entire working lives in the prison system, which is a very specific environment.

In this context, the *Arts of Freedom* project comprises a collection of texts written by professionals focusing on key formal and informal academic and artistic practices of implementing art programmes and projects in prison with an emphasis on the therapeutic effect of art and its value in terms of aesthetics and space. Examples of good practice in Europe and worldwide aim to educate the general public and the prison staff, to encourage them to change their perspective of prisons, and by doing so, to inspire them to conduct and participate in artistic and therapeutic projects in the prison system.

In addition to an overview of prison history, art projects, prison art and artists who were making art during and after serving their sentence, this handbook provides an insight into contemporary forms of artistic activity that have a positive impact on prisoners

and can help reduce deprivation they face during imprisonment. Also, this book emphasises the benefits of aestheticization of prison premises for the prison staff and its impact on the reduction of job burnout syndrome. We also analyse the economic benefits of artistic and therapeutic programmes in the prison system, all with the aim of deepening knowledge and drawing attention to the importance of education and understanding the purpose and complexity of conducting artistic programmes with prisoners.

The leader of the *Arts of Freedom* project, the Croatian Association of Fine Artists, carried out the project in partnership with prominent European experts: the Polish University Uniwersytet Jagiellon-ski, the Hungarian Eszterhazy [AJN1] Karoly Catholic University, the association Changes & Chances from the Netherlands, the European Prison Education Association from Norway and associated partners, the Department of Justice of the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia.

The aim of the project is to take advantage of all the positive aspects of art and, despite the different rules and possibilities that make up prison reality, to combine the seemingly incompatible artistic freedom with the prison environment.

Among 38 applicants, the *Arts of Freedom* project is one of the seven projects accepted and funded by the Croatian Agency for Mobility and European Union Programmes. It was implemented under the programme Erasmus + Key Action 2: Strategic Partnerships in the Field of Adult Education.

PSYCHOLOGICAL
AND CORRECTIONAL
CONTEXTS OF
ART IN PRISON

PRZEMYSŁAW PIOTROWSKI & STEFAN FLOREK

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CORRECTIONAL CONTEXTS OF ART IN PRISON

Przemysław Piotrowski & Stefan Florek

Abstract

Being imprisoned does not just mean staying behind bars, in isolation. For inmates, time, space, monotony of everyday activities, boredom and the inability to decide about themselves also become oppressive elements of reality. Many convicts claim that the space of prison is hostile and monotonous, and that time passes slowly and is wasted. To cope with this stressful situation, prisoners undertake a variety of adaptation strategies and fill their time with various activities such as education, entertainment, work, and prohibited activities (e.g. gambling and forming informal groups).

One of the basic tasks of the prison staff is to create a prison space in which serving the sentence will be of a humanitarian nature, as it allows to increase the chances of effective rehabilitation and social readaptation of prisoners. The authors claim that art activities can help modify the prison environment in such a way that it becomes a place leading to rehabilitation. In our opinion, such *healing prison environment* should be planned and constructed in accordance with the guidelines of scientific research and in cooperation with artists.

Keywords: imprisonment, psychology, corrections, art, social rehabilitation.

Introduction

On a daily basis, in typical, conventional situations, when time is planned and sufficient in relation to the activities undertaken, and space is *tamed*, we do not seem to notice these aspects of our lives. They become more important when something happens that goes beyond the routine; when time *chases us* or *slows us down* and space is unfriendly. One such situation is undoubtedly serving a prison sentence. Many convicts claim that the space of prison is hostile and monotonous, and that time passes slowly, needs to be *killed* or is

wasted. All the more important are such forms of penitentiary interventions that allow to modify the oppressive character of prison time and space, and thus make serving an isolation sentence more humane.

Prison Time

Prison time has its own unique characteristics - it differs in many ways from that at liberty (Cope, 2003). First of all, it is supervised by prison staff and strictly organized. Since the rhythm of the day is imposed from the outside, the prisoner is largely deprived of control over time and has limited opportunities to plan it according to her or his preferences. Prisoners suffer mainly from the enforced idleness, boredom, and monotony of prison time. They try to fill it with various activities: they undertake self-service activities (e.g. laundry, cleaning the cell), provide themselves with entertainment (playing games, reading, watching TV), occupy their time with work or study. Of course, adaptive strategies using destructive behaviors, such as activity within an informal criminal subculture, exploitation of weaker inmates, smuggling or use of psychoactive substances, are also common (cf. Gulla, Tucholska, Wysocka-Pleczyk, 2015).

Żukowska (2016) distinguishes two groups of ways in which convicts cope with the nuisance of prison time: escapist methods and time manipulation techniques. The former include *escaping into sleep*, fantasizing, escaping into the past or future, into creative activities or sports. It should undoubtedly be added that the use of prohibited psychoactive substances, which temporarily alter the consciousness of inmates, is also an activity involving a kind of escape from negative emotions (Kolind, 2015; Rowell-Cunsolo et al., 2016). Techniques of time manipulation include ways such as creating time (by creating circumstances to speed it up), recalling unusual, dramatic life events from memory and recounting them to fellow inmates, and marking time (e.g., by crossing off days on the calendar that separate the inmate from the end of their sentence).

An attempt to plan prison time is also made within the framework of individualized social rehabilitation measures. In Poland, adult prisoners may serve their sentences in one of three systems: regular, therapeutic and programmed. The latter is considered the most effective from the point of view of rehabilitation; it consists of planning the time and activity during the sentence by the prisoner together with the prison supervisor. They should cooperate in order to arrange a plan of action, which will be directed at solving the most important problems of the prisoner's life: e.g. providing key psychosocial competences, improving relations with the family, completing the level of education, acquiring professional qualifications. Serving a sentence in the system of programmed impact is considered by the prison staff as a fact indicating a willingness to change the conduct of the inmate for the better, and thus increases the chances of obtaining conditional early release.

Undoubtedly, one of the most important current views on experiencing time is the concept of time perspective by Philip Zimbardo and John Boyd (1999, 2009). According to their assumptions, everyday experiencing of the world by an individual is strongly connected to the individual's characteristic time perspective. Some of us *live in memories* (past orientation), others are focused on the *here and now* (present orientation), others tend to look ahead (future orientation). If we also take into account the factor of emotions, connected to particular tendencies to experience time, we obtain, according to the authors of the concept, five time perspectives: positive past, manifested in focusing on positive events; negative past (focusing on failures and unpleasant memories); hedonistic present (focusing on pleasures); fatalistic present (belief that events are inevitable and beyond one's control); and future, expressed in planning and anticipating and considering possible consequences of behavior.

Zimbardo and Boyd (2009) consider the balanced perspective optimal from the point of view of psychological well-being. It is characterized by the ability to enjoy the situation *here and now*, having goals for the future and positive attitude towards the past.

Gulla et al. (2015, p. 47) considering the concept of temporal perspectives distinguishes three groups of inmates: *prisoners of the past*, *prisoners of the present moment* and *prisoners of the future*.

For the first ones, the past can be a source of anxiety and frustration, constantly returning in the form of bad memories (negative reliving of the past) or, on the contrary, is an idealized time of lost freedom (orientation to the positive past). As the authors of the article suggest, in the rehabilitation work with *prisoners of the past* the emphasis should be put on working through the traumatic events, and at the same time attention should be paid to the successes and positive experiences of the inmates; it is important that they learn to use the past events constructively and draw conclusions from them for their future conduct. *Prisoners of the present moment* are those who are focused on the prison reality, mainly on the nuisances of isolation. They feel mostly negative emotions about their situation: helplessness, boredom, or anxiety. The authors believe that the present can be overcome by indicating to the prisoners that in every life situation there are more important goals/elements (e.g. universal values) and less important ones. Art can provide means of identifying these important, socially acceptable goals or values.

The term *prisoners of the future* refers to two groups of people. The prisoners of the future are those who make plans for the future or who escape into unrealistic dreams about what they will do when they will be free. The attitude of the representatives of the second group of prisoners can be described as a negative future orientation. They feel mainly anxiety and uncertainty in relation to the future. Rehabilitation work with *future-oriented prisoners* should consist of teaching them to plan reasonably, based on realistic resources. The realization of the prisoner's goals at liberty should be prepared, as far as possible, already during her or his sentence: this can be done, for

example, by completing her or his education, acquiring professional qualifications, developing her or his social skills and improving her or his relations with those close to them.

We believe that art can help prisoners to identify important and socially acceptable goals or values, when it presents objects or situations connected to them, for example family, work, social cooperation, healthy ways of spending free time. Constant exposure to this type of stimuli leaves permanent records in long-term memory, which can later be activated in various life situations. Regardless of the temporal orientation adopted by inmates, pointing to prisoners' values / goals may have - in our opinion - a positive impact on their way of experiencing the time of imprisonment due to the increased probability of assessing their own past, present and future in relation to important values.

Prison Space

As Lopez and Maiello-Reidy (2017, p. 1) rightly point out, *it is just not feasible to expect individuals to become healthy in an unhealthy environment*. This thought can be applied both to individuals who require treatment (e.g., in a hospital) and to prisoners who are subject to rehabilitative interventions. In their article, the authors make several recommendations according to which the prison environment should be shaped. Although their thoughts concern mainly mentally ill prisoners, they seem to be standards that should be applied in every penitentiary institution so that punishment can be carried out in a humane way. Art can help modify the prison environment in such a way that it becomes a place conducive to rehabilitation. Features of a *healing prison environment* include:

(a) security; many inmates have had traumatic, violent experiences, so it is important that the prison space foster a sense of psychological and physical security. Security in this sense means predictability and transparency (no hiding places in sight) and furniture with gentle curves instead of the usual *sharp-edged* furniture. The level of psychological safety is increased by the possibility of good communication between prisoners and staff based on mutual respect;

(b) reducing the barriers between prison guards and inmates in order to create a supportive, therapeutic environment; human interaction is extremely important as it allows many psychological needs to be met, shapes empathy and reinforces hope for a better future. The use of typical prison barriers (bars, locked doors, etc.) should be adapted to the level of risk posed by the inmates;

(c) a design that is calming; this can be achieved through the use of appropriate materials, furnishings, colors and carefully chosen decorative accents (e.g. views of nature);

(d) an activating dimension; allowing the prisoners to influence the lighting or furnishing, the aim can be pursued that the prisoners

develop a greater sense of control and gradually *tame* the prison space. Greater freedom of movement and decision-making about daily matters can also increase their sense of responsibility;

(e) *normality* of space: as far as possible, the premises in which prisoners are held should resemble those which they will use upon release, as this promotes effective social reintegration and also reduces stress, both for prisoners and staff.

In terms of basic recommendations regarding the architecture of prison housing units and their furnishings, there are several important issues that should be pointed out in support of rehabilitation.

A very important element of the prison environment is lighting. The importance of the access to daylight and its positive impact on the human psyche and activity has been confirmed in many research projects (see: Heerwagen, 2000; Vandewalle et al., 2009; Sharp et al., 2014; Porras Alvarez, 2020). Artificial, blue-toned, uni-directional light sources can disrupt circadian rhythms, while too much light at night can make it difficult to fall asleep and impair inmate well-being (Wener, 2012; Bernheimer et al., 2017). Being in rooms illuminated by natural sunlight improves mood and reduces the stress of isolation. Of course, access to daylight should be provided by large, unobstructed windows. The ability to look outside the cell and to cover as much space as possible with one's eyes reduces the sense of being isolated and satisfies the evolutionary need to control the immediate environment (see Orians, 1980, 1986; Ulrich, 1983; Orians, Heerwagen, 1992; Piotrowski, Florek, 2015). It is also worth remembering that electronic devices with screens radiate unnatural light. This light can cause disturbances in the circadian rhythm and, consequently, lead to sleep disorders, which plays an important role in the process of cleansing the brain of harmful substances, which are remnants of cellular metabolism. Therefore, efforts should be made to ensure that electronic devices used by prisoners (and this applies also to all people) are equipped with blue light filters, which make the light emitted by the screen similar to the natural light characteristic at any given time of day.

Equally important for mental and physical well-being is a contact with nature. It can be provided through certain solutions used both indoors and outdoors. In closed-type penitentiary institutions, small potted plants could be used as furnishings. Moreover, furniture and floors could be made in such a way and in such colors (e.g. shades of green and brown) that they are associated with natural landscapes. Realistically painted, spatial landscapes or large-format nature photographs could also be placed on the walls of the prison. The prison environment should also be designed to incorporate the beneficial effects of contact with nature. Instead of typical walkways in the form of concrete *cages* one can (if safety considerations allow it) introduce open walking fields with plenty of vegetation and places to sit. It is worth considering the use of natural materials (wood, large stones), its presence - as well as the presence of water - has a calm-

ing effect. As research shows (Nadkarni et al., 2017), even vicarious nature experiences in the form of videos screened for a year have a positive effect on maximum-security prison inmates: inmates feel calmer, are more empathetic, and exhibit significantly less aggressive behavior.

An important part of a person's living environment is color. The effect of colors on the human psyche is still being studied. It is known, for example, that factors that influence how we interpret colors include gender, age, cultural background, and an individual's traumatic past experiences. For example, in most Western European countries, the color white is associated with purity and a wedding ceremony, while in China it is a symbol of death. Representatives of both genders prefer the colors blue and green, which are associated with nature, while women like the color pink much more than men (Bonnardel et al., 2017). In addition to the use of certain colors in certain situational contexts, color combinations, contrast between ambient colors, and color saturation are also important.

As for the elements of the prison environment that, in addition to those mentioned above, affect the well-being of inmates, noise and temperature should be mentioned. Some architectural solutions introduce constant discomfort in the prisoners' cells. For example, covering windows from the outside with plexiglass panels not only prevents the unauthorized communication of prisoners with the outside world, which was the justification for their use, but also significantly impedes the penetration of sunlight, blocks the supply of fresh air and raises the temperature in the summer. As for acoustics, certain sounds, such as the sound of cell doors closing or the hum of prison guards' electronic equipment, cannot be eliminated from the environment of correctional institutions. Noise can also be exacerbated by overcrowding. However, solutions can be provided in the form of special soundproofing panels, which - as in the Union County Juvenile Detention Center in Linden, New Jersey - also have a decorative function (see: <https://architizer.com/projects/union-county-juvenile-detention-center/>). In this building there are also more humanizing design elements, such as large windows and many open, transparent spaces.

A Need for Scientifically Designed Art Projects in Prison

Several years ago, the authors of this chapter proposed that the use of art projects in prisons should be planned and consistent with scientific findings (Piotrowski, Florek, 2015). In our experience, knowledge of applied aesthetics is relatively scarce and rarely used by prison administrations, especially in post-communist countries. Several reasons for this state of affairs can, of course, be pointed out. Some of them are the permanent financial problems faced by justice institutions. Due to insufficient funds, the attention of those who administer prisons turns to basic issues necessary to ensure the implementation of confinement, but does not cover issues that are import-

ant but not directly related to security. Moreover, public attitudes in post-communist countries are strongly punitive and populist, which is related to the difficult and socially conflict-filled time of political transition (Swallow, 2018).

Moreover, even if the authorities officially support the use of arts in prisons, it is difficult to disagree with Cheliotis' statement: *arts-in-prisons programmes and pertinent evaluation research are often employed as means to a variety of latent ignoble ends, with 'decorative justice' - the function of masking the injustices and painful nature of imprisonment behind claims of fairness, benevolence and care - chief amongst these ends* (2014, p. 16).

So what should be done to humanize the face of contemporary (or rather postmodern) prisons through art? The primary recommendations are:

- conducting research within cutting-edge, rapidly developing disciplines of knowledge, such as cognitive science and evolutionary psychology
- co-organization of artistic projects by scientists, representatives of the prison administration and artists
- the introduction of research-based modifications to the prison environment to prevent aesthetic deprivation of prisoners and other psychologically disadvantageous phenomena.

As we pointed out several years ago *introduction of systematic, evidence-based, changes in the prison environment, can help to reduce stress and the negative effects of inmates' sensory deprivation. Positive emotions, which - as is to be expected - will be evoked by a more stimulating environment (created by artists in cooperation with scientists) should in turn lead to a reduction in the size of aggressive and self-aggressive behavior. We also believe that using emphatic art can help to develop the regions of inmates' brains responsible for social emotions. These effects of the scientifically designed art in prison can strengthen prisoners' resistance to environmental risk experiences* (Piotrowski, Florek, 2015, p. 105).

In fact, one can point to a growing number of examples of such use of art in prisons that are consistent with the state of contemporary knowledge. For the authors of this chapter, it is not clear whether the recommendations stemming from the findings of evolutionary applied aesthetics are introduced fully consciously and with the aim of achieving the aforementioned goals, nevertheless, the appearance of solutions humanizing the space of serving a sentence should be appreciated.

It is worth noting innovative projects such Las Colinas Detention and Re-entry Facility (see: <https://www.balfourbeattyus.com/our-work/project-portfolio/las-colinas-detention-and-re-entry-facility>) and HMP Low Moss near Glasgow (see: http://www.matterarchitecture.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/421-op-02_Design-toolkit-report-online.pdf).

In the projects mentioned above we can see several elements that clearly refer to the assumptions of the so-called *savannah hypothesis* (Orians, Heerwagen, 1992) and *prospect-refuge theory* (Appleton, 1975). Various shades of green and light brown create the impression of communing with nature. The space is open, and a lot of sunlight comes through the glass walls. The furniture was made in such a way that it was possible to freely arrange the public areas and adjust their appearance to the specifics of the activities carried out with the participation of female detainees. The walls of larger rooms are decorated with huge paintings depicting vast natural landscapes.

Conclusion

The current state of the art allows us to state that the shaping of the prison space and time with the use of art is one of the ways to increase the effectiveness of the rehabilitation and social readaptation of prisoners. The basic issues that should be emphasized in the projects aiming to modify the environment of penitentiary institutions are:

- providing contact with nature
- providing positive distractions
- providing social support places
- promoting important values
- giving a sense of control
- reducing or eliminating environmental stress (Ulrich, 1984, 2006; Ulrich et al., 2010; Bernheimer et al., 2017).

Artistic activity and environmental design in prison can result in positive changes of inmates' lives. Participation in art projects in prison is non-directive type of social rehabilitation influence, respects autonomy and privacy of the inmates, reduces stress, isolation, sense of alienation and lack of confidence in others. It can also be an important source of information about criminal lifestyle and helps to identify the main topics of prisoners' narratives (see: Piotrowski, Florek, Bajek, 2013).

