

ARTS OF

FREEDOM



A COLLECTION OF
PRACTICES AND IDEAS
ON ART IN PRISON

MANUAL FOR ARTISTS

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and Ideas on Art in Prison

Manual for Artists

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INTRODUCTION

Art and prison are two social elements that are extremely contradictory in nature. Art evokes freedom, spontaneity, creativity, unconventionality, playfulness, colourfulness, frivolity. Prison is associated with lack of freedom, restraint, order, discipline and restrictions, rules and rigour, severity and authority. Therefore, prison art seems almost as an oxymoron.

The relationship between prison and art in this handbook is developed by shifting the perspective of art towards its therapeutic effects and shifting the perspective of prisons towards their humanisation.

Carrying out artistic work in prison dictates different rules and possibilities for establishing contact, freedom of movement, raising certain topics and a careful reflection on its ethical dimensions, including the obligation of professional secrecy regarding the information or insights artists gain there.

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 artists and encourage them to conduct and participate in artistic and therapeutic projects in the prison system.

In addition to a historical overview of prisons, 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. We also analyse the beneficial effects of formal and informal education and 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 in the prison environment, including working with prisoners. Furthermore, this handbook provides an overview of literature studying and illustrating the impact of colour, form, architecture, space and art on the physical and mental state of prisoners and the prison system in general.

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 Jagiellonski, the Hungarian Eszterhazy 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.

ART AND PRISON

ED SANTMAN

ART AND PRISON

Ed Santman

Abstract

After some notes on the history of prisons and a short summary of the ideas of the French philosopher Michel Foucault, this chapter focuses on the impact a prison sentence had on important artists like Oscar Wilde and Ai Weiwei and the impact of art made by some of our most famous artists like Michelangelo and Salvador Dali. In 1791 the British philosopher and social theorist Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832) designed a circular prison with an inspection tower in the center of the building from which the guards could keep an eye on all the prisoners or also referred to as panopticon. The tower in the center is designed in such a way that the inmates couldn't see if anyone was present in the control room. Because of this the prisoners could not know whether they were being observed or not. When a prisoner knows that they are being watched all the time, they inevitably and continuously act as if they are being watched and this type of surveillance impacts on their behavior and forces them to behave properly our prisons.

Keywords: history, Foucault, panopticon, artists in prisons, art in prison.

Introduction

Show me your prisons and I will tell you in which society you are living in, is a quote that has been contributed to Winston Churchill but also to Fyodor Dostoevsky. When it comes to art and prisons, there is a lot of truth in this quote. Prisons and the arts are in many ways opposites. Prisons are about locking people up and about the restriction of freedom. Prisons are about making people part of the restrictive system and the arts are about freedom of expression but also about freedom of thought. By its very nature the arts are threatening for any system that tries to control people's liberties. It is no coincidence that in totalitarian regimes artists are often among the first to be sent to prisons. A country that locks up its artists is a country that tries to control its people.

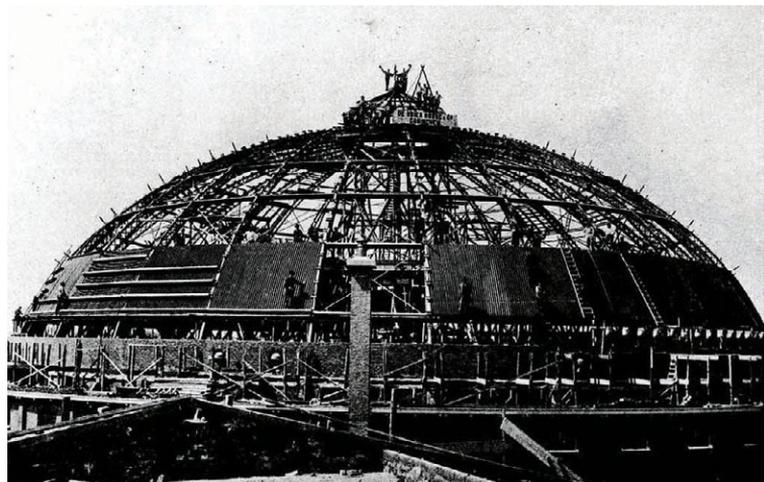
A Brief History of Prisons

The earliest records of prisons date back to the 1st millennia BC. They describe prison like places in ancient civilisations like the ones in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Almost every other major civilisation used the concept of prisons to incarcerate people. Until the 19th century however prisons were often only used as a temporary place to lock people up before torturing them or sentencing them to death, exile, or a life of slavery. The concept of keeping somebody imprisoned in a confined space as a sentence is a relatively recent development.

Around 1800 a new concept became the standard of the penal system, detention. From that time on, prisons have stood for the deprivation of liberty as punishment for any crime. In his book *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* written in 1975, the French philosopher Michel Foucault describes how the character of punishment has shifted since the Middle Ages. From physical corporal punishment, often as a public spectacle to punishing the mind, with the aim to achieve moral discipline and thus favor social inclusion. His conclusion is that discipline and punishment did not really disappear, they just took on other forms.

The Panopticon of Bentham

The panopticon of Bentham plays an important role in the philosophy of Foucault, he also argues that civilians who are aware that they are permanently visible, will behave according to certain rules and standards. He concludes: *The one who is subject to the visibility and is aware of it, spontaneously takes over the presence of power and applies it to himself; he internalizes the relationship of power by playing both roles simultaneously, thus becoming the principle of his own submission* (Foucault, 1975, *Discipline and Punish, the birth of the prison*).



Haarlem panopticon under construction. (1910). [Photography]. Photographer: Unknown. Source: Public domain. shorturl.at/mtS39

The industrial revolution roughly started round 1800. It marks a major turning point in history. From then on in many ways, factories, schools, hospitals, and prisons are organised all along the same lines. In these institutions disciplines and schedules make organizations and the people manageable and known. Central to all disciplines is the norm and the power of the normal. Someone is less likely to break rules or laws if one believes one is being watched. Foucault describes how our institutions, schools, prisons, hospitals and factories make us docile and conservative. We must be on time, we have to be healthy, we have to behave. Not only prisons but the whole of society appears to be a sort of machine, that works efficiently through punishment and reward, and produces obedient and capable individuals.

A prison completely in line with the ideas of Bentham was never built. Over the years prisons started morphing into the correctional facilities that we know today and started implementing the concept of rehabilitation and the reform of prisoners.

Today the prison system, and more generally the mode of punishment in our late modern capitalist society, is a much-discussed topic. Despite all efforts, reoffending is still very high in most countries. Not only is the prison's failure to meet its goals increasingly recognised but discussions about what prisons should look like are the subject of wide public debates, usually focusing on whether to sanction longer and heavier.

Why Michelangelo's Final Sculpture was Sent to Jail

A panopticon can also work the other way around. All prisoners can see the center of the building from their cell. In 2013 *La pietà Rondanini*, an unfinished sculpture by Michelangelo was sent to an unlikely temporary location, a prison. During that time the Sforza Castle, that normally houses the sculpture, underwent intensive renovations. The statue was installed in Milan's San Vittore prison less than a kilometer from the Sforza Castle, where the artwork was placed at the center of the 19th century building. The prison is partly based on a panopticon design, so the inmates from every wing could see it all the time. Instead of being watched all the time as Foucault describes, the inmates now could watch the sculpture all the time.

Press and art historians objected to the rehousing, but Stefano Boeri, Milan's culture commissioner at the time, told the newspaper *Corriere della Sera* that the statue's brief spell in prison will cost very little, while raising questions of piety and faith, among the local prisoners. The Rondanini Pietà is the last sculpture that Michelangelo made, he worked on it from 1552 until his death in 1564. Although it remains unfinished, the Pietà can be seen as one of his most important sculptures.

Buonarroti, M. (1552-1564). *The Rondanini Pietà* [Sculpture]. Museum of Rondanini Pietà at Sforza Castle in Milan, Italy. Photographer: Pierre Aden. Source: Public Domain. Dreamstime.com shorturlLat/cmCIM



Art and Prisons

Art and prisons appear to be an unlikely combination. Prisons are about locking people up and art is about freedom of thinking and expression. Especially for totalitarian systems, independent people who express their opinion can be a threat. Often during wars and revolutions, the artists were among the first ones to be sent to jail.

Ai Weiwei

The Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei was arrested on April 13, 2011 for *economic crimes* and taken to a secret prison somewhere in Beijing. Ai Weiwei is a frequent critic of the Chinese government, and his artwork often reflects his opinions on the system. He was

locked up in a cell for 81 days. To prevent him from killing himself the whole room was wrapped in soft cushion and soft white foam, which was taped roughly on the wall. Even the toilet was wrapped with soft materials.

All this time he was under extreme surveillance. Three cameras monitored every corner of his cell. Two guards, young soldiers of about twenty years old, were constantly with him in his cell. Even when he was sleeping or taking a shower, there would be guards standing next to him.

You can lock the artist away, but you cannot lock away the art inside the artist. Five years after his release from prison, Ai Weiwei offered the public a glimpse into his time behind bars. At the Biennale of Venice, he presented a six-part installation of near-life size



Voiobev, A. (2013).
Ai Weiwei exhibition
S.A.C.R.E.D. in K21
museum, Dusseldorf,
Germany [Photogra-
phy]. Source: Public
Domain.
Dreamstime.com
[shorturl.at/pgI26](https://www.dreamstime.com/shorturlat/pgI26)

dioramas. Big steel boxes representing his cell showing uncomfortable scenes of his time in prison. Glimpses of the life of the artist and his prison guards can be witnessed by looking through peepholes of the boxes.

After his release the artist returned to his studio in Beijing. The government placed twenty cameras around the place so, like in the panopticon of Bentham, they were able to watch him all the time. Across the street a four-story high building was built so they could also look over the wall that surrounded the studio. One day a truck hit the camera in front of the studio, and since it had been turned to another angle, it no longer pointed at the entrance. It took more than a month before someone came to put the camera back in its original position. If somebody had been watching on the other end, it would have been fixed the next day, so obviously nobody had been looking

at the monitor connected to the camera all this time. This suggests that like Bentham the Chinese government might have thought that the artist would behave properly if he thought that he was watched all the time. Ai Weiwei describes his life in the studio with all the cameras surrounding the compound as soft detention.



Voiobev, A. (2013). Ai Weiwei exhibition *S.A.C.R.E.D.* in K21 museum, Dusseldorf, Germany [Photography]. Source: Public Domain. Dreamstime.com shorturl.at/gqwU1

Writers Behind Bars, Oscar Wilde, and Miguel de Cervantes

Foucault's theories are not completely applicable in all situations. When he argues that people accept the presence of power and thus regulate their behavior, this does not apply to all sorts of behavior. For example, if we have sexual fantasies or have a sexual orientation that is not accepted by society, it could lead to suppression and as a consequence force one to pursue them in secret.

Oscar Wilde, who was a celebrity in his time, living an extravagant life, was sent to prison for two years because of his homosexual contacts with younger men, which he had been trying to hide. The conditions in prison were very bad and his prison experience changed him. In the last months of his sentence, he was allowed to write in his prison cell, and he wrote 'De Profundis', one of his most important works, a 55,000-word letter to his lover Lord Alfred Douglas. In prison the tone of his work changed from an aesthete to a survivor. His work became deeper and stronger and looking back we can conclude that the pen might be stronger than the sword after all.

Foucault also mentioned that being sentenced to spending time in prison is a relative new concept. However, before the industrial revolution there were sometimes reasons to lock people up for a long time. The famous Spanish novelist Miguel de Cervantes was captured by pirates and taken to Algiers. There he was locked up for



Banksy. (2021). *Oscar Wilde* [Mural]. Reading, UK. Photographer: Basphoto. Source: Public Domain. Dreamstime.com: shorturl.at/isuFL

five years before a ransom was paid and he was allowed to return to Spain. The prison changed him, and in his cell, he became the man who would write *Don Quixote*. It is said he got the inspiration and worked on his most famous work during a five-year imprisonment.

The story of this traumatic experience continuously speaks through his work, one of the book's iconic lines reads: *Freedom, Sancho, is one of the most precious gifts that heaven has ever given man* (Cervantes, 1605, *Don Quixote*).

Dali's Drawing in Rikers Island

A prison is not the place where one would expect the theft of a work of a world-renowned artist would take place. Nobody would even expect to find a drawing of Salvador Dali in a prison, but sometimes reality is bigger than fiction.

In February 1965, Spanish surrealist artist Salvador Dali was supposed to pay a visit to Rikers Island and conduct an art therapy class as a favor to his friends, then Department of Correction Commissioner Anna Moscowitz and his business associate Nico Yperifanos. But on the morning the class was scheduled, Dali woke up with a high fever and had to cancel. Because he felt guilty for the last-minute cancellation, he made a quick drawing inside his suite at the St. Regis Hotel in Manhattan as a gift for the inmates.

Dali drew a depiction of Christ on the cross with the note that read *To the dining room of the prisoners, Rikers Island* in the bottom left corner. He signed it and dated it 1965 in the bottom right corner. At the time, a watercolor and charcoal drawing of Dali was valued to be worth between \$175,000 to \$185,000. Although much of Dali's work consists of paintings of melting clocks, sexual imagery and surreal images of people, Dali has also made some paintings depicting a crucifixion. Dali's reasoning behind deciding to draw the image of Christ for the inmates is not known. However occasionally, the artist made religious work. His crucifixions of Christ are among his best paintings.

The drawing was framed and hung in the canteen of the prison, where it went largely unnoticed until 1981, when an inmate threw a metal coffee cup at the drawing, the glass broke, and the image was stained. After this incident the image was taken down and sent to a Virginia gallery for a brief period, it was then returned to the prison where it was stored in the basement and most people forgot about it. In the cellar the drawing sustained even more water damage. When the cellar was cleaned sometime in the 1990s, the drawing was saved by a guard from the trash.

By 1998, it was back up in the jail, hanging near a Pepsi Cola machine and in the lobby of the canteen on Rikers Island. Next to the drawing was a framed note from the warden explaining that the painting was worth 1 million dollars.

Stealing the Dali

Inspired by the value of the painting, a group of prison guards decided to steal the painting and replace it with a poorly made imi-



Detrick, L. (1965). Nico Yperifanos, Salvador Dali's personal representative, presents artist's "Christ on the Cross" to Rikers Island prison [Photography]. Source: NY Daily News Archive via Getty Images 97325798

tation early in the morning on March 1, 2003 during a fire drill. The fire drill would draw all the other guards on-duty away from the lobby with the Dali, and then the guards could steal it.

Only hours later, after shifts changed and the fire drill was over, a guard who quietly prayed to the Dali drawing every time he started his shift realised something was wrong. He went to the warden and said that the drawing was a fake. The warden noticed right away that the drawing hanging on the wall was a smaller version of the drawing that had been in that spot for years. After an internal investigation, the Investigators determined that the incident must be an inside job.

In the end three guards were convicted for the stealing of the drawing and had to spent time in jail. The Dali, however, has never been found.

Vann Nath, Saved by the Arts

Vann Nath was born into a poor family in Cambodia in the 1940s. Nothing prepared him for his extraordinary life. As a child he lived four years as a Buddhist monk, where he developed his interest in the complex paintings that could be found everywhere in the temple complex. After his life as a monk Nath visited the art academy to study painting. Like so many others he was arrested for no reason during the communist Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia. Like in other totalitarian regimes, intellectuals and artists were seen as political opponents and were sent to prison camps. Most of the people who were arrested, were executed under the brutal Pol Pot regime. This genocide can be seen as one of the blackest pages of human history, ultimately about 1.5 to 2 million people, 25% of the people in Cambodia were killed.



Nath, V. (2011). *A prisoner being beaten by a Khmer Rouge cadre with an iron bar at the Killing Fields* [Painting]. Tual Sleng Museum, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Photographer: David Cumming. Source: Eye Ubiquitous. [Alamy Stock Photo shorturl.at/ftDHPI](https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-shorturl.at/ftDHPI)

Surviving S-21

Vann Nath was one of the handful of prisoners who survived the infamous Tuol Sleng prison, also called S-21 (security prison 21). A former French high school turned into a prison for the regime. He owed his life to his talent as a painter. His name was already on an execution list signed by Kaing Guek Eav, also known as Comrade Duch, the commander of the prison. Against all odds, the commander of the prison Comrade Duch found out that Vann Nath was an artist, and he wrote an order saying, *Spare the painter*. At the time the leader of the Khmer Rouge, Comrade Number 1, Pol Pot was seeking official portraitists and Vann Nath was ordered to do various paintings and sculptures of the leader of the regime. Vann had to paint head-and-shoulders portraits of Pol Pot every day from sunrise to midnight.

He would paint the same portrait over and over again, while he constantly heard the screams of prisoners being tortured in the background. After being appointed as painter, he not only had to paint portraits of Pol Pot, who was pleased with his work, Duch also requested large portraits of Karl Marx and Mao Zedong, as well as several other propaganda pictures. *I hated him while I was painting him*, Vann later recalled speaking about Pol Pot.

One of the other survivors of Tuol Sleng, Bou Meng, who was also a painter, was also told to paint Pol Pot, Lenin and the Vietnamese communist leader, Ho Chi Minh. He would later say: *Because of my painting skills, I was treated less harshly, and I survived S21*. About 17,000 people were killed in Tuol Sleng, only seven people survived. Both Vann Nath and Bou Meng would later make uncomfortable paintings that depicted the terrible conditions and the daily torture routine in S-21, that can now be seen in the Tuol Sleng museum in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia.

Conclusion

Prisons and the arts have an uncomfortable relationship, art is about freedom and imagination, prisons are about locking people up and taking away their rights to all forms of expression. Spending time in prison can be of great influence on the lives of artists like Ai Weiwei, Oscar Wilde and Miguel de Cervantes who have demonstrated this through their incredible achievements. For some like Vann Nath and Bou Meng the arts can be quite literally the only way to stay alive in prison and all though these are extreme examples, for others using art as a means of expression can be just as vital and one powerful way, to escape their harsh realities.

References:

Foucault, M. (1975). *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison*.

ART AND CULTURE IN PRISONS

ED SANTMAN

ART AND CULTURE IN PRISONS

Ed Santman

Abstract

An incomplete history of art in prisons, how to understand the relationship between art and prisons, why art is made and what is its value. A brief description of important collections of prison art and the influence on modern artists in the early 20th century.

Keywords: history, outsider art, Cesare Lombroso, Hans Prinzhorn, degenerate art.

Introduction

Most people have never seen a prison from the inside. When they think of prisons they might think of a medieval dungeon. Four walls a small window with bars high in the wall, bored prisoners counting the days left, writing their name or obscene words on the wall. Or maybe they have associations based upon American movies, gang violence, people fighting, guards with guns yelling at inmates.

Real life in prisons can be very different. It can be boring. Inmates sometimes tell each other *If you don't want to do the time, don't do the crime*. To stimulate the inmates many modern prisons will organise activities and pursuits like sport, education and religious services. Art and prisons however seem an unlikely combination. Again, the reality is very different. There is one thing inmates have and people on the other side of the prison walls don't have... time. One could say they have time to re-invent their time. There are always people who feel the inner urgency to create and express themselves. Not everyone accepts the boredom of life behind the walls. Some inmates, those who feel this inner urgency to create and express themselves will find a way. Even without paint some people will find materials to work with. Bars of soap or bread can be used to make small sculptures, coffee and tea can be used to paint, Toilet paper can be used to write poems.

An inmate artwork.
(2020). Clear View
[Soap bar sculpture].
HM Prison Peter-
borough. Source:
Collection Koestler
Trust, UK



For some it is hard to imagine but sometimes in prisons, the most beautiful things are made. The work can be very powerful if it reflects the stressful situations of somebody in custody or someone who is separated from their loved ones and who is trying to accept and face up to the events that led to their punishment.

An inmate artwork.
(Unknown). *There
is something about
Mary* [Coffee and
tea painting]. Prison:
Unkonown. Source:
Collection Koestler
Trust, UK



All this makes the work of inmates so interesting. Dreams and fantasies, hope and expectation are sometimes depicted in a very original way. Universal themes such as loneliness, mortality, aggression, faith, and love get an extraordinary intensity that often exceeds the work of professional artists. Work from detainees may be technically less skilled, it can be fascinating and overwhelming. Some

works can be very moving. On some occasions original and unique solutions are generated and very powerful images are created because the artist does not have any theoretical knowledge.

Graffiti

If we count graffiti as prison-art, we can safely say that it has been around for thousands of years. Probably there have always been prisoners that needed to express themselves in word and image. In ancient Rome on the wall of a room near the Palatine hill an interesting piece of graffiti was found, made around the year 200. It is called the Alexamenos graffito, also known as the *graffito blasfemo*.

Although it has also been suggested that slaves were locked up in this building, most historians believe it was the building that was used as a sort of prison to lock up Christians before they were fed to the lions or other wild animals. The graffiti was found in a room that was probably used by the guards. The image depicts a crucifixion, a man on a cross with the head of a donkey. The translation of the Greek text reads: *Alexamenos worships his God*. Most Romans had a lot of disdain for Christians and the graffiti was apparently meant to mock the Christians.

The picture is also interesting for art historians, it is the earliest known pictorial representation of the Crucifixion of Jesus, a subject



The Alexamenos graffito. (3rd century). [Graffiti]. Palatine Museum in Rome, Italy. Photographer: Unknown. Source: Public Domain. shorturl.at/tfJ14

that would become a major theme in Western art. Since crucifixions were a common practice in Rome until around the year 400, the maker of the graffiti had probably witnessed people being executed this way, which makes this depiction very special. The man on the cross is naked. In ancient Rome it was normal that people who were crucified were naked, Christianity also brought us prudery, for those of us used to all the paintings of Jesus on the cross wearing a loincloth, imagining the real scene might be a shocking idea.

The Prisons of the Spanish Inquisition

Interesting and sometimes beautiful graffiti can be found in the dungeons that were once used by the Spanish inquisition in Sicily. They were discovered in the early years of the twentieth century in the Palazzo Chiaramonte in Palermo. Most of them were made between 1600 and 1780 in a complex of ten cells specially built for this purpose.



Inquisition Graffiti 2.
(Between 1600
and 1782). [Graffiti].
Palazzo Chiaramonte
Palermo, Italy. Photo-
grapher: Gandolfo
Cannatella Source:
Public Domain.
Dreamstime.com:
shorturl.at/fwMPg

Such places where students had to spend several days to a few months, were present in many German schools until the beginning of the 20th century. They were established in the 17th century as a place to punish those who had misbehaved themselves. Later the punishment became almost a rite among students and turned into a more social event once a student landed there.

Then and Now

What makes graffiti so special is that sometimes many very ancient drawings can hardly be distinguished from today's graffiti.



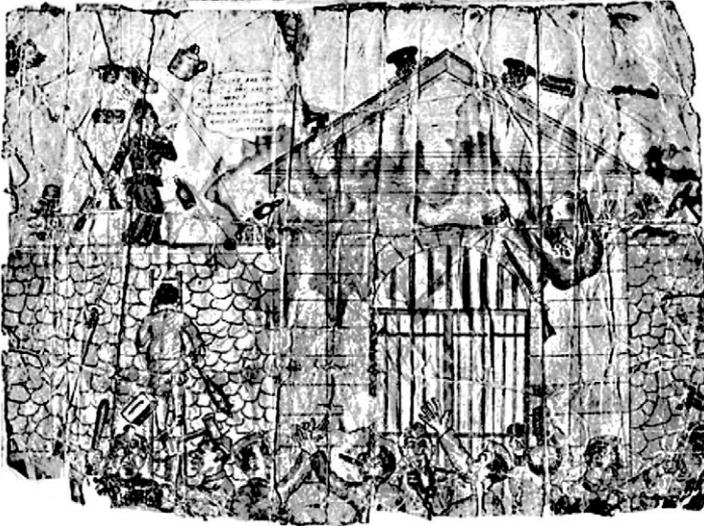
Graffitied door.
(Around 1800).
[Graffiti]. Fluiere
Lyon, France.
Photographer: Joel
Sousa. Source: Public
Domain. Dreamstime.
com shorturlat/
bAPRY

Creativity in Prisons

Often in the past, it was not allowed to be creative in prisons. However, a playful mind always finds a way, poems or even whole novels can be written on toilet paper. On walls, handkerchiefs or toilet paper drawings can be made, soap bars or bread dough can be used to make sculptures. Of course, most examples of these tiny art pieces have been lost over the years. Some examples are fortunately

still here today such as a drawing of the riot in Dartmoor prison in January 1932. Protesting at the poor conditions, the inmates started fires and rampaged through the jail with handmade spears.

The drawing on toilet paper survived because it was used as evidence in the process that followed on from the riots. The daughter of a prison officer sent the drawing to researchers after an appeal for information about the riot. It shows prisoners playing musical instruments and smoking and gave a completely different version of the events to that of the official version given by the prison authorities.



An inmate artwork. (1932). *Dartmoor Prison Riot* [Drawing on toilet paper]. Photographer: Unknown. Source: Public Domain

Recommendations of the Council of Europe

Nowadays there are recommendations from the council of Europe about cultural activities in prisons. Article 12 states *Creative and cultural activities should be given a significant role because these activities have particular potential to enable prisoners to develop and express themselves.*

Prison Art

Inmates art expressions are today often referred to as Prison Art. There are many similarities with Outsider Art. The characteristic of these forms of art are hard to describe, both refer to authentic works of art, made by people outside the art world. Artists, who do not look at other art, or are not aware of art history and did not follow any art education, have developed their creativity outside the framework and sight of the regular art circuit. The makers, often people living on the margins of society, such as psychiatric patients, drug abusers, the mentally ill or socially disabled people often have an almost obsessive interest as a theme.

Outsider Art has long been dismissed as *not real art*, but that has changed in recent decades. Art by outsiders was shown at MoMA New York, the Center Pompidou in Paris and at the Biennale in Venice. Today Outsider Art is assured of by a large group of collectors and fans, including artists, art historians and scientists. Prison Art is less known to the public, but equally deserves attention; not only for its artistic and cultural value, but also because it can contribute to a more meaningful and humane imprisonment.

Vibrant and Raw Art

In the first half of the twentieth century many artists tried to leave the conventional art behind and looked for other sources of inspiration. Many cubist painters were inspired by African art, and at the same time the interest for the creative expressions in psychiatry increased. The first artist to collect and exhibit this sort of art was Jean Dubuffet. He introduced the term Art Brut to describe this raw and vibrant art. Important artists such as Paul Klee and in later years Karel Appel and Arnulf Rainer played a big role in the appreciation of Art Brut. In the early 1970s the art critic Roger Cardinal came up with the term Outsider Art to label all non-academic artwork.

Collections and Publications

At the end of the eighteenth century, artwork made by inmates and patients of psychiatric clinics were first described and the first collections were established. One of the first comprehensive publications was written by the infamous criminologist Cesare Lombroso and was published in 1890. Lombroso was fascinated by human behavioral disorders and assumed that genius was also a form of mental illness. In his view expressions of geniuses and madmen were comparable and coming from the same source. To support his theory, he created a collection that also contained some art by inmates that can still be seen in the Museo Lombroso in Turin.



Portrait of Cesare Lombroso. (Around 1800). [Photography]. Photographer: Unknown. Source: Public domain. Wellcome Library no. 13107i. shorturl.at/bqsEG

In 1889 Lombroso published *A man of Genius* (original title: *L'uomo di genio in rapporto alla psichiatria*). In this book he argues that artistic genius is a form of madness. To support this thesis, he collected a lot of psychiatric art. Prior to the publication of his book he published an article on the subject in 1880, in which he classified thirteen typical characteristics of *madman's art*. Although this criterion is generally considered outdated, he inspired later writers in this field, in particular Hans Prinzhorn, who worked as a psychiatrist in a hospital in Heidelberg.



