

MNE

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**In Search of the European Identity**

В търсене на европейската идентичност

À la recherche de l'identité européenne

Auf der Suche nach der europäischen Identität



### Key questions / Questions at the portico

1. How can a future European community / identity be imagined?
2. How can we create a positive European culture of memory, which invites us to identify with it?
3. How can all this happen without lapsing into regressive thought patterns and nationalisms? The European Union – and with it the longest period of freedom and the greatest prosperity the continent has ever known – is, after all, the answer to two World Wars and those crimes against humanity, the Holocaust and the Gulag.

## PRELUDE: THE LEGEND OF THE GIANT ANTAEUS

These days we all, as individuals and as a collective, seem to be like the giant *Antaeus* from Greek mythology. He was the son of *Poseidon*, the god of the sea, and *Gaia*, the personification of the earth, and had virtually invincible strength.

When *Heracles* met the giant he was challenged to a fight and an unequal trial of strength began. However much *Heracles* struggled he could not overpower *Antaeus* because he kept getting new energy and healing from the earth. Only when he was lifted up in the air, was he robbed of his strength and defeated. He had the ground pulled from under his feet, in the true sense of the phrase, and therefore lost his connection to his mother, *Gaia*.

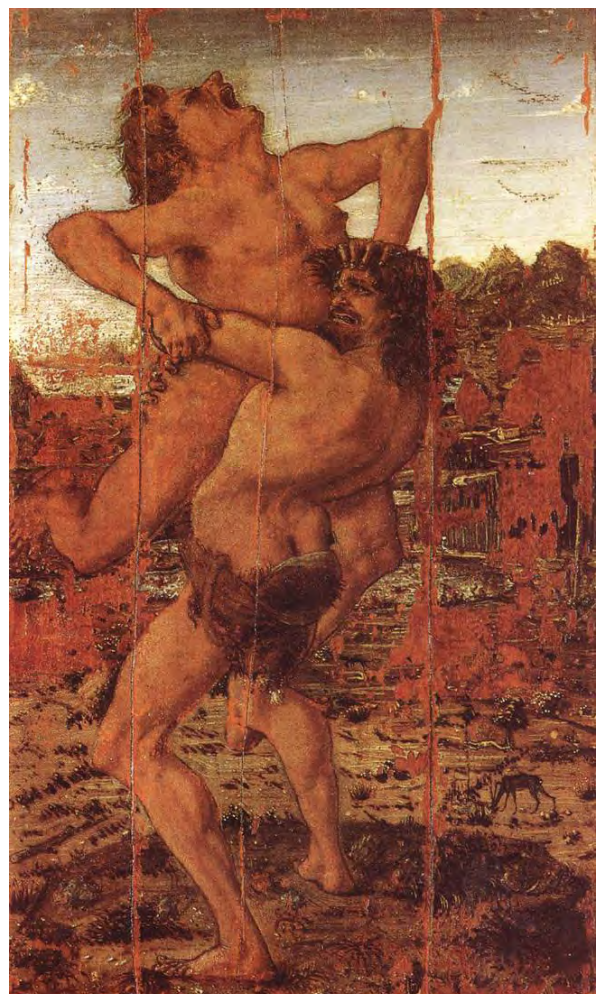


Thomas Cole, *The Dream of the Architect*, 1840

This picture can be further developed. The ground on which we stand and from which we originate is always historical. Not only soaked in history, but also in itself an expression of this. Our clothing, language, indeed every word, all sorts of things have grown and been cultivated historically. An insight into these processes is at the same time an experience of freedom and education, and thus a strengthening of one's own identity. The crisis in which

Europe currently finds itself can also be most conclusively described as an identity crisis. Insecurity regarding personal values, misunderstood, stark liberalism, which offers no orientation and leads to relativism, plus the invisibility of one's own evolution or 'becoming', are just some of the symptoms and reasons for the present situation.

Europe as something common and shared should be understood as the *European cultural consciousness*. It is a social space, a storeroom of common ideas, forms, (hi)stories and enthusiasms. Pursuing and presenting these is the task and concern of the international research and exhibition project *Mnemosyne*, for a *sense of history* is grounding the present in the past.



Antonio Pollaiuolo, *Hercules and Antaeus*, circa 1475

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## A MNEMOSYNE. EUROPE, MEMORY AND IDENTITY

'Europe could become a memory community.'

Aleida Assmann – Nation, Memory, Identity. Europe as a Memory Community?

'Tradition is not holding the ashes, but passing on the fire.'