According to Konopczyński (2008), the two basic goals of creative social rehabilitation are the discovery and development of the creative potential of persons with deviant behaviour and the shaping of new individual and social identities. Both of them can be effectively realized through the participation of convicts in artistic projects and the introduction of thoughtful, scientifically-based modifications to the prison environment.

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IMPORTANCE OF
AESTHETICS IN
PRISON SPACE –
PSYCHOLOGICAL
PERSPECTIVE

STEFAN FLOREK & PRZEMYSŁAW PIOTROWSKI

IMPORTANCE OF AESTHETICS IN PRISON SPACE – PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Stefan Florek & Przemysław Piotrowski

Abstract

People have a natural tendency to punish cases of violation of social norms and act with strong negative emotions against criminals. This is the cause of public support for harsh and even cruel methods of punishing criminals. The prison sentence is often seen as lenient. In fact, it is an extremely severe punishment, because it causes the deprivation of the basic needs. This deprivation in all important areas of life causes serious psychological consequences, including mental disorders and disrupted ability to function in normal society. There are many ways one may resolve this problem. One of them is to aestheticize the prison space through art. The results of some studies indicate that the modification of prison space by artists, or artistic interventions in prisons, are beneficial for the well-being of prisoners. However, it should not be forgotten that they are also beneficial for society, as they increase the likelihood of rehabilitation.

Keywords: art, prison, mental functioning of inmates, rehabilitation

Introduction

Arts in Prison and The Philosophy of Punishment

Punishing individuals who violate norms is important in every society as a manifestation of retributive justice (Brandt, 1959). The punishment is a phenomenon observed not only in humans, but also in many species of social animals, especially in primates (de Waal, 1997). Nowadays, in contemporary states the punishment is carried out according to the system of law, and is based on the philosophical assumptions.

It seems that there are three fundamental philosophical approaches to the institution of punishment: retributive, utilitarian and the mixed one (Poklek, 2018). On the basis of the retributive approach, which flourished in the Age of Enlightenment, and which was supported by famous philosophers Kant and Hegel, the necessity of punishment is emphasized as the way of restoring justice that had been violated by the commitment of a prohibited act. Punishment is therefore in this view a moral obligation. This approach assumes that the perpetrator is a rational and free being, who chose the evil act although he or she should have chosen good, so he or she should be punished.

The second approach is the utilitarian one, which was developed almost simultaneously with the retributive one. Amongst its famous supporters were Bentham and Mill (Poklek, 2018). In this approach the consequences of actions are important. The assumptions about the rationality and freedom of the perpetrator are questioned, and her/his deeds are treated as rather deterministic ones. A good action is considered to be one that leads to the maximization of the public benefit. Therefore, not retaliation but the rehabilitation of offenders is the recommended response to a crime (Michael, 1992).

The third one, which may be called mixed approach, is guided by both the idea of justice and of rehabilitation. The punishment is to be performed in such a way that both these goals are fulfilled. We believe that this approach, which attempts to reconcile these two important currents in the philosophy of punishment, is the best justified. We believe also that it is important to emphasize the freedom of men, although of course this freedom can be understood in different ways, and to pay attention to the limitations of freedom.

It should be remembered that without absolute knowledge of all the circumstances of the prohibited act, it is impossible to determine to what extent a perpetrator was free in his action. In other words, we are not able to make an objective moral assessment of her/his deeds, although of course this does not preclude the possibility that we can judge it within the framework of the legal system. There are two important sources of restrictions on freedom of action to which we all are subject: (1) innate factors, such as genes, which to some extent determine how our bodies, including our brains, are built and function, and (2) environmental factors, which have influence on our life experiences and the way our genes are expressed. In other words, our freedom is limited by our genes and environment (Dennett, 1984). For this reason, when we enter a penitentiary, we should not judge people morally, because we have too little knowledge to do so, although of course we condemn their criminal deeds.

How risky it is to judge people in moral terms is demonstrated by - the well-known in cognitive literature - case of a pedophile described by Patricia Churchland (2006). A middle-aged man unexpectedly started to feel sexual attraction to children and molested his stepdaughter. It turned out that his brain had developed a tumor in the frontal area. When tumor was removed, pedophilic tendencies

also disappeared. This case shows how factors that are completely independent of the perpetrator can influence his or her behavior. This fact makes that it is morally risky to demand extremely harsh conditions for serving a sentence even from the ground of retributive philosophy of punishment, and justify *inter alia* the implementation of the idea of art in prison. On the basis of the utilitarian approach, the use of art to increase the chances of rehabilitation is so obvious that does not require further justification.

In Polish conditions, both the mixed approach to punishment and the idea of art being in prison slowly and with difficulty made their way into the social consciousness. Until the end of the 1980s, no organized artistic activities were conducted in prisons, and objects created by prisoners themselves (e.g. figurines made of soap or chewed bread, structures made of matches or other available materials) were treated as semi-legal and contemptuously called *faience*. The situation began to change after the start of the systemic transformation process. In 1991, the first Polish Review of Prison Art was held at the Prison in Sztum. Next, similar events began to be organized in many prisons in Poland. Appreciation of the art created by prisoners coincided with the development of the Polish concept of creative social rehabilitation, the precursor of which was Marek Konopczyński (1996, 2007, 2014). At the beginning of the 21st century, the importance of artistic influence in prisons was not questioned, which was reflected in the fact that in 2012 Poland participated in 21 European programs implementing art in prison (European Social Fund, 2012). Thus, the evolution of understanding the prison - art relationship proceeded in three stages: marginal treatment of prisoners' creativity - promoting and rewarding prison creativity - art in prison as a method of social rehabilitation.

Negative Attitudes Towards Improving the Conditions of Imprisonment

The natural human reaction is to punish violations of social norms (Buss, 2001; Thagard, 2004). This reaction also occurs in other social species and is an adaptation to life in a social group. Evolutionary psychologists believe that there is a specialized mechanism in the human brain, or mind, that serves to strengthen cooperation and extinguish the exploitation of members of one's own group, which is responsible for thirst for revenge.

Moral norms serve to promote cooperation within human social groups, and people have an innate tendency to generate it, e.g. to forbid murder, support reciprocity, and regulate mating behavior. These moral principles serve to maximize the interests of both individuals and the group as a whole. Their violation causes negative moral emotions in the group members, which could motivate them to punish the person who broke it, e.g. for the committed crime.

The moral emotions that motivate punishment undoubtedly include such emotions as disgust and rage (Thagard, 2004), or the

satisfaction of taking revenge. They cause people to carry out extremely severe, sometimes cruel acts of retaliation against individuals who violate the moral norms in order to deter other potential perpetrators.

The perpetrators of crimes, especially aggressive ones, have been and still are subjected to various repressions. In the past, they were usually punished by death, sometimes preceded by torture, or by mutilation. These punishments were carried out in public, so that they could not only satisfy the desire for revenge, but also to deter and act preventively. It can be assumed that in small groups of hunters and gatherers, as in the primates, punishment was executed by direct witnesses of the rule violation in the form of immediate and spontaneous revenge. It has been observed, for example, in chimpanzees. Sometimes the consequence of such an attack is the death of the perpetrator (de Waal, 1997).

In large and developed communities, however, specialized institutions responsible for the administration of justice were invented and they took over this task from the social group. As Hobbes (2002) argues, the need to deal with aggression and violence was the reason for the creation of the monarchy or state with its power to punish criminals. The state produces more or less specialized institutions dedicated to detect crimes, prosecute their perpetrators and punish them. The result of cultural development in this dimension is, for example, the emergence of the profession of hangman, which implemented the sentences of court, in a *professional manner*.

However, the anger at perpetrator caused by the old evolutionary mental mechanisms is common and culturally universal. Regardless of the era, people have demanded justice and have manifested negative emotions and behaviors towards the perpetrators. This desire for revenge is still present today, even though in most countries the death penalty and mutilation penalties have been replaced by imprisonment.

From a psychological perspective, the fundamental problem with imprisonment is that it appears to be a punishment that is not very severe (Florek, 2021). Some people, who do not deal with penitentiary issues, sometimes even express the opinion that imprisonment does not bear the hallmarks of punishment and is not harmful to the perpetrator, because it involves free food, accommodation and fulfillment of other basic needs at the expense of the taxpayer. This kind of thinking, which we will argue below to be wrong, is one of the reasons for the reluctance of societies to ease the conditions of imprisonment. The aversion of people to improve the living conditions in prisons is widespread. Therefore politicians seeking support from voters declare harsh policy towards perpetrators of crimes, which leads to a lack of interest in the decent conditions of imprisonment.

The results of this phenomenon are the extremely severe rules of executive criminal codes in many countries. Their societies are eager for more or less thoughtless revenge on criminals, in the lack of

knowledge about the relationship between the methods of carrying out prison sentences, the effectiveness of rehabilitation and the level of recidivism.

For example, in the Polish Executive Criminal Code (Ustawa z dnia 6 czerwca 1997 r, Kodeks karny wykonawczy), an inmate in the conditions of a closed facility has the right to 3 square meters of space in a cell, an hour's walk during the day, several visits with loved ones in a month and a daily feeding rate of just over 1 € per day (Rozporządzenie Ministra Sprawiedliwości, 2016). It should be remembered that not only in Poland, but also in many other countries, prisoner's basic needs are deprived (Poklek, 2018), but the level of deprivation varies not only from country to country, but often also from one prison to another.

It is worth emphasizing that aesthetic needs are viewed as one of the less important and attempts to improve the prison space in this respect are met with particular social disapproval. Perhaps people treat them as a manifestation of luxury that they cannot afford themselves. In this context, it is important to explain that in the case of prisoners, satisfying their aesthetical needs can cheaply compensate the impossibility of satisfying their other, more important needs: e.g. physiological, emotional, social, parental ones.

Deprivation of Needs in Prison and It's Negative Consequences

Imprisonment seems to be a mild punishment compared to other types of punishments still applied in some countries, such as the death penalty or mutilation penalties. This is probably because this kind of punishment does not evoke in our minds spectacular images of instruments of torture, blood, or a dead or mutilated body. If, however we are guided by slightly deeper reflection, when assessing its severity, we come to completely different conclusions. It is enough to consider whether we would not be considering mutilating ourselves so as not to lose the opportunity to freely manage our lives: to move, to choose where we live, the people with whom we live together, with whom we meet, the type of work we do, the meals we eat, the way we spend our free time. For prisoners, particularly acute is the loss of the opportunity to stay with their loved ones: wives, children, parents (Poklek, 2018). Often, imprisonment lead not only to weakening the bond with loved ones, but even to breaking it completely. The aestheticization of the prison space is not able to compensate for all these torments; and this is not its function, for it must not be forgotten that the penalty of imprisonment should still remain a punishment.

In prison, the fundamental needs of a prisoner are subjected to deprivation, which causes a state of almost constant frustration. This frustration can and often leads to aggression, as psychologists commonly agree (Krahe, 2021). Level of aggression, which increases in inmates during their stay in a prison is a potential threat to fellow prisoners, prison staff and, and if they finally leave the prison, also to

other people. It should also be mentioned that it can have consequences in the form of acts of self-aggression, which, apart from the fact of the damage they bring to the inmate, also constitute stressful situations for the staff (Poklek, 2018), because self-harm performed by prisoners can cause an extremely disturbing experience.

It seems, moreover, that the fact that self-harm and suicide attempts are a much more frequent phenomena within the prison walls than outside, proves well enough that the prison sentence is a particularly painful punishment, not to mention a cruel one (Florek, 2021). The degree of her ailment largely depends on the type of penitentiary in which it is performed. In different countries there are various types of prisons, but usually they are equivalent to closed, semi-open and open prisons, which are distinguished in the Polish Executive Penal Code (Ustawa z dnia 6 czerwca 1997 r, Kodeks karny wykonawczy). In an open type facility, prisoners move freely around the prison and have the opportunity to leave it to perform work, in a semi-open type facility it is possible to leave the facility only under the supervision of guards. The worst conditions are in the closed penitentiaries, where recidivists and perpetrators of particularly serious crimes usually serve their sentences. In Poland inmates in such facilities spend almost the whole day (23/24 hrs.) They have to live in overcrowded cells, in which the ability to move is very limited, not to mention the limited possibility of meeting other needs. Such extreme deprivation increases probability of mental disorders and acts of aggression, including sexual violence, self-harm and suicide attempts.

Keeping people in very harsh conditions makes their rehabilitation difficult or even impossible. Among other things, it makes difficult to feel guilty. Perpetrators of crimes use – usually unconsciously – various techniques to reduce guilt (Sykes, Matza, 1957). However, the fact that they themselves feel subjected to inhuman treatment makes it difficult for them to understand their fault, which hinder their rehabilitation. In this context, we will recall the statement of the killer, with whom one of the authors of this chapter had the opportunity to talk in a prison of a closed type, about his and his victim situation : *I am rotting here, and he is only dead*. It cannot be overlooked that sometimes prisoners become also victims of aggression by fellow inmates or even prison staff. Feeling like a victim probably makes it difficult to realize the accept one's own guilt. The analysis of the prisoners' narratives about their lives showed that they rarely make negative moral assessments of their behavior (Piotrowski, Florek, Cieśla, 2016). Interestingly, there are many clues that serving sentence in severe prisons conditions increase probability of reconviction but positive climate connected with experience of peer relationships, autonomy, and meaningful activities decreases it (Ginneken, Palmen, 2022).

It is not entirely possible to make an objective moral assessment of the perpetrators, to determine the scope of their freedom and responsibility. This facts should prevent morally sensitive people from thoughtlessly demanding revenge on the perpetrators for the acts they have committed. The attitude of suspending the moral, but not legal, judgement seems much more rational. From the perspective of an outside observer, the prison sentence may seem to be of little severity, because the damage that is done to the perpetrator is not as clearly visible as for example the damage he had caused to the victim. However, a little more careful reflection leads to the conclusion that imprisonment is a very cruel punishment, because it changes the whole life; deprives prisoner of the opportunity to continue important relationships and to fulfill her/his basic needs. Nor can we forget that in most cases – with the exception of people sentenced to life imprisonment – inmates will be released. We should all care that they come out without mental problems caused by too harsh prison conditions which will minimize the risk of recidivism. Using art in prison is relatively inexpensive way to accomplish this goal.

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PRACTICES OF
PRISON ART
IN EUROPE AND
THE WORLD

MELINDA ŠEFČIĆ, ANITA JANDRIĆ NIŠEVIĆ & VIDA MEIĆ

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Abstract

In the modern world, with our noses to the grindstone, in a constant race against time, it is easy to overlook the value of art the same way we overlook the importance of prevention and rehabilitation because they do not directly contribute to, for example, curing cancer or the development of robotics. We ignore criminal offenders in the same way because we are not offenders ourselves – we do not understand what it is like to be them. Despite this, many prison systems in the world have been implementing artistic activities within prison environments with a particular emphasis on rehabilitation and contribution to inmate social integration, primarily within the prison system itself, followed by that within society after their release. The application of various artistic forms of expression in the world usually entails drama, fine art, music, dance, and theatrical and stage workshops for larger numbers of people. Getting inmates involved in various artistic activities can help them better understand themselves and their emotions through the creative process, and see themselves in a different light.

Keywords: inmates, art workshops, prison art, practices of prison art

Introduction

In the modern world, with our noses to the grindstone, in a constant race against time, it is easy to overlook the value of art the same way we overlook the importance of prevention and rehabilitation because they do not directly contribute to, for example, curing cancer or the development of robotics. We ignore criminal offenders in the same way because we are not offenders ourselves – we do not understand what it is like to be them. However, more and more civil society organizations are beginning to take note of the value of art in penal institutions throughout the world. They understand that misdemeanours and criminal offences have a variety of biological

and psycho-social causes, and that imprisonment on its own does not always prevent repeated offences.

For many young male offenders, their time in prison starts around 15 years of age. They spend the majority of their lives trapped in a vicious circle taking them in and out of prison. It is becoming ever harder to radically change their lives after their release due to reductions in rehabilitation programmes, lack of employment opportunities for former offenders and potential homelessness once they leave prison. It is difficult to achieve positive reintegration of former inmates into society in a way that they are accepted as its equal members. Namely, there is frequent discrimination and labelling of this population by that very society where they are supposed to find their place in the sun.

Many prisons in the world, characterised by a Victorian architectural style, insufficiently embody the ideas of Jeremy Bentham (18th c. English philosopher) on the panopticon – a system of social control where a single guard can observe inmates without being perceived himself. The bleak and colourless environment of many prisons, paired with a high level of acoustic echo, makes prison life boring and simultaneously frightening and off-putting. On top of that, prisons are understaffed, overcrowded, and plagued by an abundance of drugs like the so-called spice and medications, which engenders an environment dangerous to inmates. Mental health is another major problem in prisons, especially due to the reduced numbers of employees who can attend to inmates in a quality way on an everyday basis. This is undoubtedly reflected in the unbelievably high rates of self-harm and suicide in prisons all over the world; namely, suicides in prison are five times more frequent than they are among the general population (Thwaites, Harkness, 2019).

Saul Hewish is one of the leading practitioners using drama and theatre to work with inmates. He currently teaches at the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom, and as part of his classes, students work with people in the prison system, with an emphasis on facilitating inmate participation in theatre plays. He points out that the point of drama workshops is for people to work in a group with multiple players. One thing that has become apparent throughout the years is that, by participating in this expressive art form, people are reminded of the fact that they are human beings. According to Hewish, offenders sometimes forget that they are people themselves, which clearly indicates what the problem is with most prison systems in the world. It is no coincidence that while serving their sentence within the prison system, offenders feel dehumanised above all else, and often go back to their previous lifestyle after their release. If inmates are neglected and if healthy forms of social collective good are not instilled in them, how can we expect them to change their lives in a positive way if they do not think of themselves as people who have a positive role in society? Hewish reminds us that drama is not introduced into prisons in order to encourage people to pursue acting, but to offer them the opportunity to learn how to be different via a participatory

process (Thwaites, Harkness, 2019).

Artistic forms of expression, whether they include fine arts, drama, theatre or dance, offer inmates the chance to understand themselves and their emotions and to see themselves in a different light. This very identity change is key to preventing inmates from repeating their offences after leaving prison.

Practices of Art in the Prison System

The application of artistic forms of expression in the world usually entails drama, fine art, music, dance, and theatrical and stage workshops for larger numbers of people. The implementation of art workshops is highly significant for a comprehensive approach to the individual. They facilitate both spiritual fulfilment and the construction of a new value system, as well as revitalization, re-socialization and social integration of participants, and can be one creative way to fill up their free time.