An inmate artwork. (Around 1880). Jar Collection Lombroso [Decorated jar]. Museo di Antropologia Criminale Cesare Lombroso, Turin, Italy. Photographer: Ed Santman.

Today Lombroso is a very controversial figure; he propagated the idea that some people were born criminals. According to Lombroso, criminals are recognisable by their physical appearance. Features, such as wide jaws, deep-set eyes, continuous eyebrows, an asymmetrical face, high cheekbones, deviated ears, a hawk nose and fleshy lips could all point to a person's criminal nature. Lombroso also stated that he could determine if someone was a criminal by measuring the shape of somebody's skull. He based his theory upon research among thousands of prisoners.

Nowadays Lombroso has a bad name in science and his ideas are outdated. However, Lombroso also deserves some credit; he was one of the first defenders of more humane treatment of prisoners. In his view crime is heritable. Because of this, criminals cannot

be blamed for their criminality, so we should help them to become better people. Lombroso can also be credited for being one of the founders of forensic psychiatry. His work formed the base of institutions where the 'criminally insane' would be treated for mental illness, rather than being placed in jails with other inmates.

The Prinzhorn Collection

The German psychiatrist and art historian Hans Prinzhorn (1886-1933) not only observed his patients, but also analysed their art production. He became known for the big collection he built up between 1919 and 1921 of artistic work from psychiatric patients. In 1922 he published the book *Bildnerie der Geisteskranken* based upon the more than 5000 paintings, drawings, and carvings that he had gathered from various institutions in and around Heidelberg. Most of the work in his collection is made by patients diagnosed with schizophrenia.



Wölfli, A. (1915).
Saint Mary Castle
Giant Grape (Unitif
Zohrn Heavy Tons).
Kunstmuseum Bern,
Switzerland.
Photographer:
Unknown. Source:
Public Domain:
shorturl.at/ghAQT

Prinzhorn also studied and collected work from inmates, he was one of the first to recognize the artistic quality of it.

The Prinzhorn collection was known among artists who were particularly fascinated by the original character of the work. All major artists of the first half of the 20th century, were looking for new sources of inspiration. They were interested in artistic expressions from other cultures, images made by children, folk artists and the mentally ill. Many artists recognised the great artistic quality of some pieces in the Prinzhorn collection and came to see it.

Prinzhorn described the similarities (and differences) between the works of psychiatric patients and those of artists such as Van

Gogh, Ensor and Nolde. He argued, among other things, that the 'primordial principles of art' can also be found in psychiatric patients. According to Prinzhorn image making is driven by our intense desire to leave traces. He identified six basic drives for the urge to make images: an expressive urge, the urge to play, an ornamental urge, an ordering tendency, a tendency to imitate, and the need for symbols.

Apart from his book *Kunst der Geisteskranken* Prinzhorn also published a book about prison art: *Bildnerie der Gefangenen* (1926). His books gave a voice to marginalized groups like those incarcerated and those in institutions for the mentally ill. The artist Max Ernst took some copies of Prinzhorn's books to France, where they were a major influence on the surrealist movement, especially on Andre Breton who can be seen as one of the founders of the surrealism.

Degenerate Art

Prinzhorn's collection was eventually misused by the Nazis who wanted to deal with the liberal climate that had characterized the Weimar republic. In 1937 a big exhibition was organized by the Nazi's: *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Arts). Modernist art was seen to be part of the overall assault on German art and culture by artists who wanted to destroy German and Western, civilization.



Entartete Kunst, poster. (1938). [Poster]. Source: Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 de. Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-H02648 / CC-BY-SA 3.0, CC BY-SA 3.0 DE. shorturl.at/jwzNY

What did not fit within the Nazi ideology was stigmatised and addressed publicly.

In the *Degenerated Art* exhibition works from the Prinzhorn collection were displayed alongside the work of the most important avant-garde artists of the time. Drawings and paintings by artists like Oskar Kokoschka, George Grosz and Paul Klee, were hung between works of the mentally ill and inmates, inviting the public to distin-

guish the 'madmen' from the artists. The ambition of the Nazi's was to show the connection between biological and artistic degeneracy and to prove how sick the minds of the modern artists were.

The exhibition, which was shown in Munich, Berlin and Hanover, attracted an unprecedented mass of visitors. With more than three million visitors, it is still seen as the best visited art exhibition ever. The ambitions of the Nazi's were not fully carried out, art of the avant-garde artist in the first decades of the 20th century is still considered to be the best modern art ever made. For some the vibrant quality of the work of an outsider artist was also an eyeopener and that exhibition has contributed to the wider appreciation of outsider art.

In 1939 the Nazi regime began to systematically murder the mentally and physically disabled throughout Germany, several people who had been patients of Hans Prinzhorn died during this operation.

Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels at the "Degenerate Art" exhibition in Munich. (1938). [Photography]. Photographer: Unknown. Source: Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 de. Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-Ho2648 / CC BY-SA 3.0 DE, CC BY-SA 3.0 DE. shorturl.at/jyHPW



Jean Lacassagne

Jean Lacassagne was born in Lyon in 1886, the son of the famous law doctor Alexandre Lacassagne, who, like Lombroso, was one of the founders of forensic psychiatry. With his father he frequently visited the hospitals and prisons of his hometown. After his father's death, Jean inherited his father's photo archive of tattooed people, and even a set of dishes decorated with tattoos. Jean later published extensively on this subject as a dermatologist.

Even more than his father, Lacassagne was inspired by compassion and advised his incarcerated patients to find a way out of their despair by drawing and writing. One of his publications was illustrated with drawings by inmates. Because of his interest in art by prisoners, a large collection of drawings and paintings made in the early 20th century by French inmates still exists today.



Jean Lacassagne. (Around 1925). [Photography]. Photographer: Unknown. Source: Archives-Départementales du Rhône, Lyon and ART WITHOUT BARS vzw, Leuven, Belgium



An inmate artwork. (1930). Caught in the act [Painting]. Jean Lacassagne collection. Scan of the original painting. Source: ART WITHOUT BARS vzw, Leuven, Belgium

Cellblock Visions

Phyllis Kornfeld worked as an art facilitator in prisons in America for more than 35 years. In her book *Cellblock Visions*, published in 1996, she presented some strong examples of outsider art, made by inmates in the last decades of the 20th century. Her work opened the eyes of many people, with these paintings of unusual subjects filled with erotic and religious symbolism and violent action. Many viewers were surprised by the unexpected qualities that can be found in a place, where you would not expect to find, powerful paintings made by people, without previous training.

Conclusion

Art does not have bars According to Hans Prinzhorn, six basic drives urge people to make images: an expressive urge, the urge to play, an ornamental urge, an ordering tendency, a tendency to imitate, and the need for symbols. This has not changed over the centuries. From early pottery or graffiti on prison walls to modern outsider art the urge to create has always been the same and will no doubt remain that way for centuries to come.

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AESTHETICS
IN PRISON:
AN EVOLUTIONARY
APPROACH

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Stefan Florek & Przemysław Piotrowski

Abstract

In many penal systems, imprisonment is treated as a form of social retaliation for committing a prohibited act. At the same time, most codifications of executive criminal law assume that imprisonment is to lead to the inmates' social rehabilitation. It is impossible to achieve this goal in a situation of severe frustration of their basic physical and mental needs. Among important, though usually overlooked needs, is the need for adequate sensory stimulation of the brain. One of the features of adequate stimulation is its aesthetic character. From the perspective of evolutionary psychology, an unsightly view is a signal of a hostile and threatening environment, which leads to a negative, alarming stimulation of the nervous system. Evolutionary psychologists have also established which stimuli positively affect the mental functioning. The use of this knowledge and other findings in the field of empirical aesthetics may be of key importance for the humanization of prisons and the reduction of problems related to the deviant behavior of inmates. Aesthetic deprivation creates frustration that can lead to aggression, the reduction of which is a fundamental challenge for penitentiary systems. The use of the scientific findings for the appropriate artistic modification of prisons can be a relatively inexpensive and effective tool for reducing aggression and other deviant behavior of inmates.

Keywords: evolutionary psychology, prison, art, aggression, social rehabilitation

Introduction

Aesthetics from the Evolutionary Perspective

Aesthetics is a discipline that until recently was considered the exclusive research domain of philosophers (Zeki, 1999). The belief

that beauty and aesthetic experience were purely subjective ones, and even supernatural, excluded empirical research. This situation changed with the development of psychology as an empirical science and a psychological study of aesthetic experience. Nowadays with the development of cognitive sciences and methods of neuro-imaging scientific studies in the field of aesthetic flourish. It is possible to determine the neural correlates of various aesthetic categories and better understand the aesthetic experience as a mental and neural processes (Brown, 2005). The new scientific discipline was developed, which was called neuroaesthetics by one of its pioneer, Zeki (1999). Cavanagh (2005) claims even that in some sense all artists are neuroscientist, because they intuitively know how activate brain to produce an aesthetic experience.

Neuroscientists and cognitive scientists often underline that the brain is a product of evolution and is composed of modules. These modules are adaptation to environment in which our ancestors lived (Pinker, 1999). Evolutionary perspective is of the key importance to understand the functional architecture of the brain/mind and to explain its preferences, including aesthetic ones. We are convinced that the evolutionary approach can integrate existing knowledge about aesthetic experience and constitute a source of potentially fruitful, not only research hypotheses, but also practical applications.

The evolutionary approach emphasizes the need to take into account the phenomenon of – so called - evolutionary lag (Buss, 2008) in the analyses of human preferences. The evolutionary lag occurs because brain evolves far more slowly than the culture, so it is unprepared for rapid changes in the environment. As a result, brain architecture and the preferences that people display today are not always adaptive; and in some situations they may even hinder functioning. For example, people are very poor adapted to long-term stay in a closed space or in an urbanized space.

Louv (2008) argues that this type of deprivation may be the cause of the so called *nature deficit disorder*, which manifest in behavioral problems and attention deficits. It has been shown many times that the level of crime in a urbanized space is negatively correlated with the presence of greenery, e.g. number of trees (Kuo, Sullivan, 2001; Troy et al., 2012; Weinstein et al., 2015; Shepley et al., 2019). This phenomenon is probably due to the fact that long-term exposure to natural stimuli contributes to the systematic reduction of stress level (Buss, 2008) and, as a result, reduces probability of aggressive behavior.

Science of Art in Prison

This perspective of an evolutionary-oriented psychology dominates this chapter on aesthetics in prison based on evolutionary and scientific approach (Piotrowski, Florek, 2015). As we wrote in 2015 *We believe that there is a need for scientific research of the aesthetic preferences of prisoners and the impact of aesthetic stimulation on*

their mental and social functioning. An introduction of systematic, evidence-based, changes in the prison environment, can help to reduce stress, negative effects of inmates' sensory deprivation and recidivism rates (Piotrowski, Florek, 2015, p. 103).

The fundamental theoretical assumption behind the idea developed in this chapter is that natural stimuli reduce stress level and as a consequence the likelihood of aggressive behavior and depressive reactions of prisoners. This idea is based on research on sensory and cognitive deprivation (Johnson, 2021) on the theory of frustration – aggression (Breuer, Elson, 2017; Piotrowski, Florek 2015) and on the reports that the aestheticization of space leads to an improvement in health (Caspari et al., 2006, 2007, 2011; Cork, 2012).

The approach seems especially promising, if we take into account the ratio of costs and benefits. It is worth noting that painting the walls of the prison in a certain way does not increase the expenses, as they are painted in some way anyway. Enriching them with the works of artists also does not have to necessarily be associated with great costs, however the profits in better mental functioning of inmates and prison staff is hard to overestimate.

Before we move on to the issue of implementation the idea of *science of art* in prisons, it is worth mentioning that nowadays art is present in prisons in various forms described in this book. Artistic interventions in prisons have been undertaken for many decades (Gussak, 2009). Artists are not only engaged in *art therapy* classes, but also undertake the task of transforming gray prison reality (Djurichkovic, 2011). The space of prisons are often decorated also by the inmates themselves, who are rarely professional artists; though it sometimes does happen. There is empirical evidence that artistic projects in prisons can help in the desistance process (McNeill et al., 2011).

Conditions of imprisonment are also analyzed from various psychological perspectives. A valuable insight was made within the theoretical framework of the so-called environmental psychology. In Great Britain, the *Matter's Wellbeing in Prison Design* project (Bernheimer, 2017) was developed. Its main goal was to create a guide - based on environmental psychology - on how to modify a prison space in accordance with the scientifically based principles concerning mainly architectural issues.

However, artistic expression in prisons goes in different directions. After all, the spectrum of possible ways of artistic expression is at least theoretically unlimited. This is an immanent feature of art as a form of human activity, in which freedom has the fundamental value. But it is also quite obvious that artistic freedom should have its limits. The most obvious are moral ones, e. g. resulting from taking into account the interest and well-being of other people (Gordon, 2020).

Therefore it's necessary to limit the scope of artistic creativity when art is used instrumentally in prisons. It would be immoral to create art that would damage mental health of prisoners or guards, or that would motivate them to commit crimes. Majority of philos-

opers agree that our duties are determined by moral values and moral concerns. Of course there is unsolved – and we won't try to resolve it – problem how strict these limits should be. However we are convinced that the most important in penitentiary context is to use art as a tool to better situation of prisoners, guards and the whole society.

This conviction accompanied two initiatives carried out in Polish prisons: Horizon of Freedom and Labyrinth of Freedom (Piotrowski, Bajek, Florek, 2013). Nevertheless, there were some problems with artistic freedom. They resulted from a fundamental difference in the aesthetic sensitivity and experiences of artists who undertook the task of modifying the space of the penitentiary facility and the inmates doing time in it.

In the prison in Radom, artists from the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow created murals in prison' walking blocks, which in terms of artistic value undoubtedly meet the the highest standards (Piotrowski, Florek, 2015). However, these were often artistic expressions related more or less to artists trauma of their first stay inside the prison, which resulted, among others, in abstract forms and dusky colors of paintings, and other more or less disturbing pictures. One could fear that these artistic realizations would not improve the psychological situation of inmates, but even they could worsen it.

Majority of prisoners can be described as rather poor educated and with below average intelligence (Poklek, 2018). Moreover intelligence quotient of inmates is negatively correlated with their violence level (Diamond et al., 2012). In terms of psychological profile they clearly differ not only from the artists and art critics but also from. Just like the majority of people they don't understand and not value modern art.

It is not uncommon that works by recognized artists exhibited in public space are removed by the services that clean the city of rubbish. Recently, for example, murals made by recognized artists in in Cardiff have been washed away by city cleaning services (BBC, 2021). Therefore it seems overly optimistic to assume that prisoners will appreciate contemporary art. Prisoners we have examined didn't like non-mimetic contemporary art (Piotrowski, Bajek, Florek, 2013; Piotrowski, Florek, 2015); maybe because they simply don't understand it.

Generating art that worsens the condition of prisoners would be not only unethical, but also irrational, given the goals of the imprisonment in almost all countries of the world. Therefore, it was important to perform a detailed and multidimensional analysis of this problem in order to create appropriate guidelines for artists. Evolutionary psychology can help to do it.

Modifications of the Prison Space in the Evolutionary Context

We conducted research on the aesthetic preferences of inmates and the results confirmed the evolutionary based hypothesis

that prisoners prefer murals that represent a natural space. It was also found that they do not like representations that deviate from mimetic art, in particular abstract paintings (Piotrowski, Bajek, Florek, 2013; Piotrowski, Florek, 2015). The two other studies on prisoners' aesthetic preferences, supervised by us, have also shown that they definitely prefer natural landscapes. All these findings are consistent with those of evolutionary psychologists. According to them (Orians, Heerwagen, 1992; Pinker, 1999; Orians, 2001; Thornhill, 2003), the human brain evolved modules specialized in the selection of an adaptive environment, in which organisms can survive and reproduce, on the basis of aesthetic experience. Therefore aesthetic preferences can increase organisms inclusive fitness (Hamilton, 1964).

Findings of empirical psychology show that positive mood is associated with exposure to the colors associated with sky, water and vegetation: blue, green, yellow, orange, red (Palmer, Schloss, 2015). But it is necessary to remember that red is also the color often associated with danger, as it is the color of blood. The culturally common association of dark colors with danger is probably due to the fact that in the history of our species, staying away from the source of light at night was dangerous. But in some environments, e.g. in high mountains, white color could be linked with danger. There are also studies on color preferences for certain personality types. It seems that this factor should be taken into account when designing artistic activity in a prison. There are research results suggesting (Choungorian, 1967) that people prefer cool colors (green – blue) to warm ones (yellow – red), but introverts prefer cooler colors than extraverts, who more than introverts prefer stimulating, warmer colors. It can be assumed that this difference is rooted in the specificity of brain functioning. The increased need for stimulation in extroverts is caused by low stimulation of their reticular brain-system (Nęcka et al., 2006).

The adaptive habitat has strictly defined properties: there must be signals of adequate irrigation in the form of visible sources of water or vegetation. The presence of water and plants is also sign of the presence of animals, which are an important source of food. Landscape features that facilitate observation of the terrain and at the same time provide the opportunity to run away or hide from predators or enemies are also important. These are the basic theses of the prospect-refuge theory proposed by Appleton (1975, 1996). For this reason, the desirable elements of the landscape are hills and trees from which one can observe the area at a great distance and find shelter in danger. There are also reasons to believe that our ancestors preferred habitats with plenty of trees (Dominquez-Rodrigo, 2014).

Orians (1980) and Heerwagen (Orians, Heerwagen, 1992) believe that all these properties are possessed by the savannah landscape, the environment in which *Homo sapiens* evolved. Research results show that children already have the preference for this type of landscape (Pinker, 1999; Buss, 2008). The results of the research show also that the exposure to natural stimuli not

only leads to a reduction of stress, but also increases resilience to stress. Stress reduction is usually desirable in most life situations. In a prison, which is an environment particularly saturated with various forms of stress-related aggression (Florek, Siemiginowska, 2020), stress reduction is of utmost importance.

Research results show the importance of contact with nature and physical activity for human wellbeing. Shanahan et al. (2016) claim that regular physical activity may reduce the level of depressive tendencies by 7% in the population and the occurrence of diseases associated with hypertension by -9%. According to Townsend et al. (2016) the number of trees in the neighborhood correlates negatively with the level of stress and positively with the declared level of health. Bratman et al. (2015) showed on the basis of an experiment they conducted that nature experience allows to reduce the depressive tendencies and activity of subgenual prefrontal cortex (sgPFC) - an area associated with an increased risk of mental illness. Vincent et al. study (2010) proved that even just looking at images of nature improves patients' health. Especially the last of the above-mentioned results seems to confirm the legitimacy of applying evolutionary aesthetics in prisons.

It is important in this context to allow the inmates to have direct visual contact with the outside world. Unfortunately, in some prisons, plastic screens or covers are installed in the windows, which largely limit the visibility from the cell and cause frustration of the inmates. In this perspective, it is worth recalling the statement of one of the inmates we studied. He was a man serving a sentence of imprisonment in a closed-type facility in which there were plastic covers on the windows. He complained about the mental tension associated with being in a room from which you cannot see the outside world. He admitted that he was very happy that there was a scratch on the plastic cover so he could see a chimney of the nearby building. He said that when aggression occurs in the cell, he looks at the chimney, and the possibility to look at it makes him feel better, calmer.

The described case confirms the assumptions of evolutionary psychology that brain needs sensory stimulation and that positive aesthetic experience is associated with the possibility of perceiving distant elements.

At this point, however, one cannot fail to mention that short-term sensory deprivation in so called flotation-tanks can have positive health consequences (Kiellgren, Westman, 2014). It should also be remembered that an overstimulating environment can be harmful to some inmates, such as those suffering from ADHD. This problem may also occur in prisoners with a dissocial personality disorder (ICD-11) or antisocial personality disorder (DSM-V) who suffer from impulsivity and attention deficits. Due to the individual differences of inmates in terms of their problems and psychological profiles, when planning the aestheticization of the prison space, it is necessary to consult a prison psychologist who knows prisoners and should be well-oriented in factors that can be detrimental to them.

There is also other empirical data suggesting that sensory deprivation can lead do mental problems, including serious ones (Smith, 1962); especially in so-called *supermax* prisons (Johnson, 2021). In some countries sensory deprivation has been used as a torture to punish prisoners or to extract their confessions (UIA, 2019). We believe that stress can be reduced not only through exposition to landscapes in the proper spatial perspective, but also through appropriate photo wallpapers, screens with changing landscapes/environment or even 3D-glasses with virtual reality full of natural stimuli. It should not be forgotten that photography and film are also visual arts. The optimal solution seems to be to allow prisoners to undertake physical activity in their natural surroundings, which would allow them to relieve tension related to stress. Perhaps, then, aesthetic transformations should begin with the gym. If possible, aestheticization the prison space by artists should be preceded by the presentation to a group of inmates few samples of artistic projects. We suggest that prisoners should identify the design that is most attractive to them. For this purpose, appropriate research should be carried out by psychologist on a representative sample of the prisoner population. They can be questionnaires and if possible also biopsychological studies, e.g. with use of an electroencephalography, a galvanometer or polygraph, in order to objectively determine the stress reduction potential of a given project. The procedure of this kind would make it possible to reconcile artistic freedom, as the artist would present a few preliminary proposals, with the actual aesthetic needs of the inmates and their cognitive abilities in the field of art reception.

Although it seems that almost everybody likes natural landscapes, still individual differences in aesthetic preferences are quite evident. Not only traits of personality but also history of ones life shape them. People prefer stimuli with which they have dealt frequently (Berlyne, 1970). The strength of the stimulus preference is proportional to the number of its exposures. For this reason inmates brought up in the city may therefore, in addition to the preferences of natural stimuli, show a preference for urban stimuli. Also for this reason, prisoners who stay in prison for a short time may feel more frustrated due to the fact that the prison environment differs from the one they were used to.

It is very important to understand our aesthetic preferences also in the context of the phenomenon of the evolutionary lag, already described above. One of its consequences is that the brain treats human-generated artifacts and cultural phenomena as natural objects. Very generally, it can be said that positive aesthetic experience is evoked by stimuli that are easy to be perceptually categorized. Pinker (1999), Ramachandran and Hirstein (1999), and Zeki (1999) argue that this is why the use of these stimuli can work.

These stimuli are prototypical ones, because they are the best specimen of a given perceptual or conceptual category. Simply speaking, a prototypical apple is the apple that is the most similar to all other apples (Thagard, 2005; Ramachandran, Hirstein, 1999).

Objects with this property seem ideal. At this point, it is impossible to ignore the famous research conducted by Galton (Buss, 2008), who wanted to determine what the face of a typical criminal looks like. Galton, who was influenced by the famous idea of *natural born murderer* proposed by C. Lombroso (Lombroso-Ferrero, 1911), prepared an image which was the result of superimposing a large number of photographs of prisoners. The effect was amazing. Instead of the expected scary face of the murderer, the face of an evidently handsome, attractive man appeared. It happened because in the process of generating the artificial image, important features of the face were averaged and, as a result, a prototype face was created. In conclusion, the brain of everyone, especially the brain of an unrefined recipient, likes prototypical stimuli that are easy to categorize. We believe that artists creating art in prisons should remember this.

The human mind also has a preference for objects that are easy to categorize as they have emphasized isolated or *exaggerated* characteristics of a given category. Zeki (1999) says that the artist's indication of what is essential for a given type is, in a way, a capture of the nature or essence of the object being depicted. The great art consists of precisely in capturing what is in fact unchanging and essential, which is, in a way, hidden beneath the surface of accidental elements. We believe that in the case of prisoners who already have some kind of aesthetic education, this kind of stimuli can also be used.

Ramachandran and Hirstein (1999) draw attention to the fact that the exaggeration in crucial characteristics, if it is not very strong, does not lead to a feeling of artificiality of the image, but to the belief that it is a better or even more faithful reflection of reality. As an example, Ramachandran gives Indian art of the Hala Bronze period. Sculptures from this period depicting Indian goddesses are characterized by the fact that features considered typically feminine are exaggerated, e.g. wide hips, large breasts or a low WHR (waist-hip ratio). For example, WHRs of Hala Bronze goddesses are definitely lower than the average in the female population. Determining from a distance whether the strangers who approach a village are a group of men or a group of women may have been critical to survival in a hunter-gatherer world. The ability to quickly and effortlessly recognize objects in the world was of key importance to our ancestors, what makes such sculptures attractive for human brains.

Hirstein and Ramachandran (1999) also point out other important features of objects towards which the brain reacts with aesthetic preferences and explains these regularities in an evolutionary context. Their list includes the following properties of a work of visual art: grouping, peak shift, contrast, isolation, perceptual problem solving, abhorrence of coincidences, orderliness, symmetry and visual metaphor.

The fundamental idea behind the Ramachandran and Hirstein (1999) concepts is that if a work of art poses a specific perceptual problem and at the same time presents the brain with an attrac-

tive solution, then a positive affective experience occurs. From the neurobiological point of view, not only the appropriate cortical centers are involved in this process; especially the occipital and frontal lobes, but also the evolutionarily old limbic system responsible for emotional experience. This makes possible to test the reaction on art using a subjective methods as questionnaires and even methods of neuroimaging. Before the realization of the art project it would be optimal to present many designs to the inmates and study their subjective reactions – and if possible – their brain reactions in order to choose the best one.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that there is possibility of developing the moral sensitivity of inmates through art, which is sometimes described as empathizing art (Mariewicz, Przybysz, 2012). This kind of art is basically focused on emotions and presentation of affective experience in such a way that it can induce similar states in the recipient. Developing the emotional sensitivity of inmates can be particularly useful in the context of their social rehabilitation. Emotional deficits are common in the prison population, especially those with sociopathic features. Repeated exposure to empathizing art may bring positive results in their case, although gaining confidence in this issue requires appropriate research.

Conclusions

The Applied Evolutionary Aesthetics in Prisons

The idea of *science of art* (Piotrowski, Florek, 2015) and the aestheticization of prisons in the spirit of evolutionary psychology entails a number of practical implications, which are presented in this chapter. We assume that this is not a complete list and will allow for its supplementation by further results of theoretical reflection and research. The research conducted in Poland so far are consistent with the expectations of evolutionary-oriented theories and indicate that inmates prefer stimuli representing nature, and in particular natural landscape.

The least attractive to inmates are stimuli that are difficult to categorize, e.g. images of an abstract nature, images associated with negative affective states or containing stimuli that resemble a prison space. Moving on to the guidelines for art activities in prisons, we will first focus on what artists should avoid. Because in prisons they should obey the ancient rule of medical ethics: *primum non nocere*. We will move on to guidance on what qualities a work of art should have in order to increase the likelihood that it will positively influence inmates and, above all, reduce stress or otherwise positively affect their well-being. Finally, we will briefly consider the theoretical possibility of developing the moral sensitivity of prisoners through works of art that can inspire empathy. These are, of course, guidelines rather than rules aimed not as much at restricting artistic freedom, which, unfortunately, cannot be completely avoided in prison, but rather at giving it a specific, psychologically desirable direction.

Firstly, do not introduce any representations of aggression, weapons, or images associated with aggression or weapons. Such stimuli, as repeatedly demonstrated in empirical studies (Krahe, 2001), activate cognitive patterns responsible for aggressive behavior and significantly increase the probability of their occurrence. Stimuli that could arouse negative emotions (especially anger) in prisoners should also be avoided; e.g. representations of morally evil deeds or works which prisoners are unable to categorize or understand.

Moving on to the tips of a positive nature. It is usually difficult for prisoners to appreciate art that is not mimetic, so this kind of art seems especially useful. It is especially useful to place on the premises of the penitentiary depictions of natural landscapes, or even to transform the prison space so that it resembles a natural space. A good solution would also be to use virtual reality generating devices (VR glasses) to present artistic recordings of nature or artistic compositions that would use a three-dimensional spatial perspective. The use of this technique could also enable individual selection of the type of aesthetic stimulation, not only natural one by also artificial, by each inmate, according to their individual preferences.