Thomas More

Mnemosyne is the name of the Greek goddess of memory. The word 'memory' stems from her. The basic assumption of *Mnemosyne. In Search of the European Identity* has thus already been formulated – without (shared) memory, no (European) identity can be formed. This is valid for each individual, as well as for collectives, states and unions. Without certainty about the past there can be no future, just fear.

The multimedia exhibition, research and mediation project presented here is embarking on a search for just those ideas and stories of a common European self-image, which recognises the differences of the various national states and vaults over them. It would like to issue an invitation to identification and to the joyful exclamation: *Yes, I'm a European! Yes, I can gladly identify with these values and with this community!*

In this sense, the *Mnemosyne* project follows a historical-political objective and has therefore, in accordance with the complexity of the theme, been set up to extend for about a decade.



The Austrian pop singer Conchita Wurst won the Eurovision Song Contest 2014 with her song 'Rise like a Phoenix'. She is regarded as a symbolic European figure

## A I The Search Begins

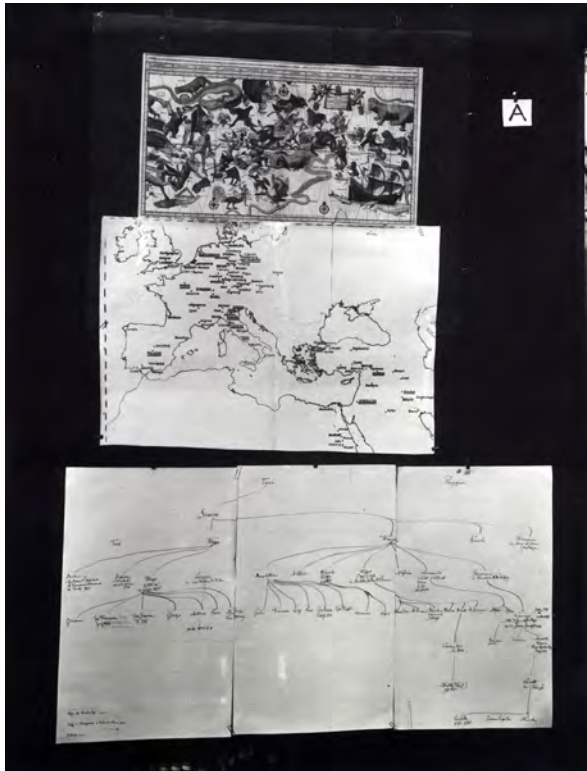
The search for the European identity begins in the oldest city in Europe – in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. In the European Capital of Culture 2019, there is a complex microcosm of European history to discover: traces, monuments, ruins, objects, traditions and customs all provide information on, and bear witness to, a vibrant 8,000 year old past. The city probably had its origins in the Donau civilisation, which is much discussed today. Thracian kings were familiar, as were the Greeks, with Philipp, the father of Alexander the Great, naming the city after himself: Philipopolis, which was the capital of the Roman province of Thracia and later a part of the Byzantine imperium. Bulgarian stardom and the Orthodox Church played decisive roles; the city was under Ottoman rule, as well as being a centre of national and freedom movements during the 19th century. During the 20th century, fascist and authoritarian regimes ruled under the aegis of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. Not forgetting, of course, the new world of gradual European integration and global capitalism since 1990.

In this predestined location, *Mnemosyne* will present 9 + 1 main narratives of European culture, thematically structured in so-called modules, distributed across the entire historical urban area, and thereby create an 8,000 year old exhibition location. A complex visualisation of cultural history including the latest technology and oldest myths takes place and a new combination of historical narrative, art exhibition and participatory project results. *Mnemosyne* focuses on the question as to which narratives, myths and cosmogonies, which persons, figures, fairy tales and stories possess a supranational, pan-European validity.