The activities of many civil society organisations throughout the world contribute to a novel approach to working with inmates, and workshops they conduct have positive results leading to the proactive development of various skills.

Much research and numerous projects, some of which will be presented in this review of practices of art in the prison system, confirm the thesis that art can serve as and become a vital part of rehabilitation, integration, and consequently re-socialization and social reintegration of the inmates themselves. Art can help them change their perception of the world around them and evaluate things in their immediate and indirect surroundings in a better way, as well as to develop skills that can help them to better navigate their social surroundings after their release.

There are many examples of inmates who were able to turn to the artistic aspect of work after their release and who have become renowned artists, or of people whose creative work enabled them to become reintegrated into society by finding employment in printing houses, design companies, and even galleries. It is not uncommon for these people to become workshop facilitators within the prison system itself. These examples prove that people can mend their ways while serving their sentence. One such positive example is that of Toine Bakermans, a former Dutch inmate who is now a famous artist, who has spent more than 20 years in prison for bank robberies. More details on his life experience, life in prison, transformation, and subsequent academic education can be found in the chapter *Art education in prisons*.

Best Practice Examples for Art Activity Implementation When Working With Inmates

Fine arts workshops within the prison system are becoming more common in the world. An increasing number of the goals and

visions of civil society organisation activities focus on this extremely marginalised social group, and the practices of art applied produce tangible results. This chapter introduces one smaller, but important overview of praiseworthy programmes, projects and activity results which ought to serve as best practice examples, not just to those of us dedicating our careers to and aligning our vocations with the prison system, but to the coming generations as well, who may also redirect their work experience to rehabilitation and activities with inmates after becoming acquainted with all the positive aspects of artistic work.

An Art Practice Example from the Croatian Prison System

The Croatian Association of Fine Artists is a non-profit art organisation established in 1868. Throughout the many years of its activity, it has cooperated with artists on various forms of artistic expression, and as of 2018, at the initiative of the artist Melinda Šefčić, PhD, it has initiated its first projects focused on conducting art workshops with the implementation of artistic interventions in the form of murals in the prison system. The aim of such art workshops is to aestheticize and re-humanise the prison space as we know it. For example, within the scope of the *Exemplary Penitentiary* project at the Women's Penitentiary in Požega in 2018, two workshops were conceived and led by the artists Mia Maraković and Martina Miholić. In addition to workshop activities, this project also included painting murals throughout the entire second floor of the women's penitentiary, more details on which can be found in the chapter *Revitalization of prison space with art: New innovative practices*. The following is a presentation of the results of these two praiseworthy workshops which have impacted the female inmates strongly and constructively, not only in a creative way, but also in a verbal, emotional and psychological one as well, which was apparent in their participation and great interest in the work.

The Personal Book Workshop

The art-therapy workshop entitled *Personal Book (Osobna knjiga)* was conceived and led by the artist and project participant Mia Maraković. The workshops were carried out as part of the *Exemplary Penitentiary* project with seven inmate participants from the Women's Penitentiary in Požega, six of which also actively worked on the books in their free time during the project implementation. At the beginning, the inmates selected one of the books prepared by the workshop leader, Mia Maraković. In each of the four workshops, the workshop leader read one line of a song to the participants with the aim of fostering cooperation and discussion between the leader and the participants and to encourage the participants to do continuous creative work on the book they selected. For example, her reaction to the line *Can do, can do, can do, can do. I shout these two words*

from the rooftops – can do, can do (Može može, može može. Vičem s krova ta četiri slova – može, može) encouraged one participant to dedicate her entire book to this line, to her options and wishes, to everything she can do with her life that would have a positive outcome, while another inmate rephrased all her negative statements, replacing them with positive attitudes (Maraković, 2018).

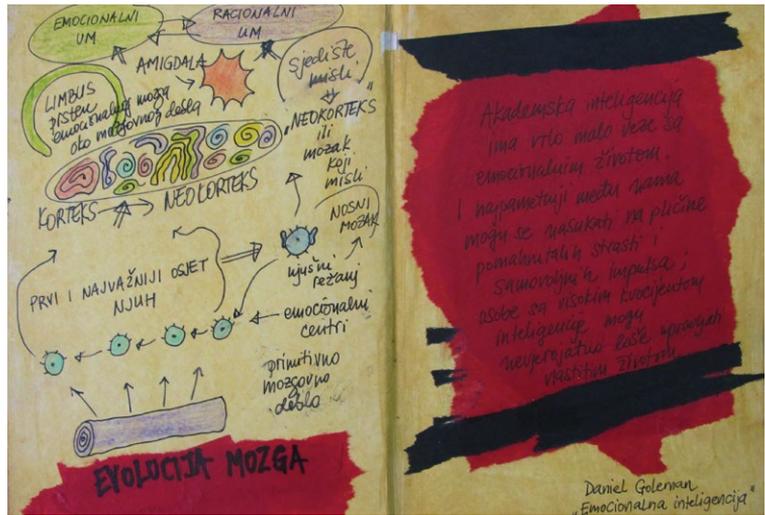
The concept of the workshops encouraged the participants to produce more than just artistic expressions using drawings or pictures. Pieces produced by the artists during the workshops displayed bold photo-collage techniques by cutting text out of magazines, while drawings were mainly absent. Their preferred mode of expression was text, the writing of personal messages, poems and verses combined with pasting words cut out of magazines which ultimately resulted in unique personal stories. The participants used these books as their personal diaries and even pasted personal photos and wrote out buried emotions which they usually refrain from sharing with their environment (Maraković, 2018). This contributed to engendering trust between the workshop leader and the participants, and to the achievement of creative therapeutic expression which contributes to a positive inner transformation.

Each of the books created within this project is therefore very personal and unique, filled with emotions and thoughts, experiences, attitudes and opinions. As seen from the photographs below, the workshops resulted in unique transformations of discarded books into their own books, more specifically, into personal diaries which serve as a mirror of sorts for the souls of the participants themselves.

The workshops affected the mood of the participants and the creative and quality fulfilment of their free time, contributed to the self-analysis of the personal circumstances of each woman included in the process, and encouraged sincere expression and confrontation with their own selves and their most deeply hidden emotions (Maraković, 2018).



Project Exemplary Penitentiary (2018). *Personal Book* [Collage]. Author of Workshop: Mia Maraković. Photographer: Juraj Vuglač. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.



Project Exemplary Penitentiary (2018). Personal Book (Collage). Author of Worksop: Mia Maraković. Photographer: Juraj Vuglač. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.

The topic of this workshop, implemented by the artist Martina Miholić, was how to question, from a personal perspective, the sense of unease and/or shame imposed by society and arising when one does not fit into behaviour patterns and stereotypes tied to traditional notions of gender. In other words, the topics of these workshops centred around discussions on what women should not be ashamed of, such as the way they dress, their weight, their jobs, their hobbies and their opinions. They also included discussions on more serious, complex topics brought up by the participants themselves, such as being ashamed of one's illness, the illness of one's child, one's prison sentence, or the criminal act perpetrated. The aim of this workshop was to build and strengthen self-esteem, to encourage positive attitudes and opinions of one's self, as well as positive perceptions of the qualities each participant possesses, which are never a topic of conversation nor are emphasised in any way.

The workshops were continuously conducted on a weekly basis for the duration of the *Exemplary Penitentiary* project in the Women's Penitentiary in Požega. At the introductory workshop, the artist and workshop leader Martina Miholić introduced herself to the participants, presented her work and thereby acquainted them with the topic of these highly intimate and personal workshops in a subtle, sincere and open manner. The workshop concept entailed asking questions about a certain topic, with the participants themselves providing the answers, and encouraging discussions and dialogue between the participants and the workshop leader.

In addition to conversations on a given topic, the workshop concept also included forming the answers in writing or visual art using collage and drawing techniques. In this way, the participants created their own artistic diaries where they reacted to the given topic in writing, or where they (often) posed new questions by themselves, providing creative answers. A presentation was given for each poster, additionally encouraging discussion on these topics among the participants and the workshop leader.

Some of the topics discussed during the workshops included:

1. *Is there a form of occupation, hobby or activity the participants wanted to, but did not do because this was considered unacceptable for a woman?*

2. *Is there a form of occupation, hobby or activity which the participants cannot imagine a man doing?*

3. *Is there anything they are ashamed of, and shouldn't be because their shame is due to the socially imposed, biased concept of women and their roles?* (Miholić, 2018).

The participants participated in the conversation and discussion with great eagerness. They recognised each other's shared and similar opinions and the problems they have been facing.

The analysed topics were not primarily connected to the pe-

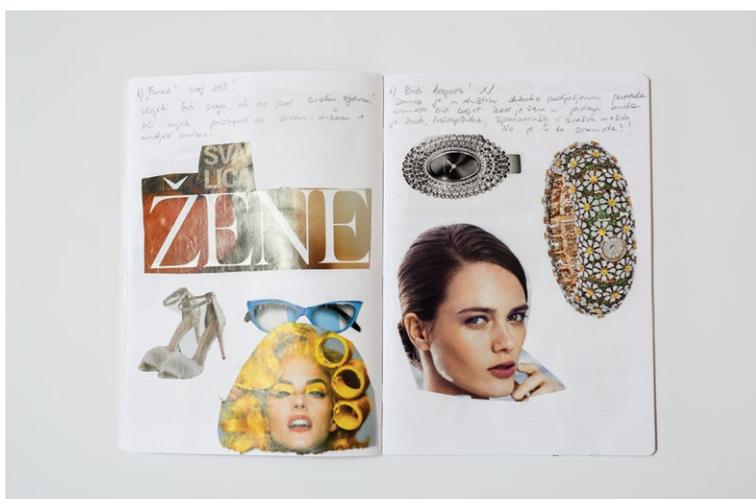
nal institution nor to the inmates' sentences. These were topics all women have in common, regardless of their social position or the circumstances of their lives and activities.

We would like to highlight some of the answers participants gave on certain topics which resulted from these workshops, and which are key to a better understanding of the structure and goals of these workshops:

- *women should not be ashamed of having an abortion*
- *women should not be ashamed of having breast cancer*
- *women should not be ashamed to report violence*
- *women should not be ashamed of having another woman as their romantic partner*
- *women should not be ashamed of the illness of their child or another family member*
- *women should not be ashamed to demand that their rights are respected at work and in society*
- *women should not be ashamed of their femininity*
- *women should not be ashamed of their choices*
- *they should never be ashamed of their origin, their job, whatever it is, their looks, their weight, their teeth, their wrinkles or their actions* (Miholić, 2018).



Project Exemplary Penitentiary (2018). *What Women Should Not Be Ashamed Of* [Collage]. Author of Workop: Martina Miholić. Photographer: Juraj Vuglač. Penitentiary in Pože-ga. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.



Project Exemplary Penitentiary (2018). *What Women Should Not Be Ashamed Of* [Collage]. Author of Workspop: Martina Miholić. Photographer: Juraj Vučlač. Penitentiary in Pože-ga. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.

An Art Practice Example From the Romanian Prison System

One instance of a best practice in art activity application can be found in Romanian prisons, which encourage inmates to join cultural and artistic programmes via educational activities, and which place great emphasis on the development of skills, as well as encouraging appropriate behaviour and self-respect. The following is an introduction of several festivals and activities carried out each year involving a large number of inmates.

The MultiArt Festival

The MultiArt festival entitled *Dana Cenuşă – Unshackled Through Culture* is a unique cultural event in Europe taking place every year. The festival has a great impact on inmates and encourages positive changes, such as the creative fulfilment of time, the acquisition of self-esteem and more positive behaviour within socially acceptable frameworks. This festival is organised in cooperation with the Nottara Theatre in Bucharest, and from its first to its fifteenth edition, it has held 73 plays on the Nottara Theatre stage, with the participation of 730 inmates. As of 2016, this event has been part of the programme of the International Theatre Festival, which is an indicator of its success.



MultiArt festival (2019). Theatre play by inmates [Theatrical performance].
Photographer: Unknown. Source: Romanian prisons & National Administration of Penitentiaries. Romania, Bucharest, Nottara Theatre.



MultiArt festival (2019). Theatre play by inmates ITheatrical performance]. Photographer: Unknown. Source: Romanian prisons & National Administration of Penitentiaries. Romania, Bucharest, Nottara Theatre.

National Folklore Festival for Inmates

The *National Folklore Festival for Inmates* takes place yearly in cooperation with Romanian penitentiaries and the Dimitrie Gustin National Village Museum. This event brings together talented inmates and encourages them to express themselves in creative ways, which contributes to the inmates' reintegration into society after their sentence ends. The results are presented to the local community with the aim of building a healthy, stimulating environment for the healthy reintegration of inmates into society.

The festival has three segments: traditional Romanian dance, folk music and an exhibition of handicraft artefacts made by the inmates as part of the workshops. What makes this festival unique is the complexity of its production, bringing inmates together to do creative work throughout the year. Coordinated by experts from within the prison system, the inmates create this extensive and unique art programme with the aim of raising societal awareness of the importance of programmes such as this one.



National Folklore Festival (2019). Dance and choir of inmates [Dance and choir]. Source: Romanian prisons & National Administration of Penitentiaries. Romania. Bucharest.



National Folklore Festival (2019). Dance and choir of inmates [Dance and choir]. Source: Romanian prisons & National Administration of Penitentiaries. Romania. Bucharest.



National Folklore Festival (2019). Handcraft of inmates [Handcraft]. Source: Romanian prisons & National Administration of Penitentiaries. Romania. Bucharest.



National Folklore Festival (2019). Handcraft of inmates [Handcraft]. Source: Romanian prisons & National Administration of Penitentiaries. Romania. Bucharest.



National Folklore Festival (2019). Handcraft of inmates [Handcraft]. Source: Romanian prisons & National Administration of Penitentiaries. Romania. Bucharest.

Local Activities

Art, regardless of its form, provides inmates with unique opportunities to understand themselves and the world around them, and thereby create their own cultural identity.

Liter-Art is a symposium on literature organised by the Aiud Prison partnering with the Liviu Rebreanu Cultural Centre. This event brings together people of varying generations and walks of life: inmates, state officials, renowned artists, and members of the Romanian literary community.

Mankind's deep need to communicate our emotions and ideas has grown even stronger in 2020 due to restrictive conditions imposed by the pandemic. As a result, the sixth edition of the symposium in 2020 provided inmates with a framework to express their feelings and thoughts via poetry, short prose, photography or graph-

ics through technology, which also enabled them to exchange topics and feelings ultimately reflected in their artworks.

An Art Practice Example From the German Prison System

The Open Walls Association (*Mauern öffnen e.V.*) is a non-profit organisation located in Bremen in Germany, which utilises the act of creation to assist the rehabilitation and re-socialisation of inmates by connecting them with artists and volunteers in order to create sculptures for private and public spaces.

Workshops with minor and adult inmates in the Bremen penal system are carried out, coordinated and led by 12 artists, where sculptures made of wood, clay and stone are created and made. The resulting art is displayed on public surfaces such as schools and kindergartens, as well as parishes of the Evangelical Church of Bremen. The Mauern öffnen association also organises exhibitions where inmate artwork is sold. This non-profit association is supported by the federal ministries for culture, justice and the constitution, as is the Uwe Hollweg Foundation.

Workshop Structure

Adult workshops offer the possibility of hiring inmates, with eight job vacancies reserved for these jobs. At the start of a workshop, the inmates are hired for 34 hours per week, receiving a regular salary for their work. The entire course of the work is supervised by two artists, while inmates can make sculptures according to their own designs or those which match the context of the project. Sculptures are mostly made of stone and wood.

The minor inmate workshops include eight inmates who make ceramic sculptures for kindergartens, schools and public spaces as



Kita Flintacker (2019).
Sculpture [Sandstone]. Association
Mauern öffnen e.V.,
Bremen, Germany.



Work by prisoners (2018). Herkunftsorte/Sehnsuchtsorte Gröppelinger Grünzug Bremen (Place of original, place of longing Gröppelinger Greenway Bremen) [Concrete and ceramics]. Association Mauern öffnen e.V., Bremen, Germany.

part of the project. Inmates here can also make sculptures according to their own ideas or ideas supervised by an artist.

The concept of workshops for minors also offers the possibility to get individuals displaying difficulties with integration into the system involved in the activities. It is precisely these workshops that provide the chance to receive positive feedback and to acquire new skills and knowledge which can greatly contribute to a positive direction after release from prison and during integration into society.

An Art Practice Example from the Moldavian Penitentiary Number 3-Leo

The Moldavian penitentiary number 3-Leo has been conducting the *Art and Light* project as of 2017, which involves the artistic processing of paraffin wax.

The program is implemented in penitentiary number 3-Leo during the winter season (from November to March of each year).

It was first hosted in 2017 as part of the project *Joint Efforts for Better Access to Psycho-social and Medical Services in Moldovan Prisons* carried out by the Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims *Memoria* with financial support from the Human Rights Fund of the Embassy of the Netherlands in Bucharest, Romania. This project enabled the purchase of technical equipment and consumables including training materials (brochures, video materials). The programme is implemented by an officer of the judicial police within prison, and assembles and provides activities for groups of up to 10 convicts. The participants are convicts who have shown an interest in participation and who possess artistic skills such as painting and sculpting.

This creative-arts programme lasts a total of six weeks and is centred on diagnosing, stabilising and improving the psycho-emotional state of the convicts. Unique decorative candles are created by developing and applying their creative skills in the areas of design and carving.

The various aims of the programme include:

- developing the candle carving project
- developing precise motor skills
- developing tactile research skills
- logical acquisition of the spatiality of visual elements
- understanding and use of colours and their combinations
- application of geometrical and floral motifs etc.
- development of tolerance to frustration by fostering self-control
- development of cognitive abilities such as attention, thinking, memory and creativity
- forming communication and relationship skills via adequate verbal and non-verbal contact with others
- expressing feelings, desires and needs
- reduction and removal of apprehension, frustration and inhibition via the creative release of accumulated tension.

The implementation of this programme has a string of benefits such as the following:

- the programme provides the means for convicts without a sufficiently developed vocabulary to express their feelings via visual art
- in most cases, the programme engenders a series of positive emotions in convicts and helps them overcome apathy and frustration
- the artistic symbol which the inmate is working on can be the result of a projection, can be destroyed, reshaped or altered with no disciplinary or legal consequences.