This solution may be particularly useful for inmates where the deprivation associated not only with free space movement, but also the perception of space is particularly difficult to bear. In the case of an art depicting it, nature is, of course, the object that is particularly desirable for prisoners. However, it is worth considering creating art focused on emotions. However, we believe that in every case - and especially in the case of empathizing art - it is worth conducting a survey of the opinions of future recipients in advance, e.g. using an anonymous questionnaire, or even using neuromonitoring tools (described above) to find out to what extent they induce the appropriate emotions.

Finally, it is worth briefly discussing the issue of motivating inmates to undertake artistic activity. Evolutionary psychologist Miller (2001) believes that a work of art is a display of its creator's biological fitness. It shows that he has the resources to devote himself to artistic activity and that his brain is enough cognitively efficient to produce valuable artefacts. According to Miller, ability to create art is a very good indicator of the absence of harmful mutations in one's genome, what makes artist attractive to others, especially to potential mates. In this context, it is worth remembering that prisoners should not only be passive recipients of art, but that they should be also engaged in artistic activities, and good incentive can be - in the light of Miller's theory - to open to them the possibility to be admired by people from the outside of the prison. This can be realized by organizing exhibitions of inmates' works, publishing them on the Internet, or selling them in auction houses.

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PRISON SPACE,
TIME AND ART:
PSYCHOLOGICAL
AND CORRECTIONAL
CONTEXTS

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Przemysław Piotrowski & Stefan Florek

Abstract

Prison isolation is one of the toughest situations in a psychological sense. Compulsory stay in a total institution results in the occurrence of chronic stress. The level of internal discomfort depends, among other things, on the environment where the sentence is served, which is usually poor in stimuli, and thus contributes to the occurrence of sensory deprivation. Another important factor influencing the well-being of prisoners is the duration of sentence. Time has an objective dimension - the length of the sentence, but it also has subjective meaning for inmates. The results of numerous studies indicate the importance of the dominant temporal perspective (past, present, or future) for every aspect of human life.

Prison punishment is a necessary response of society to the violation of legal norms by the convict. It is important, however, that even the harshest punishment should be served in humanitarian conditions. For that to happen, the art can be used.

The aims of the chapter are as follows: 1) to characterize the psychological importance of time and place while serving a prison sentence, and 2) to analyze artistic projects scientifically designed to modify the conditions of serving a sentence so that it is both more effective in the context of social rehabilitation and more humanitarian.

Keywords: prison, space, time, art, social rehabilitation.

Introduction

Time and space are the basic dimensions of human life. In the prison reality they acquire a special meaning, because imprisonment is an exceptional and extreme situation.

Penitentiary institutions have a total character (Goffman, 1961). This means, among other things, that prisoners cannot make independent choices to the same extent as others, that they have to be constantly in the presence of other (often unknown) people and that they have to fulfil objectives imposed by the staff. All forms of activity are controlled by superiors, who can also apply sanctions for violations of statutory norms. In the prison there is no separation of work, sleep and rest places, and the activity of the inmates is subordinated to a schedule planned from above.

As for the psychological situation of the incarcerated, it can be described most briefly as the effect of being in a stressful environment. Prisoners experience stress in both acute and chronic forms. The former is more likely to occur during the initial phase of incarceration and mainly affects first-time offenders, where incarceration may cause culture shock (Silverman, Vega, 1990).

Chronic stress is associated with the inability to fully meet needs in the environment in which inmates are housed daily. The most burdensome physical stressors include noise, crowding, and monotony resulting from a fixed daily schedule and lack of new stimuli. In addition, stress is magnified by a lack of privacy, constant tension in relationships between staff and inmates, the pressure of conflicting expectations from fellow inmates and correctional officers, a sense of threat of victimization, and situations in which inmates witness violence (Massoglia, Pridemore, 2015; Skowronski, Talik, 2018). Disturbed relationships of inmates with loved ones who have remained outside the prison and uncertainty about their situation are also factors that generate psychological tension (Wakefield, Wildeman, 2013). In addition, the formation of an informal community structure, the prison subculture, is typical in correctional institutions, which creates social status markers different from those outside, such as physical strength, aggressiveness, and criminal experience (Przybylinski, 2006).

Time

Research on the temporal aspect of imprisonment has been conducted extensively by criminologists for many years. As Sparks et al. wrote (1996, p. 350), *time is the basic structuring dimension of prison life*. Research projects address various aspects of time in the context of incarceration. Among them, one can find those that are an analysis of changes in the correctional system over time (Jacobs and Helms, 1996), studies on the inconvenience of prison time (Jewkes, 2005), analyses of the ways in which inmates adapt to the rhythm of time passing in prison (Thompson, Loper, 2005; Warren et al, 2004), works

that emphasize the uniqueness of the time of imprisonment against the background of a person's life span (Petit & Western, 2004), and articles that deal with the specificity of inmates' time perspectives (Gulla et al., 2015).

Time spent in prison is one of the basic dimensions of imprisonment. Nowadays, especially in individualistic societies, we are accustomed to being able to manage and control time. This belief is brutally verified in prison conditions. Time becomes an aspect of enslavement instead of an obvious privilege of freedom. It is planned from the top down and forced to be spent in isolation. Although some inmates try to make the most of their time of incarceration, for many others it is a period devoid of any purpose or meaning – a lost time (Mydłowska, Pierzchała, 2020). The degree of subjectively perceived inconvenience of incarceration time is determined by factors such as the length of the sentence and the severity of the prison regime, as well as how inmates individually experience psychological time.

One of the most significant features that make up the characteristics of prison time is the length of the sentence. The length of a sentence is at the same time a definition of the stretch of time that a prisoner is expected to spend in conditions that are significantly different from the previous ones. The length of the sentence (as opposed to the circumstances of the crime committed) is one of the topics that people serving time in prison bring up in conversations with newcomers. This theme is reflected in slang sayings that downplay the importance of short-term sentences (*one year is not a sentence*). As the sentence is served, the possibility of applying for conditional early release becomes more and more important. In Poland, prisoners can apply for it after serving half of the sentence in the case of first-time offenders, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the sentence in the case of repeat offenders, and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the sentence in the case of multi-repeat offenders. Exceptions are people who can apply for parole after serving $\frac{1}{3}$ of their sentence. These include: convicted for an unintentional crime, juveniles, persons who have custody of a child under 15 years of age, women who are 60 years of age at the time of the decision on conditional early release or men who are 65 years of age (Art. 91 § 2 Polish Penal Code). An inmate must have been in prison for at least 6 months to be eligible for conditional release. Persons sentenced to 25 years imprisonment may apply for conditional release after 15 years of serving the sentence and those sentenced to life imprisonment after 25 years (Art. 91-92a PPC).

In addition to applying for a parole, important *markers* of prison time are situations in which contact with loved ones occurs. Phone calls and visits are anticipated and tend to carry a great deal of emotional weight. Meetings and other forms of contact represent the few situations in which some inmates can satisfy their needs for closeness, recognition, and respect, and increase their sense of control over their lives.

Depending on the type of prison and the disciplinary regime prevailing in the prison, prisoners can vary their time of incarceration.

In a closed prison, they are entitled to only one hour of walking a day; the rest of the day they spend in their cells. These inmates most often complain about the boredom and monotony of serving a prison sentence. The prison time, on the other hand, is more varied and full of stimuli when the inmates serve their sentences in semi-open or open prisons. They are also much more likely to work or fill their time with study.

The events that modify the experience of time are also the periods of holidays (Christmas, Easter). It is an element of Polish tradition to spend them with one's closest relatives, hence the inability to be with loved ones makes the prison isolation at that time exceptionally troublesome. Another event that determines the experience of prison time is the transfer to another prison. Such a fact means the necessity of adaptation to new conditions, getting to know new people and situations. The prisoner may be transferred to another prison if it is located closer to his place of residence. Moreover, the change of prison may be a consequence of the so-called *principle of free progression*. According to this rule, depending on the attitude and behavior of the prisoner and the degree to which he meets the objectives of the punishment, the isolation regime can be softened or tightened (Szczygiel, 2002). The harshest regime prevails in closed type of institutions, milder in semi-open and open type of institutions, respectively.

The period that is exceptional for the inmates, is also approaching the end of their sentence. The intensity of the emotions and their tone depends on several factors during the readaptation period, including the family and housing situation of the prisoner, the degree of *immersion* in the criminogenic environment, the possibility of getting a job or the degree of clarification of plans for the future.

As noted above, both the majority of prisoners and prison rehabilitation specialists unfortunately perceive prison time as lost.

Space

The treatment of offenders has changed throughout history as civilization has changed. Wener (2012) distinguishes four stages of prison development.

In the first, prehistoric, which lasted until the 18th century, imprisonment was usually of short duration and aimed at isolating a suspected criminal until trial or punishment. Prisoners were generally held in dungeons, and conditions provided only the minimum necessary for survival. During imprisonment, torture was often used as an acceptable way to induce confessions. It is difficult to speak of a deeper sense of punishment at this stage; detention preceded the imposition of punishment.

The period from the late 18th to the mid-20th century can be called the stage of early prison reforms. The goal pursued by reformers such as John Howard and Jeremy Bentham was to move away from the practice of harsh and inhumane treatment of criminals to-

ward imprisonment, which was to be guided by the goal of spiritual (moral) transformation of prisoners and, consequently, improvement in their behavior at liberty. Howard (1777) focused mainly on changing the rules of imprisonment. He called for, among other things, the religious education of prisoners and their performance of socially useful work. It was not until Jeremy Bentham (1791), however, that he systematically addressed the need to change the conditions of imprisonment. According to his design, the dark, damp dungeons were to be replaced by a light-filled prison built on a circular plan. A guard tower of several levels was to be placed inside the building, while individual cells were to be located around the perimeter. The cells were to be separated by a thick wall and well lit. The prisoners were to be constantly watched by guards, who themselves were to remain invisible. In the second half of the twentieth century, Michel Foucault pointed out that the Panopticon was a kind of metaphor for the power to acquire information and control every aspect of a citizen's life through the use of state-of-the-art technology (Foucault, 1975).

According to Wener (2012), the third stage of prison development is the time of modern traditional institutions, which were typical for the 20th century. However, the improvement in the conditions of imprisonment was not accompanied by significant changes in the perception of inmates and the goals of correctional institutions.

The fourth period, which began at the end of the 20th century and continues today, is the phase of modern reform of prison design and management style, based on new ideas about the goals of rehabilitation and views that take into account the psychological situation of inmates and the importance of shaping the prison environment.

Prison architecture is clearly subordinated to the purposes that penitentiary institutions are supposed to fulfill - mainly ensuring the isolation of the inmates and the requirements of security. The shape of prisons and the plan on which they were built also reflect a broader stage in the development of penitentiary ideas.

According to Johnston (2000), there are several typical ways of arranging the prison space. In the long history of the penitentiary system, prisons were usually rectangular, circular, octagonal, or radial.

The classic example of a prison located in a building designed on a rectangular plan was the former Newgate Prison in London. Prisons of this type were usually fortified structures with thick walls or other features that prevented prisoners from escaping. They helped to isolate prisoners from the outside world and provided security for guards, but much less attention was paid to the security of the prisoners themselves, especially in cells with multiple occupants. Monitoring the behavior of individual prisoners was also difficult in these cells.

Interest in building prisons on a circle plan dates, as mentioned above, from the time of the Panopticon, Bentham's famous project. An important advantage of this type of building was, above all, the unlimited possibility of visual access and, consequently, the control of the inmates by the guards. In reality, few prisons were built to Ben-

tham's design. In addition to the virtually unlimited ability to monitor inmate behavior, structures using a circular or polygonal plan also had certain limitations. Like rectangular buildings, they were difficult to use rehabilitation based on inmate classification; in addition, providing safe access for inmates to fresh air was a problem (Wener, 2012).

The 19th century saw the growing popularity of prisons built on a radial plan (Jonhston, 2000). Such buildings consisted of a central area and longitudinal, intersecting 'arms', which housed the individual wards. The security of such structures relied on solid, isolating elements (thick walls, bars, solid fences) and the ability of centrally located guards to monitor the behavior of prisoners in each ward. It was also relatively easy to isolate the individual living quarters from the rest of the building (for example, in order to impose order during a mutiny). The limitation of this type of solution was that the guards could not effectively control the cells more distant from the center, so they had to patrol the ward from time to time. Routine, fixed-hour cell rounds (*linear intermittent surveillance*; see Nelson, 1988) are a predictable procedure; inmates can therefore relatively easily avoid detection of prohibited activity. While spaces outside of cells are controlled by staff, activity in housing cells during periods outside of rounds remains under the actual control of inmates, encouraging the formation and growth of subcultural groups (gangs) and covert, undesirable behavior. Buildings of this type also lacked space dedicated to various types of constructive inmate activity.

As an example of a modification of the idea of linear intermittent surveillance, two further developments in prison architecture and management are referred to as *podular remote surveillance* and *podular direct supervision* (Nelson, 1983, p. 108).

The first of these consists of separate accommodation modules, centred around an observation and control center for the prison guards. The guards are separated from the prisoners and their role is to observe and react to cases of negative behavior rather than to take preventive action. The space for free activity of the detainees is small. The cells are equipped with furnishings that are difficult to damage (e.g. aluminium toilets fixed to the wall, concrete sleeping niches) and the guards have a system of remote electronic locking and opening of doors. The quality of life for inmates is enhanced by having windows in the cells and the presence of doors rather than bars, which increases the level of satisfaction of the need for privacy (Wener, 2012).

So-called new generation jails is a term referring to *new or re-modeled jails that are designed around a podular architectural design in conjunction with a direct supervision inmate management orientation* (Nelson, 1983, p. 108). This type of architectural design is also referred to as the third generation of jail design (Wener, 2012, p. 37). The main modification in relation to the previous generation concerns the fact that the guards are not separated from the prisoners but move in a common area. It is assumed that the division of the prisoners into

small (at most several dozen) groups and the constant presence of guards will, on the one hand, increase the possibility of controlling the behavior of the prisoners and, on the other hand, reduce tensions between fellow-prisoners and between staff and prisoners. The quality of prisoners' life will also be improved by providing space for different activities of the prisoners (e.g., game tables for several persons, places where one can watch TV). The modification of the prison environment is intended to achieve the goal of correctional rehabilitation, which is to make inmates understand that *[...] critical needs are best achieved through compliant behavior and his negative deeds will consistently result in frustration* (Nelson, 1983, p. 109).

The Potential of Artistic Projects Carried Out in Prison

It seems that due to the temporal and spatial specificity of imprisonment described above, art projects in prisons have a great potential to activate the inmates and can contribute in various ways to increase the effectiveness of resocialization and social reintegration. In fact, art is one of the means by which prisoners can improve their quality of life; it can also be a *vehicle* for symbolically transcending physical barriers and personal limitations.

According to one of the most prominent scholars of the psychotherapeutic effects of art, David Gussak (2009), participation in art projects allows inmates to express experiences that are difficult to communicate in any other way - it supports opening up to other people in a safe, controlled way that is both acceptable in the prison community and consistent with the standards of the world beyond the walls. The practice of art often allows an inmate to bypass habitual personality defense mechanisms, including self-deception, because it does not require verbalization of problems and emotional states. Art projects also enrich the prison environment: they increase the variety of stimuli in a monotonous environment. Finally, and quite obviously, they allow to reveal the potential of prisoners' creativity and support their creative activity (Gussak, 2009). As Maxell (2017) points out based on the analysis of the statements of inmates in California Men's Colony, practicing art increases their ability to cope with stress and provides an opportunity to give gifts to people close to them. Besides, acquiring some practical skills makes inmates perceive positive changes in themselves, and they are more confident that they can make a positive presence in the community at large based on them.

Art therapy offers an opportunity to change the sense of localization of control from external to internal. The so called external locus of control (Rotter, 1966) is based on the belief that what happens to us in life is independent of us, as opposed to the internal location of control, which is based on the belief that the fate of a person depends directly on her/his actions. Prisoners usually have a developed external locus of control (Poklek, 2018), what increases likelihood that they commit crime again, and stay in a prison where they

have a very limited ability to influence their own fate only strengthens it. Participation in art therapy is an excellent opportunity to change the locus of control from external to internal, because the activity undertaken by the prisoner during art therapy almost always leads to positive experiences, which strengthens the belief that through one's own action one can achieve the desired goals.

The list of benefits of participating in art projects in the prison environment mentioned above includes rather general statements like *opening up* or *self-expression*. However, the fact that these effects do occur has been proven by many empirical studies. Only a few of them are highlighted below. Their results indicate that art projects in prison lead to:

- improving control of negative emotions (Breiner et al., 2011) and alleviating symptoms of depression (Gussak, 2007)
- lower levels of aggressive behavior and recidivism (Smeijsters and Cleven, 2006)
- improve inmate relationships with prison staff and other inmates (Gussak, 2004)
- gain more insight and express thoughts and feelings that are difficult to verbalise or threaten (Johnson, 2007)
- change towards an internal locus of control (Gussak, 2009a),
- building an identity based on positive role models and raising self-esteem (Heenan, 2006)
- improve relationships with loved ones, and
- increase the chance of early parole (Belton, Barclay, 2008).

Art in Prison - Selected Polish Examples

The use of artistic activities in prison can relate, sometimes in a non-obvious way, both to the prisoners' experience of time and space. Below we will briefly describe three art projects that are exceptional from the point of view of penitentiary rehabilitation in Poland.

Prison time is largely about dreams of lost freedom. The meaning and experiencing of freedom by prisoners were dedicated to the art projects *Labyrinth of Freedom* and *Horizon of Freedom*, which were conceived by Zbigniew Bajek, a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow (see: Piotrowski, Bajek, Florek, 2013; Piotrowski, 2015).

Labyrinth of Freedom was a project realized in 2012 in the Penitentiary in Nowy Wiśnicz (Małopolska). During it, an attempt was made to establish a dialogue with inmates, which, as it was assumed, would raise the level of their quality of life in prison and be a factor stimulating positive changes after serving a prison sentence. On the artistic side, the project was devoted to reflections on the subject of freedom, its conditions and limitations.

The project participants represented two - at first glance distant from each other - environments. The first group were representatives of the academic community: 28 lecturers, PhD students and

students of the Academy of Fine Arts plus 2 psychologists and a sociologist from the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. The second group of people who took part in the artistic activities were inmates serving sentences in Nowy Wiśnicz Prison (closed type unit, intended for penitentiary recidivists).

At the beginning of January 2012 the artists forming Professor Bajek's group met at the castle in Wiśnicz with the representatives of the town's authorities and the management of the penal institution. The authorities of the unit undertook to disseminate the idea of the project among the inmates and invite those willing among them to a meeting with the artists. Then, on 18 April 2012, a meeting was organized, which was attended by a group of a dozen or so prisoners (mainly those who were involved in some kind of art themselves). After a multimedia presentation about the idea of the project and various aspects of art through the ages, a discussion with the inmates took place. They were invited to participate in thematic workshops: literary, artistic, film and painting workshops. Those willing could also co-create a patchwork fabric, whose theme was the labyrinth of freedom. The visit culminated with a concert by the Heavy Blues Band, which played for the inmates on one of the prison's walkways.

After the April meeting, each inmate received a card with the word *Freedom* written on it. Those who wished could use it until June 10 to create a personal statement about their understanding and experience of freedom. In total, between April and June 2012, some kind of statement (paintings, works made with the collage technique, drawings) was obtained from about 20% of the inmates. If we take into account the specificity of the group and the degree of distrust of the inmates towards *outsiders*, it should be considered a significant number, and at the same time an indirect testimony to the establishment of a specific dialogue between artists and people whose time passes within the space limited by the walls. The *Labyrinth of Freedom* project was crowned at the castle in Nowy Wiśnicz. On 16th June 2012 the exhibition was opened, featuring works by the participants - both staff and students of the Academy of Fine Arts, as well as the inmates. The artistic statements of the prisoners (over 100 works in total) were used to create an artistic installation - the labyrinth of freedom.

The project *Horizon of Freedom*, was realized in the Radom Detention Center in 2013 and 2014. A team of artists (from the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow and the Czech Republic), led by Professor Zbigniew Bajek, created an enclave of colors and artistic representations of freedom in a huge complex of overwhelming prison buildings. The invited artists painted the walls of the walking areas. The walls of one of the walkways were designated to be painted by prisoners.

At that time, the Radom Detention Center housed over 1,000 male convicts and temporary detainees. According to Polish legal regulations, they should be provided with an hour of walk a day. In the Radom remand prison, the issue of the location of the walking

areas was solved in a specific way. From the residential wards one goes to them underground. The walkways themselves are a complex of over 20 concrete *cages*, secured from above with a metal net. It is these spaces that have become a place for artistic expression on the subject of freedom. It should be noted, however, that the project designed by Professor Bajek did not have - at least among its primary objectives - rehabilitation intentions. The aim was to carry out creative actions, and at the same time to improve the quality of life of the inmates. The film, which is a brief account of the project, can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/89461564>.

The idea of the third project called *Tattoos of Freedom* was created at the Warsaw Pedagogium Academy of Social Sciences. The project is one of the examples of putting into practice the concept of creative social rehabilitation, created by a former professor of this school, Marek Konopczyński. In his social rehabilitation practice, he often encountered people with typical prison tattoos, which, especially when visible, can significantly impede the social reintegration of former prisoners. They are a specific *offender stigma* and often make it impossible to find a job. It was therefore decided that ex-prisoners who so desire can, in a professional tattoo studio, *cover up* their prison tattoos with other tattoos that have aesthetic qualities and at the same time are neutral in terms of social reaction. The project was met with great interest and proved to be a great success (see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onvyHpVw7jY>).

Conclusion

The projects briefly described above relate to both space and time spent in prison. Space can be understood not only as prison walls and locked cells: the body covered with tattoos, or the *prison* created by addictions can also be a trap. Time is also a quality that is not obvious in the context of a stay in prison. Prisoners have to cope with the stress of isolation in the present, in real circumstances. It is mainly up to them whether they use this time to their advantage. At the same time, their thoughts and experiences inevitably deal with both the past events that caused the punishment and the uncertain future that awaits them behind prison walls. Art is a specific language of symbols that can help describe difficult experiences, facilitate coping with stress, improve relationships with other people, and give hope and motivation to live a constructive life upon release from prison. Participating in art programs can also strengthen the belief of inmate that she/he has control over her/his life, which is an important factor in reducing the likelihood of recidivism.

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PARTICIPATORY
AND COMMUNITY ART,
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Virág Kiss, Júlia Egervári & Csaba Orosz

Abstract

In this chapter, we discuss the phenomena of participatory communal and inclusive art, and acts related to this such as place-based projects, performativity, and socially engaged art, primarily with a visual focus, but also mentioning other artistic modalities. In addition, we discuss the concept of creativity and the methods by which it can be released and directed in a constructive direction.

Keywords: participation, community art, participatory projects, performativity, creativity

Introduction

In the 20th-21st century, certain trends emerged in contemporary art that focused on social impact and participation, pursuing direct and active contact with people. This endeavor is well expressed in the expression of *social sculpture* by Joseph Beuys, which aims to shape society, or in the *Theater of the Oppressed* developed by Augusto Boal.

Social Projects in Art

In her study *The social turn. Collaboration and Dissatisfaction* (2006) Claire Bishop, a British critic and art historian systematizes the following examples of dialogue-based art practice:

- socially-engaged art
- community-based art
- experimental communities
- dialogic art
- littoral art
- participatory
- interventionist
- research-based
- collaborative art.

She explains that these practices are more dominant in the creative results of collaborative activity, and states that we shouldn't use the term *artwork* in the classical sense, as these are rather social events and workshops, where the intersubjective space created by projects becomes the medium of research. Bishop identifies three sources of motivation for aspects of this artistic dialogue: the pursue of the individual to take an active role in shaping social and political space, the need to introduce a collective authorial model, and the strengthening of social which appears in the creation of new communities in response to fragmented social relations. Furthermore, she suggests an approach to artistic action (participation) that doesn't avoid conflict, breaks with the previous romantic agreement-culture, and considers the practice of these rearranging established systems and situations to be possible to follow. In doing so, she encourages the 'indifferent outsider' to engage with the resulting conflicts through creative engagement.

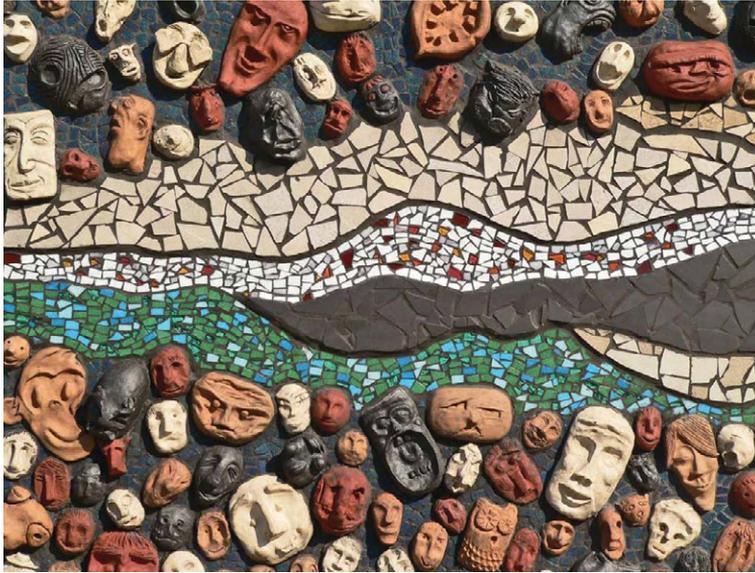
Community Art, i.e. the Art of the True Communication

Community art (Kiss, Longden, 2019) has been a widespread creative method since the '60s. The point is that it usually creates an art product under the supervision of a professional artist by actively involving members of a given community in its creation and / or design, i.e., it is participatory in nature. Usually, its purpose is to develop a given community or to reflect on a social issue. It involves members of a given community to the extent of their abilities and willingness to participate, i.e. the extent, nature and level of participation may differ in various cases (Bálint, 2017). The phenomenon of community art can be extended beyond visual arts to other forms, including music, dance, and drama (Novák, 2017).

Among the many community art projects of the ceramicists Kinga Ráthonyi and Neil Wolstenholme, is also the Illyés Gate, the entrance to a high school, from 2011, where many clay masks made individually by the members of the Illyés Gyula High School community (students, teachers) are combined into a common system by the ceramic artist due to its concept and construction.

Ráthonyi, K. and Wolstenholme, N. (2011) Illyés-gate - The ceramic community art wall at the entrance of the Illyés Gyula High School [Ceramics mural]. Budaörs, Hungary. Photographer: Kinga Ráthonyi. Source: <https://kozter18.hu/hu/kozossegi-muveszet/az-illyes-kapuja-2011/>





Ráthonyi, K. and Wolstenholme, N. (2011). Illyés-gate - The ceramic art community wall at the entrance of the Illyés Gyula High School [Ceramics mural - detail]. Budaörs, Hungary. Photographer: Kinga Ráthonyi. Source: <https://kozter18.hu/hu/kozsosegi-muveszet/az-illyes-kapuja-2011/>

Similar community works can be found in the Dutch JJI Lelystad and the Catalan jail for minors in Can Llupià, led by Marcellí Antúnez Roca.

A typical community art phenomenon and a special type of street art is undoubtedly yarn bombing. In 2012, for example, in response to a law aimed at criminalizing homelessness, a public bench with the inscription *Home* was set up in Budapest, which disappeared from the bench the next day. The creators call themselves the *Trade Union of Needleworkers* and they are an anonymous women's team similar to the *Guerrilla Girls* artist team, but not made up of artists but rather civil rights activists.