The synthesis and selection occurs on a scientific basis and draws on various



Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Mnemosyne*, 1881

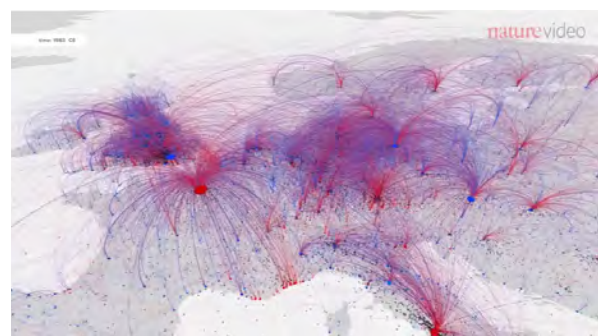


Aby Warburg, *Mnemosyne-Atlas*, Board A, 1926

theoretical concepts and models, such as those of the *cultural memory* and *mythomotoric* (Assmann), the *collective* and *social memory* (Halbwachs, Warburg), *memory places* (Nora) and the *imagined community* (Anderson). The narrative is presented by means of a broad spectrum of artworks by internationally renowned and young artists, with special emphasis on Eastern Europe, cultural artefacts, explanatory videos, 3D animated graphics based on *Big Data*, Virtual and Augmented Reality, music, poems and explanatory texts. A particular focus thereby is on mediation work for a wide audience. The exhibition is intended for every citizen and to be fun, to construct a network of references, which are inviting and beguiling, pleasing and perhaps, through identifying, even find home. Thus, the individual modules will have patrons as identification figures, and media such as comics are embedded. A game on the basis of the *Loci method* (mnemonics, memory palace) is being developed, which can be played on-site, as well as in digital space. There are also workshops and



Symbols of Mnemosyne, Apollo and the nine muses, Roman mosaic, 1st century A.D.



The project *Charting Culture* by Maximilian Schich engages in a visualisation of historical occurrences by recourse to so-called *Big Data*. In this case, a combination of dates and places of birth and death pertaining to around 22,000 historical figures.



training sessions for pupils and students to become video reporters, work with volunteers, a large film programme that in turn engages in dialogue with individual aspects of the exhibition, as well as discussions with artists and experts on central issues and questions.



In Plovdiv, about 8,000 years of European cultural history are to be found in a confined space.

## A 2 Hand in Hand with Bulgarian and International Partners



A project such as *Mnemosyne* only functions through close collaboration, as well as merging expertise and capacities in trustworthy partnerships, both on-site and on an international level. Large sections of the project will be carried out in cooperation with the University of Plovdiv: a volunteer programme with up to 100 students training to become live guides and the development of the Karakatchan-Module, amongst others. Communication through art and the inclusion of outlying areas is being conceived together with the Dirya Foundation and tandem in cooperation with the Mayor's office in Thrakia, a developing quarter to the south-east of the city. The Capacity Building Programme will be realised with the NGOs Gender Alternatives and Helsinki Committee, the cinema programme with the film scholars Thomas Scherer and Svetla Koynova, as well as the Bulgarian collective Culture Cosmos. The video reporter training programme will be led by the journalist Leon Krenz. Telekom Collection will enable access to historical works, especially Eastern European art, and the presentation in Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality is being developed in cooperation with the production studio INVR.

### A 3 Identity is based on History and Stories: the Necessity of a Positive Narrative

It is important to recognise that a national identity is formed in a similar way to a personal identity: narratively. Whilst talking about oneself engenders the identity of a person, communities create their identities through stories. This occurs through the handing down of memories with a national, or in Europe's special case pan-European, reference. Europe, however, lacks these broad-based, common positive stories. Pro-European sentiments are usually argued on the basis of the absence of things (e.g. no war; no border controls, no currency exchange etc.). This is correct, but citizens have become accustomed to this state and, for the younger generation in particular, it hardly has any identity-conveying potential. Moreover, nobody falls in love with an internal market.

These days more urgently than ever, we need a common and, above all, positive memory culture, a new pan-European self-image over the web of one's own story, on the basis of which a future social and political togetherness can succeed. For in point of fact, the world repeatedly empties itself during the changing of generations and endless stories, which are connected to places and objects and are inevitably lost. The idea of a common cultural identity is necessary to counteract this automatic and insidious memory loss, which society barely notices. Culture transcends national borders and ultimately creates itself through comprehending and identifying its own past, healing and accepting, the recognition of differences and appreciation of the complexity of its own and the other.



Man Ray, *Noire et Blanche*, 1926

#### A 4 On the Heterogeneity of the Community: Culture always on the Move

*Mnemosyne* is a pan-European and civil-society project: it is about recognising what we have in common within the complexity and heterogeneity of the European structure nexus. This is valid not only on political and social levels but also on a cultural plane. The project is thus a symphony of symbols and stories, following Europe's motto: 'United in Diversity'.

The French ethnologist Claude Lévi-Strauss wrote in his autobiography *The Savage Mind* (1996) that each culture only develops thanks to exchanges with other cultures. Europe is a prime example of this. Nowhere else in such a confined space did or do there exist so many different languages, traditions, cultures and customs. Never in the history of humankind has there otherwise been any attempt to create from these a democratic, political and cultural community. This is a richness, but also a difficulty, necessitating mediation, pictures and a common, non-levelling language.