Inmates receive education on various techniques and methods used in candle-making, become acquainted with flexible materials such as paraffin wax and stearin, and are provided with the possibility to quickly and creatively combine different colours in the process of making decorative candles.

This programme has proven to be an efficient tool for diagnosis, correction and education contributing to identifying the personal skills of convicts within the field of applied arts. The development of these skills will contribute to easier socialization and reintegration after the completion of the inmates' sentences.



Project Art and Light (2017). Carved candles [Parafin and stearin]. Photographer: unknown. Source: Moldavian penitentiary number 3-Leo. Leova, Republic of Moldova.

An Art Practice Example from the Catalonian Penal System

The Catalonian penal system is an exemplary instance of best practices when it comes to art workshops and programmes for inmates.

The penal system itself hires 52 specialised academic artists as so-called *monitor artists* distributed to all penal institutions of the Catalonian prison system. Working with inmates takes place five days a week, eight hours a day. Lectures conducted within the programme include various creative skills such as painting, sculpting, ceramic work, restoration, performative arts, audiovisual arts, photography, graphics, serigraphy, radio activities, music...

Programmes of such quality design and structure teach various skills to inmates, foster self-respect and self-esteem and boost their general learning and working capabilities. Inmates learn to act and work as part of a team, get to know themselves and others via creative expressions, and develop positive communication.

Art programmes carried out in Catalonian prisons include various prison competitions such as the *Best Prison Photography*. All inmates can apply, and the artwork created is displayed at a group exhibition each year. For example, in 2016/2017 the first large-scale exhibition was opened in the Caixaforum in Barcelona, entitled *Balsam and Escape*.



Balsam and Escape
(2016/2017). Brians 2
[Ceramics]. CaixaFo-
rum, Barcelona.

In 2020, the second large-scale exhibition named *Collateral Damage* took place at the oldest prison in Barcelona, La Model. The original name of this prison is *Prison Cellular* due to its panoptical structure, and it has also been referred to as the *Model* as it served as an example for the construction and planning of other Catalanian prisons.

The concept of this exhibition included both the presentation of selected inmate creative pieces, as well as diverse creative programmes such as workshops and plays for audiences, while the entire event was accompanied by music performed by the inmates. The prison gates opened up to welcome visits from citizens and inmate family members in order to spread awareness of the positive outcome of programmes such as these, namely the construction of an exemplary prison community and a wholesome, healthy societal community, free from crime.

Conclusion

Working with people is necessary, and often centred around working with children, vulnerable social groups, the ill and the elderly, but the focus is rarely on working with inmates. If we claim that art is unique for everyone, then it truly is so and it should be applied and introduced into all social spheres and groups, from the cradle to the grave. This includes the prison system, i.e. people who have committed a criminal offence with or without intent, and who are serving their sentence, frequently deprived of basic life necessities, as well as those with spiritual and emotional value. Even though they have committed a criminal offence, inmates are people nonetheless, who need art as well. Via these best practice examples, we attempted to point out how little it takes to make real changes which will in time lead to even greater changes, all with the aim of creating an empathetic, understanding, conscious and responsible society which we should all live in.

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REVITALISATION
OF PRISON SPACE
WITH ART:
NEW INNOVATIVE
PRACTICES

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REVITALISATION OF PRISON SPACE WITH ART: NEW INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

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Abstract

The implementation of art programmes in the prison system is a reflection of the outside world's aspiration to contribute to and enrich a peculiar, in a way neglected, and maybe even forgotten inner world such as a prison is. If we look at art in the form of murals, we will notice on many prison walls around the world artistic achievements of inmates as well as artists who, in a creative and completely innovative way through various projects and initiatives, improved this cold and utterly rigid space occupied by both inmates and prison staff. Workspace, outdated equipment and furniture may cause frustration and dissatisfaction among employees. Art, it should be emphasized, contributes to the creation of a new, more humane, supportive and nurturing environment and creates conditions for the growth and development of awareness, responsibility and compassion in people in prisons, all of which could lead to an increased employee satisfaction in the workplace and a reduced stress that leads to burnout at work.

Keywords: murals, aestheticization, art revitalisation, burnout at work

Introduction

It is known that art has a transformative power, an unlimited effect and applicability in every social sector. Art projects in prison systems around the world support life without crime, open windows to

a new world and provide hope for a better tomorrow. Art represents our future, turns walls into windows and breaks down the boundaries of our comprehension of the world and the reality. Art reveals stories and desires of whose presence and existence in us we were not aware. Art is of unlimited duration and offers countless positive opportunities to change the living environment of all of us. Through activation and commitment, it may contribute to the transformation of lives of all of us, including the lives of inmates, but also to the change in the working environment of prison employees (Šefčić, 2018).

The implementation of art programmes in the prison system is a reflection of the outside world's aspiration to contribute to and enrich a peculiar, in a way neglected, and maybe even forgotten inner world such as a prison is. Art is an extremely rich field, inseparable from life experience of all of us (Šefčić, 2018).

In the previous chapters, the important and transformative role of art in working with inmates was mentioned, while in this chapter the focus is on presenting the programme of aestheticization and artistic revitalization of the prison space. Not only do such initiatives lead to the activation of inmates, but also positively impact the prison system employees.

If we look at art in the form of murals, we will notice that on many prison walls around the world one can find and see artistic achievements of inmates who, in a creative and completely innovative way, improved and marked 'the living space' whilst serving a sentence. In the very beginning, this type of inmates' artistic expression was considered an act of vandalism, an inappropriate behaviour, whereas today the *graffiti* works on many prison walls are seen as an artistic expression encouraging the inmate to behave better, to strive for change, but also to strive for an aesthetic improvement of the prison facility.

Likewise, we see that this form of art may contribute to and change the perception of the work environment of the prison system employees. It is not uncommon for the employees to join such initiatives, contributing thus to stress reduction, better communication among the employees, as well as to the improved workspace which, due to its distinctive architecture, often negatively affects the mood of the employees.

Workspace, outdated equipment and furniture may cause frustration and dissatisfaction in employees, so we could say that a prison affects inmates and prison system employees both positively and negatively. The loss and lack of aesthetic preferences extremely negatively affects each individual (Piotrowski, Florek, 2015). Art, it should be emphasized, contributes to the creation of a new, more humane, supportive and nurturing environment and creates conditions for the growth and development of awareness, responsibility and compassion in people in prison, all of which could lead to an increased employee satisfaction in the workplace and a reduced stress that leads to burnout at work.

Prison Aestheticization and Art Revitalisation Projects in Croatia

Since 2017, the Croatian Association of Fine Artists (HDLU) has been continuously implementing aestheticization and art revitalisation projects in the prison system of the Republic of Croatia. The author and project leader is the artist Melinda Šefčić, PhD who, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration of the Republic of Croatia and numerous artists, researchers and institutions is implementing extremely innovative projects. Completed projects so far include the *Exemplary Penitentiary, Revitalization of Prison Space with Art*, the *Horizon of Freedom* and the *Freedom of Creation*, with the fifth project, the *Colours of Reality*, underway. Within the implemented projects, more than 60 artistic interventions were made in 12 penal institutions, with the participation of about forty artists - HDLU members and students of the Academy of Fine Arts of the University of Zagreb. So far, the following facilities were painted: Požega Penitentiary, Glina Penitentiary, Turopolje Penitentiary, Lepoglava Penitentiary, Zagreb Prison, Bjelovar Prison, Osijek Prison, Karlovac Prison, Rijeka Prison, Juvenile Correctional Institution in Turopolje, Zagreb Prison Hospital and Zagreb I Probation Office.

The project aims to improve the quality of life and interpersonal relationships of inmates and to influence the establishment of social values and the re-socialization of inmates, empowering them to develop responsibilities and activities within the prison community. The projects also seek to contribute to the construction and development of a more humane prison environment which will encourage inmates to behave exemplary and create a new perception of life in the prison community. There is also a pronounced therapeutic effect of art, including changing one's self-image, improving communication skills, achieving a positive feeling and reducing depression and anxiety in general. Through the active engagement of inmates, the projects contribute to better recreation programmes with the aim of achieving successful socialization and social integration during imprisonment and after release.

The already implemented projects were accompanied by complex research work by numerous institutions and individuals such as: Anita Jandrić Nišević, PhD, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb; Nevena Škrbić Alempijević, PhD; Sanja Potkonjak, PhD from the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb; Valentina Gulin Zrnić, PhD; Sanja Đurin, PhD from the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb and Miran Jurić, MA, a project associate from the Croatian Society of Artists.

The aim of the project's research component is to gain insight into how inmates and professional staff of penal institutions in which art interventions were made perceive prison exterior and interior be-

fore and after project activities, all in order to improve the general conditions of imprisonment. More about the research results can be found at the following links:

Exemplary Penitentiary https://issuu.com/hdlu6/docs/katalog_kaznionica_po_ega_za_web

Revitalization of Prison Space With Art https://issuu.com/hdlu6/docs/katalog_web_b72943d4461f21

Horizon of Freedom https://issuu.com/hdlu6/docs/katalog_-_horizont_slobode_web__2_/1

Freedom of Creation https://issuu.com/hdlu6/docs/katalog_-_sloboda_stvaranja_web

Ratković Sobota, A. (2018). *Trees* [Mural]. Penitentiary in Pože-ga. Photographer: Juraj Vuglač. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.



Kosanović, L. (2019). *Heroes* [Mural]. Prison in Zagreb. Photographer: Ivo Kosanović. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.





Rakić, G. (2020). *Point of View* [Mural]. Penitentiary in Glina. Photographer: Ivo Kosanović. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.



Šefčić, M. (2020). *Circles of Freedom* [Mural]. Penitentiary in Glina. Photographer: Ivo Kosanović. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.



Lučić, A. (2020). *Garden* [Mural]. Zagreb Prison Hospital. Photographer: Ivo Kosanović. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.

Tandara, P. (2021). *No. 43* [Mural]. Prison in Bjelovar. Photographer: Ivo Kosanović. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.



Tomić, V. (2021). *It Hasn't Rained All Day Anyway* [Mural]. Prison in Rijeka. Photographer: Ivo Kosanović. Source: Croatian Association of Fine Artists.



The Inmate Mural Arts Program (IMAP) Project

In 2007, the Inmate Mural Arts project was launched in the Florida prison system, in collaboration with the prison administration, the judicial police and the Florida State University. The goal was to paint a large-scale mural which will reflect the talent and creativity of inmates and project participants as well as group cohesion, socialization and social integration through participation (Gussak, 2016; according to Barišić, 2020). Gussak (2016) points out that involving inmates in such projects contributes to reduction of frustrations, alleviation of depression and development of problem-solving and conflict-solving skills in inmates. Three works, three murals were painted as part of the program, in collaboration with the final-year art therapy students, their mentor from the university and the inmates themselves.

Gussak (2016; according to Barišić, 2020) say that all three works placed great emphasis on the application of art therapy in working with inmates. The aim of the program was to emphasize and show in practice that art therapy can recognize and improve the psycho-physical condition of inmates (Gussak, 2016; Barišić 2020).

Work 1: *Transformation Through Unity*

The *Transformation through Unity* mural was painted at the Wakulla Correctional Institution in Florida. After setting the project goals and establishing all the rules for the implementation of the project in that institution, the following step was to select inmates for participation in painting the mural. A total of 11 inmates were selected and participated in project activities over the course of four weeks - developing ideas, making sketches and painting the mural. Once the sketch was finalized, the preparatory phase began, which included obtaining materials and preparing the wall surface for work. Scaffolding was erected, which had to be assembled and dismantled each day for security reasons, and the inmates began working on the intervention. Painting the mural lasted for six weeks, with the help of two art therapy students who implemented the project (Gussak, 2016; Barišić, 2020).

Upon completion of the project, all inmates who participated in it developed a sense of pride, belonging and fulfilment. They appreciated their hard work and effort, were grateful for the opportunity to participate and felt empowered and accomplished, which also impacted their self-confidence (Gussak, 2016; Barišić, 2020). These positive outcomes were crucial for their decision to dare and paint another two large-scale murals, which we present to you below.

Work 2: *Gospel of the Rock*

The second mural, *Gospel of the Rock*, was also created as part of the IMAP programme, in the City of Colquitto in Georgia, USA. The project was initiated by the Miller Arts Council, in collaboration with the Florida State University and the inmates at Miller County Jail (Barišić, 2020).

The project team consisted of an art therapist and two artists who participated in the painting of the first mural. Throughout the implementation of this project idea, they used the experience gained from the previous project. What differed was the theme of the mural, which was based on the legend of the Anglin brothers. The Anglin brothers often stayed in the Colquitt prison for bank robberies and were portrayed on the mural as two old men looking over the detritus of their lives.

Six inmates were selected for participation based on their interest, low security risk and good behaviour. The process of painting the mural took six weeks, just like the first mural. The theme of the mural was the story of the Anglin brothers who were portrayed as two old

men looking over the detritus of their lives. The mural has since become an attraction and a famous part of tourist tours and exhibitions around the city (Gussak, 2016; Barišić, 2020).

Work 3: *Beacon of Hope*

The third mural, *Beacon of Hope*, was painted at the Gadsden Correctional Institution. The concept of project implementation is similar to the previous experiences of painting murals at the Wakulla Correctional Institution and the Miller Prison. This mural is significantly larger than the other two and is positioned to face the main prison complex (Gussak, 2016; Barišić, 2020).

The implementation process involved a larger number of female inmates, sixteen of them. They were divided into two groups, led by two artists who participated in the first two projects. The process of making the mural itself was somewhat shorter, five weeks in total (Barišić, 2020).

The concept of the mural combined the ideas of all participants, but it had a special feature, namely a filmstrip at the very bottom of the mural which, after the mural was painted, each female inmate painted individually as they saw fit. It is through such work and freedom of expression that female inmates were able to give a small personal contribution within a group project, which is extremely valuable for people who are generally deprived of such positive activities (Gussak 2016; Barišić 2020).

The Murales de libertad Project

The Murales de libertad Project has been implemented in Ecuadorian prisons since 2008, at the initiative of artist Alejandro Cruz. The aim is to link art with the rehabilitation of inmates. The project has expanded over the years and has become a multidisciplinary programme comprised of various forms of artistic activity such as painting, music, acting and audiovisual art (Barišić, 2020).

The main and most recognizable form of artistic work are murals. Inmates are involved in the implementation of project activities under the guidance and supervision of artists. The concept of project implementation is similar to the previously mentioned projects. After the introductory formalities, the artists presented their project idea to inmates and the prison system, and after the first meeting, intensive collaboration with an educational character began. Inmates were introduced to project activities and the way a mural is made, ideas were developed, sketches made, they were prepared for the work and the process of carrying out art interventions (Barišić, 2020).

So far, the project has been implemented in the Quito prison Centro de Rehabilitacion Social de Atención Prioritaria, the Sierra Centro Norte Cotopaxi prison, the Ex-Penal Garcia Moreno and the Cárcel de Mujeres del Inca women's prison. Not only did participation in the project enable inmates to express their feelings, longings,

hopes and fears, but it also helped them present themselves to the general public (Barišić, 2020).

The project is of great importance to the inmates as it has enabled them to connect, feel free and heal. In this way, it became part of their rehabilitation, which further contributes to the reduction of mutual competitiveness, violence and intolerance (Barišić, 2020).

Project video: MURALES DE LIBERTAD ECUADOR VOCES DE LIBERTAD. (2013). Arte En Carceles Ecuador "Murales De Libertad" Segunda Parte. [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ti3G_gqiHc

Conclusion

While there are a number of projects implementing art in the form of murals in prisons, prison employees often resist the initiatives of painting these spaces. The common perception is that prisons should be rigid and cold, deprived of any humane atmosphere that would give inmates a glimmer of hope. The belief is that these facilities are occupied by criminal offence perpetrators who did not respect social norms and the law and therefore they should not be *rewarded* with a pleasant space - they should be deterred from committing criminal offences, among other things, by not being comfortable while serving their sentence. However, such considerations forget that space can affect a better mood and more adequate adaptation of inmates to prison conditions, which is certainly important for maintaining the security of the institution and improves the working conditions of all professionals employed in criminal institutions. That is why, relying on research, we realize this resistance can be reduced with well-structured projects, information and education of employees and continuous work, even in the direction of criminal authorities themselves initiating participation in art projects, recognizing that goals of art projects are not beneficial just for the inmates, but also for the employees themselves.

What we should definitely be aware of is the fact that every deeper change still requires longer time and years-long practice of applying art in prison systems. We should keep in mind that such activities open the possibility for inmates to change the way they think and to adopt a new lifestyle - they are offered a new perception of life. In addition, employees are offered artistic redesign of the workspace, crucial in reducing stress in at least one aspect, and consequently in preventing burnout at work.

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ARTISTS IN PRISON

VIRÁG KISS

Virág Kiss

Abstract

Artists can also go to jail convicted both for political and criminal offense. There are those among them for whom the prison situation is a fundamental source of influence and inspiration, while for some of them art and life situation are completely separated, and in some cases artistic activity itself can be illegal.

The chapter discusses some of the well-known historical classical and contemporary criminal law cases without claiming completeness.

Keywords: people convicted of criminal offence, art history, artist, art brut, outsider art

Introduction

In the old and contemporary art history, we can find many examples of convicted, imprisoned artists and prisoners moving in an artistic direction or moving simultaneously in both of these two worlds. Two basic situations can be distinguished: in one case, a recognized artist gets imprisoned, and in another, someone becomes an artist in prison.

This chapter will focus on artists imprisoned for criminal offences, and will focus on examples from the field of the visual arts, sometimes looking at other branches of art, but without claiming completeness. We will also reflect briefly on the very wide range of political prisoners. The artists presented and mentioned are just examples.

Artist Convicted for Political Offences

One of the basic cases of imprisoning artists is when they are convicted of political reasons, as in the case of Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky. His novels *The House of the Dead* and the *Humiliated and Insulted* are based on his prison years, but his best-known novel *Crime and Punishment* is certainly inspired by prison experiences.

In the case of concentration camps, I would single out one of the numerous artists, Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, who held fine art classes for children in Terezin with the art tools he brought in the camp as personal belongings. He had also been imprisoned before. He himself died in Auschwitz in 1944, but saved the children's work, now part of the material of the Jewish Museum in Prague (Kiss, 2017). Friedl's case is special in that the branch of art he practiced was the resource-intensive fine arts, and the products have survived¹. The Hungarian poet Miklós Radnóti wrote his surviving poems in a notebook kept in the pocket of his tunic, which was found when he was exhumed. On October 30, 1944, the newspaper *Déli Hírlap* in Timisoara published a full-page selection of the poems of the deportees from Bor, entitled *Poems Behind the Barbed Wire*, including Radnóti's *Seventh Ecloga* (Babus, Sajó, 2009).