Trade Union of Needleworkers (2012). Home bench [Yarn bombing. Community artwork]. Köztársaság square, Budapest, Hungary. Photographer: Kati Holland. Source: Author

Participatory and Inclusive Art Activities: Art for All

The keyword often used in connection with community art is *participation*. The aim of inclusive artistic practices and processes is to create opportunities for creative participation for people of all ages and abilities. This is often achieved through the use of personalized methods and approaches and those particularly centred at a person. Inclusive approaches create opportunities for real, active participation for people of all ages and abilities in active creative activities where they can participate as equal partners (Kiss, Longden, 2019).

How can the creativity inherent in everyone be awakened and achieved in order to make the individual an active and equal participant in the artistic activity?

Place-based Pedagogy, Place-based Projects, Nature Art

In the United States, especially in rural areas, in the 1980s, the so-called place-based new pedagogy and movement that focused attention on the role of the given (residential) place and community, arose from organizations dealing with environmental education. This is a teaching-learning strategy that can be adapted to any medium, environment and community, with the aim of providing an authentic learning environment and situations, examining and processing problems and issues in a real context. This context is provided by the local environment and social environment. It inspires participants to take a fresh look at their environment, not just through a filter of mass media, consumption, TV shows, and to look for other points of contact and personal reports in the built environment, all presented in some creative activity. In this case, the search for meaning and identity, the connection with the place occurs through the artistic activity, which is given a kind of indirect educational role (Mészáros, Egervári, 2021).

Depending on the place, we can imagine different ways to connect with nature. Natural materials can get into the walls of the prison, and shaping the environment can be a common, activating activity. Where it is possible, visually interesting shaping of the garden or only small interventions can have a transformative effect through breaking out of the routine and direct perception. Following the principles of place-specific and community-specific projects in prisons, observing, transforming and integrating the environment and the situation in other ways also offers many opportunities to experience and learn through action or even to therapeutic effects. This approach necessarily characterizes most of the art projects in prison, as the specialty of place and situation, that it *forces itself* is hard to be ignored. For instance, critics were shocked with the ease with which prisoners in (Italian) prison theaters could play the works of the hard-to-reach absurd playwright Samuel Beckett. Although the the main theme of waiting *Waiting for Godot* is an everyday, self-evident con-

dition in prisons, some believe that the characters of Beckett's works may be created mostly in prisons (Szokács, 2013).

Performativity

The concept of performativity can be briefly described as the attribution of meaning by action, yet not all actions work as performative acts, since the classical act of imitation does not have a reality-creating force (Beöthy, 2012). In addition to the independent performative branches and modalities (drama, dance, music...), it has also appeared in the visual arts, such as action, happening and performance, and can also be applied to art-based interventions.

An important feature of performativity is that the activity does not stay away, normally it involves the whole human body. It also contains a special state of consciousness. Performative art practice is based on the *dialogue* of the active participation of the artist and the viewer, and only in this way does it become experiential. Performative involvement in action complying by reinterpretation or critique of authorial authority can take place in two ways, on the one hand where the framework and outcome of the collaboration are predetermined, the audience is actually the raw material for the creation



Visky, Á. (2020). Tales from the Prison Cell (camera: Nagy Zágón, Kürti István) [Photography], Proton Cinema. Source: <http://protoncinema.hu/hu/filmek/mesek-a-zarkabol>

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of the work, the total control is in the hands of the artist. The other direction is defined through artistic actions where the artist sees cooperation as the essence of the artistic process. In this case, the participants involved are co-creators, and the artist leaves the outcome of the project open, leaving room for accidental occurrences.

About Creativity

There is a very extensive literature on the research of creativity in both psychology and art. In the field of psychology, its main sources come from the psychodynamic, cognitive and humanistic trends. We will not cover all known trends and lines of concepts, but only highlight a few here. There is a broader and a narrower range of meanings associated with the concept of creativity, the separation of which may be important to our topic. On the one hand, it means a general creativity, on the other hand, it more narrowly refers to innovative, inventive and unique solutions when using this concept. Accordingly, the release of creativity can be understood in two ways:

- we can consider the initiation of a more general creativity and willingness, i.e. the active participants to entering and committing to the offered artistic activity. In many cases, this is hindered by the fact that they feel awkward, or the other common issue is that they feel childish, ridiculous in this situation. Therefore, the matter, in this case, is the participation itself
- we can consider the methods that result in truly personal, unique or innovative solutions for people who have already become involved.

Joy P. Guilford and Ellis P. Torrance, precursors of cognitive psychology, gathered ten creative skills that they perceived as the main structure of creativity: sensitivity, fluency (ease), originality, flexibility (pliability of thought and action), synthesis, elaboration (system design and elaboration), analysis (not accepting syntheses created by others, re-analyzing structures to create new syntheses), redefinition, complexity, evaluation (easily determining the value of new ideas) (Fodor, 2007).

Guilford also links creativity with divergent thinking, which is a problem-solving strategy and an *irregular*, unconventional, original way of thinking. In the case of divergent (incoherent) thinking, there is no single *correct* answer, it approaches with new ideas, it is multidirectional and divisive, and it examines, considers and evaluates many possibilities. Its pair, the convergent (coherent) way of thinking, is characterized by a cohesive narrowing way of thinking, a series of logical conclusions (Fodor, 2007). Divergent, i.e. creative thinking is characterized by irregularities, deviations from the norm, and is related to deviant behaviors, in this term. Creative thought often transgresses rules, it is not always constructive, and obtains the potential for destruction. In the context of prison, this is best demonstrated by

the ingenious ideas of prisoners attempting to smuggle disallowed objects into prison. In addition, humor is one of the manifestations of creativity, as is the *prison kitchen* known for its resourcefulness and several other elements of a particular prison culture.

Artist Joyce Laing, who worked for decades in Glasgow's Barlinnie Prison, describes this experience in following sentences (1984, p. 144): ... *While labelled as deviants, many offenders are inventive, ingenious, quick-witted and have great vitality. It may be that the creative aspects of the criminal have, for reasons of background experience or psychological make-up, been misdirected towards destructive ends. If the art therapist can channel these talents in a positive, creative direction, the offender will experience a new perception of the self and where he belongs in society. Over the weeks in which the art work is being produced, step by step, an alteration in his previous thinking pattern will take place. The more he becomes engrossed in art, the less likely will he be content to see himself just as a criminal [...].*

On the other hand, destructive energy can be accessed and transformed in the *as if space* of art and is (to some extent) permissible, but the facilitator can play an important role in ensuring that this process takes place safely, within limits of control, so as not to put anyone in dangerous situation.

The concept of creativity is linked to deviance and psychopathology by many researches and psychological theories, and the literature of it is extensive.

Recently, *two C* and *four C* models for defining creativity have emerged. The outstanding creativity (*Big C*) is typical of exceptional individuals and is often associated with psychopathological features, as opposed to the common creativity (*Little C*), which is more related to a healthy psyche. In addition, the phenomenon of *Mini C* in learning processes and *Pro-C* resulting from the development of common creativity to a professional level are also known (Kőváry, 2012).

Psychiatrist István Hárđi, the precursor of expression pathology, distinguishes creativity from productivity (the text refers to psychiatric patients): *With dynamic drawing, valuable data to determine work capacity, productivity and creativity is acquired – certainly, always based on a comparison with the clinical picture. The series also point to a return to work ability, as the drawings reflect a picture of completeness, a healthy, original personality. It is also possible that the person's recovery can become more productive than before as a result of their recovery (for example, if they were previously struggling with their conflicts and complaints for years). We talk about creativity when an individual brings more, new, original in the series of drawings – most often in connection with their recovery* (Hárđi, 2004, p. 433). This quote is also an example of the fact that, in the case of reintegration efforts, artistic activity can be an important aid, from which diagnostic information can be derived and can also imply initial steps.

The two aspects are connected by Irving Taylor, who argues that the overlapping levels of creativity are classified into the following categories (Fodor, 2007):

Expressive creativity: the creator expresses their knowledge, opinion and spectrum of feelings in various forms of activity almost spontaneously: in words, in writing, in images, in sounds. The creator does this playfully, without constraints, at the level of expressive gestures. This is generally typical of childhood, but can also be found in some aspirations of modern and contemporary art, and we can aim at this manifestation when we want to involve everyone in the activity. Drawing an expressive line, painting spontaneous spots of color, free improvisational movement or sound effects without any aesthetic expectations... these are the basic activities of art therapy, music therapy, movement and dance therapy, but other art-based methods start from this level if the participant can be anyone, i.e. the person who is not proficient in art and the activity is not for artistic purposes.

Productive creativity: at this level, the need and ability to apply the knowledge acquired by learning is required to create a product of a creative nature. This can be, for example, learning a craft technique or creating based on templates, singing a particular song together, dancing a particular choreography. This can also be a good introductory step for everyone.

Inventive creativity: this level is characterized by fiction and discovery. Its most important element is flexibility, i.e. seeing new and unusual connections even between previously unrelated parts.

Innovative creativity: the creative person brings something new to the existing product, which improves it, or solves tasks and problems perhaps in a completely different or a new way, and this is better, more reasonable than was the old solution. This level is not open to everyone, talent (along with knowledge) is already needed here.

Emergentive creativity: the highest level of creation. A fundamentally new principle or assumption is created. Only very few people can operate at this level, they are well-known inventors, epoch-making artists, scientists, and so on.

The last two levels can not be reached by everyone, but on the first three levels we can work well with art-based methods. Almost everyone is capable of productivity, expressive gestures, free association, but only few people can reach a higher level of creativity that brings novelty.

The example described below is the story of an art brut artist Gábor Ritter, how (and how slowly) the creative process started with him, in what steps and how much time it took him. He attended the *Lipót* (the largest psychiatric center in Hungary until 2009) for years the sessions of the art therapist Katalin Erzsébet Komáromi, who reflects on the phases in which Gábor's creativity unfolded:

...Gábor was very suspicious, passive, withdrawn and slow at first. He refused to draw, he only perforated waste leather all day, ripped strips of leather, and made small leather goods and paper boxes. At our art therapy sessions, he initially made templates from thicker sheets of cardboard, cut them out, and apparently collected them without any preconceived notions or designs. He later drew them around, always sliding on the paper to create different rhythms, then he colored them. With the help a square, a circle, a triangle, or a hexagon, and with their overlapping contours he composed an interesting ornamental surface.

He later achieved the same effect with a ruler and then slowly shaped the surface with his free hand. Then he painted pictures with the same effect with his free hand, and then crammed the page full of increasingly vibrant, playful shapes. Drawing for him became more and more courageous and enjoyable, and his love for it also increased. He had drawn these playful ornaments for a long time, with great diligence, but his enthusiasm was not yet real.

The real breakthrough was his first precise depiction. He then consciously searched for the topic. He once found in my closet a textbook on the protection of monuments, in which there were post-card-size black and white photographs (in very poor quality) of ruined fortifications, castles, and mansions in a very neglected state after the Second World War. For some reason, Gábor was fascinated by the photographs, he looked at the almost unrecognizable ruins for a while,, and then began to draw houses using the atmospheric elements of his initial template drawings and the structural elements he understood from the photographs. Inspired by the ten-and-fifteen-inch black-and-white images, he created abundantly colorful forty-centimeters large creations. (...) He draws the composition first. He thickens each line two or three times, yet you don't feel any chunks on them. Then he colors. Easy, playful, with visible pleasure (Komáromi, 2014).

It can be seen how the initial mechanical, very simple productive level of action started the process, during which gradually a higher and higher level of creative functioning was unfolded.

For the practice of creativity, it is important to mention the stages of the creative process in addition to the individual character of the person and the levels of creation (Wallace, 1926; cited by Fodor, 2007).

In the preparatory phase, the creator incorporates all the information pertaining to the issue. This is the time when the problem needs to be addressed profoundly. When dealing with an issue intensively, thoughts still revolve around the problem, even if the problem-solving person consciously turns to another activity.

In the incubation phase the creative person does not directly address the issue to be resolved, and neither do they focus entirely on the present. Guilford believes that this is when they remove the associations from their consciousness that they could make and that bind their mind, so that they can find unusual solutions.

In the *aha* experience, the solution suddenly emerges. It is interesting that this process requires a relative state of rest, since the

tense attention and the conscious observation of thoughts do not lead to a goal. Such a sudden appearance of a solution is often comparable to the intrusion of a foreign *unexpected* guest.

At the stage of verification and control, the originality and the *competence* of the idea are examined.

To this question belongs the concept of insight (realization of something), which is well described by modern psychology. The term insight as a psychology of thought also refers to an unexpected situation for a problem-solving individual when seemingly incompatible elements suddenly come together and turn toward each other, thus the hitherto chaotic state now appears as a resolved shape. The function of solving a problem is thus to build out a mental shape or system from the chaos generated by the problem. The theory of insight may also encourage the creator not to insist on a consistently one-sided approach to objects and ideas, but to attempt to approach them in an increasingly newer context. As this is only possible by taking different aspects into account, it should be approached with the most pluralistic-thinking possible structure.

We often mention the *flow* experience in connection with artistic activities as well, which is the concept and theory of Mihály Csikszentmihályi (Csikszentmihályi, 2008). Its essence is to describe and grasp a special state of consciousness, the *flow*, during which we are completely immersed in what we are doing, we are able to pay full attention to one thing, and we focus only on that activity amidst a kind of timeless hovering and pleasure. The flow experience can be experienced not only through artistic activities: it does not depend on the content, but on the quality of the activity. Immersion in artistic activities can definitely evoke the *flow* experience. The flow theory is based on extensive research, which is also related to the creativity research already mentioned. Related to this topic, the basic question of Mihály Csikszentmihályi is what makes a person happy, and – regarding creativity – what makes someone creative, what are the conditions and components of creativity in the case of outstandingly creative people?

Carl Rogers (cited in Fodor, 2007; Fazekasné, 2019), the creator of person-centered psychology, also dealt with creativity. Rogers mentions two external factors that develop creativity: psychological security (being in a non-judgmental, accepting, empathetic environment) and psychological freedom (the freedom of initiating spontaneously and deciding independently).

According to him, there are three internal conditions for the success of the creative process. On the one hand - openness to experience, that is, allowing reality to reach us without distortion, without the prejudices that have developed within us. On the other hand, the inner center of values that helps us to mobilize our ability to create out of inner conviction; and finally - playfulness.

Playfulness is seen by Rogers as an internal condition and other authors link it to creativity (Fodor, 2007). In the psychoanalytic literature, D.W. Winnicott (1971/1999) pays special attention to play and

considers it to be the basic state of creativity. The motive of playfulness also appears in the works of Mihály Bálint (1991/2012). According to them, in some cases, one may not be able to play, which may be due to a deeper psychological reason (in which case it should be treated at a therapeutic level), but may simply be unsupported by their environment, for example, when playing is seen as childish behavior by a dominant group culture. So not everyone will be able to do it, because for some people it is *too risky* or they might be hindered in it some other way.

Film director Ábel Visky shot a documentary (2020) entitled *Tales from the Cell*, where fathers who serve their sentences write tales, and fairy tale films are made based on them - starring the inmates themselves and their children at home. Thanks to today's cinematic technology, in fairy tales, father and child can meet in a magical, freely adaptable world, thus crossing the boundaries of tangible reality. Ábel Visky told in an interview about the antecedents and the game along with it: *In this fairy tale, fathers not only wrote stories, but they could also tell and act them to their children and family members at Christmas. I contacted the project manager and I finally managed to arrange going to a play. It was then that I was confronted with how powerful the game could be, to give prisoners a chance to hide in the*



Visky, Á. (2020). *Tales from the Prison Cell* (camera: Nagy Zágon, Kürti István) [Photography], Proton Cinema. Source: <http://protoncinema.hu/hu/filmek/mesek-a-zarkabol>

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skin of fairy-tale characters. While, of course, there was a very strong tension all along, as the base radiation of the prisoners was in stark contrast with the playful, light-hearted baseline that was created on stage. But I saw that it was very liberating for both fathers and their children that fathers were able to show a dimension here that they might never have had before.

Ways to Unleash Creativity

Providing the atmosphere needed for creativity can be important in artistic facilitation. There are two approaches, also known in public thinking. The combination of the two functions is also conceivable by combination of the external-internal pressure and a safe atmosphere by the facilitator of artistic activity. External pressure can be a time factor, quantitative or other constraints. In terms of time, both very much and very little time has an interesting effect. Very little time supports a quick, improvisational spontaneous response. A lot of time means that you have to do something with it (to *kill time*), in this way, in a prison environment, meticulous creations made of matches and copies of works of art that take a lot of patience and time are created. According to a former inmate (personal communication), these activities can be a temporary internal *refuge* with concentration and focus on the subject. Creative thoughts can also emerge during the flow of images in a meditative state of consciousness during in-depth meticulous activities (personal experience).

By many significant professionals, creativity can be developed while creating the right environment. This means, on the one hand, a special pedagogical attitude and, on the other hand, knowledge of the concept of creativity, the nature of the creative process and the characteristics of the creative person, as well as a specific environment, atmosphere, and appropriate teaching and training methods (Fodor, 2007). Developing creativity requires action-orientation, activity-based organization, and game-based or play-based methods. Based on the list of László Fodor (2007), artistic activities are well connected to research-based methods, projects, brainstorming, free association procedures, cooperative forms of work, problematization and performative procedures.

The German Joseph Beuys and the Hungarian Miklós Erdély carried out significant experimental work in the field of creativity development practices. Beuys, with the concept of anthropological art, and Miklós Erdély's integration of individual creative power into the community, questioned the elitist basic concept of art. Beuys's well-known statement *every person is an artist* does not refer to the potential for becoming an artist (a professional one) in the traditional sense, but to the influx of the artistic principle of creation (creative practice) into all walks of life (Orosz, 2009).

Everyone carries along the ability to shape something: images, sculptures, their profession, their life, and finally (perhaps most importantly) even the social context itself (Beuys, cited by Orosz, 2009,

Taking into account the aforementioned levels of creativity can be particularly important for inclusive, participatory activities where people need to be enabled to participate.

Art for All: Empowerment and Enablement in an Artistic Context

In a study, Kinga Lakatos (2009) analyzes the process of enabling and uses the double concept of empowerment-enablement in the field of social work. According to her, *enablement* refers to the phase of enabling someone when changes occur on an individual level, that is, *I can do it because I am able to do it*. *Empowerment* is the phase of empowering when ... *you have to recognize your own position of power and dare to use the tools of that power for the benefit of the community, that is, I can do it because I have a right to it*.

This approach provides a useful thought framework for participatory arts activities (Boehm, Boehm, 2012).

1. Entry points: this corresponds to the *empowerment* aspect. Where facilitation and community create opportunities for entry, which consists of three parts:

- where is the available *open space*, what are the possible roles
- what is the empowering instruction
- when is the specific moment or situation dedicated to it.

2. Becoming capable: this corresponds to the *enablement* aspect. How does facilitation create the opportunity (the entry point) for the widest possible range of participants to enter the role through their own activities on their personal individual level, on the participant side?

- with easy-to-understand communication and easy-to-follow instructions
- accessibility, adaptation
- repetitions, practice, situation experience, learning with particular aims (Kiss, 2021).

Our Own Practical Experience

Csaba Orosz: In the most of our joint actions with ViNYLs, the preparation process played an important role. The mentor of the projects usually outlined the components of the expected and ideal operation of the event as a kind of motivating act, planting somehow a seed of an idea in the participants. The group members involved in this primary dialogue then unpacked the parts they got like brainstorming, providing them with new details, but in some situations they also came up with completely new brainstorming elements at this stage. In each case, the solutions that emerged were discussed together and incorporated into their detailed project plans. There

were always a lot of ideas among the group members for planning contact or dialogue with the people on the street, and in most cases the passers-by themselves shaped the actions with their social sensitivity or insensitivity.

In general, the intuitive moments resulting from unusual situations stimulated the group members, and most of the insights gained from the experience were later incorporated into their other work.

While at the beginning of the projects we used the act of preparation, at the end of the actions we used the act of deregulation or chill out process. In this, we worked by releasing experiences, traumas, successful and unsuccessful *moments together, and we let go of the excitement of the work.*

A Project on *Holding Our Tongue*, ViNYL Group, 2015.

The Vinyl Group's performative action has raised questions about our everyday silences that is not saying things that make us upset. So why aren't we able to stand up for ourselves in private, in public, or just at all ?! Why do we keep our tongue when we experience something wrong? They gave words to the passers-by as gifts, while repeating their presence *silently* and ironically: *Holding my tongue, my head won't hurt.* The project took place at the Miskolc Gallery event on the Night of the Museums in June 2015.



Orosz, C. (2015).
*Holding my tongue,
 my head won't hurt*
 [T-shirt design].
 The Vinyl-project.
 Photographer:
 Csaba Orosz
 Source: [http://
 vinylprojekt.blogspot.
 com/2016/01/ne-
 szolj-szam-nem-faj-
 fejem-projekt.html](http://vinylprojekt.blogspot.com/2016/01/neszolj-szam-nem-faj-fejem-projekt.html)

Virág Kiss: In my practice, I have mostly worked with people, children and adults who were not open to the arts, did not think of themselves as creative, skillful or skilled in the art. They often bring bad experiences from their prior art experiences, school drawing lessons.

The first steps in working with such participants are very crucial, we have to involve them in the activities. I am therefore working on the first steps, where the technique and the material itself provide an aesthetic look and contain a very simple, easy-to-solve and yet simple creative moment that also includes several choices. In the case of a group, they can often be integrated into a common system (eg they are placed in a common *aquarium* when making fish), which is spectacular and experiential, and the individual elements look good in a common whole and also represent some quality of their own as they are put into context - that is, we create a kind of community artwork together.

Another way I evoke creativity, is to create with new materials that are unusual for them (e.g. sand) or in a position (e.g. with eyes closed). In this case, no one is an *expert*, they can start with a clean slate of experience and thus skill, experimentation and discovery create a new situation. I often instruct these experiential activities throughout in the form of a *guided experience*, but I only give recommendations and leave the participant free to do anything other than what I say. Some of my instructions are about safety, some about experimentation: The goal is to invent ourselves in an unknown new situation and take advantage of the possibilities of the situation by relying on our senses. I also tend to create spontaneous and less controlled situations of a quick immediate, improvisational, and free association or brainstorming nature.

I also work with ephemeral methods and techniques, i.e. when it doesn't stay, it goes away, the work disappears after a while. Such a technique is also the blackboard chalk, the application of which I also encountered in the JJI Jelystad Juvenile Prison, the transience of the image may have a special extra meaning in the context of the prison.

Júlia Egervári: The way to evoke creativity may be different depending on age group, medium and environment. ... It can be electrifying to step out of the 2D-plane into 3D-space, to replace the usual A / 4 sheet size by sheets of different sizes, shapes and colors, or even completely different natural and artificial materials. Individual work can be replaced by paired or group activities, and even a certain topic can be processed on a project-by-project basis, placed in a relevant and authentic context. There are several possible solutions, and the goal is not necessarily to create a *beautiful* work, but to start a process that is open-ended as an open question that we can then answer together, there is no definite unified answer. (...)

One way to get involved is to bring about a personal experience, such as when there is a dialogue between the teacher and the student, the facilitator and the participant: when I ask which country

produces the most waste in the world or I ask how you see your own place, what is the street, village or town where you live, do you have a favorite place or neighborhood, or do you have one? What would you like to change? In a supportive environment, where the teacher is more present as a facilitator, continuous research and experimentation, more possible solutions encourage participants, so they are less afraid of making mistakes. (...)

In a supportive environment, where the teacher is more present as a facilitator, continuous research and experimentation, more possible solutions encourage participants, so they are less afraid of making mistakes. (...)

The multi-day workshops, artists' colonies and camps are especially suitable for unfolding the creative processes. I believe that place and medium play a particularly important role in these situations. In this case, the temporary company, the novel environment to be explored, the break from the routine and the comfort zone can all start a process of creativity - but of course this is not necessarily always the case and the opposite of this also can happen. (...)

In nature art projects, the possibilities provided by nature, the minimal use of tools, the sensory experience, the work with the material, the detachment from the schemas also move those who may feel unsuccessful in the field of visual creation. (...) The other medium offers a new way of expression, there is room for experimentation. In one of the camps we had accommodation on the edge of the forest, after two days of adaptation and various tasks and games that mapped and visually processed the place, very instinctive and experimental works were created. In some of them, natural elements, such as fire, water or a lifeless stag beetle occurred. Participants were happy to work specifically in places they had already become acquainted with and filled with content from previous days and tasks. Pair, individual and group work was also allowed, as a kind of group dynamics developed during the two days, and this also had a positive effect on the creative processes. In the case of this type of work, is it a challenge how to *tune in* or introduce the participants to the tasks: whether to show them similar motivating images before the project, or rather avoid having any examples in front of them that can bind creative ideas?

Documenting land art or natural art works is a particular task in which everyone can find his/her role. Different angles, changing focus and lighting effects - each of them can make the process more exciting during photography. If a video is also made in a way that can attract the interest of even more participants - because not only the work itself can be creative, but also the way of making the recordings, *using* the location where the work is carried out, how the two things support each other. In certain cases, one's own body can be also incorporated into the natural art work, composition, the modified space, giving new meaning and direct experience to the participants and spectators as well. Thus, the connection with nature and elements can be even more intense, so that the new situation and

context can also result surprising, new ideas. Therefore, the creative work is no longer just a photo or video or an ephemeral short-term imprint, but also an action, an act or even a performance.

Like nature art, the creative transformation of everyday objects in the environment is also present in prison: the constructions made of matches, soap sculptures, sculptures made of soft bread reflect a similar way of thinking in essence.

Conclusion

In summary, facilitator methods and the created atmosphere play a major role in both the general creativity in a broad sense and the inventive creativity, which means that the artistic facilitation itself is also a sort of creative activity. With a toolkit of participatory and community art, artistic creativity can be used to build community and become a society-shaping force. *Creativity isn't just about thinking. The impact of developing visual, acoustic, and motor creativity can be transferred to the development of personality and thinking. We may suppose that our approach to problems will become divergent, more flexible and more original* (Fazekasné, 2019, p. 129).



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Detail

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IMPACT OF ART IN PRISON SPACE: NEW INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

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IMPACT OF ART IN PRISON SPACE: NEW INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Melinda Šefčić, Anita Jandrić Nišević & Vida Meić

Abstract

Art is an unlimited action and has countless positive possibilities to effectively change the living environment as we know it. Through its activation and commitment, it can contribute to the transformation of all our lives, including the lives of inmates, as well as to the change of the working environment of the employees of the prison system. The implementation of art programmes within the prison system is a reflection of the aspiration of the outside world to contribute and enrich such a peculiar, in some ways neglected, and perhaps even forgotten inner world, such as a prison. If we look at the art form of murals, we will notice that on numerous prison walls around the world one can find and see artworks made by inmates who, in a creative and completely innovative way enriched and marked the *living space* while serving their sentence. The same applies today! Namely, there is an increasing number of projects in the world that actively involve inmates, as well as artists, through the form of socially engaged activities, which intend to activate and artistically revitalize the working/living space within the prison systems around the world.

Keywords: murals, wall art, art in prison, aestheticization, artistic revitalization

Introduction

It is well known that art has a transformative power, its action is unlimited, and it is applicable in every social sector. Art projects in prison systems around the world support crime-free life, open windows to a new world, provide new hope for a better tomorrow. Art is our future, it turns walls into windows, breaks down the boundaries of our understanding of the world and reality. Art reveals stories

and desires we were not aware we had (Šefčić, 2018). Art is a limitless action and has countless positive possibilities to be effective in changing the living environment of all of us. Through its activation and commitment, it can contribute to the transformation of all our lives, including the lives of inmates, as well as change the working environment of the employees of the prison system (Šefčić, 2018).