It is therefore important for *Mnemosyne* and its accompanying projects to identify and present main narratives, basic patterns, recurring figures (like the fools), philosophically and scientifically-characterised topoi (such as the body-soul problem), as well as the 'myths of the nations'. Heterogeneity and syncretism, interpenetration and never-ending intercultural dialogue are thereby the leitmotifs of this whole project. We call this close exchange of culture and knowledge, plus cultural wanderings, the *migratory paths paradigm* under which European culture could foremost develop. Examining this, conveying and presenting it to a broad public during the year of the Capital of Culture in Bulgaria in 2019, is today, in the ages of globalisation and new mass migrations, more urgent than ever. This is the only way it



Claude Lévi-Strauss, 1957

can succeed and the necessity of undertaking steps towards a common cultural, European identity is taken into account. The fact that the exhibition is taking place on the 30th 'anniversary' of the ending of the Warsaw Pact, the opening of the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall – with these already long iconic symbols of separation and cessation opening their gates for the first time – is an emphatic exclamation mark.



Fall of the Berlin Wall, photo, November 1989



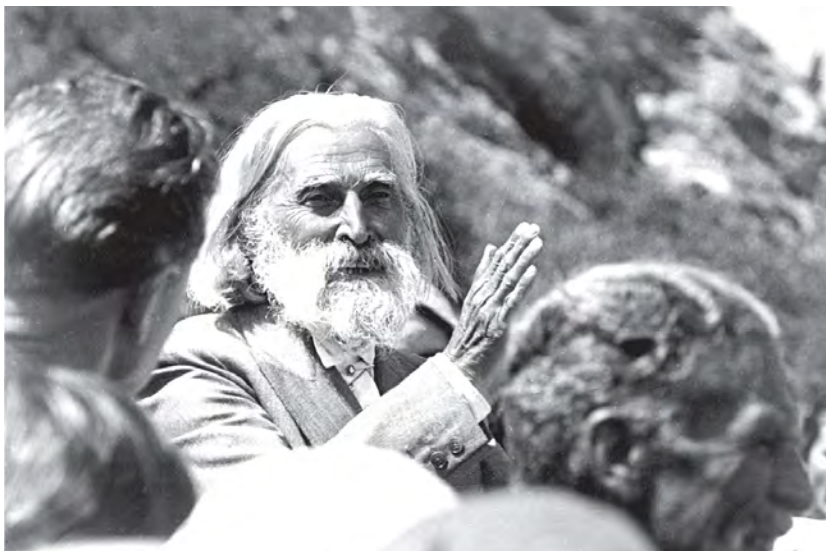
## A 5 The Inhabitants of a Dream

Europe is a normative utopia, the desirable unity of inner community and humanistic, social and democratic values. The European utopia of peace and coexistence of different cultures and states did not arise beyond history, but is the direct answer to a history of war and conflicts. A terrible influence, which first led to thoughts of unity.

The *Mnemosyne* project is thereby part of a larger movement of a historical and identity-political search. This found its most prominent expression in the declaration *A new narrative for Europe: The Mind and Body of Europe* and was presented in the presence of the then President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, and the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, in Berlin on 1st March 2014. In this declaration, developed in dialogue form by leading worldwide artists, philosophers and scientists, some of whom will also be present at the exhibition, is this statement, amongst others: '[T]he cultural inheritance of Europe is the continent's most sustainable resource ...'



Paul Klee, *Angelus Novus*, 1920



We interpret working hand-in-hand with our Bulgarian partners as also taking Bulgarian history and its personalities as the starting point of our considerations. The spiritual teacher Peter Danov (1864–1944) is just such a person, with global charisma. He was the founder of the *Universal White Brotherhood*, which has active members in at least 22 countries.





Theatre of Philippopolis: an inscription by the builder states that construction dates back to the end of the reign of the Emperor Trajan, probably 116–117 A.D. Nowadays, during the summer months, drama, dance and music performances are regularly held at this ideal site, including Plovdiv's annual International Folklore Festival.



## B THE FORM OF THE EXHIBITION

### B I A Module-based Project

The exhibition, which aspires to a mixture of historical narrative, art exhibition and participatory project, focuses on the question as to which narratives, myths and cosmogonies, persons, figures and fairy tales have a supranational, pan-European validity.

*Mnemosyne* uses a wide spectrum of different media. Included will be works by renowned and young artists, with a particular emphasis on Eastern Europe, cultural artefacts, explanatory videos, 3-D animated graphics based on *Big Data*, poems and explanatory texts. These presentation forms are being developed in collaboration with the *Büro für virtuelle Räume* [Office for Virtual Spaces], INVR, in Berlin. The exhibition's pioneering project, which will simultaneously take place in virtual space, will be developed together with them.