Artists often criticize the existing government, and in non-democratic systems this could result in imprisoning – which was the case also with Tibor Hajas, the Hungarian avant-garde performer, in the 1970s (Hajas, 2005). Even more artists could report on being arrested. Perhaps the best-known contemporary artist imprisoned for political reasons is Ai Weiwei of China, who has made his prison experience part of his activist art.

Classics Convicted of a Criminal Offence

In the European cultural history there are many creators driven by deviant tendencies, characterized by a *going to the brim* and an extreme desire for freedom, which is also a kind of philosophy of life, the topos of the rebel artist has been with us for centuries.

The notion of *the cursed poets* is due to Paul Verlaine's days spent in jail as his stormy homosexual relationship with the young poet, Arthur Rimbaud, ended in an assassination attempt. The poet, who followed the footsteps of Baudelaire, was characterized by debauchery throughout his life.

The tradition of *the cursed poets* was opened by the poetry of Francois Villon (1431-1463), who not only stood trial several times and was imprisoned for crime (theft, murder), but also wrote several well-known poems in the *shadow* of the gallows (*Ballad of the hanged*). His four lines are considered literary memes:

*I'm Frank, which weights me down of late,
Born in Paris – by Pontoise situate.
And from a rope, six foot to eight,
My neck will know my arse's weight.* (Dale, 2021).

¹ Music and dance remained only based on narratives, as reported by Holocaust survivor Edith Eva Eger, who later wrote as a psychologist and also gave a report on how she danced to Mengele, the dreaded Nazi doctor.

In this context a much more general connection emerges, a stereotypical picture between art and prison: *the foggy figure of Villon, the prototype of the stereotype of the artists, the eternal pathfinder, the genius and the hobo, the womanizer, the burglar, the prisoner, the poet appears before us somewhere in the distance, and he is also a man who cares about himself, his peers, art, and who is art himself, because he never gets an impulse that he can't respond to with rhyme carving* (Kovacs, 2021).

Oscar Wilde was imprisoned for two years for homosexuality, from which he was released financially, morally and physically ruined, his wife had divorced from him, and he was also excluded from his company. His shocking works, the ballad of *De profundis* and *The Reading Prison*, were born during his prison years. He spent the last three years of his life poor and ill in France, and in his homeland even mentioning of his name wasn't considered appropriate (Tóth, 1921, sz.i. 2015). Today homosexuality is not imprisonable in European countries, but in some countries, it is still a criminal offense.

Caravaggio (1571-1610)

Talking about imprisoned artists, for most people, Caravaggio comes to mind first. He is one of the most significant, outstandingly talented and innovative artists in art history, a representative of Mannerism and a forerunner of the Baroque. His artistic work as a painter



Caravaggio, M. (1599-1600). *The Calling of Saint Matthew* [Painting]. Contarelli Chapel, San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome, Italy. Source: Public Domain: Wikimedia.com shorturl.at/bMPPR1

is outstanding. It typically had dramatic light-shadow effects, characterized by a novel pictorial approach to the processing of biblical themes.

He is also known to have clashed with the law many times because of his problematic and violent personality, and to have been charged for murder, too. He sat in prison several times, but often escaped from prison. His difficult, incompatible character was in a sharp contrast with his artistic role, therefore he did not create a school, he did not gather disciples, which otherwise characterized the artists of his age. However, according to Roberto Longhi, the best-known Caravaggio expert, the artist's work can only be interpreted strictly in the context of his biography, as each of his masterpieces reflects his personal experiences, as we can read in the review of the film *Caravaggio: About Blood and Soul* (2018) (Révy, 2018).

Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571)

Cellini lived right before Caravaggio – he was a famous goldsmith and sculptor, a major master of the late Renaissance. Since he also wrote his autobiography, not only do we know about his paintings, but from here we know more about him than many of his contemporaries. He was imprisoned several times (including in the Roman Castle of Angels), and in addition to numerous acts of violence, fighting, and theft, his soul was burdened with murder, but then the newly elected pope dissolved him and entrusted him with work. He was released from prison several times with the help of church people, mainly due to his artistic achievements and works.



Cellini, B. (1540–1543).
Saliera [Sculpture:
 Salt Cellar]. Vienna
 Museum of Fine
 Arts, Vienna, Austria.
 Photographer: Cstutz.
 Source: Public Do-
 main: Wikimedia.org
shorturl.at/aio45

We also find characteristic examples of artists who have been convicted in modern, avant-garde and contemporary art. The artistic activity itself, pushing the boundaries and, in many cases, the artists' way of life, cause a clash with the law.

Picasso and Apollinaire were unjustifiably charged and imprisoned for a few days for the stealing the Mona Lisa. Egon Schiele's art is characterized by a peculiar overheated sexuality and thus, he was briefly imprisoned for pornography. Keith Haring was also almost imprisoned for making illegal graffiti, but he finally escaped it because of the popularity of his work and was only fined.

Among others, a well-known Hungarian actor András Stohl was also imprisoned: he had caused a car accident while intoxicated and therefore spent five months in prison, but this did not break his career. Roman Polanski, one of the best and best-known filmmakers in the world, has not been imprisoned, but has been fleeing his final sentence for decades for assaulting a 13-year-old girl. In 2003, he received an Oscar for Best Director for his film *The Pianist*, but he was unable to receive it in person because of the arrest warrant against him which is still valid.

For his artistic *performance* he might not necessarily have a place in this line, but the murderer of Roman Polanski's pregnant wife, a cult leader Charles Manson (*Family cult*) and serial killer - also known as musician -, has released several albums. After his terrible fame, his 1970 album *Lie: The Love and Terror Cult* was well received by critics and audiences as well (Sixx, 2019).

The rap genre is closely linked to the *gangster* image, with many rap singers going to jail, such as the rapper working under the artist name Tekashi69 or Bobby Shmurda, who is a sort of genre-creator in hip-hop, and therefore, the fans applied for remission of his punishment. Eminem had already been also in court several times, but finally he did not end up in prison. We just wanted to refer to this phenomenon here, because of its diversity it will not be discussed in more detail here.

Art Brut, Outsider Art and Art in Prison

Art brut and outsider art also provide an art platform for *prison art*, in addition to psychiatric and disability art / specialty art. Art brut and outsider art are interrelated art trends that focus on art that is spontaneous and is internal origin, and also stands outside the formal and the professional art scene. In the first decades of the twentieth century, a number of collections and studies of the works of patients of psychiatric institutions across Europe were published (Tóth, 2016).

These artists draw everything - theme, choice of material and application, rhythm and mode - from their own depths and do not create

their works according to the conventions of fashionable art. - writes Jean Dubuffet, and his sentence was taken over in 1949 by the web-site of the Gallery *Átkelő*, which also promotes art brut and outsider art artists.

Walter Morgenthaler discovered Adolf Wölfli in Switzerland in 1921, one of the world's best-known art brut artists, who was considered a serious psychiatric case. After his difficult childhood, Wölfli was arrested several times for pedophile crimes and spent two years in prison, from where he was transferred to the mental hospital in Waldau (Einspach, 2013).



Wölfli, A. (1911). *General view of the island Neveranger* [Drawing]. Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland. Source: Public Domain Wikipedia.org shorturl.at/der28

Hans Prinzhorn, a physician at the Heidelberg Clinic, published his groundbreaking study in 1922 entitled *Imaging the Mentally Injured* (*Bildnerie der Geisteskranken*).

At the same time, avant-garde trends, expressionism, surrealism and dadaism attracted interest in tribal and archaic art different from European painting traditions, as well as in children's drawings. The nature of these, arising from internal needs and spontaneously expressing unconscious contents, was a source of inspiration for them. The works of psychiatric patients have also attracted their interest. The work of the French informel painter, theorist and collector Jean Dubuffet and the concept of art brut (raw art) he created came to the attention of the public in the 1940s (from the web-site of the Gallery *Átkelő*).

Art brut and outsider art galleries, along with art fairs provide market exposure and connections with the public sphere for marginalized artists and self-generated artistic manifestations, while *adding value* to these artistic phenomena. The drawings of the infamous imprisoned murder Magda Marinko have also been included in the Psychiatric Art Collection of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences as a result of the collection expansion of András Veér (Kiss, 2019).



Hámori, P. (2022). *Drawing of Magda Marinko* [Drawing]. MTA Pszichiátriai Művészeti Gyűjtemény / PsyArt Collection of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Source: Inv. no.: MTA_PMGY_94.7 (C) Péter Hámori.

An exciting complex exhibition concept was implemented in 2016-17. by art teachers working in Catalan prisons. For the first time in a joint exhibition (*Balsam and Escape*) the works of inmates and well-known artists (as Miquel Barceló, Matt Mullican, Antonio Saura, Edward Ruscha or Evru/Zush) were put into dialogue. The exhibition took place in a contemporary exhibition space in Barcelona – in the Caixaforum. Their second exhibition (*Collateral Damage*) took place in La Model's *mythical* prison building (which was closed in 2017) in 2019-2020, where only the works of inmates were exhibited. The exhibition was accompanied by film screenings, workshops, concerts and theater performances with the active participation of inmates themselves.

With all this, their goal was to make the art appearing in prison visible and to support the reintegration of prisoners, the their *readmission*. On the other hand, these events has also focused on the work of art teachers working in the prison (Ginabreda, 2016).

Artists from Prison

They are some unique, very creative prisoners who, one way or another, have a place in the art life with their special phenomenon. Others learn and consciously build a creative career as a profession, from which they can make a living after their liberation.

The Unwanted Butterfly (Ferenc Deák 1954 – 1994)

The Hungarian Butterfly (Pillangó), originally called Ferenc Deák, is a unique phenomenon in prison art. Photographer Tamás Urbán accompanied and documented Butterfly's life until the death of the artist, who lived with a strong creative vein and a huge need for self-expression. Tamás Urbán was both a friend and official sponsor of Butterfly, whose photographs – along with objects and works related to the Butterfly - were exhibited in 2020 at the Robert Capa Contemporary Photography Center entitled *Unwanted Butterfly*. Butterfly's work and the special relationship between the two are reflected and analyzed by recognized art historians. The virtual exhibition created due to the pandemic can also be viewed on the Capa Center website.

Robert Capa Contemporary Photography Center (2020). Invitation to Tamás Urban's exhibition *Unwanted Butterfly*, Curator: István Virágyvölgyi [Flyer]. Source: Robert Capa Contemporary Photography Center shorturl.at/PTY36. Consent: Robert Capa Contemporary Photography Center

F E L S L E G E S

PILLANGÓ

URBÁN TAMÁS
Unwanted Butterfly

A Robert Capa Kortárs
Fotográfiai Központ
tisztelttel meghívja Önt és
kedves barátait következő
kiállításának megnyitójára
*The Robert Capa Contemporary
Photography Center cordially
invites you and your friends to the
opening of its upcoming exhibition*

2020. MÁRCIUS 4., SZERDA, 18 ÓRA
Wednesday, March 4, 2020, 6 pm

Köszöntő - Greetings by
KÖRÖSI ORSÓLYA ügyvezető igazgató,
Capa Központ
managing director, Capa Center
URBÁN TAMÁS fotográfus - photographer

A kiállítást megnyitja - Opening remarks by
BÁNKUTI ANDRÁS fotóriporter - a Digitális Föld
Magazin főszerkesztője
photojournalist,
editor of Digitális Föld Magazine
Kurátor - Curator
VIRÁGYVÖLGYI ISTVÁN

Helyszin - Venue
ROBERT CAPA KORTÁRS FOTOGRAFIAI KÖZPONT
Robert Capa Contemporary Photography Center
1065 BUDAPEST, NAGYMEZŐ UTCA 9.

A kiállítás megtekinthető: 2020. március 5. - április 5.
Mindennap 11 és 19 óra között. Ünnenapokon zárva.
*On view: March 5 - April 5, 2020
Every day 11 am - 7 pm. Closed on public holidays.*

18+

A kiállítás a nyitáskor megrendezésre kerülő művek keretében bemutatásra kerül. A kiállítás 18 év feletti látogatók számára nyitva tart. A kiállítás megtekintéséhez szükséges a bejelentkezési lap kitöltése.
The exhibition is presented as part of the opening program. The exhibition is open to visitors aged 18 and over. Please note that the exhibition includes disturbing graphic content. Visitors under the age of 18 must be accompanied by adult supervision.

Stárium együttműködési partner
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Art House of Modern Context

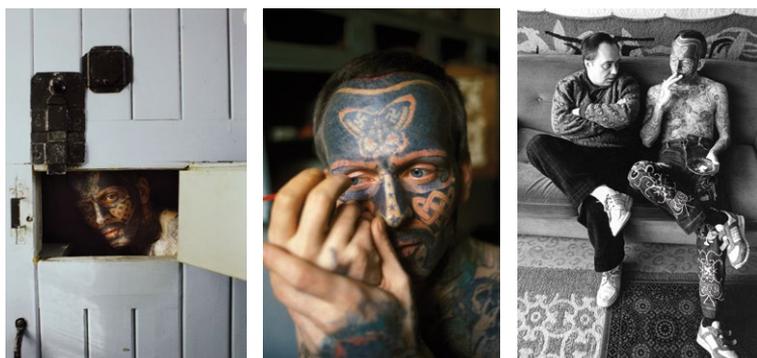
AMC
A kiállítás létrehozója a Nemzeti Kulturális Örökség Minisztériuma
The exhibition was supported by the National Cultural Office of Hungary

nó

Butterfly's character was an inspiration to Hungarian underground artists; according to the descriptions, his personality intertwined with unrestrainedness and intellectual and creative traits. He read a lot, wrote poems and lyrics, drew, painted, designed crossword puzzles and board games, cooked creatively even in prison, and when he was paroled, he also used to work as a yoga teacher. In the wording of Tamás Urbán, *he had a razor-sharp mind* (Urbán, 2020). Butterfly performed with *Sziámi* - one of the most famous bands in the Hungarian underground in the 80's -, where in addition to singing he also carried out yoga poses on the stage. The well-known underground musician Gas (János Gasner) made a music album (cassette) in 1994, entitled *Butterfly + Gas: Prison Songs*, where he sang Butterfly's lyrics. He was also invited to the most famous talk show of the age, the *Friderikus Show*, an article about him was published in the German magazine *Stern* (Jankovics, 2020).



Németh, D. (2020). GAS - Butterfly: Prison Songs (Tape, 1994) [Photography]. Source: Capa Blog (Capa Központ/Center). shorturl.at/agkP2. Consent: Capa Blog (Capa Központ/Center)



Urbán, T. (1989-1990). From the series *Unwanted Butterfly* [Photography]. Source: Fortepan / Urbán Tamás Public Domain: [Fortepan.hu shorturl.at/noA12](https://fortepan.hu/shorturl.at/noA12)



Urbán, T. (1989-1990).
Siami concert and
Friderikusz Show
(From the series
Unwanted Butterfly) [Photography].
Source: Fortepan /
Urbán Tamás
Public Domain:
Fortepan.hu shorturl.
at/noA12

During the long years of imprisonment, which he received for various crimes (all together about 24 years), he tattooed his entire body, making it a big hit everywhere, and also composed his wardrobe in a very extreme way, according to reports. Art historian Kata Oltai considers him as a punk who conveys a kind of message to civil society, a self-mythical creator, whose body could be and had to be *read* (Böcskei, Berzsenyi, Oltai, 2020). Although he never got a child, he said that once he became a father, he would not have to buy a picture book. *I'll just have to undress, my baby will flip me through and then I'll put myself away* (Cséka, 2020).

A unified ideology could not be read from Butterfly's skin, it was a personal, indecipherable, impressively chaotic comic, incomprehensible to the vast majority of society. It is no coincidence that prisoner psychologist and cultural anthropologist Fiáth Titanilla inserts Butterfly's figure into the ancient pantheon of Tricksters, the joking deities who violate the norms so much that they resist even attempts at definition. Because Trickster is an eternal outsider, his key element is ambivalence, as he mixes play with subversion, insanity with knowledge - and wherever possible, mocks positive heroes (Fiáth, 2020).

In the case of Butterfly, in a sense, the art work is Butterfly himself, his own body and person (Cséka, 2020), and the prison situation and being an outsider are a characteristic and integral part of all that. His art is visual, verbal, musical and tactile at the same time, and even organoleptic when we think of his culinary art, that is, complex, in addition to being unique and provocative.

The convicted *bank robber* Attila Ambrus, who is nicknamed *Viszkis* (*the Whiskey-man*), is very well known in Hungary and has become a kind of media star. He built his own brand for himself as a former inmate, and a film and a book also were published about his life. He himself also wrote a book and works as an independent potter. He also has his own webshop, where in addition to the ceramic objects he makes, he also advertises team-building and ceramic workshops, along with his own book and the film made about him.



Derzsi Elekes, A. (2013). Ambrus Attila [Photography]. Source: Public Domain: Wikimedia.org shorturl.at/ey579

Artistry, Livelihood and Reintegration

Attila Ambrus's (the *Viszkis*) ceramics are related to commercial tastes and are primarily handicrafts for sale. Despite similar traits, he does not show *Butterfly's* embarrassing, deep, extreme and original artistry, but at the same time his activities certainly help survival and reintegration. *Butterfly* died at the age of 40, but was not even *prepared* to survive, he actually could not imagine himself as an old man.

A special combination of these two life paths is the Dutch Toine Backermans, who spent many years in prison in the Netherlands due to bank robberies and set off from there in the artistic direction. As a graduate artist, he is now devoted to art teaching, thus in his case reintegration has not only taken place with the help of art, but also supports others in this. His works are also characterized by strong artistry.

Bakermans, T. (2010).
Prison windows.
Day-Night [Painting].
 Photographer: Toine
 Bakermans. Consent:
 Toine Bakermans

Bakermans, T. (2010).
Light of Christ
 [Painting].
 Photographer: Toine
 Bakermans. Consent:
 Toine Bakermans



Conclusion

Many artists have been imprisoned over time, and in many cases well-known artists have also benefited from their prisontime. It happens that while someone is struggling in one area of life, they may be successful in another area. And sometimes the prison situation becomes part of the creative personality and the artistic image that has been created.