It is important to mention here socially engaged art that uses artworks as a tool to reach a larger number of people from different social backgrounds, as well as social institutions. This form of artistic activity aims to improve the quality of life, as well as to promote human rights and equal opportunities in society. Talking about socially engaged art, we are talking about the artist's attempt to change the view of the world and raise public awareness about the topics that most people do not pay enough attention to, nor sees as important. Engaged art provides an opportunity for the artists to share their work with a larger number of people beyond the cultural and institutional context and teaches them how to modify and adapt their work to different strata of society and social environments (Šefčić, 2018).

Socially engaged practice, also referred to as social practice or socially engaged art, can include any form of art which involves people and communities in debate, collaboration or social interaction. This practice questions social situations and relationships within which they are created, contrary to the idea of the autonomy of art, more precisely its self-sufficiency within certain aesthetic formats, engaged art is based on the view that art is intertwined with other forms of human activity and inseparable from the social order of the community. Seeing this order as a consequence of a certain ideological construction based on inequalities in society (Kulunčić et. al., 2015). *Socially engaged artists question the established relationships and situations, warn of their true nature within the established power system and point to the need for rearrangement. [...] Art is not truly engaged if it only shows or illustrates problems in the society, but when it encourages change by being fully and completely engaged* (Anonymous 1, 2014; Šefčić, 2018). The implementation of art programmes in the prison system is a reflection of the aspirations of the outside world to contribute to and enrich such a peculiar, in some ways neglected, and perhaps even forgotten inner world like a prison. Art is an extremely rich field that is inextricably linked to the life experience of all of us. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the presentation of art programmes dealing with the aestheticization and artistic revitalization of the prison space. Such initiatives not only lead to the activation of inmates but also have a positive impact on the employees of the prison system.

Aestheticization and Humanization of Prison Space Through Art

When talking about the impact of art on prison space, we refer to its aesthetic impact. The idea of aesthetics is used to describe the

quality of prison space, which could positively affect the health and well-being of inmates in prison or penitentiary. We need to keep in mind that most of the world sees prison in the traditional way, and it is this perception that ignores the aesthetic dimension and focuses on punishment instead of the functionality of the prison as a whole.

The natural connection between art and life is an integral part of every society, including the life of every individual. When it comes to aestheticization, there is a need to rearrange the world as we know it, guided by the example of the beautiful and artistic. Aestheticization is, simply put, beautification of nature (Šefčić, 2018). By re-aestheticization, we refer to the re-aestheticization of nature, and in the context of this book, we refer to the aestheticization of prison space, which leads to artistic revitalization.

The aesthetic dimension of space generally affects both the physical and mental aspects of person. We should point out that both aesthetic and non-aesthetic environments equally affect the conscious and unconscious dimensions of perception, understanding and experience of space in each individual (Caspari et al., 2006; Šefčić, 2018).

The aesthetic dimension of space is of great importance not only for the perception of space but also for the health of the individual, and it prevents destructive stressors that can negatively affect the immune system and lead to further collapse of the already disturbed psychophysical state (Caspari et al., 2006; Šefčić, 2018).

The aesthetic dimension of space itself includes and covers a wide range of concepts, including, but not limited to, colour, inadequate art, insufficient natural light, artificial lighting, empty and boring surroundings, limited opportunities and limited personal space (Caspari et al., 2006; Šefčić, 2018). These factors lead to additional stress, increased risk of aggressive outbursts and dissatisfaction, all of which can create resistance in inmates.

Having all the above in mind, we can say that the aesthetic dimension of space is an important factor in the life of the individual in general, it is important for everyone (Caspari et al., 2006; Šefčić, 2018). Furthermore, the aesthetic dimension of space: its beauty, harmony and balance, but also the lack of these features are essential characteristics that are cognitively assimilated.

Another important concept of this chapter is the concept of humanization. In the full sense of the word, humanization means *creating a person, giving human qualities, giving and showing goodwill, compassion, generosity* (Chernicharo et al., 2014; Šefčić, 2018). Humanization in interpersonal relationships is considered an innate trait of the human being, it is an instinctive feeling that all people possess to a greater or lesser extent (Šefčić, 2018). Humanization is at the core of ethics and morals that lead to acts of love, kindness, solidarity, compassion, etc.

In the postmodern era, the notion of humanization focuses on the recovery and revitalization of human values that have been forgotten and neglected due to increasing globalization and social re-

organization, as a result of multinational capitalism and economic globalization. In the middle of the 20th century, the issue of human rights, bioethics, environmental protection and sociality, and the reconstruction of reality through (re)humanization began to be discussed more seriously (Chernicharo et al., 2014; Šefčić 2018).

The humanization of prison space is becoming increasingly important when it comes to comprehensive physical and psychological care for inmates, but also for the employees of the prison system.

By combining different elements, such as colour and light, one can contribute to the deep humanization of the space, which can then help distract from the cold of the traditional prison as we know it. The humanization of space, including the prison community, implies a system that in its physical, technological, human and administrative structure respects the dignity of beings, and thus provides conditions for comprehensive and quality rehabilitation and care while serving a prison sentence.

Spatial-physical humanization is an integral part of the broader concept of humanization and includes organizational, relational and therapeutic aspects of the ecological and social characteristics of interior design. Numerous researches, as well as those conducted in Croatia within the projects of the Croatian Association of Fine Artists (*Exemplary Penitentiary, Revitalization of Prison Space With Art, Horizon of Freedom* and *Freedom of Creation* implemented in the Croatian prison system), show a positive effect of aestheticized and rehumanized space. The performed interventions play a big part in changing the perception of space, initiating and encouraging positive thoughts and encouraging the resocialization of the inmates. The aggregated results show that over 90% of inmates believe that the interior design of prisons and penitentiaries is important and that they think about it while serving their sentences (over 80%). The majority of respondents (90%) support such initiatives and support the implementation of project activities in other penitentiaries and prisons around Croatia. Over 90% of the respondents say that after painting the exterior and interior walls, they feel more comfortable staying in the penitentiary.

Here are some of the inmates' suggestions that were collected within the project *Horizon of Freedom* in 2020:

- *when painting the walls, I would suggest using cheerful colours to fight off this greyness and monotony*
- *in the future, it would be desirable to paint the walls inside the Penitentiary as well. It is not a bad idea to also landscape the green areas, maybe plant some exotic trees and flowers*
- *renovate the walls inside the rooms where the inmates stay because the exterior walls are rarely seen. It would be good to use vivid colours, but also cool ones, such as green and blue because they have a calming effect on inmates. Also, involve inmates in drawing and painting*
- *certainly, a commendable project! That is how the greyness was somewhat fought off. There are people here who appreciate art.*

Nice, good works!

- *it's nice that the outer walls were painted, for the children who come to visit. But the interior should also be painted*
 - *i want to confirm that the idea of painting the walls is great and very unusual because I have never heard of such a thing before. Whoever this idea was, I commend it!*
- (Šefčić, Jandrić Nišević, 2020).

The Impact of Aestheticization and Humanization on Prison Space

Since one of the purposes of punishing perpetrators is to prevent re-offending, but also to influence other, potential perpetrators, i.e. intimidate them, the general opinion is that prison space should not be comfortable. However, as the rehabilitation component of serving a prison sentence and the importance of humane treatment of perpetrators are increasingly emphasized, prison space is also beginning to be seen as part of the rehabilitation component. Prison spaces that are enriched with artistic creations contribute to a better atmosphere and reduction of stress, which is certainly important for the rehabilitation of inmates, but also for maintaining the security of the institution.

If we look at art in the form of murals, we will notice that there are artworks of inmates on numerous prison walls around the world who have, in a creative and completely innovative way, enriched and marked the *living space* while serving their prison sentence. In the very beginning, such form of artistic expression of inmates was seen as vandalism, inappropriate behavior, whereas today, the graffiti artworks created on the walls of many prisons are seen as an artistic expression that encourages inmates to behave better, to strive for change, but also to aesthetically enrich the prison space.

We can also see that this form of art can change the way the employees of the prison system see their working environment. Often, the employees also become proactive and join such initiatives, which in turn contributes to reducing stress, improving communication among employees, but also enriches the workspace, which, due to its peculiar architecture, often affects their mood negatively.

Workspace, outdated equipment and furniture can cause frustration and dissatisfaction among employees, so we can say that the prison space both positively and negatively affects inmates, as well as the employees of the prison system. The loss and lack of aesthetic preferences affect each individual in a negative way (Piotrowski, Florek, 2015). It should be emphasized here that art can contribute to the creation of a new, more humane, supportive and caring environment and create conditions for the growth and development of awareness, responsibility and compassion of people in prison, all of which can increase employee satisfaction in the workplace and reduce the stress that leads to burnout at work.

Furthermore, one of the problems of neglected space is the

general disinterest and insufficient attention paid to the physical environment in prison premises (Piotrowski, Florek, 2015; as cited in Barišić, 2020).

Piotrowski and Florek (2015) point out that there are several reasons why prison premises have such a poor aesthetic appearance, some due to insufficient attention of competent bodies, pervasive financial difficulties and, above all, because of the belief that these premises should be unpleasant because they serve to carry out the sentence (Barišić, 2020).

Investing in aesthetic appearance is important for the improvement of the aesthetic dimension of the space, which can have a positive impact on the entire prison community, and not only on inmates. Namely, the activation of brain areas in charge of cognition and moral decision-making can result in a higher level of communication skills, a better sense of well-being, positive distraction and a reduction in the level of anxiety and depression in inmates, as well as employees of the prison system (Barišić, 2020).

One should have in mind that most offenders will sooner or later go free and become an integral part of our society. This society and individuals in it are the ones who initiate various artistic initiatives aimed at the rehabilitation of the prison system and its users that play a significant role in their easier and better reintegration into the community.

Innovative Art Projects Focusing on Murals in Prison – Examples of Good Practice

Based on the collected material of successfully implemented projects, below are some of the innovative practices of implementing projects in the prison systems around the world. The projects were implemented by institutions and organisations with the participation of artists and inmates and can serve as an example for launching new projects focusing on aestheticization and artistic revitalization of the prison system.

Projects of Aestheticization and Artistic Revitalization of Prisons in Croatia

Since 2017, the Croatian Association of Fine Artists (HDLU) has continuously implemented projects of aestheticization and artistic revitalization of prisons within the prison system of the Republic of Croatia. The author and project manager is the artist Melinda Šefčić, PhD, who, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice and Administration of the Republic of Croatia and numerous artists, researchers and institutions, has been developing highly innovative projects. Previously implemented projects include: *Exemplary Penitentiary, Revitalization of Prison Space With Art, Horizon of Freedom, Freedom of Creation*, while the fifth project, *Colours of Reality*, is under implementation. Within the implemented projects, more than 60 artistic

interventions have been carried out in 12 penal institutions, with the participation of about 40 artists, members of the Croatian Association of Fine Artists (HDLU), and students of the Academy of Fine Arts of the University of Zagreb. The institutions covered so far include the Penitentiary in Požega, Penitentiary in Glina, Penitentiary in Turopolje, Penitentiary in Lepoglava, Prison in Zagreb, Prison in Bjelovar, Prison in Osijek, the Prison in Karlovac, Prison in Rijeka, Correctional Facility in Turopolje, Prison Hospital in Zagreb and Probation Office Zagreb I.

The projects aim to improve the quality of life and interpersonal relationships of inmates and encourage the establishment of social values and re-socialization, which empowers them to grow responsibilities and activities within the prison community. The projects also seek to help build and develop a more humane prison environment that will encourage exemplary behavior of inmates and give a new perception of life in the prison community. This emphasizes the therapeutic effect of art, as well as changing self-image, improving communication skills, achieving a positive feeling, and reducing depression and anxiety in general. Through active inmate engagement, the projects contribute to creating meaningful recreation programmes, with the intention to achieve successful socialization and social integration during and after discharge.

The projects implemented thus far have involved numerous institutions and individuals in the implementation of complex research work, 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, and Sanja Đurin, PhD, from the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb and Miran Jurić with Master's degree in Sociology, who is an associate on projects from the Croatian Association of Fine Artists (HDLU) in Zagreb.

The research component of the projects aims to gain insight into how inmates and professionals working in penal institutions, in which art interventions were implemented, perceive the prison exterior and interior before and after the implementation of project activities, all in order to improve the general conditions of serving a prison sentence. You can read more about the research results on the following internet 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_
- *Freedom of Creation* - https://issuu.com/hdlu6/docs/katalog_-_sloboda_stvaranja_web

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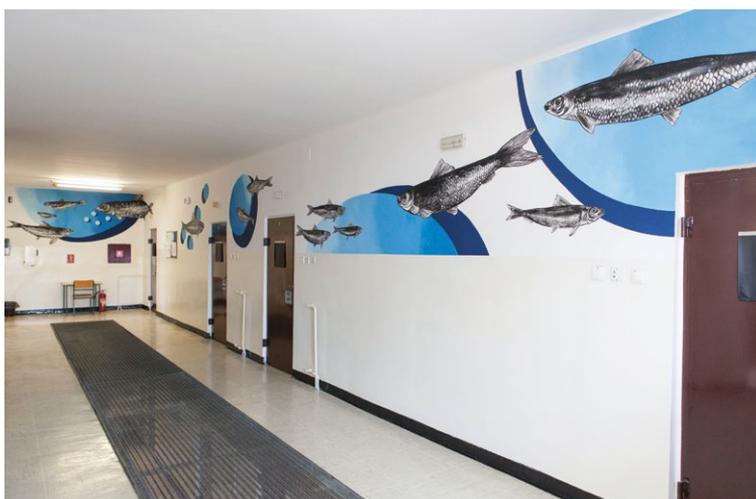




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Croatian Association
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The Inmate Mural Arts Program (IMAP)

In 2007, *The Inmate Mural Arts Program* was launched in the Florida prison system, in cooperation with the prison administration, the judicial police and the University of Florida. The aim was to paint a large-sized mural that would reflect the talent and creativity of the inmates, the participants of this project, as well as the group cohesion, socialization and social integration. Gusak (2016) points out that this kind of inclusion of inmates into projects contributes to reducing frustration, alleviates depression and helps develop skills in solving problems and conflicts among inmates. As a part of the program, three murals were created in collaboration between the students of the final year of Art Therapy studies, their mentor from the University and the inmates.

Gusak also points out that all three works have focused on the use of art therapy in working with inmates. The program aimed to highlight and point out in practice that art therapy can determine and improve the psychophysical condition of inmates (Gusak, 2016; Barišić, 2020).

Work No. 1 - Transformation Through Unity

The mural titled *Transformation through Unity* was created in the Wakulla Correctional Institution in Florida, a men's prison. After defining the project goals and the rules for implementing the project within the institution, the selection of inmates who would participate in the project activities of painting the murals followed. Eleven inmates were selected, who participated in project activities over the course of four weeks – they elaborated the ideas, sketched and then painted the mural. After the sketch was completed, they started the preparatory phase that included the acquisition of materials and the preparation of the wall surface. Scaffolding was installed, which had to be mounted and dismantled every day for security reasons, and the inmates began to carry out the intervention. Painting the mural took six weeks, with the help of two art therapy students who carried out the project (Gusak, 2016; Barišić, 2020)

After the project completion, all the inmates who participated in it developed feelings of pride, belonging and fulfilment. They appreciated their invested effort and work, were grateful for the opportunity to participate and felt empowered and accomplished, which also affected their self-confidence (Gusak, 2016; Barišić, 2020). These positive outcomes were decisive for realizing two more large murals featured below.

Work No. 2 - Gospel of the Rock

The second mural titled *Gospel of the Rock* was also created as part of the IMAP program, in the city of Colquitt, Georgia, USA. The project was encouraged by the Miller Arts Council in collaboration

with the University of Florida and detainees at the Miller Detention Centre (Barišić, 2020).

The project team was made up of one art therapist and two artists who participated in the creation of the first mural. For the overall implementation of the project idea, they used experience from previous work. What differed was the theme of the mural, which was based on the legend of the Anglin brothers. The Anglin brothers often stayed in Colquitt prison for bank robberies and were depicted in the mural as two elderly men looking at the fractured parts of their lives.

Six inmates were selected to participate in the project based on their interest, low-security risk and good behavior. The process of painting the mural took six weeks, just like the first mural. The mural has been an attraction ever since and has become a well-known part of tourist tours and city exhibitions (Gussak, 2016; Barišić, 2020).

Work No. 3 - *Beacon of Hope*

The third mural, *Beacon of Hope*, was created in the Gadsden Correctional Institution, a women's prison. The concept of carrying out the project was similar to the previous ones of painting murals at the Wakulla Correctional Institution and Miller Prison. This mural is significantly larger than the other two and placed to face the main prison complex (Gussak, 2016; Barišić, 2020).

The process of carrying out the project involved several female inmates, i.e. sixteen of them. They were divided into two groups, led by the two artists who participated in the first two projects. The process of painting the mural took a bit less time, five weeks in total (Barišić, 2020).

The mural concept combined the ideas of all the participants, but it had one special feature; at the very bottom, there was an image of a film reel, which, after the work was painted, each inmate painted separately according to their wishes. This way of work and freedom of expression enabled the inmates to make their small personal contributions within the group project, which is extremely valuable for people who are generally deprived of such positive activities.

***Murales de Libertad* Project**

The Murales de Libertad project has been implemented in Ecuadorian prisons since 2008, at the initiative of the artist Alejandro Cruz. The goal is to associate art with the process of inmate rehabilitation. Over the years, the project has expanded to become a multidisciplinary program that includes various forms of artistic expression, such as painting, music, acting and audio-visual art (Barišić, 2020).

The main and most recognizable form of artwork is murals. Inmates are involved in the realization of project activities with the guidance and supervision of artists. The very concept of carrying out the project is similar to the projects mentioned above. After the intro-

ductory formalities, the artists presented themselves to the inmates and the prison system with the project idea, and after the first meeting, they began an intensive collaboration that had an educational character. The inmates were introduced to the project activities and the process of creation, they developed ideas, made sketches, made preparations for the work and the process of performing art interventions.

So far, the project has been implemented in the Prison in Quito – Centro de Rehabilitación Social de Atención Prioritaria – and the Sierra Centro Norte Cotopaxi prison, Ex-Penal García Moreno, and the Cárcel de Mujeres del Inca women's prison. Participation in the implementation of the project allowed the inmates not only to express their feelings, longings, hopes and fears, but it also contributed to their presentation to the general public.

This project is of great importance to the inmates because it has allowed them to connect, feel free and heal. In this way, it has become part of their rehabilitation, which further contributes to reducing mutual competitiveness, violence and intolerance.

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=Tj3G_9q1iHc.

Conclusion

Although many projects bring art into the prison space in the form of murals, it often happens that prison employees resist such initiatives. It is a common belief that prisons should be rigid and cold, devoid of any humane atmospheres that would give the convicts a glimmer of hope. Namely, it is considered that this space accommodates the perpetrators of crimes who did not respect social norms and the law, and it is therefore not necessary to *reward* them with a comfortable space while they serve their sentence. However, such views neglect the fact that the environment can affect the mood and improve the adaptation of inmates to prison conditions, which is important for maintaining security and safety and further contributes to improving the working conditions of all the professionals working in penal institutions. That is why, and based on research papers, we see that good project structuring, informing and educating employees, as well as continuous work, can contribute to reducing this resistance and it can even make penal institutions initiate participation in art projects.

However, any profound change still requires more time and long-term practice of using art in prison systems. It should be borne in mind that with these activities, inmates are given the possibility to change their minds and adopt a new lifestyle – they are given a new perception of life. In addition, employees get an artistic redesign of the workspace, which is crucial to reducing stress and preventing burnout at work.

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COLOURS IN PRISON: WHAT COLOURS TO USE IN PRISON

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Abstract

In this chapter, we deal with the concept of colour in the context of its meaning, symbolism, health outcome, as well as its use in the prison environment. It is well-known that colours play an extremely powerful and significant role in our lives. They affect our visual, aesthetic and spatial perception, as well as our mood and emotions. In everyday life, we are constantly surrounded by colours, which is not the case in the prison environment. Prison is a grey, sterile space, devoid of aesthetics, and the use of colours and their understanding can lead to a change in the perception of space and how one feels within this space.

Keywords: colour, meaning of colour, colour in prison, psychology of colours, association

Introduction

Colours play a particularly important role in our lives and directly affect our feelings, mood and experiences. Each of us has our own preferred spectrum of colours, which means that there are certain colours we like and the ones we dislike. Using colours, one can express their emotions, state, perception and personality. The experience of colours depends on several different factors, such as our general mood, biological rhythm, colour tones, type of light (depending on whether it is day or night, dimmed, intense or natural light) (Škrbina, 2013; Šefčić, 2018).

The theory of colour is based on Isaac Newton's discovery (1676), who was the first to claim that colour comes from light. By directing the white light through a prism, Newton discovered that white light is made up of several different colours because on the other side he got a reflection of a rainbow made up of seven colours: red, orange, yellow, green, cyan (blue-green), indigo and violet (Nadarević, 2019).

Something very similar happens in the human eye because it perceives white light. Accordingly, when there is no light, there is no colour either (Nadarević, 2019).

The human eye can differentiate between 200 monochromatic colours. When it comes to yellow, which our eyes are the most sensitive to, we can detect differences of 0.1 nm, so it can be concluded that colour perception is a process that takes place in the brain (Zjakić, Milković 2010; Klamp, 2015).

When it comes to the division of colours, the primary colours of the spectrum are red, green and blue. Mixing these three colours creates other colours, i.e., secondary colours: yellow (red and green), purple (red and blue) and blue-green (blue and green) (Delija, 2018). Tertiary colours are created by mixing one primary and one secondary colour, and these colours are called intermediate colours (Delija, 2018).

The Psychological and Symbolic Meaning of Colour

Numerous psychologists point out that colours directly affect an individual's behavior. Colours can motivate us to act; they stimulate our feelings, affect the perception of spatial relations in our immediate and remote environments and make one feel a certain way (Nadarević, 2019). Jacobson (2009; as cited in Nadarević, 2019) points out that colour is the key element of interior design because it makes up to 60% of the overall experience of the space. Moreover, Jacobson proposes the term 'supportive colour design' that specifically implies the use of colour that affects the users of space both emotionally and physiologically by respecting their wishes and needs when it comes to the space in which they live and work. Such a way of approaching, choosing and using colours has a significant impact on creating a positive working environment that, in turn, stimulates people to achieve work goals and it will also create an aesthetically pleasing working environment.

It should be noted that colours directly affect our everyday life: they affect our visual, aesthetic and spatial perception, as well as our mood and emotions (Nadarević, 2019).

Colours are also used in the treatment of humans. This method is called chromotherapy, which is an alternative medicine method based on our reactions to colours. One of the best-known examples of using chromotherapy is for the treatment of neonatal jaundice (increased bilirubin in the blood), which is treated with blue light (Nadarević, 2019).

Furthermore, when it comes to how colours affect one's health, numerous studies show that colours that cause a high level of pleasure with a low level of excitement most often cause a state of calm, whereas those that cause dissatisfaction and a high level of excitement can evoke the feeling of anxiety in the observer (Šefčić, 2018). It has been proven that patients in hospitals, as well as inmates in prisons, more often express a penchant for and understanding of realis-

tic art (landscapes), which is in line with the evolution of psychological theories that predict positive emotional reactions of the observer when looking at the scenes of flourishing nature and landscape dominated by green and blue (Šefčić, 2018). It also turns out, and this should be emphasized and paid attention to when it comes to art interventions in both prison and hospital environments, that regardless of the artists' experience of their work and social classification of an artist as 'good', people deprived of liberty or with deteriorated health, who are in a bad psychophysical condition due to their situation, still prefer realistic over abstract art because they often do not understand abstract art or it makes them feel anxious and repulsed. It is, therefore, advisable to use calm tones with an abundance of green and blue, the images of landscape or nature in general. This will have a positive effect on the inmates' feeling of calm, reduce stress levels, and foster positive thoughts and emotions, communication, as well as social integration (Šefčić, 2018).

The symbolism of colour has been developed through the entire history of humankind, and thus each culture had its own symbolism associated with each colour. Fundamental laws and principles related to colour have always been part of ancient teachings. This is evidenced by many preserved manuscripts that show precisely how, for example, in India, China and Egypt priests and healers were familiar with a comprehensive system of colour science, which corresponds to the relationship between human nature and the nature of the solar spectrum (Škrbina, 2013; Šefčić, 2018).

To each individual, colours represent powerful symbols that arouse many emotions and associations (Nadarević, 2019). For example, productivity and behavior in a workplace will largely depend on the colours decorating the space. Colours can make one calm, as well as cause stress; intense colours can foster aggression and soft colours can calm a person down (Lovgren, 1996; Nadarević, 2019).

The symbolism of colours differs from one place to another and is in a way relevant for a particular social community and culture in a given place and time (Nadarević, 2019). Therefore, the perception and use of colours largely depend on the culture itself, that is, the meaning a specific colour has in a specific social climate.

The psychology of colour studies how colours affect humans. The insights gained are of great importance and have also become part of a broader communication process (Nadarević, 2019).

The Colour Red

Symbolic meaning: red is mainly perceived as the colour of blood and fire, therefore people most often associate it with warning, danger, energy, war, power, determination, prohibition and control. It is most often associated with life, passion, love, emotions, sensitivity and power (Nadarević, 2019; Delija, 2018). It also symbolizes combativeness, warfare, revolution, aggression, anarchy (Bilban, 2015; Nadarević, 2019). Throughout history, many revolutionary political

parties have adopted the colour red, such as the French Revolution, Communism, Nazism, etc. (Nadarević, 2019).

Red stimulates human metabolism and breathing and increases blood pressure. Since blood is red, it is often associated with aggressiveness, greed, and generally with intense emotions (Delija, 2018). People who prefer red are usually open, full of confidence, they react impulsively and vigorously, these people are full of emotions and passion and often have intense sexual urges (Delija, 2018).

Health effects of red: it increases heart rate, speeds up breathing, increases muscle tension, raises blood pressure, stimulates metabolism and the nervous system (Bilban 2015; Nadarević, 2019). The colour red is also stimulating on an emotional level. However, too much red can make people aggressive. It is associated with energy. Due to its positive beneficial and warm effect, it is also used in infrared therapy (Die Welt der Farben, n.d.; Nadarević, 2019).

Use of red in prison: as we can see, red is the colour of emotions; it stimulates activity and strong reactions (Nadarević, 2019). When it comes to the use of red in prison, this is not recommended because red can have a very negative impact on the observer and cause unwanted negative and aggressive reactions. It should, therefore, be used as an accent; for example, in a monotonous room, a detail can be painted red (a part of the wall or a piece of furniture) but with great caution when it comes to the shade of red used (Nadarević, 2019).

The Colour Blue

Symbolic meaning: blue is the colour of the sky, sea, purity, freedom, tranquillity, peace. In many cultures, it symbolizes loyalty, wisdom, trust, intelligence and serenity (Delija, 2018). It relieves stress, tension, promotes laughter and cheerfulness in people, promotes inner and outer peace, harmony and contentment (Nadarević, 2019). The colour blue is calm and soothing (Die Welt der Farben, n.d.; Nadarević 2019). However, it also has a negative association: melancholy, doubt, apathy and depression.

It visually enlarges the space and creates a peaceful, spacious and relaxing atmosphere (Bilban 2015; Nadarević 2019).

Health effects of blue: it lowers blood pressure and calms the nervous system. Dark blue promotes balanced sleep cycles, relieves pain and has a positive effect on bones, improves focus, refreshes thinking and creativity (Bilban, 2015; Nadarević 2019). The colour blue also relaxes muscles and relieves body tension, and it is used in chromotherapy to treat migraine, sore throats, fever and back pain (Die Welt der Farben, n.g.; Nadarević 2019).

Use of blue in prison: blue has a positive effect on the observer, but one has to have in mind the tones and amount of blue used. Namely, large amounts of blue can cause depression in the observer. Blue symbolises loyalty and trust (Nadarević, 2019). It is interesting that in most countries police uniform is blue, and the inmates

thus hate the *boys in blue*. However, prison premises painted in blue, especially in lighter tones, will have a calming effect on inmates and reduce their anxiety (Nadarević, 2019).

The Colour Green

Symbolic meaning: the colour green is cold but due to being highly represented in nature, especially in spring, it represents life, awakening, vitality, fertility, tolerance, health, peace, strength, harmony, serenity (Delija 2018; Nadarević, 2019). The negative aspect of green is manifested as malice, envy, fear, anxiety, depression, unpleasantness, etc. (Musil, 2002; Nadarević, 2019).

Health effects of green: green has a very calming and relaxing effect; it relieves tension and emotional distress, lowers blood pressure by dilating peripheral blood vessels, regulates blood flow and stimulates the pituitary gland. It also relaxes chest muscles and allows deeper and slower breathing. It is known to be used in chromo-therapy to calm the heart rhythm and kidney function, and it is also used in the treatment of stomach ulcers, allergies and to promote rest (Nadarević, 2019).

Use of green in prison: the colour green relaxes, soothes; it acts harmoniously, contributes to achieving balance, self-control and harmony. It is thus extremely suitable for use in prison. It is often used in combination with blue. It is suitable for painting prison walls, and it is most often used to protect parts of the wall in combination with washable greasy paint (Nadarević, 2019).

The Colour Yellow

Symbolic meaning: yellow creates the effect of warmth, stimulates mental activity and fills a person with energy (Delija, 2018). It symbolises happiness, wisdom, harmony, passion, love, intellect, optimism, brilliance, joy, but also arouses envy, jealousy, disgust, insincerity, betrayal, cowardice (Nadarević, 2019). The colour yellow reminds one of the sun and evokes optimism and warmth (Bilban 2015; Nadarević, 2019). Pure shades of yellow are usually positive, whereas darker shades can have negative connotations such as conspicuousness, exaggeration, irritability, arrogance, hostility, jealousy, envy, betrayal (Kovačev, 1997; Nadarević, 2019).

Health effects of yellow: it strengthens the nervous system, restores optimism, creates energy in the muscles, stimulates the lymphatic system and cleanses the digestive tract (Bilban 2015; Nadarević, 2019).

Use of yellow in prison: due to its warmth, yellow promotes cheerfulness, optimism, intellectual activity, whereas the excessive use of yellow has a disturbing effect. The use of yellow in a grey prison environment fights the monotony of the space, creates a feeling of warmth, cheerfulness and closeness, but over time can lead to oversaturation and cause anxiety in the observer (Nadarević, 2019).

One should, therefore, should pay attention to how it is used.

The Colour Violet

Symbolic meaning: violet is seen as the colour of power given that in the past it was the colour of the highest strata of society. It is associated with imagination and spirituality; it has the energy of red mixed with the stability of blue (Delija, 2018). Violet is believed to be soothing; however, it should be dosed appropriately because it can cause one to become introspective and distracted (Delija, 2018).

Health effects of violet: it is well-known that violet is the colour of spirituality. It affects mental balance and self-awareness and is therefore used in treating deep psychological issues as it contributes to reducing stress and promoting mental stability (Nadarević, 2019). It is considered to be the colour of the spirit, contributes to strengthening brain activity and is also used in treating mild migraines. It has a beneficial physiological effect on the heart and lungs and increases body resistance (Nadarević, 2019). Purple has a beneficial effect on the nervous system and brain, it cleanses and disinfects, as well as balances the digestive tract (Nadarević, 2019).

Use of violet in prison: although violet is said to have a beneficial effect on humans, it is not recommended for inmate dormitories. It is, however, recommended to use it in the rooms used for counselling, psychotherapy and the like because, due to its mysticism, it helps establish the authoritarianism and competence of the therapist. Therefore, the walls of therapy rooms painted in violet can positively affect communication when working with inmates (Nadarević, 2019).

The Colour Orange

Symbolic meaning: this is an extremely warm colour created by mixing red and yellow and is seen as an extrovert colour, the colour of life, joy and activity. It reminds one of the colour of the sun, just like yellow. It symbolizes activity, vitality, uniqueness, energy, health, sociability (Nadarević, 2019). However, orange can also be associated with cheapness, arrogance and loudness (Die Welt der Farben, n.d.; as cited in Nadarević, 2019).

Health effects: orange emphasizes safety, comfort and emotional warmth. This colour lifts the mood, brings the feeling of satisfaction, joy and sociability (Nadarević, 2019). It is used in chromotherapy to strengthen the immune system and stimulate digestion (Die Welt der Farben, n.d.; Nadarević, 2019). Physiologically, its impact is visible in stimulating the heart, lungs and creating a feeling of comfort and optimism.

Use of orange in prison: just like yellow, orange is also suitable for rooms where inmates spend the majority of their day (Nadarević, 2019), e.g., in common rooms, hobby rooms or leisure areas.

Symbolic meaning: although this is a variant of red devoid of vibrancy, it is most often associated with love, romance and friendship (Bilban 2015; Nadarević, 2019).

Health effects: promotes a feeling of love, safety and warmth.

Use of pink in prison: pink is suitable for dormitories, but after some time it can provoke repulsion, saturation and encourage aggression. Its symbolism is especially problematic in prison, where even the slightest hint of homosexuality can cause violent reactions among inmates.

In many prisons in the USA, Switzerland, Germany, Poland, Austria and Great Britain, Baker-Miller pink is used for painting cells. It is a special tone of pink believed to reduce aggressive, angry and hostile behavior. In Switzerland, 20% of prisons and police stations have at least one pink cell. It is believed, although this has not been scientifically proven, that pink has a soothing effect. However, besides its positive and calming effect, pink walls might have negative effects if inmates feel emasculated by having a traditionally feminine colour on the walls, which can increase the level of aggression among them (Hammond, 2015).

The Colour Brown

Symbolic meaning: brown represents earth, warmth, autumn, humility, material reality and motherhood (Nadarević, 2019). It is seen as an extremely stable and serious colour, it can be an ideal substitute for black in cases when black is too intense for a specific space or theme (Delija, 2018). Humans perceive it predominantly as calming because they are used to it as such since it is most often found in nature along with green (Bilban, 2015; Nadarević, 2019).

Health effects: lighter shades of brown physically affect the feeling of health and good mood, safety and warmth (Nadarević, 2019).

Use of brown in prison: when it comes to prisons, brown is most often used for painting floors and furniture upholstery because it promotes warmth and closeness in the observer. Rooms painted brown should, however, have an accent, some warm colour that *breaks* the gloom of the atmosphere and the situation in which the inmates are (Nadarević, 2019).

The Colour Black

Technically, black is not a colour because black objects absorb all the colours of the visible spectrum and reflect none of them (Nadarević, 2019).

Symbolic meaning: black is the colour of power, sophistication, formality, seriousness, loneliness, mystery, fear, evil, grief, remorse, emptiness and it is associated with elegance and progressiveness,

as well as with grief, burial, evil, sin, darkness and fear (Nadarević, 2019).

Health effect: black has a physiological effect on psychological grief and oppression, and in therapy, it is seen as the colour that boosts self-confidence (Nadarević, 2019).

Use of black in prison: in prison, black is associated with authority; it is well-known that special police forces wear black uniforms. Black cannot be used in prison, the only thing it can be used for is black furniture in offices (Nadarević, 2019).

The Colour Grey

Symbolic meaning: grey is associated with creativity and inspiration. It can be easily combined with other colours and is therefore often used. It leaves the observer with the impression of exclusivity and symbolizes a sense of practicality, timelessness and solidarity, as well as of vagueness, insignificance and insensitivity (Delija, 2018; Nadarević, 2019).

Use of grey in prison: it is well known that grey is still the colour that is predominantly used in prison. It evokes the feeling of coldness, fear, uncertainty and alienation. Grey is less pronounced than other colours. It has the tendency to dampen the space and other colours around it, as well as one's mood. Grey is somewhere in between white and black, it is neutral and cold, which can have a depressing impact on the observer, especially when it comes to dark grey.

The Colour White

White is a combination of all colours.

Symbolic meaning: it symbolizes purity, innocence, freedom, light, holiness, simplicity, as well as coldness, fragility, isolation, etc. It is a symbol of peace, peacefulness, rest, silence, purity, simplicity, new beginnings, neutrality (Bilbon, 2015; Nadarević, 2019). Rooms painted in white, without furniture, seem empty and lonely. In prisons and hospitals, this is the most common colour used for walls, bedding, tablecloths, etc. It points to formality and seriousness, as well as to sterility, cleanliness, harmony and order (Nadarević, 2019).

The above colour interpretations are just some of many, and this list is not a comprehensive analysis of each of these colours. This overview aims to point out their complexity and the need for research when it comes to their use in prison, as well as in other specific places, such as hospitals.

How to Paint a Prison

Our usual daily activities take place in different rooms of our home. We eat in one room, sleep in another, in some rooms we do

hobbies or spend our free time, and we also decorate and design these rooms accordingly. The colour of the walls, furniture and floor create a feeling of comfort in a room. The rooms such as the living room, kitchen and dining room are usually painted in warm colours, whereas bedrooms are usually painted in colder colours, such as blue, violet and green. Red is usually used for decorating kitchen elements and the like (Nadarević, 2019) but not for painting walls.

When it comes to prisons, the situation is completely different. Prisons are total institutions where activities mostly take place in the same rooms, and white and grey walls are common.

The design of prison interior spaces depends on numerous factors. However, one thing is for certain, despite being deprived of freedom, people feel the need to be surrounded by colours. Moreover, wall colour in prison is a subtle form of therapy (O'Brain, 2003; Nadarević, 2019). Starting from the declarative goals of serving a prison sentence and limitations that affect their realisation, some general rules can be defined when it comes to the interior design of prison premises:

1. Entrance hall: this is the space that inmates first encounter at the start of their prison sentence. This space is characterised by heavy and large metal doors, barbed wire, bars, which arouses a sense of fear, uncertainty and creates the feeling of anxiety. To avoid this and alleviate the feeling of anxiety, there should be a place in the hall where inmates could sit and wait to be admitted, as well as a place where they could store their belongings. There should also be a table with magazines and information leaflets about the institution (Nadarević, 2019). The choice of furniture can include a brightly coloured sofa and it is recommended to paint the walls in lighter colours. When it comes to painting halls that only serve for passage and one does not spend much time in them, it is recommended to use bright wall colours to facilitate orientation, and in this case, furniture should be of a lighter colour (Nadarević, 2019). These halls can be decorated with various appropriate paintings or handicrafts made by inmates, as well as with planters with plants and flowers.

2. Common room: this is a multipurpose, prison communal room. In addition to being used as a common room, it is also often used for therapy sessions and creative workshops with inmates. Given that this is a multipurpose room, the atmosphere should be relaxing and it is therefore advised to paint the walls green and blue, whereas using *heavy colours* is not recommended (Nadarević, 2019).

3. Dormitories / cells: can be single, double or multi-bed dormitories/cells. Walls should be painted in lighter pastel shades, warm and intimate colours. White should be avoided as it reflects institutionality and alienation from nature. When it comes

to interior design, one should use curtains of lighter colours, such as pastel green, blue and orange, as well as check and stripe patterns. Red should be avoided. When it comes to the floor surface, it should be smooth, but not shiny, easy to clean and it should reduce noise when walking. Mats are not desirable, and the colour of the floor should be in contrast to the colour of the walls (Nadarević, 2019).

The light in prison, and especially in rooms (cells) and the common room, should come from a natural source (daylight). Natural light is the basic stimulative factor with a strong biological effect. In line with this, well-designed lighting, be it natural or artificial, has a significant impact on various vital bodily functions and psychological and physiological reactions. When it comes to the use of artificial light, it must not be too bright and must not create strong shadows. It should be homogenous and even, must not flicker and must have a colour similar to the natural light (Nadarević, 2019).

4. Correctional / treatment offices: these rooms should exude warmth and creativity because this is where therapeutic activities take place. The entire room should have a relaxing and intimate atmosphere suitable for working with inmates. The use of green and violet is recommended, as well as pastel shades in general (Nadarević, 2019).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we saw that colour plays a major role in the perception of one's environment, and thus in the way inmates feel inside a prison. Colours have always had a symbolic meaning that comes from the individual feeling we develop towards objects of a certain colour. There is, however, also a well-established scheme of collective experience of certain colours – for example, light colours are recommended in a prison, with a focus on green and blue because people experience them as soothing and stimulating, they evoke the sense of safety and belonging (Nadarević, 2019). Furthermore, yellow is also extremely suitable for use in prisons and inmates most often perceive it as cheerful, optimistic and warm. It is commonly known that prison is a rigid-looking public space, but despite its coldness, it is like a home for inmates who stay there temporarily or long-term. Inmates often protect their prison space, just as we protect our homes. This need to protect their space comes from a biological need of all living beings to have a specific place to call their own, even though their feeling of a certain space is extremely unstable because they are often moved from one cell/room to another (Nadarević, 2019), which creates a feeling of insecurity and lack of belonging and identification with this space.

Inmates are extremely attached to their intimate space, they are sensitive to it, in a way, it is the only thing they have at that moment

and therefore they are very protective of it. Inmates do not allow access to this intimate space, they often do not allow other inmates to sit on their bed for example. Nadarević (2019) points out that this is also related to the phobia of homosexuality.

Finally, painting a prison is an extremely complex task where one has to take into account multiple factors and important information that will help in choosing the best combination of colours and shades. This will have a positive impact on the entire prison population, not only an individual.

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ART AND THERAPY

PETER VAN OLMEN

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Peter van Olmen

Man has always used music, poetry, dance, drama, literature and the visual arts to symbolise, explore and express that which cannot be expressed in words (Keyes, Margaret Frings, 1975).

Abstract

Through a short description of the origins of art therapy and outsider art, interviews with therapists, art teachers and examples of various art projects, we hope to arouse interest in making art, in whatever form, meaningful to the personal development of prisoners.

Keywords: non-formal learning, return to society, attitudes and skills, art therapy and outsider art, best practices.

Introduction

The Genesis of Creative Therapy

What has emerged throughout the short history of Outsider Art is how art is gradually being used as a practical form of therapy, especially in post-war Europe, where creative workshops and forms of art therapy began to develop. From the occupational therapy of Dr. Plokker (1907 – 1976) to the introduction of small assignments by Leo Navratil (1921 – 2006) and the simultaneous emergence of the psychoanalysis of Freud and Jung, visual creative therapy took shape.

From the 1950s, art therapy was given official status in France following international exhibitions on psychopathological art. The official term 'art therapy' was introduced by the British artist educator and therapist Adrian Hill (1895-1977) after the publication of his book *Art against illness*. His goal was to institutionalize and spread art therapy. During the 1960s, art therapy was introduced into psychiatric hospitals and was mainly used by psychiatrists, psychologists, nursing staff and occupational therapists, before it became possible to train as a creative therapist. From then on, art really enjoys a therapeutic dimension and is freed from an exclusively aesthetic point of view.

At the end of the 1970s, a need for scientific research developed in the art therapy field. This happened because the field had been frantically searching for an identity and a way to distinguish itself as

a genuine therapeutic discipline. The question of scientific foundations did not remain unanswered. Art therapy sought connections with art, science, health and education. Meanwhile it has developed into an interdisciplinary form of treatment.

Art Therapy is the English Equivalent of Creative Therapy

Art therapy can also be translated as visual therapy, which was the case in the early days, but it is now also known as the umbrella term for visual therapy, music therapy, drama therapy and dance and movement therapy.

1. Visual Therapy

Through visual work, clients can release and express unexpressed experiences, repressed emotions, or conflicts with the help of materials (drawing materials, paint, clay, paper, and so on.) It is not a requirement that an art therapist is also an artist. Artists express something of themselves in their work, and have their own artistic vision applying their own personal and specific technique. In the therapeutic setting the personal aspect comes first, with a rather objective attitude towards the materials used. Versatility of an art therapist is a must. They must be able to master various techniques and materials and also be able to convey these methodically to the clients or patients. The great advantage of this way of working is that it offers a visual alternative for thoughts and feelings that are difficult to put into words.

2. Dance and Movement Therapy

In dance and movement therapy, the expression of feelings and emotions through the movement of the body is central. Through dance and movement, clients experience a unity between body and mind. The body is akin to an instrument and the dance is the process that helps to promote integration and growth of the personality. It goes without saying that non-verbal communication and its interpretation is an important pillar. Movement and posture can express feelings when language falls short.

3. Drama Therapy

Drama therapy helps to express one's own personality and feelings as well as those of others in an appropriate manner. Through theatre techniques such as improvisation, sociodrama, drama, storytelling, fantasy play, puppet play, and so on, an attempt is made to stimulate contact with others. There is a strong focus on emotional and verbal capacities. Interactions between people are worked through play situations.

Participants in a drama therapy session may also look at their own situation from a distance and make up stories inspired by their own lives. This often involves looking at the roles people take on in relation to their surroundings.

4. Music Therapy

In relationship to the participants, music therapy brings about change, development, and acceptance on a social-emotional, cognitive, and physical level. It is both receptive (listening to music) and active (making music). Here, one tries to link rhythm, tempo, melody, and harmony to inner feelings. So, associations are made between music and feelings whilst also aiming to stimulate and activate the body into a non-stressful less anxious state.

What Can Art Mean Within a Therapeutic Context?

According to Massoumeh Farokhi (2011) art is a psychotherapeutic tool for solving educational and psychological problems. Art is loaded with experiences and emotions and can be used in a creative therapeutic setting as a medium to gain more insight into the human psyche. Art can also be a communication tool in the sense that it can bring out problems, emotions, and inner conflicts in a non-verbal way. Visual aids can be used to express thoughts and feelings that are more difficult to put into words. The artistic product obtained acts as a medium to bring about a verbal interaction between therapist and client. The aim is for the person to gain insight into their problems and, under the guidance of the creative therapist, strive for awareness and positive change.

To what Extent Can Art Therapy and Art Brut Contribute to the Wellbeing of Prisoners and Form a Bridge with Society?

Two ex-offenders were asked: How important has creating art been for your reintegration process?

Willy: *'Without art, I would be dead now. Thanks to art I find my place in society again. I can show society my view of the world and society can express its appreciation of my works. Recently I sold a work to an alderman of culture. It was framed beautifully, given a prominent place in the house and I was invited to dinner. That appreciation gives me oxygen*

Gust: *For me, too, art is vital. It is good to be appreciated. My works of art are a sign that I've landed on my feet. I am building something again. I used to be a photographer, now I am an artist. I like to use that status because it expresses in a positive way that I am creating something.*

Prisoners who have no art training but create in response to their feelings in a closed environment and who are not tainted by academic rules or social needs make their *own art*. This self-taught art gives space for their own style, with their own imagination as the only limit. This form is called outsider art, or Art Brut. It gives prisoners space to think and fantasise beyond the closed environment and make contact with society.

Founders in the Description and Collection of Outsider Art

Jean Dubuffet coined the term *Art Brut* in 1949, which stands for pure art, free from cultural influences. His definition reads: *We understand by these works made by people free from all artistic culture, in whom imitation, contrary to what happens with intellectuals, plays little or no part, so that their makers draw everything (subjects, choice of materials, means of transportation, rhythms, ways of writing, etc) from their own accounts and don't borrow from the schemes of either classical or fashionable art.*



An inmate artwork.
(2015). [Painting]. JJL
Lelystad, the Netherlands.
Photographer:
Peter van Olmen

The British art historian Roger Cardinal came up with the term *Outsider Art* in 1972. The term is broader than *Art Brut*. *Outsider Art* refers to artists who live and work outside the world of art, such as psychiatric patients, people with mental disabilities, prisoners, drug users, the homeless and the elderly. He does not believe that people, regardless of their mental condition or social origin, can be free from external influence. Cardinal opposed the idea that what was considered art was determined by museums, exhibitions, galleries and art experts. People are conditioned, as it were, to carry a preconceived idea of art that allows for cultural and historical transmission. Cardinal searches for unadulterated art, a search for a real, honest, original artistic expression.

As described above, art is not only a therapeutic tool to diagnose and treat anxiety and emotions but can also play an essential role in the life of a prisoner during his *Prison Time*. Working with art, in whatever form, has a therapeutic effect.

Since the opening in 2004 of the youth prison JJI Lelystad, it has been a challenge for the staff to develop and implement educational programs for very differentiated target groups. Large differences in age, intelligence and previous education made it difficult to develop an educational curriculum that connected to regular education outside the prison. At first, it was quite a difficult search.

The solution was found through tailor-made education, an individual education program for each pupil, as much and when possible, in line with the regular education programs outside of the prison. In the first few years, this seemed to work, but it soon became clear that when using this method students developed several specific skills less effectively. Non-formal skills would be developed less within this individual approach, and yet it is precisely these skills that these students need. They are essential for them to re connect to society upon their return. A student may have become an excellent welder, but if he has not learned to be on time, to work together, to listen, to communicate and so forth, his welding education is of little value to him or to society.

Therefore, this tuning is the essence of the guidance of the detainees. To give them the knowledge, attitude, and skills they need to reconnect with society. To restore this balance, the prison has adjusted the educational program by giving more room to non-formal learning through all kinds of art forms.

In addition to the already existing art therapy by therapists, the prison started to develop workshops in which music, visual arts and drama played a role in teaching nonformal skills.

Interview with a Creative Therapist and a Teacher

This interview takes place in the juvenile detention center in Lelystad, that houses young people between the ages of 15 and 26.

The young people staying at this prison have a so called PIJ measure (juvenile forensic psychiatric treatment) and are following a treatment program. That is why all forms of therapy can be used in this juvenile prison. The visual therapist who has been working with young people in closed settings for 10 years and the art teacher who does not work as a therapist but supervises young people in several creative activities have been involved since the opening of this institution in 2004. During the interview it became clear that there has been a lot of overlap in the activities and goals they both use.

Both the therapist and the creative activities supervisor use forms of art to make the detainees aware of the negative shells they are rooted in. Many young offenders have a very negative self-image, have had many experiences of failure, feel excluded, unappreciated and have often had traumatic experiences. They have been moved from one institution to another, some have had more than 20 supervisors and practitioners in their short lives and have as a con-

sequence lost their trust. In this context, the therapist and creative counsellor try, by means of creative forms and materials, to give the young people confidence again, to make them proud of who they are and to make them feel appreciated in their surroundings. Not only does *art* give them the opportunity to gain self-confidence by making something they are proud of, but also to further develop other skills, such as cooperation, communication, and recognising their own role.

In this treatment setting, it is a challenge for the therapists to overcome the reluctance of the detainees to participate in a form of therapy. Prisoners in general have a lot of trouble with their obligations. If they refuse the therapy, it can affect the duration of their detention. The resistance is partly explained by the therapists by the *unknown* with which detainees are confronted. In many cases they are not used to creating things that might give insight into their emotions and feelings. They are afraid of failure, have no knowledge of materials and often live in two extremes in which HAPPY and ANGRY determine their behavior.

In addition, they must also deal with a target group that uses *art* to express their state of mind. Think of the Rap music, the artistic expressions in their cells and on the walls, the poems and so on. Interaction with this target group is more positive and is used to find openings with detainees who are less open. Another approach that is used to reach the youngsters is the use of a wide variety of materials. Chopping soapstone with a hammer gives a completely different experience and perception than kneading a soft mass like clay. Making music gives a different experience than making an intuitive painting. To draw from life will create a different feeling than using paint brushes to express your feelings. But for the therapists, one thing is very clear: by doing, the detainees are better able to *talk*.

An example: A detainee was very closed, difficult to reach, only had superficial conversations, showed little emotion and so on; By showing him a painting by the 17th Century Dutch artist Jan Steen and hearing the story behind the painting, the detainee made a house himself. Eventually he made a whole village of houses where he let people/family from his past live and he started telling his story. One of the houses was depicted with an eye, which turned out to be his grandmother's house. He felt that his grandma always kept an eye on him, and he did not get much appreciation from her, but there was also love and still a form of trust. After he had proudly shown his grandmother the village, the conversation turned to the eye in her house. This conversation resolved a lot of mistrust for both the grandmother and the detainee. It also gave the therapist an opportunity to take the next step in the treatment process. In this, the therapists indicate that the diversity of material is a strong factor in making small measurable steps in the process of regaining trust and self-respect.

In the follow-up discussion, it was again clearly indicated that the behavioral therapists have so far made too little use of creative

therapy. According to these therapists, they do not yet see the added value that art therapy could have. In several projects, the behavioral scientists do provide goals, but these are usually not formulated in a smart way, which limits the yield. In most institutions, art therapy is not yet structurally used as a diagnostic tool. According to these therapists, they could certainly do something to address this matter.

Interviewees indicate that creative therapy and art workshops are used as a means and that few detainees actually continue to make art after their detention. It is not the tangible but the skills, attitudes and cognitions that they have developed through this creative therapy that may be important after their detention in order to re-join the society to which they were temporarily detached. It does not matter what is made, but it is the process that makes it a work of art. The therapists indicate that by means of art therapy (in the broadest sense) they have been able to provide the detainees with: self-confidence, pride, self-esteem, cooperation, communication, respect, and the confidence to ask questions like, how am I, what can I do, how do others look at me and so forth.

As one of the therapists said it:

For the art therapist a painting is a means to an end, not an end itself. In addition to creative therapy, the making of art can also be therapeutic.



Cooperative work from inmates during art classes. (2015). [Collaborative artwork]. JJI Lelystad, the Netherlands. Photographer: Peter van Olmen

Through these projects, different skills were practiced. The juveniles were given limited tools and just a few examples, which stimulated their senses enough to develop their own creative thinking. Juveniles had to come to solutions in consultation and argue

has respect for the results of the projects. Juveniles also show more respect towards the other participants in the project. The interaction between the different bodies that have participated in the project have become more positive. The hands project is shaped by the juveniles and their therapists and or (psychologists) They have worked together on the project, and this in turn has given a positive result in furthering the treatment process of those participating. Juveniles were more open to the treatment process and took responsibility for themselves.

Conclusion

In the various interviews, the responses show a clear indication that the power of art within the walls of a prison or institution can be essential for acquiring the skills needed to reconnect with society.

The *power of art* should be broadly applied so that, in addition to its therapeutic benefits, it is also used as a means of communication to discover talent whilst developing the skills needed to re-enter society.

The diversity of materials can encourage the detainees to overcome their fear and resistance to participate in creative therapy. Art is a multifunctional instrument that can certainly be used in the institutionalized environment to help prisoners communicate with their past, present, and future.

When I paint, it's like I'm cleaning up the mess in my head.
(prisoner's statement during an art workshop)

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ARTS-BASED
METHODS AND
METHODOLOGICAL
ISSUES OF
ART THERAPY

VIRÁG KISS

ARTS-BASED METHODS AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES OF ART THERAPY

Virág Kiss

Abstract

There are many ways how to work with art. Artistic interventions can take place in different frameworks with different professional backgrounds for different purposes. Art itself can be both a tool and a goal for these purposes.

In addition to artistic interventions in a broader sense, art therapy in a narrower and more professional sense is a profession and method that requires special skills. Art therapy is interrelated with art education, but as a discipline, it is separated from it. Both versions can be found even at the same time in prisons, where they operate with different tools and professionalism for different purposes. Outstanding works generated during artistic interventions can also be placed in an artistic context (e.g. *art brut* and *outsider art*).