On the other hand, the artists who work in prisons are also able to notice the creative potential in those who commit crimes, thus forming a bridge between the outside and the inside.

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ARTS-BASED INTERVENTIONS

VIRÁG KISS

ARTS-BASED INTERVENTIONS

Virág Kiss

Abstract

Art and the artists themselves can play a variety of roles in prisons, providing a wider spectre of artistic interventions. In addition to artists, the roles of representatives of many other disciplines can have different purposes and professionalism, and can also transform their material environment. Through artistic materials, prisoners can connect with themselves, each other, their family members, and also with material and the wider social environment.

Keywords: arts-based interventions, reintegration, art therapy, art education, storytelling therapy

Introduction

In what roles can we meet artists in prisons? What are the most typical forms of artistic interventions here, what arts disciplines emerge, and what role can these play in the lives of prisoners and workers?

One can work as an artist anywhere, even in a prison, and art can appear as a tool in reintegration endeavours. Within the special framework of the prison, it is possible to identify different artistic interventions of different purposes and professionalism, which can be carried out by persons with different professional competencies accordingly.

Artists, art teachers, social workers, spiritualists, art therapists, psychotherapists, etc. can all work with art in prison, all in their own area of competence. The fundamental difference may be whether the focus is more on the person or more on the art. In the case of education through art, therapy, development or facilitation, art can

be a tool, and the emphasis is on personal work, which can be therapeutic, social or even spiritual (eg meditation). In the case of *education for art*, the goal is the art product itself (Kiss, 2010). In the case of prison theaters, we often encounter the *for art*-model, where the highest possible performance is the main goal (Szokács, 2013) and the storytelling film project presented later in the chapter (Tales from the Prison Cell, director: Ábel Visky, 2020) chose exactly that path (interview with Visky, 2021). In the case of art therapy or social theater (Szokács, 2013) the emphasis is on the functioning of the person(al-ity). Therapy tends to penetrate one's personal inner core, the other targets the level of social, interpersonal relationships.

Artists in Prison

Artists can appear in the prison in a few roles:

- artists can be imprisoned as prisoners and prisoners can become artists
- they bring their own art, i.e. they paint on the wall, take photos, perform (music, dance, theater). They can also prisoners and possibly employees can also be involved.
- they lead community participatory art projects in which the open creative process they live together creates a common art product
- they can mentor individual art processes among the prisoners (and possibly the workers), they teach art as a kind of master, they can deliver an art workshop.

Representatives of the Caring Professions in Prison who Work with Art

Representatives of all sorts of caring professions can also deliver arts activities in prison. In addition to an art therapist and an art teacher, the artistic methods can be brought into prisons by a social worker, a spiritualist, a special education teacher, etc not just an artist.

The nature of the activities (which can be combined) can involve:

- art teachers and drawing teachers can provide art training, teach techniques, help prisoners in developing skills, and introduce them to works of art. This may have a therapeutic effect, but its main aim is not therapeutic
- in the course of art pedagogical development activities, the goal is self-efficiency, productivity, development of *soft skills*, creation of art product, artistic value, arousal of creativity and productivity, spending time meaningfully
- community-building arts activities can also be hosted by prison, which can be used to shape the relationship between prisoners and with family members, as well as with prison staff and co-operation with them

- restorative justice methods can also be assisted by art therapy and art-based methods
- stress-relieving and meditation activities, during which the experience of flow is experienced, tension is dissipated, artistic mindfulness techniques are applied
- empowerment processes through art, where the emphasis is on decisions, entitlement, participatory functioning and the distribution of equality, experience of personal identity, individual preferences, and autonomous functioning.

(Psycho) therapeutic and focused activities can be delivered by trained art therapists and art psychotherapists. In this case, the focus is entirely on the person, their internal processes, and possibly their traumas (Kiss, 2014).

Storytelling Projects in Prisons

In the prison in Eger, Hungary, several storytelling projects were delivered where the inmates worked with complex art tools, which provided new means and new personal skills, mainly for contact with their families. This project was led by Ildikó Boldizsár and Margó Luzsi. There are also books about Margó Luzsi's projects (Luzsi, 2020 ab), and Ildikó Boldizsár also published a case study in one of her books (Boldizsár, 2019).

When a complex art project led by film director Ábel Visky was undertaken, a documentary entitled *Tales from the Prison Cell* was made, which was shown in 2020. The description of the film from the website of Proton Cinema: *Fathers serving their sentences write tales on which films would be based - starring themselves and their children at home. During the joint creative process that frames the film, we see the parallel life of the detainees and their families and the development of their difficult relationships. Due to today's film technology, in fairy tales, father and child can meet in a magical, freely adaptable world.*



Nagy, Z., Kürti, I. (2020). *Tales from the Prison Cell* (directed by Ábel Visky) [Photography]. Source: Proton Cinema shorturl.at/ilQW2. Consent: Proton Cinema

thus crossing the boundaries of tangible reality. The question, however, is whether the experience of encountering in fiction can have a real impact on these very severely limited, heavily burdened relationships. Can the closeness in the world of fantasy become real, or can it be stuck at the level of some kind of artificially created illusion (<http://protoncinema.hu/hu/filmek/mesek-a-zarkabol>).

What kind of fairy tale character do you think your little boy would be? is a question raised in the film, and a topic definitely strikes family relationships. But it is not only at this level that the project gets into their lives, as the experience of filming in a film studio in Fót is such a new situation, such a positive experience for disadvantaged families (it is worth watching in advance how the child's eyes shine on the news) and what they can be attributed to a troubled family member in a prison.

The Role of Art Working

The impact of artistic work is summarized and analyzed in several researches and studies. They agree that it has restrained disciplinary violations and improved the quality of life not only for prisoners but also for staff. According to the opinions collected by artists and therapists on the role of art in mental health (Geréb Valachiné, Fónagy, Oriold, 2020) and the opinions of various professional groups working in prison (management, social service, law enforcement) (S. Sandberger refers to Honti, 2016), there is a start of a learning process, the development of social competencies, communication skills, empathy, self-confidence, self-reflection, problem-solving strategies develop, concentration and discipline improve - that is, a complex personality development occurs.

Paul Clements (2004 refers to Juhász, 2016) lists five arguments:

- prisoners are not bored but find a preoccupation that suits their interests, which makes the order easier to maintain
- it means (re-) involvement in education
- creativity matches rehabilitation needs
- self-expression, self-confidence, helping communication, acceptance of each other
- enabling the prisoners to become useful, hard-working citizens.

In addition, art provides an opportunity for a deeper connection with something other than the prison itself. It can have a complex impact on a prisoner, their communities, but can also be a tool of destigmatization and sensitization. Demonstration of a value can work in a way to avoid stigma and counter stereotypes. On a personal level, it can be a simple pastime (prison time is slow and difficult), a meaningful activity that can lead to a *flow* experience. It can provide space for immersion or activity. It stimulates, brings variety and stim-

uli into the vacant and closed space, for example, through murals placed in bleak space, and also provides stimulation during creation (e.g., color experiences).

In the case of operative activity, it provides an opportunity to learn in a social and general sense, to develop new skills. In addition to spontaneous (non-guided) artistic activities, along with the self-expressive works, there is also copying of well-known works of art in prisons, which is a feasible, well-defined technique for untrained people. Among the paintings are the sacred images are also involved, which can have a rich meaning for the convict, who can relate to their symbolism by copying the image. In addition, it is a productive activity that results in a self-generated meaningful object that may turn into a commodity. Thus, drawing skills can have an exchangeable value in this closed environment. What is mostly made in prison, in addition to copies are portraits and genre-scenes for family members (personal recounts; Laing, 1984).

In addition to the creation, establishing a secure relationship also plays a critical role in guided activities. In a *good enough* personal environment, i.e. the one accepting and securing aiding relations, the so-called *soft skills* develop and emerge, through which we understand the personal and social skills that, determine a person's integration, motivation, manageability and creativity in a workplace beyond a professional knowledge. Examples of such abilities are flexibility, creativity, communication skills, organizational skills, endurance, emotional intelligence etc. The self-expression can enable to share and channel feelings, difficult or untarnished stories, and in the case of visual expression they can be embodied in a material product. The rule-breaking activities can in some cases be transformed into divergent thinking and can be legally lived and experienced in creativity. Experiences and getting to know oneself from a new side can also result in a change of attitude. Attention and empathy can also be given and received during artistic work. It can lead to an experience of competence, i.e., *I am good at something, too* feeling. The activity, the action nature, acts against the learned stagnation, it makes it possible for one to be an active figure and not just a passive subject of their own life, to take part in shaping their destiny and to take responsibility for it.

A particularly striking feature in the prison context may be that a kind of *framed freedom* can be experienced in art through personal choices and decisions that take place within the framework of artistic work. A prisoner who is fundamentally restricted in his or her personal freedom can choose a theme, a color, and many small autonomous decisions in a creative process. This is the freedom of imagination and thought, i.e. creation. If there is artistic work in the prison, also the prison staff and in many cases the family members are involved in some form. An artistic expression can bring understanding, thus acceptance, and sometimes even recognition if someone is talented. It certainly sees the person from a different, more refined and vulnerable side. Specific art projects can be built to help keep

in touch with family members (Boldizsár, 2019; Luzsi 2020 ab; Visky 2021). Artistic methods can also play an important role in aftercare and reintegration efforts due to their aforementioned characteristics. *It facilitates the transition to the world of work, as the creation of the work of art itself involves work, it is in fact a bridge between the present state (being ill) and the future (being healthy), the opportunity to work* (Valachiné Geréb Fónagy, Oriold, 2020).

Conclusion

Arts-based interventions by artists and the various caring professions have a wide-ranging and complex impact on prison life. They can be important tools for humanizing place and situation, reintegration, living and comprehension.

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ART AND THERAPY

PETER VAN OLMEN

Peter van Olmen

Culture is very important for personal development, social involvement and a richer learning and living environment. Culture creates social connectedness.

(Quote from *Kunst heel gewoon / Art very common* by P. Smet, 2010)

Abstract

Society does not stand still and will naturally continue to develop and innovate. Innovations that require different skills, knowledge, and attitudes from people. Prisoners are not or partially included in this process and will also as a consequence of this exclusion have difficulty participating again in *modern* society after their imprisonment.

Art can be a tool that can be used to make this time of confinement bearable, but also to develop skills that society demands. It can fill the lifeline with which they can keep a connection with society. Prisoners can enter society after their imprisonment with a *toolbox* that increases the chance of a positive reintegration.

Keywords: reintegration, lifeline, awareness, connection

Introduction

Imagine walking into a prison today. You have to hand over your phone and laptop, which virtually cuts off the connection with the outside world. You have to leave behind you, your family, children, friends and social environment, the building blocks of your existence, for a certain period of time. Life in prison is monotonous, the environment is often black and grey, with limited chances to cooperate and minimal contact with the outside world. Being stuck in a small cell for years on end with hardly any normal social contact has a negative impact on self-esteem. Prisoners can become bitter, angry, and vengeful towards society.

The Importance of Art as a Toolbox and Lifeline

To endorse the importance of the arts as the toolbox and life line, we would like to refer to a book by the philosophers Alain de Botton and John Armstrong (2014). They introduced a new method: art as a form of therapy, this book is full of solutions to numerous life questions. They describe how the arts can be a therapeutic medium that can guide, entertain, and comfort us, enabling us to become better versions of ourselves. We need to focus more clearly on what kind of tool the arts can be and what you can do with it. Like other tools, art can enhance our skills and capabilities. Art enables us to do more than just working with our hands and senses. Art compensates for our innate deficiencies, especially in the case of the mind, where these defects can be described as psychological deficiencies. To find out the purpose of art, we must ask what things our mind and emotion need to function better. What psychological limitations can art help with? Seven limitations have been identified, along with seven functions of art: memory; hope; suffering; regaining balance; self-awareness; development and appreciation.

It would be interesting to discuss these functions with all the staff in prison. Possibly this could contribute in a positive way to the wellbeing in prison and to the re-integration processes of prisoners.

Let's take a closer look at a few brief responses to four of the seven functions of the arts:

Art Gives You Hope



Matisse, H. (1909). *Dance (I)* [Painting]. The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA. Source: Public Domain: 2022 Succession H. Matisse / Artists Rights Society (ARS), MOMA New York. shorturl.at/cEIOY

The dancers in Matisse's painting will not claim that this world is completely without problems, but their attitude is encouraging. They put us in touch with a joyful, carefree part of ourselves that can help us deal with inevitable humiliation and rejection.



Klee, P. (1936). *Nach der Ueber Schwemmung* [Painting]. Fondation Beyeler, Riehen, Switzerland. Source: Public domain shorturl.at/ryPUZ

By looking and focusing attention on the art object, the attention is diverted from the pain. Looking at or listening to art evokes an experience and or an association, for example anger, an experience of beauty, a memory, a question about the maker's intention. In this way, every individual gives his own meaning to what he sees in an image, a painting or any other object. Art as part of our environment adds an extra dimension to the quality of life. It offers a different way of looking, builds a bridge between different worlds and different times.

Art Helps You Develop



Mwana Pwo-mask. (20th Century). [Mask]. Congo. Photographer: Viscorp. Source: Public Domain Dreamstime.com shorturl.at/jkN23

Many experiences, people, places and periods of time that have something important to offer us are rejected because they are packaged in the wrong way, and we cannot make use of them. Our judgements are often superficial and biased. We quickly find things 'strange' and that attitude is far too defensive and limited. Art is a guide to expanding our experience. Art is a highly refined collection of other people's experiences, presented in beautiful, well-organised forms. It can show some of the most eloquent forms of expression of other cultures, giving us a better understanding of ourselves and our world. At first, many works of art appear to be merely 'different', but we discover that they can contain ideas and beliefs that we can take ownership of in a way that enriches us. Not everything we need to become a better version of ourselves is within reach.

Art Makes You Appreciate Everyday Things Again



Mondriaan, P.
(1913). *Tableau no. 1*
[Painting]. Collection
of Kröller-Müller
Museum, Otterlo, the
Netherlands. Photog-
rapher: Rob Lumen
Captum. Source: Pub-
lic Domain Dreams-
time.com
shorturl.at/bARXZ

We have become more insensitive because everything is so familiar, and we live in a world dominated by commerce that focuses on glamour. We are often dissatisfied because life is boring. We are tormented by the idea that there is more to experience elsewhere. Art helps us to become sensitive again. It removes our shell and rescues us from the indifference with which we are used to viewing ev-

everything around us. We become receptive again and look at the old in new ways. Art makes us understand that novelty and glamour are not the only solutions.

These seven functions can also be a powerful toolbox for the goals set by the Flemish government in 2013 in the 'Decree on the organization of assistance and services for detainees'.

Through the decree, the following points are pursued:

- to stimulate the self-development of detainees
- to restore the social, relational, and psychological balance of the detainees
- to limit the negative consequences for the detainees and their immediate social environment
- to promote integration and participation in society after the period of detention
- to encourage a process of recovery between the offender, the victim and society
- to reduce the risk of relapse.

A very laudable aim that could be supported by all kinds of art and culture projects in the prisons.

Therapeutic Effect by Offering All Kinds of Art Has Both an Impact on the Prisoners and on Society

The outside world often has a unilateral view of life in prison. They demand that prisoners be punished, forgetting the fact that these prisoners will eventually become part of society again.

Using art projects to discuss prison life with society in general will give the outside world a more realistic view of prison life. Society will also become more aware of the importance of preparing prisoners for their return to society. Prisoners can use art to get rid of their frustrations, lay their souls bare, learn to think critically about society and themselves, find out what respect is, and learn to cooperate and communicate.

Being stuck in a small cell for years on end with hardly any normal social contact has a negative impact on self-esteem. Prisoners can become bitter, angry and vengeful towards society. Through art, prisoners can positively influence their self-esteem and self-image. Prisoners have limited possessions, are strongly controlled by the security rules and protocols, have little or no contact with family and relatives, all of which can cause them to lose their identity.

Art projects also have an impact on social life in prison. The black and grey environment becomes more colourful, and a more positive social environment is created through increased interaction between inmates, staff, guards and workshop leaders. By working together on art, more connection, respect, and trust will grow, which in turn can influence a favorable reintegration process of the inmates.

Examples of These Interactive Projects

The Dutch theologian/artist Folly Hemrica claims that *all art is sacred* in an article (2014) with the same name referring to her projects in various prisons. She describes the prison as the most banal environment imaginable. An environment that is flat and heartless, where language use is unsophisticated. The sounds are loud and unpleasant, keys grind, inmates scream, and cells are decorated with unaesthetic images. Making a work of art together with the inmates, in this *Desert* was a challenge for her.

It was interesting for Folly to gauge the reactions of the inmates before she could start the project, asking *Could we make wind together, a fresh gust that could open a window despite the closedness*. This wind did consist of a lot of headwinds in the beginning.

Prisoners did not see themselves as very creative, the management thought that an art project was a nonsense plan and indicated that there was no financial room for it. Staff were afraid the project would not contribute to safety. Despite the headwind, they started a small project. Prisoners made a screen print of a star shape on canvas and these individual pieces were joined together to form a large canvas. After the project, the inmates were proud of the product they had created together in harmony.

In many cases, conversations in prison are about guilt, shame and not being heard. But not so in this project. New talents were discovered and working together created an environment where conversations were no longer forced. Conversations arose naturally. Working together on the screen-printing project gave prisoners and staff the space to discuss issues in an informal way, like *talking at the wash table*. The headwind had disappeared. The staff and management saw the positive results of the project.

Another interesting project is her *Golden Lifelines Project*. In order not to downplay the power of this project, this part of the article is quoted in its entirety.

After this first experience, new projects were bound to follow. In the prisons of Hoogeveen and Breda I started my gold lines project. I had the prisoners draw golden lines with a brush on red canvas with gold paint. A golden line for everything that was good in their lives. A golden line? I read the amazement on their faces. What a strange question this was for them. After all, everyone was constantly asking what had gone wrong in their lives, where it had gone wrong, how they had gone so far off the rails.

And now this question, so contrary and unusual that they were silent for a moment. It was also so contrary to the usual culture of complaining that is typical of the prison. Nowhere are there so many complaints as in prison: about the food, about the guards, about the lack of privacy, about fellow inmates, about the lawyers, and so on and so forth.