The applied artistic methods should be adapted to the given framework, goals, and target group, respecting the limits of the competence.

Keywords: artistic intervention, arts-based methods, art therapy, art education, methodology

Introduction

There is a wide range of arts-based methods known. They work with art as a method with different professional backgrounds, and different goals, and they are also characterized by different use of concepts.

Arts-based Methods

Art can appear in different ways and in different roles the world, including in the life of prisons. Different arts-based interventions can be characterized by different professional frameworks (Kiss, 2017) such as:

- pedagogical – educational framework
- social framework
- the framework of psychotherapy
- spiritual (e.g. meditation) framework
- framework of art.

They provide different types of services to people. A fundamental difference may also be that the focus is more on the person or more on the art.

This is how Ábel Visky, the director (see also: pages no. 83 and 89) of the documentary *Tales from the Cell* (2020), filmed with imprisoned fathers and their children, articulated this difference in an interview (2021) with him: *I tried not to look at myself as a therapist and keep the process within the framework for which I can take responsibility as a filmmaker. We had to ask the question of what the primary purpose of storytelling is. To make the process of storytelling a therapeutic experience, or to make the tales suitable for making fairy-tale films? These are two very different approaches. In the first, the aesthetic and dramaturgical aspects are secondary to the therapeutic aspect, while in the second one they are paramount. At the beginning of the process, there was a period when I wanted to involve a narrative therapist Ildikó Boldizsár in the project - simply because she worked in prison in addition to her work in storytelling therapy. In the end, however, we discarded it because we realized that the project would also achieve the desired impact on the actors if we put the dramaturgical and aesthetic, i.e. the aspects of the filmmaking profession first. But basically, I believe that every work of art has a therapeutic aspect, even if the focus is not on it.*

A similar approach can be found in the case of Italian prison theaters. In her doctoral dissertation on Italian prison theaters, Kinga Szokács (2013) wrote:

With the participation of Fabio Cavalli, the sessions became increasingly artistic. The director supported the group from the very beginning. Although he believes that theater workshops launched in prisons have primarily therapeutic purposes, the activity in Rebibbia goes far beyond such purposes. One inmate actor says that when they receive positive and enthusiastic feedback on their performances, they have a hard time falling asleep because they are afraid their dreams will take them too far. (...) In his view, the purpose of prison theater work is catharsis, which is created during the coexistence of actors and the audience, that is, the rite that unfolds with the performance. The theater is a huge opportunity for inmates to live their daily lives differently.

Theatre as a teaching method for self-reflection has been considered paramount by many people. They don't want to stage their own suffering, they want to show themselves, which is a big risk, of course. A prison is a place of constant reflection for some, they reckon with the past and try to make plans for the future.

An essential element of Punzo's work is that his goal was not to educate, not to resocialize, but to create performances with high-quality theatrical work and run an independent company. He did not want to work as a social worker, but raised the bar: the inmates had to face working methods, qualities, and also overcome obstacles along with the director they had never encountered in their lives. The director's work is, of course, very educative, but the educational goal always achieves its effect indirectly: it is precisely the setting of the greater goal, the confrontation with the unknown, the processing and internalization of the unknown, through which change is created and the chances of reintegration into society increase. Thus, according to the director, the theater is not the mean by which something can be achieved, theater - as a creative activity of artistic work - is itself a goal that can indirectly have a different effect (Szokács, 2013).

It is also articulated when the focus is on the person:

We can speak of the social theater when the aesthetic dimensions of theatrical work are not the main point, but the socially, community-driven goals that seek to bring about change in the coexistence of members of a given community. In aesthetic-social dichotomy, in this sense, social theater is separated from the aesthetic theater in terms of goals, audience, venue, and production value (Szokács, 2013).

In general, it can be articulated that in the case of *education through art*, therapy, development, or facilitation, art can be a tool, in which case the emphasis is on personal work, which can be therapeutic, social, or even spiritual (e.g. meditation). In the case of *education for art*, the artistic product itself is the goal (Kiss, 2010).

In the case of arts-based methods, art can serve different personality development goals, can affect *soft skills*, and can make everyday life richer in stimuli and more versatile. Extensive scientific research confirms the impact of artistic activities on the human soul, yet its significance is even wider. They can be perceived as a nonverbal language and communication opportunity, fictional and symbolic worlds can be created through it, it moves aesthetic qualities and emotions, it can mean sensual stimulation, and it also gives space for creativity. Marián López Fernández Cao (2012) lists, among other things, the active connection with objective and subjective reality, conflict management and the development of new adaptation strategies, the possibility of independent choices, decisions and mistakes, learning planning, and the joy of uncertainty that derives from the multiple-meaning character of the art.

In summary, arts-based methods use art as a tool in the following areas (Kiss, 2017):

- information acquisition, learning, research

- development of skills, gaining experiences
- community building, team building, sensitization, inclusion
- supporting personal functioning and autonomy, resolving stress, expressing emotions, channeling angry feelings
- psychotherapy, processing traumas.

As we have seen in the examples, there is a combination of several professional backgrounds in art therapy and art based methods, and in addition to art, we can also find in them elements of psychotherapy, pedagogy, special education, social and spiritual methods. They are thus characterized by a kind of interdisciplinarity, a wide range of trends, branches of art, and modality, and a number of adaptive versions are present in all fields of application, including prisons. In her article in the *Prison Review*, Zsuzsanna Juhász (2016) distinguishes between art therapy and art programs with non-therapeutic purposes and professional methodology.

Artists can appear in the prison in several roles:

- they can bring their own art, i.e. paint on the wall, perform (music, dance, theater). Inmates and possibly employees can also be involved
- lead art projects with community participation that create a common art product through an open creative process
- they can mentor individual art processes. They teach inmates (and possibly workers) art as a kind of tutor, they can run an art workshop.

It is not only the artists themselves but also representatives of all kinds of supporting professions who can also deliver artistic activities. In addition to the art therapist and the art teacher, the social worker, pastor, special education teacher, etc. it can also bring artistic methods into the walls of the prison:

- art teachers and drawing teachers can provide art training, teach techniques, develop skills, and introduce works of art to inmates. This may have a therapeutic effect, but it is not intended to be therapeutic
- during the development activities of art pedagogical character, the goals are self-efficiency, productivity, the development of *Soft skills*, the creation of an art product with an artistic value, the arousal of creativity and productivity, and the spending of free time meaningfully
- the prison can also host community-building art activities, which can help inmates to develop contact with each other and with family members, as well as have an impact on prison staff and co-operation with them
- restorative justice methods can also be assisted by art therapy and arts-based methods¹

¹ https://mental-healthmatters.eu/hu/home-hu/?fbclid=IwARoS9YGQZp-jtPFk54rMDVh_l5cE-BOj_UU6hPxYXuY-6znxwmUMTabHU-zrHzA

- stress-relieving and meditation activities, during which the experience of flow is insured, tension is dissipated, artistic mindfulness techniques are applied
- empowerment processes through art, where the emphasis is on decisions, entitlement, participatory function, and the exercise of equality and one's personal identity, individual preferences, and autonomous functioning
- activities with (psycho)therapeutic aim and focus can be led by trained art therapists and art psychotherapists. In this case, the focus is entirely on the person, their internal processes, and possibly their traumas.

Psychologist and art therapist Zsuzsanna Geréb distinguishes the following forms of art interventions (2022):

- art as a supportive environment, symbolism of overall human experiences, space, transitional space, ritual (relaxed enjoyment, or thoughtful presence of the viewer)
- art as entertainment and recreation (active involvement of participants)
- art and craft as occupational therapy with structuring time, self, and mental focus
- art and craft as rehabilitation (cognitive and emotional) in focus with self-effectiveness motor skills and productivity
- art as mindfulness technique, art and experiencing of the *flow*
- art as therapy in the form of sensory and kinesthetic experience
- the process of art-making
- art (psycho)therapy as self-expression, self-reflection
- art (psycho)therapy as meaning-making, non-verbal narrative
- art (psycho)therapy and its relational aspect, reflectivity, and mentalization.

In the case of arts-based methods and especially in art therapy, activity is an important tool, the action itself, that we can do something for ourselves, make decisions, express our personal preferences and choose freely within the framework of artistic activity. This may be particularly pronounced in the context of the situation in prison.

With artistic methods, feelings that are difficult to articulate verbally, which are concealed, repressed, and hidden from ourselves and others can also be approached. It involves the whole personality. Art is a *sharp tool*, so you need to be careful with it because it can open wounds, it can shift even the deepest layers of your personality, but the situation may not be suitable, or the person one is working with may not be ready for it. Kinga Szokács writes the following about the experiences of Italian prison theaters: *Showing emotions can make you vulnerable, so inmates are only able to show their aggression during hard physical exercises, for example. An important*

rule in prison is that you should not be surprised, you should not show tender or aggressive emotions, because this can make you vulnerable. Inmates, therefore, had to re-learn how to express their emotions and how to deal with them (Szokács, 2013).

In the case of artistic methods, it turns out on many occasions that spiritual things shift even in a situation where the facilitator does not expect it, this is not the goal. It is therefore important to create security for artistic interventions and especially for therapeutic applications. It also involves a framework and atmosphere, as well as the competence of the therapist to understand the dynamics of mental processes and to be able to handle the situation, to help the client relax.

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Art Therapy (Kiss, 2010, 2014ab, 2017)

One of the special versions of arts-based methods is art therapy. In public discourse, it is customary to call therapeutic any other form of arts-based activity to which some therapeutic effect or purpose is attributed.

In the following parts of the chapter, we focus on this special professional version of art therapy, which developed in the 20th century and gradually became an independent profession in the second half of the century.

In the case of art therapy, the terms *expressive therapy*, *creative therapy* and *non-verbal therapy* are also used, which avoids the problems of the concept of art. The concept of therapy is also debatable, primarily because of its medical nature, but since both the professionals and common people still use it today (although part of the professionals moves away from the medical nature and approach), we will call it that way.

There is no art therapy, but there are art therapies, i.e. many different versions and types have developed.

Art was partly introduced into psychotherapeutic clinical work, and it became the starting point of the art-psychotherapy model (through Margaret Naumburg). On the other hand, it also developed through the artistic work with verbally hard-to-reach groups (Edith Kramer), and this has become the direction of creativity-focused art therapy. It is more widely used in the field of special education and pedagogy, primarily as a holistic development (Viktor Löwenfeld, Sándor Éva), which is called art education therapy. Eventually, we can partly find the roots of its formation in reform pedagogy. Both the trend of art therapies related to psychotherapy as well as to creativity-centered ones and holistic development can be extended to other target groups. For instance, art therapy is not to be offered only to the ill, but to anyone, who wants to enhance their self-awareness or wants to process some difficult life situation, a trauma. Work-based

art therapy works also with well-verbally expressive/communicative groups, and not merely special education target groups benefit from holistic development. So, these are the methods created for a specific target group but are also universally applicable and adaptable. There are special rules for the field of art psychotherapy in every country, which can be more liberal or strict. However, in reality, the types are not distantly separated from each other, in other words, there are many individual versions, many essentially different forms and trends, there are also well-defined art therapy methods, and we encounter art therapists who use the *freestyle* methodology.

By art therapy, we imply a field where the goals and the professionalism are applied, and the framework is also *therapeutic in nature*. Judith Rubin states (Rubin, 2005), who is one of the outstanding authors of the field of art therapy, that art-therapy is not, for instance, a simple leisure artistic activity, even if you work with the sick or disabled or, on the other hand, imprisoned people, and even if it is held by an art-therapist, but working not for therapeutic purpose, i.e. with non-therapeutic methods, and frameworks. On the other hand, a simple craft activity can also be an art therapy if the goals, the problem-solving, and the applied methodology and approach, i.e. professionalism are therapeutic (Rubin, 2005, 1999/2019). These will be discussed later in the methodological chapter.

The European Federation of Art Therapy (EFAT) claims:

Art therapy is a mental health profession that also has applications in social, educational, and medical fields. Art therapists enlist the creative process of art-making to enhance the mind/body connection, foster personal development, and improve the psychological, and/or effective, cognitive, and relational well-being of individuals, groups and families of all ages and backgrounds. Art therapy is based on the premise that the creative process generated in artistic self-expression, when practiced by a professionally trained art therapist, fosters the growth and development of the agentic sense of self. This art-making process involves personal exploration with visual/tactile art materials (drawing, painting, sculpture, and other expressive art forms, etc.) where imagery may or may not result.

Traditions may differ and what they mean by art therapy may vary from country to country. Over time, this moves towards unification as the professionalism of the field gets entrenched everywhere. Along with this, the situation is different in countries in which it may have been applied for decades (eg USA, UK) and in those, it is not yet or has not started very long or is not in alignment with the previous international protocol.

There are many trends and types of art therapy according to the applied theoretical (psychotherapeutic) framework (e.g. psychodynamic, Jungian, person-centered, anthroposophical, etc.) and the used methodology. Their target group can be anyone, yet special target groups require special methods within art therapy work as they need to employ a special focus and framework. Such a special target group for art therapy work could be the prison community,

inmates, and even staff (including a possibility of joint craft in heterogeneous groups).

Art therapy in this sense is, therefore, primarily a method (in many versions) and a way of thinking that adapts different individual and community situations to the goals and objectives of therapy and frameworks (in part) through the use of art tools. Arts-based methods can also be considered as an extended version of art therapy, where art therapy methods are used in a non-therapeutic setting, such as in arts-based research or team-building training.

It is characterized by the principle of the smallest intervention. An important principle is an impunity and most often it is also an impossibility of aestheticization, in the latter case there are exceptions. It requires a psychologically and physically closed space.

Art therapy can be individual or group, group leadership is a separate competence and is not part of all art therapy methods.

An important issue might be the efficiency of the art therapy. This is not easy to research because both art and psychotherapy contain areas with many spontaneous elements that are difficult to research. Nevertheless, there is extensive research and specific methodologies have been developed for it.

Art therapy is not the same as art pedagogy and art education, however, in his 1984 text *Art therapy in prisons*, Joyce Laing (1984) speaks of the inseparability of the two areas in the context of artistic work in prisons:

The educational and therapeutic aspects of the arts are not separate entities but rather points of a continuum, both being complementary to the other. From the educational end of the spectrum towards the therapeutic, the arts include technical skills, craftsmanship, experimentation of media, the study of the history of art, art appreciation, self-expression, spontaneous image-making, psychotherapeutic art (Laing, 1984).

Art Therapy, Art Intervention, and Artistic Value, Art Brut, Outsider Art

The concepts of art brut and outsider art are closely related to art therapy (discussed in detail in other chapters), where some outstanding products of therapeutic work may be placed in an artistic context, as may work from other artistic interventions. Through art brut and outsider art galleries, they also gain value and provide an insight into the personal functioning of marginalized groups through artwork.

This is what art therapist Katalin Erzsébet Komáromi writes about this (2014):

... While art therapy is not really aimed at art education (as many still believe today) or any professional or conceptual support of the creation of works, creators have the opportunity to articulate their most personal existential realities. The essence of fine arts therapy is about the visual representation of unconscious contents and the integration

of all these contents into the personality through some kind of reflection or discourse. These contents appear at different levels and are by no means expected to be related to the field of visual self-expression on any level. The display and reworking of unconscious and often hidden content is similar to letting clean water from the Earth, hidden in the deeper layers of it.

By that, I mean artesian wells, which derive their pristine clear water from high-pressure water lenses enclosed by rocks deep below the groundwater level. Artesian water is closed between two impermeable layers ...(...)... In the same way, it is not always possible to break through those layers in therapeutic work, and even if this is possible, the pressure may not be enough to break up the crystal-clear contents. It is also possible to find a shallow well, but sometimes, as a natural wonder, an inexhaustible fountain can suddenly start flowing ceaselessly.

This is how I view the unpredictable works of art, and these phenomena cannot be interpreted only within the framework of healing, moreover, this kind of miracle requires a completely different approach. We can call it Art Brut, or Outsider.'

Methodological Issues of Arts-based Methods

There are special methodological issues in the practice of art facilitation and arts-based methods. We list methodological issues that are similar in all branches of art, and we sometimes refer to differences in the branches of art. In addition to practical experience, we discuss the most basic issues along with professional interviews from doctoral research and the literature.

Art can be used as a tool for a variety of purposes and with a wide range of methodologies. The same basic art tool works differently; its meaning can vary whether it is used in a therapeutic situation or a community-building activity. This assemblage put together from small pieces can be a *self-puzzle* in a therapeutic mindset, and a community-work put together from many small parts in a team building. With regard to methodological tools, it is important to select them from a wider array, not for their own purposes, but always according to the specific objective and taking into account the specific possibilities, just like a painter that creates a painting aiming for the right shade. A small difference can also have significance. An example of this can be seen in the second half of the chapter dealing with storytelling projects. It can definitely be sensed that, in addition to expertise, an open, intuitive attitude, and attunement to participants is paramount.

The Modalities, i.e. the Branches of Art

Two basic cases can be created from this creative and receptive, in other words, art can be applied in a creative and receptive. In the active or creative case, the participant makes the work, he *creates*, that is, paints, draws, plays music, moves, and so on. In the

receptive or affiliated case, the participant listens to music, looks at another painting, sculpture, drawing, that is, their work, and so on. The two basic situations are often combined. In addition, there is a receptive part of creation, the creator watches and listens to their own work, as well as there is also a creative part of the reception, everyone watches or listens to a work relying upon their own personal history, attitudes and associations. There is a mutual creation of meaning between the creator and the recipient through the work.

Arts-based methods, and art facilitation (teaching, therapy, coaching, etc.) can work with all branches of art, but it is worth considering the characteristics of a given art modality. For example, visual activities are more time and device consuming than other modalities, but the product remains (can also be viewed later) and is taken out of the human body. Music, motion, or drama works in the here and now, with multiple shorter instructions. Motion involves the whole body, in the case of music the action can be transferred from the body to a device, the instrument, but it is also possible to work with body sounds without devices. Art therapy trainings also cover the psychological effects and significance of certain techniques, instruments, body parts, and forms of movement. Here, we do not discuss tools with specific modalities.

Modalities can also be combined, so we can talk about intermodality, multimodality, complex or integrated art therapy, and arts-based methods. This gives more space to the primarily nonverbal term and indicates a richer set of tools in a given situation. After an inward-looking individual visual activity, a common instrumental improvisation can activate and re-create a community focus, or conversely, after a joint instrumental or movement improvisation, embodying individual experiences into a visual creation aids verbal access and gives a fixed imprint to a transient state.

Among the complex methods, multimodality means working with several branches of art, but the therapeutic method works separately, in the case of intermodality, transmodality, we directly transfer or create the experience from one modality to another. In the second half of the chapter, all this will be clearly discernible from the professional descriptions of the therapist, Ildikó Boldizsár, in connection with a specific storytelling situation.

A Question of Framework

Artwork is often intimate, and personal, so the framework it takes place in is not irrelevant. In the case of artistic interventions, the framework primarily serves the purpose of security. As art features can quickly penetrate deep into the personality and evoke partially unconscious content, the issue of security can be of critical importance, i.e., a key question of whether the situation is safe enough to bring deep internal content, repression, and trauma to the surface. Security requires a *psychologically and physically closed space*. Different types of frameworks can provide different levels of security,

i.e. the extent and depth of art that can and should be worked on depends on the framework.

One of the most thoughtful ways to create safety lies in the atmosphere created by the therapist, teacher, or facilitator, and in the case of art therapy, the *therapeutic relationship* between the therapist and the client. A tendency to refrain from judgment can be an important element of this, which in many cases can be accompanied by the exclusion of aesthetics. The triple requirement described by Carl Rogers is acceptance, empathy, and congruence, which are the foundations of security. This is in sheer contrast to the traditional situation in prisons, so anyone who wants to work in this field should take this into account.

In addition, the exclusion or inclusion of a competitive situation may be an additional issue because the competitive situation acts against security, still, it is often a matter of artistic activities and products: for example, the question of whose work should be selected for an exhibition.

Fortunately, art is not only deep-seated, open-ended, but it can also provide some protection through *as if space* and *as if a situation*, meaning that it's not an individual, it's *just* a picture, *just* a role... Provided, this option is left open with the instructions of the facilitator leading the artistic intervention (see the section on instructions). In addition, there are fewer personal forms that also provide protection against vulnerabilities.

Art can be worked within both individual and group forms. This means not only two basic forms, but a wide variety of variations, because there are many variations of group work, depending on how much it is based on intense group dynamics, coordination and collaboration, or merely on working in a common space. The size of the group is decisive, it is possible to work with smaller or larger groups, but the nature and atmosphere will certainly be different.

Groups can be closed, open, or partially open. The members of the closed groups are always the same, which can be very safe, the members know each other very well after a while, and trust among them can be built. Every impulse comes from inside and stays there, its advantages and disadvantages are a kind of permanence. Anyone can be a member of an open group at any time, which is why it is not so safe, but varied, full of new impulses, still it is more difficult to develop habits, they always need to be updated, the relationships are not so deepened. Partially open groups are located between the two: controlled, but they still allow new members to join. Artistic work is defined in the same way by group habits and group culture as anything else, even its representation.

The time frame is one of the fundamental determinants of artistic work. The art genres and techniques themselves also have their time requirement, which needs to be aligned with psychodynamic and group dynamics processes dependent on a time frame. For example, even though I want to move fast due to either internal driving forces or external limitations, the watercolor has an inflexible dry-

ing time. One of the biggest tasks of an art facilitator is timing, i.e. managing time. It is necessary that participants get into the activity somehow, and there is a time frame for this, just as important is the deduction at the end. The latter is perhaps even more important as the success of this depends on how and in what condition the client leaves the space, whose life between the two sessions can be affected.

Time management is not concerned with just one section, but rather with the whole process. There are times when we think only in one section, and artistic intervention can be a multi-sectional or regular activity. There are short-term and long-term time management, and there are some that do not have a designated endpoint, i.e. their duration is not known in advance. These showcase completely different situations. In addition, not only the duration of the encounter but also its frequency are considered internal processes.

Art therapy groups framed in the safest way, such as psychodynamic dance therapy groups, are not only closed, but members mustn't have any relationship with each other (as well as with two therapists) in the past or present outside the therapeutic group, for safety. They can't be friends, co-workers, acquaintances, and they can't even be connected on Facebook or any other social platform.

What is also related to this is the obligation of confidentiality (see *psychologically closed space*). This can also be requested in open groups, for example, in the case of fully open movement meditations, it is repeated over and over again every hour (*just tell about your own experiences, not about others*), but this is neither controllable in any way, nor is it common.

The space we work in is also part of the framework. Latitude is required for greater security. Éva Sándor calls this space a *protective space* and the therapist a *protective person* in the case of the art therapy method they have created (Sándor, Horváth, 1995), this can be applied in other areas as well.

In the case of art therapies, the tools used during the artistic activities and the fate of the finished products are also part of the framework. Who provides the equipment and what is allowed at all to be taken to jail? It's usually a fruitful idea to work with the simplest tools, those that can be easily found. All of this is paramount, and can sometimes be a key element in planning an artistic activity.

Another conundrum is who stores the finished work and who will own it (prison, therapist or facilitator, creator)? This is a considerable issue for group work specifically. To what extent can it be public and under what conditions? Can it be sold and if it can, who owns the revenue? Can it be marked in an exhibition that the work was made in prison? Is it allowed to take photos and videos during the creative process? What may it be eventually used for?

In the case of art therapy (in the narrowest sense), all of these are elements of a so-called *therapeutic contract* that is expressed orally or often in writing, based on a common agreement. Therapists put great emphasis on this. In addition to the above, the specific

therapeutic objectives and the methods used are included, and this should provide a kind of guarantee. These are also relevant issues for arts-based methods and interventions in a broader sense, but they are more flexible, less fixed, and should be taken into account in any case.

The methods that can be used in artistic interventions are highly dependent on the framework. In the case of prisons, this is particularly intense due to the special, rigorous, and rigid nature of the institution. If difficult feelings, and internal conflicts come to the surface, can the medium handle and *keep* the certain imprisoned person?

Instruction, Reflection, and Adaptability

Instruction and feedback, and reflection (assessment in pedagogy) determine the artistic activity of the participants. It is not the same whether the activity takes place in a competitive or just safe and non-competitive situation, or whether the person or rather the art itself is at the center. There are many variations of a given instruction and the reflection palette is very wide, there are many ways to react and give feedback to an art product created by the participant (s)... music, movement, visual creation, text, case or dramatic solution, video (etc.).

The instructions may provide the participating creators with different degrees of freedom. Completely free creation with free choice of subject and technique is one of the extremes, and this is also the case in art therapy situations. But narrowing down the participant's freedom (for example, that they can use only 3 colors) can also be a stimulus for creativity and may enable focused work even in a therapeutic situation. There are good *templates* and games that can be adapted to the situation in different forms (we'll see an example of this in the later storytelling description).

The instructions may be related to perception (see the storytelling example below), which directs attention to ourselves and the situation here and now. We can work with projective methods (Kiss, Bergmann, 2014), in which case the internal contents are projected onto a *calling stimulus*, such as the well-known projective tests (Rorschach test, mood test, family drawing test) or we can also work with a completely free artwork - in this case, the white sheet or the media offered for the projection are the projection surface and the calling stimuli.

It is possible to work with the arts in individual, paired in smaller and larger group work forms, in each case it is worth thinking about the situation and role of the participants. There is a huge amount of literature in this area, but it also requires a lot of experience. The group situation can be liberating and inspiring, but people are not always ready for that. All of these highly depend on the partner(s) and the quality of the connections – which can be practiced, habits can be reworked, and the so-called soft skills can be bolstered with appropriate facilitation. It is worth noting that it can sometimes be

stressful for participants, either for personal reasons or because the group is difficult to work in. A solution to this might lie in sharing personal experiences, but it requires creating an atmosphere of acceptance without judgment. (In this case, it is crucial to make sure that everyone puts out self-messages: *This is how I experienced...*, *This is how I feel...* Blaming other participants should be avoided.)

A basic task can take many forms; small changes can take the job in completely different directions. For example, there are several variations of drawing a tree (which is a classic projective task): draw a tree, a magic tree, a tree of life, a family tree, draw yourself in the form of a tree, draw a tree with different characters (witch, fairy, king, warrior, dragon, etc.), draw a tree that appears in the context of a particular story (this is the storytelling example in the continuation of this chapter), etc.

In a dynamic examination of human drawings, psychotherapist István Hárđi made his clients draw human drawings and animal drawings at different times. He examined how changes in drawing elements and characteristics are related to internal changes and the development of the diseases of his clients. He summarized his results in his book *Dynamic Drawing Examination* (Hárđi, 1983/2016, 1985). His processed drawing collection consists of more than 80,000 drawings, and the collection of drawing series is still going on today. His methods and results can also be used in prison.

In addition to giving instruction, there are also many aspects to the issue of reflection and evaluation (Kiss, 2013). In general, it is worth avoiding downgrading. The so-called *active listening* (Gordon, 1997) can also be a dominant communication technique for art products, that is, we reflect and *read back* the specifically perceptible characteristics of the art product (large, small, loud, quiet, etc.) without qualification. It can be compared to something like, *It's like...*, *It reminded me*, and *It made me feel like...* This is related to the method of amplification associated with Jung's name, where some known cultural content is associated with dreams and art products for interpretation. Direct interpretation is also conceivable, but it is much better and more authentic for the creator himself to interpret his/her own work, as the interpretation of others may lead to a mistake, or they may speak of themselves even if they are unaware of it. This is partly the reason, why it is worthwhile and advisable for the facilitator or therapist to carry out their own self-awareness work and to take part in supervision (to look at and recognize their own content and blind spots in such situations). In addition, one can raise questions: the most important thing is what their work means to the creator himself, how they experience the process, and what they see in what has been created. The facilitator or therapist can assist them in this process with their own reflections as needed and in alignment with the principle of least intervention.

It is also possible to reflect in the way that we do not express our reflective thought, but we reflect, unfold or modify the experienced situation with another instruction that responds to it - we see several

examples of this in the storytelling situation described below.

If the artistic-aesthetic quality of the product also matters, and especially if this is the goal, it is absolutely necessary to provide technical or even aesthetic assistance with direct instructions, and reflections, but it is certainly advisable to limit it to the level of necessity.

From what has been described so far, it can be seen that adaptability is an important feature in the application of arts-based and art therapy methods: we also see an example of this way of thinking in the following storytelling example.

One Example of Storytelling from the Book of Ildikó Boldizsár

In her book *The Queen Who Imagined Herself as Bird - Storytelling Group Stories* (2019), fairytale therapist Ildikó Boldizsár presents a fairytale therapy program held simultaneously in women's and men's prisons, the aim of which was to bolster family ties in the name of reintegration. I will now highlight a few specific moments from this, in support of the framework, instruction and reflection, where methodological aspects and adaptive thinking can be perceived. The program consisted of a total of 6 occasions and an of *family day* held at an external location like a closing process, whose aim was to enable prisoners to connect meaningfully and more deeply with their families during it, especially with their children on Mother's Day. During the 6 sessions, they did not prepare for the family day directly, but at the end of the process a softened, self-reflective state and situation was developed, in which the participants were able to be together with their family members in a spontaneous and creative way, enriching their mutual experiences.

In the following description of Ildikó Boldizsár, both the different modalities and the special circumstances of the prison are mentioned: *At the entrance, I had to hand over all my personal belongings, taking only those fairytale therapy devices that had been carefully inspected: papers, stationery, shawls, postcards depicting travel, and my favorite instrument, koshi. There are prisons where a trainer can take in even fewer things than here.*

The fairy-tale therapy processes presented by Ildikó Boldizsár focused on fairy tales, but she also used the tools of other modalities, such as visual, musical, and dramatic activities in their processing. She chose the modalities and the convenient way of working according to the specific situation, based on the needs and dynamics of the group. In her report, one group worked well with rhyming or children-songs and drawing, but the other group could not adapt to these forms of activity, thus she had to look for other solutions and forms of expression.

The role of modalities is also illustrated in the description where a tale had to be completed, and some participating women made spontaneous drawings in connection with it: *... They liked the opportunity with the role of bunny, but I felt that they had no idea about such*

solutions in their own lives, like apologizing, starting all over, building something new. In the drawings made at the level of the six-year-olds, it is mainly seen barren, lifeless trees with broken hearts in the middle of the trunk. I didn't want to leave them in this hopeless sadness, but at the same time, I felt that practicing rhymes and singing together would be little to be more optimistic now. So I gave up my planned exercise, placed two chairs in the middle of the room, and shouted, 'These two chairs are not chairs, but thresholds to freedom.' They were bewildered. I went on to say that only those who can say three species of birds can go out. Whoever succeeded could choose a card from the row of Dixit cards on the table that most closely resembled his imagined future (p. 218.).

In this text, in addition to the role of modalities in the complex work mode, the current aspects of instruction, *choosing from a palette* and adaptability emerge, as well as a reflection on the content brought by the participants in the form of a new, improvised instruction – which is to be done for a specific purpose. In addition to the texts and the perceptible current states of mind, spontaneous (non-instructional) drawings play a diagnostic role. Ildikó Boldizsár mentions the possibility of a tension-relieving effect of the planned musical sequence, which, however, she does not consider to be a good ending in the current state, so she creates a situation with a dramatic new instruction that meets the purpose (to create positive feelings and hope). At this point she, however, doesn't get realistic but idyllic answers, so she has to work even further in the direction of reality. To do this, she chose the tale of *Lotilkó's wings* from her personal *repertoire* of methodologies, but she also had to take into account that the participants also had to *land* safely in the last group session of the 6 occasions.

...The storytelling was followed by a sensory tour of the tale: they entered the tale and listened to what sound they heard first. Since it was the last encounter, I didn't want to open the intrapsychic plane to find themselves in the story, to see which scene do they identify with themselves, what they were doing there, what was happening to them right at that time, because it would have been irresponsible to leave the group unsupervised. That's why I took everyone to the same place, the feather collection place. I said that, although there are situations where the loss of the old wing is painful, it still has some benefits. Everyone got a huge raven feather cut out of cardboard. I asked them to think through their lives in terms of whether they have wing parts, or feathers it is about time to get rid of them. I also asked them to write on one side of the feather what they don't want to transfer from their old lives to their new ones. They then turned the feather over and wrote on the other side what new feathers – qualities, abilities, circumstances – they would need, to make their new life as happy and free as they had imagined at the beginning of the session. In other words, what they need to grow in themselves to start over. I encouraged them to be honest as we wouldn't share the answers right now, and what they had written on the feather remained their innermost secret (p. 219-220.).

The descriptions make us feel the atmosphere and the lack of

judgment, which does not mean, however, that participants would *get stuck in their stories*.

A similar description of the storytelling processes carried out in prison can be found in Margó Luzsi's book *Rabmesék*, which was published in 2020. She also launched a storytelling project where inmates told stories on CD to their children as a Christmas present. Unfortunately, in the meantime, the reintegration programs themselves (including these) have been abolished in Hungary.

Conclusion

In artistic interventions, art can be used for various purposes and with several professional backgrounds as a tool with specific professional characteristics. The therapist has to have competencies not only in the field of art, but also in the field of working with the target groups concerned, and all these competencies should be applied adaptively to certain conditions.

Finally, a thought from Ildikó Boldizsár: *I really like to tell a story in prison, because the space expands... When I tell a story somewhere else, somehow the air around us will always narrow and the community gets more and more tight – but in prison, just the opposite happens: everything will expand as if the walls are tumbling down, and the life is flowing in. Inmates get perceptibly full of energy... Every word has an extraordinary meaning. Much bigger than elsewhere. As the stakes are higher, the responsibility for storytelling is greater. If the tale does not address them, they will not stay polite, but rather get destructive, they would interrupt the story, they would make inappropriate remarks, reject questions, and tasks related to the tale.*

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ART EDUCATION IN PRISONS

ED SANTMAN

ART EDUCATION IN PRISONS

Ed Santman

About the benefits of arts, formal and non-formal learning

Abstract

The arts can be a powerful tool in prison education. It can be used as a platform for non-formal learning. It can also be used to develop soft skills and employability skills. In general adults prefer learning through experiences, like an arts project where a group of people work as a team on a wall painting, or where people are making music or working on a theatre piece. These practices have great potential to help people to develop new skills through non formal education.

Keywords: Non-formal learning, employability skills, soft skills, the power of arts, desistance.

Introduction

More than 200 years ago the infamous Marquis de Sade organised theater pieces in the French prison where he had to spend part of his life and where the Paris elite came to watch the performances. Prison art has been around for a while. Nowadays it is recognized that prison arts programs can provide strong learning experiences. Evaluations have found many correlations that show the transformative power of art education. Competences like work ethic, self-esteem, creativity, motivation, self-confidence, emotional control, and an ability to work with others are found to improve because of arts programs. Interdisciplinary research also shows cognitive, social, and personal competencies can be improved through art practices.

Art Education

Within the more traditional art education, focusing on the result (a painting, a theatre play, and concert, etc.) has always been key. This, of course, seems obvious. In the English class you learn English, in the mathematics class you learn Mathematics, and so on. The importance of subjects such as mathematics, chemistry, history, or languages have never been discussed. In formal education creative classes are often seen as relatively unimportant. This is reflected in the school report that children receive every 3 months. Traditionally, at the top are subjects such as language and mathematics, and at the bottom of the list are the creative classes, sometimes just above the grade for physical education. The behavior of a student and his commitment are often mentioned separately.

ACHIEVEMENT

	NOV.	FEB.	APRIL	JUNE
Reading	C	a	a	a
Mathematics	B	B	B ⁺	a
Language Arts	B ⁺	a	a	a
Applied Spelling	B	B	a	a
Science	a	a	a	a
Social Studies	B	B	B ⁺	a
Handwriting		a	B	a
Art	a	a	a	a
Physical Education		B	B	a
Music – Vocal	B	a	a	a
Instrumental				

A – Excellent B – Good C – Satisfactory
 D – Poor F – Failure

PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

	NOV.	FEB.	APRIL	JUNE
Effort	S	S	S	S
Conduct	S	S	S	S
Preparedness	S	S	S	S
Courtesy	S	S	S	S
Health Habits	S	S	S	S

S – Satisfactory U – Unsatisfactory

An old, stained American grade school report card. (1964-1965.). [Grade Report]. Photographer: David M. Source: Public Domain. Dreamstime.com shorturl.at/jnqtN

However, art education has a long-hidden capital, which is also an integral 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. In general, it can be said that most art projects can only be successful if several conditions are met. Projects like making a mural together, working on a piece of theater or playing together in a band or orchestra demands a lot from the participants. Several skills such as: collaboration, reflective thinking, effective communication, being reliable, active listening, flexibility, problem solving, time management and other social skills are constantly needed to achieve a good result. Making music with a group of people, for example, is complex. You shouldn't just be able to play your instrument. You must listen to others while playing. You must prepare well. You must understand that you are part of a team. You must be on time, and understand that the others can't start without you.

Although the arts in a prison setting are often related to recreational activities, they can also be used to work on the skills above, often referred to as employability skills.

The Potential of Arts in Prisons

A review of the literature reveals that art projects can also contribute to safety in prisons. Prisoners who participate in art programs improved their discipline if they are involved in arts programs. Inmates participating in an art program recognise that art helps them to express themselves, relieve stress, feel happier, be more creative and make better choices. Arts education also has the potential to influence human development. Interdisciplinary studies published and lectured on conferences in neurobiology, education, and criminal justice journals show that the arts can be a powerful and highly valuable activity for people at any age, including prisoners. Finding the right words for a poem, practicing a musical instrument, or memorizing lines in a play is hard work.

Researchers have found that arts education can lead to improved writing skills and better performance in other academic disciplines, as well as better social skills. Arts education also has been associated with other important skills, such as the willingness to experiment and learn from mistakes, self-criticism, reflection, and persistence in completing projects. Another benefit of prison art programs is that they can be a first step to further learning through building confidence and self-esteem.

Prison arts programs can offer an opportunity for inmate-artists to reconnect with society. Displaying or selling artwork, performing music and theater, or having public readings of inmate prose and poetry, provides inmates with the opportunity to engage in positive exchanges with the community before and after release.

The Potential of Different Artforms

We should divide the arts into activities like dance, theatre and other art forms that that requires a group of people to participate collectively or individually. Music can be an individual activity but can also be practiced in a group. Painting, drawing, creative writing and composing raps can also be very collective or a very individual process.

Art disciplines that require teamwork can be used to develop employability skills such as:

- being reliable
- giving a positive contribution to a process
- delivering a set task
- show time management skills
- develop reflective thinking
- learn to deal with criticism
- show flexibility when dealing with problems
- completing a challenging task within a given timescale
- demonstrate the ability to listen to others.

All these skills and competences are necessary to create a successful piece of art with a team. The same skills, often called employability skills, are needed to find a job and to keep the job. Soft skills acquired through the arts can be described in certificates, which can help people to find a job.

Prison staff who can be skeptical about art classes often become very positive when the link with employability is explained.

Formal and Non-formal Education

In recent years many educators concluded that formal educational systems like our traditional schools, do not really prepare people for the quick socio-economic changes in our current society.

To understand the value of art programs in prisons we must make a distinction between informal, non-formal and formal education. The current hierarchically structured education system, from primary school to university can be seen as formal education. Informal education is the lifelong process in which individuals learn attitudes, values, skills, and knowledge from their daily experiences at work, from their friends and family, from social media, and so forth. Organized educational activities outside the established formal system such as art programs in prisons can lead to non-formal learning experiences. The outcome of this is in general more predictable than from informal learning.

Formal education is linked with schools and training institutions; non-formal with community groups and other organizations; and informal covers what is left like interactions with friends, family, and colleagues. In everyday life there may be some overlap between in-

formal and non-formal learning.

As we have seen non-formal education is about acknowledging the importance of education, learning and training which takes place outside recognized educational institutions.

Four characteristics can be associated with non-formal education:

- relevance to the needs of disadvantaged groups
- concern with specific categories of persons
- a focus on clearly defined purposes
- flexibility in organisation and methods.

Arts-in-prison programs also work on a more individual level, they give inmates something different to talk about with their family visiting the prison. Kids can be proud of their parents or family members because of their guitar playing or because of the pictures they have painted. This will help to erase the traumatic experience of having a member of the family in prison.

Art can be a means to give people a voice to express their anger, their frustration and the problems they face within the prison system. It can also be a tool to reflect on the choices that were made in their lives, or as a tool to forget everything and spend your time in a useful way by developing new skills.

Sometimes the arts might even help people in a very individual way to improve their situation in prison. If somebody is skilled in drawing or painting portraits, they will very likely be asked by their fellow inmates to make portraits of their family members. This will put them in a very special position, they equally can ask something in return for this.

In most countries inmates will not be allowed to have money, but often they can buy food from a prison store using an account that the prison has created for them. This leads to an alternative economic system between the prison walls: *if you make a drawing of my wife, I will buy a chicken for you, or I will organise some drugs for you.*

The Power of Art

Most criminologists will agree that a prison sentence is not part of the solution, if people have made wrong choices in their lives. There are however examples of people who have found a way out of the destructive life they were leading through the arts.

Tom Magill, is an ex-prisoner who transformed his life through the arts. While in prison for violence in the nineteen eighties Tom, who has a protestant background was put in a cell with someone he saw as an enemy, an Irish Republican Army (IRA) volunteer. The IRA member was in the fourth month of a hunger strike and more dead than alive. After a while his enemy became his teacher, he advised Tom to educate himself and not waste his life in prison, confronted with the suffering hunger striker, Tom took his advice and turned his back on violence.

Today Tom is an award-winning filmmaker, drama facilitator, actor, writer, director, and producer. He specialised in the so-called 'Theatre of the oppressed', an approach developed by Augusto Boal, known from interactive theatre, using theatre methods for transformation in community and prison settings. His work shows that film has the power to transform the lives of people who are marginalized.

One of his projects was his award-winning film *Mickey B*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* performed by serving prisoners from Maghaberry maximum-security prison in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Shakespeare and prisoners might seem to be a strange combination, but the combination has proven to be very successful in projects like 'Shakespeare behind bars', an organization set up by Curt Tofteland in USA, or in the projects of Armando Punzo and the 'Compagnia della Fortezza' in Voterra, Italy.

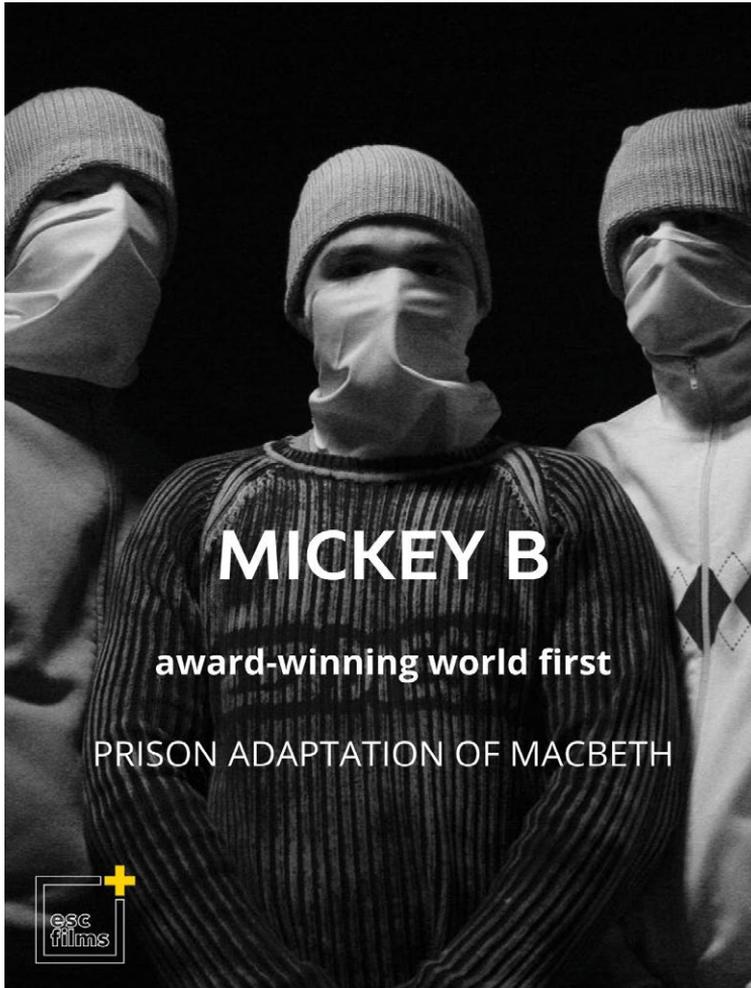
Magill discovered the power of film as a medium when he was working with a group of young people. Coincidentally they had a camera. They explained to him that they were excluded from a youth group, and this conversation was filmed. Later, Magill witnessed how the film changed the groups' perceptions of themselves and each other when the whole group saw the video. The young people got excited watching themselves, it added a completely different dimension when they saw themselves on screen. It helped them to begin to understand how they behave and who they are.

In 2007 Magill made an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* called *Mickey B*, it was filmed, written, produced and performed by serving prisoners inside Maghaberry Prison in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Convincing prisoners to work with Shakespeare was not easy. The inmates who often come from the working class, think Shakespeare is elitist and not something that is for them. When Magill started to work on his film *Mickey B*, he approached Sam McClean, who was serving a 20-year sentence for robbery to plays Duncan, the king of Scotland, and asked him to participate in the project. Sam had the right look for the role. McClean agreed to participate, and he introduced Magill to David Conway, who was asked to play the leading role of *Mickey B* (*Macbeth*). David was well respected by the other inmates, but it took time to build trust and to convince him to join the film project.

Once Conway was on board it was easy to find other inmates to join the project. There were several obstacles to overcome. The prison staff allowed Magill to work with the inmates for only five hours a week. Many guards did not like the project and even tried to obstruct it. In the end the film was very successful and was shown at festivals all over the world.

The most challenging part for Tom was to get the inmate actors to believe in themselves, many of them had low self-esteem and low self-confidence. Most of their life, they had been told that they were no good at anything. They didn't see themselves as being capable



Mickey B. (2007).
 [Movie poster].
 Source: Tom Magill,
 Educational Shakespeare
 Company
 Films

of making a film.

The success of the project shows that a film can be a tool for self-improvement and development, and it can help to make individual and personal changes for the better.

Toine Bakermans

In his lifetime, Toine robbed over sixty banks and as a result he spent about twenty years of his life in jail. When he had reached the age of 50, he decided to change his life dramatically and leave his past as a bank robber behind him. What had happened? In the prison art class Toine had made a big painting of two parrots. Everybody who saw the painting was surprised at how skillful the painting was. Toine, who did not have much experience in painting, had always been difficult to handle. For the first time in his life, he received a positive response to something that he had done. This had a great im-

pact on him. Although he only had very basic education, he decided spontaneously that he would go to art college and become an artist. At that time, it seemed to be a crazy plan, but Toine was determined. Many prisons offer art classes, often inmates visit them to kill time or to make presents for their families, or children. For Toine it was different, he was ambitious and made rapid leaps and that attracted attention. Two teachers from the Willem de Kooning Academy even came by to help him and to work on his progress.

The three years to prepare were enough. While still in prison, Toine passed all his exams. Of the 400 inmates in prison at the time, only three took the exam. He graduated with a 7.4 out of 10. After that he was allowed to study at the Willem de Kooning art college in Rotterdam

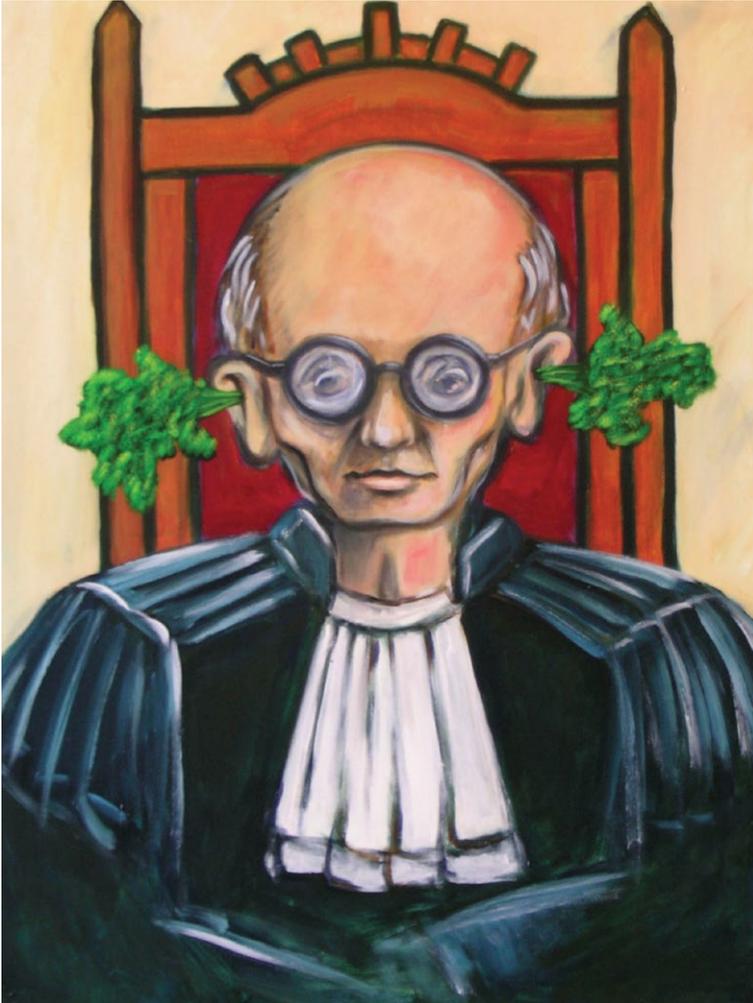
Toine Bakermans in his cell in the prison of Krimpen aan den IJssel near Rotterdam. (2008). [Photography]. Photographer: Unkonown. Conccent: Toine Bakermans



This is how Toine Bakermans changed from a criminal into an artist, a teacher and a mentor to youngsters at risk. For the first year at the art college, he was still under the umbrella of the criminal justice system in an open institution. During the day he was at the art college and at night he was at the open institution. For the last part of his sentence, he had to wear an electronic ankle bracelet.

The experiences during his life in prisons became an important element in Toine's paintings one of, which depicts a judge with very thick glasses and parsley in his ears, a man who doesn't see or listen, and therefore, is oblivious to the prisoners' stories. Another painting image shows cell windows with the light falling in, the sky depicting hope and change.

The prison where Toine's transformation started, 'de Noordsingel' in Rotterdam is now shut down. When the institution closed, an exhibition was held with paintings that were made there by inmates, including the ones Toine made. Pleasant memories came back when Toine saw his paintings again, they underscored the power of the arts to change lives.



Bakermans, T. (2008).
The Judge [Painting].
Photographer: Ed
Santman. Consent
Toine Bakermans



Bakermans, T. (2010).
Cell Window [Painting].
Photographer:
Toine Bakermans.
Consent: Toine Bakermans

Toine graduated with the paintings of prison windows with bars. The same window on different canvases, but each with a different meaning. He painted the daily rhythm and the light in a cell, the life that he had known so well for such a long time.

Turning Points

In addition to the importance of learning the soft skills and employability skills as described earlier, the Scottish criminologist Fergus McNeill describes the process of desistance, the process of turning your back on crime. He explains how participating in, for example, then making of a piece of theatre can lead to a turning point in someone's life. Basically, it comes down to this; people with a negative self-image and with little self-esteem suddenly get a very positive response to what they have done when a piece of theatre is performed successfully. When the audience applauds at the end of the play, the participants can feel the recognition and be proud of their contributions. The act of thinking about themselves can lead to a change, instead of thinking *I am no good at anything* they start to think maybe *I'm good at a few things*. The next step is that they think, since I am good at some things, I should no longer behave as someone who is not able to achieve anything, but as someone who can achieve a set goal. This is how the first step in a process of behavioral changes can be taken. Anyone who has supervised art projects with detainees or other vulnerable groups has probably witnessed turning points like this a few times, and it is a very special experience.

Despite a lot of research, little is known about what motivates people to change their behavior. A good project that makes use of artistic work forms has the potential to unleash a lot in somebody's life. This is another reason why the arts can be a powerful tool in prison education and probation.

Conclusion

Art education can be of great added value within the prison system. It can help inmates to develop their soft skills and employability skills, especially those skills focusing on teamwork. It can also be a powerful tool for non-formal and informal learning and a first step to further education. For some individuals it can be a turning point in their lives.

McNeill, F., Andersson, K., Calvin, S., Overy, K., Sparks, R. & Tett, L. (2011). Kunstprojecten en What Works; een stimulans voor desistance? [Inspiring Desistance? Arts projects and 'what works?']. *Justitiele verkenningen* 37(5): 80-101.

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Fletcher, D. & Dalgleish, K. (2012). *Evaluation of the Personal Effectiveness and Employability Through the Arts* (PEET). Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR). Sheffield Hallam University.

file:///C:/Users/Melinda/Downloads/eval-effectiveness-employability-arts.pdf accessed 18 March 2021.

BIOGRAPHIES

Júlia Egervári

Júlia Egervári was born in Budapest, Hungary. Graduated from Eszterházy Károly University in Eger as a Visual Art Teacher and Nature-Artist. As of recently she works as an instructor at the Fine Art and Art Theory Department at the same university, and is doing research as a PhD student in the fields of environmental education and visual art pedagogy.



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). *Radikalizacja. 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.



**Csaba Orosz**

Born in 1966. 1986-1990 Teacher College of Nyíregyháza, 1998-2001 Hungarian University of Applied Arts, 2005-2008 ELTE Doctoral School of Education, 2010-2012 Artist, art teacher, research field: performative visual education. Currently Vice-Rector for Education at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts.

**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 2018 Melinda Šefčić received her PhD 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. Sijetlan 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 printed edition of *Arts of freedom - A Collection of Practices and Ideas on Art in Prison* is a manual that is clear, refreshing, interesting, and, above all, useful, especially for artists who are about to begin their artistic careers and work in penal and rehabilitation institutions, that are, at least in the European context, *4th generation of prison systems*. The material of the collection represents a cross-section of practices and ideas, theoretical clarifications, and working methods, emphasizing the positive-rehabilitation approach and the importance of art in the prison system in general.

Through a brief historical overview of the development of prison systems and the experiences of working in them, the authors address the issue of punishment and the possibility of rehabilitation through the direct or indirect influence of art, but also talk about misunderstandings that arise in the collision of personal artistic approaches and the demands of such closed systems and their users. The collection also presents successfully implemented projects and practices throughout Europe and the world, as well as the achieved results of the implementation of various art forms, from participatory art practices to art therapy practices that, in a special way, include the prison population in the very act of creation, and thus in rehabilitation as such.

Going through this manual, we get clear guidelines, methods, explanations, and practical solutions on how to *manage* in an unknown environment, which the vast majority of the human population will never come into contact with.

This is a really interesting, educational, and practical handbook, which can serve as an example of *How to* and *Know How* practices for anyone in the artistic profession, and should serve and help the development and implementation of artistic ideas and concepts as well as positive communication within society in which we all participate, also public institutions, where we are all invited to contribute helping their improvement and development.

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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