What went well in your life? Slowly, the brushes glided across the canvas, faces contemplating, a few shedding a tear. Beauty also

evokes sorrow, for what is past or cut off. Thus, dotted lines, interrupted lines, skimpy lines came into being. That's how it goes with happiness in life. After the project, we talked with each other about what was good in our lives. We were all amazed that so much was good, so much was successful, so many people cared about us, who had believed in us when we were not yet able to do so ourselves. Teachers, grandmothers, and whoever else. We heard stories from each other that we did not know because we had never asked. It was one of my finest projects. Many would follow, all attempts to look beyond the flatness of existence. I am reminded of Anne Zernike's words: 'All art is sacred because it leads us away from banality.' Well done! www.theologie.nl/boekrecensies/alle-kunst-heilig 2014.

Even Without Projects There Are Different Forms of Art in Prison

Art can allow a sacred space where prisoners can create their own identity in their environment and cell. Prisoners can then use their creativity to express something and give meaning to their prison time. As long as prisons have existed pictures and objects have been made, that tell a lot about the emotions of the prisoners. Anger, aggression, dreams, and fantasies are often recognisable in these creative expressions. Not only emotions but also colours are used to make their *dark* environment more bearable.

In prison there are restrictions: they are often dependent on materials that are readily available, which is why they turn to using basic materials such as bread, toothpaste, and so on. The use of these materials creates primitive works of art that may have inspired both Picasso and Dubuffet.



Van Es, L. (2019). *Twister* (Toothpaste sculpture). Source: Jailart.shorturl.at/bfgrV

Specific skills are passed on to fellow prisoners within the detention period, giving the art a recognisable character, making one think of tattoos. Also, besides the images, the made objects, like hash pipes, weapons and so on, can be true pieces of art in their own right.

Materials from JJI
Lelystad. (2022).
[Photography].
Photographer:
Peter van Olmen



Many works are permeated with ritual and incantatory elements. Recurring themes are sex, violence, dreams, desire, fear, comfort, anger, guilt, shame and regret. Within these themes, the *mothers* occupy a very sensitive place. Many incidents in prison have its origins in disrespectful *talk* about a mother. It is precisely this *own art* and existing talents that can, through projects, create a more positive connection between prisoners and society.

There are two sides to the damage and, as the artwork below shows, art can provide the connection that keeps the life line between open and close.

Nauwens. H. (1954).
Closed House, [Sculpture]. Oegstgeest, the
Netherlands. Source:
Herbert Nouwens
shorturl.at/aikrT



The *Closed House*, consisting of two steel objects, is located along the motorway near an abandoned prison. The artist symbolises the link between the closed world of the prison and the outside world. The steel comes from a ship that was damaged after a colli-

sion. Both inside and outside the prison, this work of art has inspired interaction from all walks of life. Prisoners, ex-convicts, neighbours, and motorists driving past were all challenged by the artwork to think about the *damage*.

Conclusion

Art and Therapy, Impact of the Prison Projects

There are many examples of art projects in prisons, all of which have proven their value and usefulness. Most evaluations of these projects address a number of specific benefits, barriers and opportunities.

In short:

- prisoners can express themselves creatively and discover their talents
- through art projects prisoners can develop in a positive way
- art projects provide a meaningful time in detention
- reintegration processes can be more positive
- interaction with society is maintained.

Conditions:

In order for art projects to be successful, you need:

- sufficient financial resources
- commitment from the management, institutions should support the project
- staff are closely and positively involved and endorses the importance of the project
- the project organization will have to conform to the prison's security rules
- the inmates must feel safe in the creative environment.

Bottlenecks:

- problems between the different inmates, that make them not want to participate or work together
- evoking negative feelings when creating a creative product.
- time pressure and prison schedule.

Management of Expectations

When organising art projects in detention, there are expectations among the different bodies: prisoners, artists, project organisations, management prison, detainees and staff. Some of these expectations will run in parallel, but the project organiser will have to understand that the management and staff may also be looking at

other returns.

In general, the management will be happy with a good and safe outcome.

Everyone will be satisfied if the project provides an incentive to organise new projects. This endorses the positive proceeds of the project. Revenues such as positive interaction between staff, detainees, workshop leaders, society, embellishment of the dark rooms and the development of soft skills that make the reintegration process run more smoothly are positive indicators that can open the door to future collaborations and arts-based projects.

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THE IMPACT OF PRISON ART ON PRISON STAFF

MELINDA ŠEFČIĆ, ANITA JANDRIĆ NIŠEVIĆ & VIDA MEIĆ

THE IMPACT OF PRISON ART ON PRISON STAFF

Melinda Šefčić, Anita Jandrić Nišević & Vida Meić

Abstract

It is a well-known fact that stress caused by working in the prison system often leads to negative outcomes, such as job burnout. Burnout syndrome is manifested as emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and decreased personal accomplishment. Prison staff often spend their entire working life in the prison system. During this period, they are exposed to numerous stressors, some of which are related to working with inmates, some are organisational in nature, and some are related to the physical environment itself. The impact of art on prison staff, regardless of which division they work in, is wide-spread and particularly important. A study on the perception of space before and after performing art interventions showed that the vast majority of surveyed staff experience space after painting much more pleasant and full of content, unlike before, when it was unattractive and dull. This makes us reflect about how art can positively affect employees' mood and their perception of the workspace, just as it has a positive effect on the inmates themselves.

Keywords: prison staff, negative environment, work overload, stress, responsibility

Introduction

It is a well-known fact that stress caused by working in the prison system often leads to negative effects on the individual's psychophysical health (Dollard, Winefield, Winefield, 2001; Neveu, 2007; according to Garland, 2002). Typical outcomes of job burnout for prison staff include: 1) absenteeism, 2) increased use of sick days and 3) job dismissal (Carlson, Thomas, 2006; Garland, 2002; Maslach,

Jackson, 1981; Schaufeli, Peeters, 2000; according to Garland, 2002). In addition to negatively affecting the performance of tasks at work, burnout syndrome also has an impact on relations with colleagues and the treatment of inmates (Garland, 2002; Garner, Knight, Simpson, 2007; Maslach, Schaufeli, Leiter, 2001). The negative effect of burnout is also evident in prison staff relations with their families (Maslach, Jackson, 1982; according to Garland, 2002).

Burnout syndrome is manifested as emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment. It consists of a three-stage process that includes job stress, worker strain, and defensive coping (Garland, 2002). Burnout stems from stress accumulation and its untimely and inadequate management. In addition, certain individuals are at a higher risk of burnout than others. Garland (2002) points out that a burnout candidate profile consists of *unassertiveness, impatience, intolerance, hostility, and a strong need for approval and affection*. For that very reason, cases of burnout in the prison system are not at all uncommon. Art can be one of the tools that could contribute to reducing staff stress, by performing interventions in their workspace.

The impact of art on prison staff, whether it is treatment staff, administrative staff or correctional officers, is wide-spread and extremely important. Most available research focuses on the impact of art workshops on inmates, while their impact on prison staff is largely neglected. However, prison staff is equally exposed to the negative impact of prison premises as the inmates themselves. Prison staff often spend their entire working life in the prison system. During this period they undergo a lot of stress not only due to working with inmates, but also due to the premises themselves, and the demanding and arduous psycho-physical conditions. Burnout is very common because, on top of that, the staff is exposed to numerous risk situations that put additional burden on the job.

Most literature and research show that employees' dissatisfaction with the working environment is primarily related to their dissatisfaction with the workplace. Employee satisfaction, especially that of prison treatment and prison security staff, depends largely on a number of factors, and one of the most critical is heavy workload and the demands of the work environment. Lack of workforce and exhausting working hours are some of the key factors leading to a feeling of dissatisfaction and stress in the workplace.

A review of literature on the impact of art on the well-being of the entire prison community suggests that art positively affects not only inmates, but also prison staff. Prison staff prefer nature motifs, while abstraction and abstract art are completely rejected as irrelevant to the prison setting. In addition, a qualitative analysis conducted within projects implemented so far in Croatia (*Exemplary Penitentiary* (2018), *Revitalization of Prison Space with Art* (2019), *The Horizon of Freedom* (2020) and *Freedom of Creation* (2021)) showed that prison treatment staff are more inclined to the idea of prison art than security officers (Šefčić, Jandrić Nišević, 2020).

In Croatia research has been carried out continuously since 2017 as part of projects focused on aestheticization and artistic revitalization of prison premises, which directly contribute to changing the visual identity of the space. Previous research results, especially in the staff sample, suggest that security officers have a somewhat more negative attitude towards mural painting (and in general towards such initiatives) than staff from other divisions. This difference can be explained by the fact that the main task of correctional officers is to maintain the security of the correctional institution, which entails more repressive attitudes towards inmates in general, compared to the treatment staff who are more focused on rehabilitation and thus more open to such initiatives which in part can positively affect the adjustment of prisoners and improve the quality of serving prison sentences (Šefčić, Jandrić Nišević, 2020).

When it comes to the perception of space before performing art interventions, most of the surveyed staff find prison premises empty, unattractive and dull (almost 52%), while almost 21% of respondents from the security division consider prison premises pleasant. Furthermore, about 40% of respondents believe that interior and exterior refurbishing of prison premises is important, compared to about 30% of respondents who think otherwise. Others (20%) have never thought about it. However, about 54% of respondents believe that the aestheticization and artistic revitalization of premises is a good and necessary idea in order to improve the interior and exterior of a prison or penitentiary (Šefčić, Jandrić Nišević, 2020).

After painting outdoor murals, the vast majority of respondents (about 80%) consider the premises much more pleasant and claim they feel more comfortable when staying in them (63%), while 70% of respondents define the premises as more pleasant, interesting and full of content (Šefčić, Jandrić Nišević, 2020).

Most of them also believe that the performed art interventions were a good idea and that they were necessary (70%). In addition, about 70% of respondents think that other correctional institutions should be painted as well (Šefčić, Jandrić Nišević, 2020).

These results indicate that prison staff should equally participate in the activities of conducting art workshops with inmates, and undergo additional training on their goals and values, in order to contribute to collective awareness, but also a positive feeling of well-being in the workplace.

Research results from projects the Croatian Association of Fine Artists has conducted in the prison system so far underline the need to reflect on and recognise the importance of elaborating positive elements and goals of artistic contribution. Art projects focused on improving mental health and spiritual fulfilment of inmates directly impact the mood of the prison staff as well.

Finally, the fact that space design has a strong role and impact on people and their mood, motivation, satisfaction, and thus cooperation and collectivism should not be overlooked.

Conclusion

The environment in which we work and spend much of our time will directly affect our mood and successful performance of our work tasks. The level of comfort in our work environment is directly linked to the level of our job satisfaction. Therefore, when considering the aestheticization of prison environment, we should equally consider artistic improvements to both the workspace for the staff and the premises for the inmates. One of the suggestions is for the employees themselves to become involved in project activities by presenting their visions and ideas about the appearance of the space. Based on this, artists can make sketches, which could then be presented and given to the staff to choose from for further implementation. We have noticed in previous projects, and especially in research results, that most of the staff emphasise necessary improvements to their workspace, not strictly by painting. The most frequent remarks relate to old office furniture, old woodwork and toilets, and they generally complain about the degraded state of buildings and institutions.

It is positive experiences worldwide, new architecture and visions of the prison system that encourage us to think about making a step forward. Today, in the 21st century, one can and should think about the use of art as an integral part of a healthy society.

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EMPLOYABILITY
SKILLS THROUGH
THE ARTS

ED SANTMAN

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS THROUGH THE ARTS

Ed Santman

Abstract

The rapid development of digital media and digital tools have opened up new possibilities and caused new dilemmas. Prison services all over the world are struggling with the possibilities computers can offer and while they understand the value for education, they fear that inmates will be able to continue with their criminal practices once they have access to internet. When it comes to education, the development of digital tools brought many changes, making knowledge so easily accessible through sites like Wikipedia; more people started to underscore the value of other sorts of learning like informal and non-formal learning and the importance of developing soft skills like teamwork, reflective thinking, time management and other key competences; recognising that the arts can be an important tool when it comes to learning skills

Keywords: 21st century skills, informal learning, employability, certificates.

Introduction

A prison is a challenging environment in which conditions can vary enormously. Understanding the prison context is very important, to deliver training successfully. Working with a stable group is an important condition that should be met.

In recent years we learned that the arts can be a powerful tool to acquire important skills such as teamwork, time management, flexibility, and creative thinking. The basic idea is very simple. Making a piece of art with a group of people is very challenging and complicated. For a successful result you need to collaborate with others. The skills for this go by many names, some call them 21st century skills, other speak of soft skills or employability skills. Although these skills are not exactly the same, there is a big overlap.

Art Education and Skills

Art as a means

Great learning happens in groups (quote of Ken Robinson)

Art Education and 21st Century Skills

It has been known for some time that someone who finds answers himself learns better than someone who memorises the answers of someone else. The teacher's role will change in many situations in the near future. Instead of giving answers they should also teach the student to ask the right questions. Due to the digital revolution, the answers can be found all over the internet. Reflective thinking is an essential skill to judge the quality of information found on the internet.

Art education has a long-hidden capital, which is inherently part of every creative piece of work: The process. During the creation of a work of art, skills that are essential to all of us can be developed and learned. Most art projects can only be successful if several conditions are met. Different essential skills are needed to bring a group process to a successful conclusion. Making a mural together, working on a piece of theatre or playing together in a band or orchestra is hard work and demands a lot from the participants. Skills such as: collaboration, reflective thinking, effective communication, being reliable, active listening, flexibility, problem-solving thinking, time management and other social skills are a requirement for achieving a good result. We can also turn this around, because, as they say: *the proof of the pudding is in the eating*. If the final result is good, then there must have been good cooperation, good communication and good time management.

Everyone will agree that these competencies are important, but what is so special about art education is that it can be a tool to develop these qualities and a way to improve them. Making music with a group of people, for example, is complex. You shouldn't just be able to play your instrument. You have to listen to others while playing. You have to prepare well. You have to understand that you are a member of a team. You have to be on time, understand that the others can't start without you and so on. The more important these informal forms of learning become, the greater the role of the arts can become in education. Art education for adults in an institution such as a prison can also be about learning to work together, about finding solutions and learning to ask relevant questions. When art education classes in prisons are organised in such a way that people work on their soft skills, these courses have great potential and can become very important. Making music, acting in a play, or writing a poem is no longer the only goal, it will also be about using art as a resource and a tool for working on competences.

These competences are often referred to as *Soft Skills*, *Employability Skills*, or *Life Skills*, depending on the context. In the recent past leading companies and organisations such as the United Nations, the OECD, UNESCO, Apple, Microsoft, Lego (and many others), have emphasized the importance of these skills in a joint statement. In addition to the skills motioned earlier, the importance of digital literacy is usually also underlined. All these skills together are usually called *21st Century Skills*.

An underlying idea is that a lot will have to change in education in the nearby future. There must be a shift in education from knowledge to skills. The reasoning for this is as follows; thanks to the internet and digital media, knowledge is always and everywhere available and is therefore less exclusive than it was in the past. What is especially important today is the ability to develop yourself, to keep on learning, to find the right knowledge and to learn to ask the right questions. This shift in insight is seen as one of the most important developments in education. Until the end of the last century, knowledge that was transferred in schools had generally been limited to the knowledge of the teacher and the content of the textbook. The system was always aimed at teaching different individuals' identical knowledge, with uniform tests. Those who did not fit into the system were mainly asked to adapt. Eventually in practice many had to drop out because they did not meet the standards. For some, this was the start of a downward spiral that eventually landed them in jail.

Learning and Training

Training is based on certainties that can be tested. In most lessons at schools, knowledge is transferred, or you learn to solve problems that have already been solved by someone else. However, the reality is that these days, more than ever, we live in a world that changes constantly. Human knowledge is increasing exponentially. We must learn to respond to questions and problems that have not yet been resolved. For this we must learn to seek knowledge that we do not yet have and that we cannot find in our teaching methods.

Certifying Soft Skills Acquired Through the Arts

The European Project PEETA (Personal Effectiveness and Employability Skills Through the Arts) 2009 – 2012 it explored an innovative approach that was used by linking the arts to the development of the soft skills needed for work. In the project a certificate called SEPE (Supporting Employability and Personal Effectiveness), has been designed to help learners to gain and retain a job. The certificate focusses on the development of the soft skills that employers seek. These include adaptability, a 'can do' attitude and objectivity about one's strengths and weaknesses.

By documenting the creative process, employability skills can be identified and certified. This can be done by creating a portfolio

during an art project that will be used as evidence that someone has acquired these skills.

The portfolio focuses on four categories: Effective communication skills, positive contributions within a team, demonstrate employability skills in a group project and reflect on personal effectiveness skills and qualities for employability. There is no exam, if the portfolio provides enough evidence that someone has shown these skills within a creative project, the participant will receive a certificate. The certificate that describes one's employability skills can be used when applying for a job. Research done by the University of Exeter (Cursley, Jo. (2008) Marchmont Observatory at the University of Exeter) underpins that the skills in this certificate are the skills most valued by employers.

The content of the portfolio can be very diverse, it mainly consists of all sorts of evidence that the learner has shown the required competences during his participation in an arts project. The evidence in the portfolio can consist of notes made by the trainer during the process, but also of photo's, drawings music fragments, and so forth. A self-written text for a theatre piece for example can be evidence for *making a positive contribution*. Being on time for each session can be evidence for time management skills. A given number of pieces of evidence in all categories is required. Reflecting on the importance of the skills is also part of the process.

In the end an external evaluator, someone who was not involved in the project, is asked to check the quality of the portfolio and decide if a participant will receive the certificate. In this way the whole process is more objective.

This template can be used to build up a portfolio of skills acquired during an art project. It describes, the skills, the learning outcomes and quantities of evidence if the desired evidence is acquired a certificate can be handed out.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	Edexcel Evidence Requirements	Sample Activities	Minimum Quantity
<i>Be able to use effective communication skills</i> GOOD COMMUNICATION	1.1 Demonstrate the ability to listen to others	Active listening: Tutor notes		2
	1.2 Communicate appropriately with others	Formal and informal communication		1 of Each
<i>Be able to make a positive contribution within a team</i> POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	2.1 Contribute ideas and suggestions to the group project	Contribution: Two written suggestions		2
	2.2 Show discussion skills within a group	Discussion: Tutor notes		1
	2.3 Be reliable during the realisation of group work	Reliability: Group register		1 register for all sessions
	2.4 Demonstrate collaborative team working skills	Teamwork: Tutor notes		2
<i>Be able to demonstrate employability skills in a group project</i> DELIVER SET TASKS	3.1 Demonstrate task management skills	Two action plans		2
	3.2 Show flexibility when dealing with problems	Two problem solving examples: Tutor notes		2
	3.3 Complete assigned tasks within given timescales	Deadlines: Group register		1 register for all sessions
	3.4 Show time management skills	Be on time: Group register		1 register for all sessions
<i>Know how to reflect on personal effectiveness skills and qualities for employability developed in the context of a group project</i> REFLECTIVE LEARNING	4.1 Describe own personal effectiveness skills in the context of group project	1:1 Discussion: evidence tutor notes/recording		1 star diagram per session
	4.2 Identify personal effectiveness skills and qualities needed for own development for employability	1:1 Discussion: Action plan form		1
	4.3 Plan ways to develop own personal effectiveness skills and qualities for employability	1:1 Discussion: Action plan form		1

Non-formal and informal learning becomes more and more important these days. In this process the arts can play an important role. Art can be used as a mean; it can be a powerful tool to work on skills that are highly valued in our society. Processes can be put in place to validate skills acquired through the arts. A certificate on employability skills can help to find work, but it also has other benefits. Many participants have developed greater confidence and a more positive self-image through acquiring such a certificate.

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THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ARTS IN PRISONS

ED SANTMAN

THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ARTS IN PRISONS

Ed Santman

For every dollar spent on prison education, taxpayers are estimated to save four to five dollars that would have been spent on incarceration. (Kathleen Bender, 2018, Education Opportunities in Prison are Key to Reducing Crime)

Abstract

Prison arts programs consistently yield positive evaluation results. Research in the last decades shows that prison art projects have a lot of potential, the inmates who take part in a project will improve their social skills and emotional control. Prison arts programs are value for money, they help reduce reoffending.

Keywords: research, evidence based, costs and benefits, value for money

Introduction

Prison art projects involving groups of inmates have been around for a while. Around the year 1800 the infamous Marquis de Sade, who spent 32 years of his life in prisons, was encouraged by the director of the prison to stage several of his plays, with the inmates as actors. The Parisian public were allowed to come and to view the performances. In recent years research has proven that art projects in prisons also have economic benefits.

Art Projects in Prisons

Everybody who has been involved in a prison art project knows what a strong and touching experience it can be. Inmates discover new qualities. As a Dutch prison art teacher once put it: *A painting does not lie*. Anecdotal reports from inmates, teachers and sometimes prison guards show the impact of these initiatives.

Since the Publication of The Brewster Report (1983) on the benefits of arts in correction programs in California, many arts projects in prisons all over the world have been evaluated. Without exception these programs consistently yield very positive evaluation results. Having said this we must understand that there are always some problems with research in prisons and with research on human behavior in general. We can observe behavior and we can describe certain basic factors that drive our behavior, like the use of rewards or punishment. But to study our behavior we must simplify the whole thing to make it empirical. We simply cannot take all factors that drive our behavior into account.

When it comes to studying arts projects in prisons there are other complications. Most of the time correctional arts programs do not have enough participants to generate strong statistic results. It is also very difficult to follow a group of offenders for a longer time, and to draw conclusions over a longer period. Once someone leaves the prison, he is out of sight of the criminal justice system.

In the past decades there have been many successful arts projects. In this chapter we will highlight a few of them, but arts projects appear to have an image problem among some lawmakers, prison staff, and the public. For those who propagate a *tough on crime* approach it is hard to imagine that the arts can be a strong tool. The simple idea, that punishing harder will result in less offending is much more attractive to them.

At first sight this sort of reasoning might sound logical and attractive, but there is simply no scientific evidence to support this idea, longer sentences don't stop people from reoffending. For some policymakers, those in favor of the longer sentences, the knowledge that the arts can be a powerful tool, must even be an inconvenient idea, because it is not in-line with what they stand for. A related problem is the place of correctional education. This has been an ongoing discussion between lawmakers, the media, and the public for many years. Often the idea is promoted that by reducing these activities, one could save money.

Costs of Incarnation

There is another side to this, locking people up is very expensive, for example in the Netherlands it costs € 95.000, - a year to lock somebody up. Juvenile detention costs even more about € 225.000, - a year. Locking someone up in a forensic psychiatric clinic cost € 185.000, - a year. Therefore, it is no rocket science that if we can

reduce reoffending, a lot of taxpayers money could be saved.

In most Western countries nearly half of the people released from prison are incarcerated again within three years. If education or art projects can help to break this vicious cycle and thus play a role in reducing reoffending, then they are clearly good value for money.

A project in prisons in the region of Rotterdam illustrates how this would work. It is estimated that up to 45% of the inmates in Dutch prisons have some mental disabilities. In 2019 a project started in three prisons aiming at people with mental disabilities that were serving a prison sentence. In the prisons of Rotterdam, Krimpen aan den IJssel and Dordrecht 572 inmates with mild intellectual disabilities were offered extra counselling. The group will be fully supervised from 2019 to 2022. The project will cost an average of 4.3 million euros per year but is expected to yield an average of 13.7 million euros annually according to research commissioned by the Dutch Disabled Care Association (VGN). Every euro invested yields 3.20 euro in benefits.

Little research into the economic benefits of arts projects in prisons has been done but if we compare the idea to the project in the Rotterdam region, we understand how beneficial projects that reduce re-offending can be. The few programs that have been researched provide strong evidence for the economic benefits of art projects in prisons.

Unlocking Value

In 2012 the Arts Alliance in the UK published the *Unlocking Value* report on the economic benefit of the arts in criminal justice. Two years before, in late 2010, the Arts Alliance had commissioned the NPC (New Philanthropy Capital), a think tank and consultancy for the social sector, to explore whether the value of the arts in criminal justice could be shown through economic analysis. Three arts charities that worked with different groups of offenders were selected, to see if their projects provided savings as well as improved the life chances of the people involved in the projects. One of the most important findings was that for every £1 invested in the program, £4.57 of value was created for society over one year. A large proportion of this comes from savings to the criminal justice system through reduced reoffending.

Costs and Benefits of Arts Projects?

There are other factors that could help to reduce the cost to society. Art projects can be used to develop soft skills and employability skills. In 2001, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy evaluated the costs and benefits of a variety of correctional, skills-building programs. The study examined program costs; the benefit of reducing recidivism by lowering costs for arrest, conviction, incarceration, and supervision; and the benefit of avoiding crime

victimisation. In this research the benefit-to-cost ratio of residential drug abuse treatment was as much as \$2.69 for each dollar invested. In the program for adult basic education, the benefit was as much as \$5.65 for each dollar invested. The study clearly indicated that these inmate programs could result in significant cost savings through reduced recidivism, and that their expansion is important to public safety.

An earlier study that pointed in the same direction conducted by 'TaxWatch' and the Center for Needs Assessment & Planning in America in 1997 did a Costs-Consequences Analysis (CCA) for Florida's Workforce Development Programs that showed that every dollar of public investment in correctional education returned \$3.20. Other conclusions from the same research suggested that art programs for incarcerated individuals can help them develop better mental outlooks and that expressive therapy and art education reduces violence within the prison system as well as decreases parolees' recidivism. All of this demonstrates a strong argument for prison art education programs.

Creating Change

In January 2011, The Lloyds TSB Foundation for Northern Ireland commissioned Gauge NI a Belfast based Community Interest Company specialising in impact measurement to measure the impact of the Foundation's Creating Change Program. The analysis was carried out at the halfway point of the program and was completed between February and August 2011.

One of the organizations that was supported by Lloyds was the Educational Shakespeare Company Ltd, an organization funded by Tom Magill, an ex-offender himself. The project that was evaluated by Lloyds was a project with ex-offenders who worked with film as a medium. The value of the change was calculated at £1,171,427, - The funding received was £ 138,750,-. For every £1 invested in the program, £ 8.44 of value was created for society.

Shakespeare Behind Bars

Sometimes no research is needed, participants in the program 'Shakespeare behind bars' that has been running since 1995 in prisons in Kentucky, Michigan and Illinois have a reoffending rate of 6.25% according to its founder Curt Tofteland. A fraction of the average reoffending rate in America.

The award-winning documentary *Shakespeare Behind Bars* shows Curt at work in a prison. It proves how powerful art projects in prison can be. In a moving film, the inmates are not defined by their crimes but are shown as actors embracing new opportunities. As described before, lower reoffending rates are beneficial. Needless to say, that society will also benefit from them not reoffending.

If we believe some politicians, stricter punishment is the way to combat crime.

A higher sanction is expected to reduce criminal behavior by deterring potential offenders. This sounds as a logical thought, but punishment simply does not work like this on people's behavior. There are many more factors that come into play. If you want to impose higher penalties for a crime, it is important to consider certain empirical knowledge. Something that is rarely done by those who call for higher punishments. Some knowledge of human behavior is needed to provide a better insight into the actual influence of punishment on people. The idea is to make the criminal behavior so unattractive that committing an offense does not yield that much compared to the sentence. However, for preventive punishments to be effective, knowledge of the maximum punishment is necessary, which criminals, like most people, usually do not have. They will therefore not weigh the pros and cons of committing a criminal offence.

Another reason that more severe punishment is not an effective way to combat criminal behavior is the effect it has on the offenders. For people who have been in prison for a long time, it will be more difficult to re-enter society and thus to change their lives. Moreover, in prison, often more criminal behavior is learned from the other inmates, the so-called criminogenic effect. Usually, people don't come out as a better person.

The reason many politicians (and others in society) fall back on this idea of stricter penalties is because the concept is so simple, and it sounds so logical. It is not necessary to go into the motives of criminals. There are however plenty of studies that show that stricter punishments don't work. Strictly from an economic point of view it is also not a very logical idea to lobby for more severe sentences, which are very expensive given the annual cost per inmate per year and given the cost for society and the possibility that an ex-offender will more than likely continue his criminal career after leaving prison, due to the reasons touched upon.

The Brewster Report

The importance of Art in prison projects can be distracted from anecdotes and quotes by inmates and art facilitators, but apart from some smaller projects and case studies there is not much evidence-based research. In other words, there are more stories than numbers. One exception is the long-running California Arts-in-Corrections program (AIC). Not only does AIC have several studies demonstrating benefits, all but one of those studies were conducted by Dr. Larry Brewster, currently a professor emeritus of the University of San Francisco, who has been studying art in prison projects for almost 40 years.

In 1983, Brewster had access to data which enabled him to per-

form a rigorous cost-benefit analysis. This study usually referred to as The Brewster Report, showed a long list of benefits that could be linked to prison art programs. His most important findings apart from the financial benefits were that the programs could lead to:

- reduced tension among inmates and between inmates and staff
- cost avoidance to institutions
- institutional enrichment through cultural activities
- positive opportunities for interaction between the institution and surrounding communities.

At that time, in the America of Ronald Reagan, this was not the message that politicians, who favored a 'tough on crime' approach, had been waiting for. Despite the positive outcomes of the research many prison art projects were closed in later years and a lot of tax-payers money was spent on new prisons.

In 2014 Brewster published a new report: *California Prison Arts: A Quantitative Evaluation*. This report found positive correlations between participation in arts programs and skills like time management, social competences, achievement motivation, intellectual flexibility, emotional control, active initiative, and self-confidence. In addition to these, disciplinary reports declined, and 61 percent of those who participated in art projects reported improved behavior. Brewster's study supports the findings of other prison arts evaluations in America and elsewhere.

Conclusion

Randomised, controlled or double-blind studies are rarely possible in prisons, but the research that has been done on the benefits of art projects in prisons all point in one direction, they are powerful interventions. Art projects in prisons saves taxpayers a lot of money. For the participants it can be a step towards a successful reintegration in society.

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BIOGRAPHIES

Stefan Florek

Stefan Florek is a PhD in philosophy and psychologist. He is an adjunct academic at Jagiellonian University in Krakow (Institute of Applied Psychology, Faculty of Management and Social Communication). His current scientific interests include cognitive evolutionary approach to morality, crime, offender rehabilitation, aggression and axiological experience. He is the author and co-author of about 50 scientific publications: books (Florek, S. (2007). *Wartościujący umysł* [The Evaluative Mind], Florek, S., Gulla, B., Piotrowski, P. (2019). *Radycalizacja. Konteksty psychologiczne* [Radicalization: Psychological Contexts]. Florek, S., Siemiginowska, P. (2020). *Agresja w pracy* [Workplace Aggression]), book chapters and journal articles.



Anita Jandrić Nišević



Anita Jandrić Nišević, PhD is an Associate Professor at the Department of Criminology, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb. Her scientific, teaching and professional activities focus on the field of offender rehabilitation, criminology and prison aftercare. She cooperates with the prison and probation system and the NGO sector in creating and implementing specific treatment programmes for adult offenders.

Virág Kiss



Virág Kiss graduated as a Visual Arts Teacher from Eszterházy Károly Catholic University (ELTE) in Eger (BA) and from Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME) in Budapest (MA). Also graduated as an art therapist from the University of Pécs (PTE). For several years she was working with early school leavers and later with persons with disabilities. She received her PhD from ELTE doing research in the fields of visual arts education and art therapy. In the last years, she has been working for several universities. Currently she is an Assistant Professor at ELTE and at EKKE at the Fine Art and Art Theory Department.

Vida Meić

Vida Meić was born in 1991 in Croatia. In 2017 she graduated *summa cum laude* in Graphic Arts from the Teaching Department of the Academy of Fine Arts, University of Zagreb. She won seven awards for her artistic work. Her work has been showcased in about 30 group exhibitions and four solo exhibitions. Together with Melinda Šefčić, she designs and implements numerous projects aimed at aestheticizing hospitals and prisons, as a coordinator but also as an active participant, painting the walls of prisons and hospitals. She works as an Assistant at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb.



Peter van Olmen

Peter van Olmen is an educator innovator who, after a career of 25 years in regular education, started working at the Lelystad youth prison in 2004. From the expertise he has gained over the years in this youth prison, he has come to realise that non-formal and informal education are important for the development of skills that prisoners need in order to remain connected to society. He is convinced that art is an effective means of supporting this form of education.



Przemysław Piotrowski



Dr hab. Przemysław Piotrowski is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Applied Psychology at the Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland. Author and co-author of nearly 100 publications, including seven books and articles in respected scientific journals. He specializes in social psychology with particular emphasis on deviant behavior, aggression and crime. Member of International Society for Criminology and European Society of Criminology.

Ed Santman



Ed Santman (Rotterdam, 23/02/1955) studied fine arts at the *Willem de Kooning* Academy Rotterdam. He became involved in working with underprivileged groups when he started teaching art classes in prisons where he also worked on theatre and music projects. From 2010 until 2015 he coordinated art education in all Dutch prisons. Through this work, he became involved in several European projects on prison education. He currently develops tools for people at the edge of society such as homeless people, drug abusers, refugees, youth at risk. In many of his projects, art is used as a means to develop soft skills.

Melinda Šefčić

In 2012 Melinda Šefčić received her BA in Painting from the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in the class of Prof. Zoltan Novak, while in May 2018 she received her PhD in Painting with a dissertation in the field of art and science entitled *Re-humanisation and re-aestheticization of hospital premises - an example of an artistic intervention to a hospital ward*, under the mentorship of Prof. Svjetlan Junaković and Prof. Vera Turković, PhD. She has showcased her work at numerous solo and group exhibitions in Croatia and around the world. She is the author of over 20 art projects, over 50 murals, and has participated at numerous congresses and conferences. She is a member of Croatian Association of Fine Arts (HDLU) and Croatian Society of Freelance Artists (HZSU).



Tomislav Buntak

The manual *Arts of Freedom - A Necessity of Art in Prison* in a clear, reviewed, and interesting way, through experiences of working in prison systems, on international examples, brings new practices that have been implemented or are being implemented and should be an inspiration to prison officials, treatment managers, policymakers, but also to the general public, which is interested in the problems of prisons and correctional institutions intended for both serving sentences and rehabilitating the prison population for a possible return to an open social environment.

The manual, through examples of different artistic practices, projects, and initiatives, emphasizes the importance of encouraging more active participation of staff and also the importance of encouraging creativity, through art workshops and various forms of art therapy in correctional institutions in order to reduce the tension caused by the environment and create a more pleasant one which undeniably helps rehabilitation. This includes the participation of artists who have gone through the preparatory training process for working in such specific conditions and other professionals who are trained to implement various forms of art therapy in cooperation with artists, with the aim of possible continuous implantation of the presented programs in prison systems. In one place, clear guidelines are given for the development of a more flexible, creative system, which contributes to positive changes in institutions on the social margins, but also in society as a whole.

Collection of New Ideas and Practices for Prison Staff, Policymakers, and Public is an extraordinary collection of knowledge and experience, theory and practice, and forms a real base for understanding, developing, and implementing new projects in prison systems in Europe and, I hope, all over the world.

REVIEW

Dalibor Doležal

At first glance, it seems that art and prisons are not a common combination. Art as a special human activity, whose meaning is constituted in a complex communication process, largely represents openness to new knowledge, freedom of thought, and expression. Prisons, on the other hand, represent the complete opposite, buildings where people stay, usually under lock and key, living according to an imposed schedule, a symbol of confinement and the right to self-expression.

The book *Arts of Freedom* proves not only that the connection between art and prison is very possible, but also that it has existed for many years, in different forms and with different goals. Conceived as a kind of collection of good practices and reflections on the place that art has and can have in prison institutions, this book shows the combination of these two apparently incompatible worlds in a simple, but scientifically and practically based way.

Regardless of the type of artistic expression inside the prison, the book clearly outlines the multiple meaning and influences both on the prisoners, as well as on the employees and visitors, while it is clearly seen that art can also play a very important rehabilitative role in penal institutions, i.e. that the power of art within prison walls can be essential for acquiring the skills needed to re-connect with society.

Although at first, it seems that it is a description of the role of art within the prison and the way of incorporating different artistic expressions in the daily work with prisoners, this book also has its scientific value. Namely, each chapter has elements of scientific work, which gives the combination of art and prison another dimension that can serve as an idea for future scientific and research works in the area of the influence of art within prison systems.

The structure of the book is very compact, which is helped by the logically arranged chapters that give the book a well-rounded whole. The chapters within the book are uniform in writing and citation of the literature and supporting the stated theses with concrete examples.

In conclusion, it is a valuable work that has its own artistic, rehabilitative, practical, and pedagogical value. Due to the way of writing and selected topics described in the book, this book can serve as material for some future similar projects, but also as educational material for all stakeholders in the convict rehabilitation process.

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