In order to present visitors with a structured and comprehensible 'overall picture', themes and topics will be organised and combined in individual segments. These parts are called *modules*. By means of these autonomous modules each visitor has the possibility to set their own emphases, dependent on their own time and interests. Within the virtual space, for example, one individual module can be visited in around half an hour. In the town and its surroundings, historical sites can be discovered in connection with viewing individual exhibitions.

The module narratives in turn build a mutual network of references and are divided into different main categories, such as the Historical Modules, Everyday Modules and Etymological Modules. This system permits the greatest possible overview. In addition, there will be



Galileo Galilei – Dialogue about the two main world systems, the Ptolemaic and the Copernican

several introductory modules and a Convergence Module.

In the introductory modules, for example, all the various remembrance media (monuments, works of art, historical artefacts, homages) which are included in the exhibition, will be presented. Fundamental questions will also be explained: what is memory in general and how is it connected to (cultural) identity? What is a canon? How is history recounted and how is this different to legend? What are cultural migratory paths and who uses them? Can we speak of a common European identity and history in the first place?

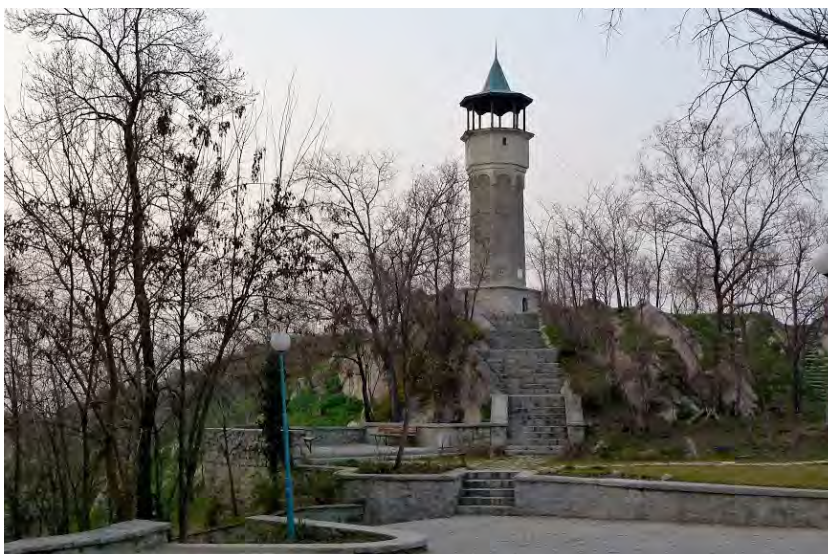
One of our central concerns is that the visitor gains an overview and orientation, whether on-site or virtually. We therefore call the introductory modules Beacon Modules. These should ideally be located in the old Ottoman Clock Tower on the Sahat Tepe, one of Plovdiv's many hills.

The modules are divided into five categories:

- Beacon Modules
- Historical Modules
- Etymological Modules
- Archetypal Modules
- Everyday and Product Modules

Another advantage of the module system we have chosen is that it can be extended at will. The visual facilities, exhibition architecture, commissioned artworks (for Plovdiv) etc. can therefore simply be scaled up with any increase in funding.

Scaling, sustainability and exact calculations are important factors in all Bublitz projects.



Sahat Tepe, Ottoman Clock Tower, circa 1596

## B 2 Remembrance Media: the Relationship between Works of Art and Historical Artefacts

Before describing other modules, we would like to explain in principle how a blend of visual arts, specific locations and historical objects can be created in exhibitions.

It is important to integrate and utilise diverse artistic genres, such as painting, photography, video, performance, sculpture and site-specific installations. These works of art are presented together with 'cultural artefacts' at historical locations. Such artefacts, sometimes described as 'objectified history', can be both historically-charged objects (e.g. Josef Stalin's copy of Dostoyevsky's *Demons* with Stalin's notes, or Martin Luther's stool made out of a whale bone, which he had in Wartburg, where he translated the *New Testament* in 1521/22), as well as documents, old maps, coins, busts, decorated drinking cups, stamps, coats of arms, cutlery, etc. This combination of virtually equal amounts of everyday objects and handicrafts together with works of 'great art', involves visitors on intellectual, emotional, aesthetic and visual planes.



Page from the manuscript 'The Demons' by Fyodor Dostoyevsky



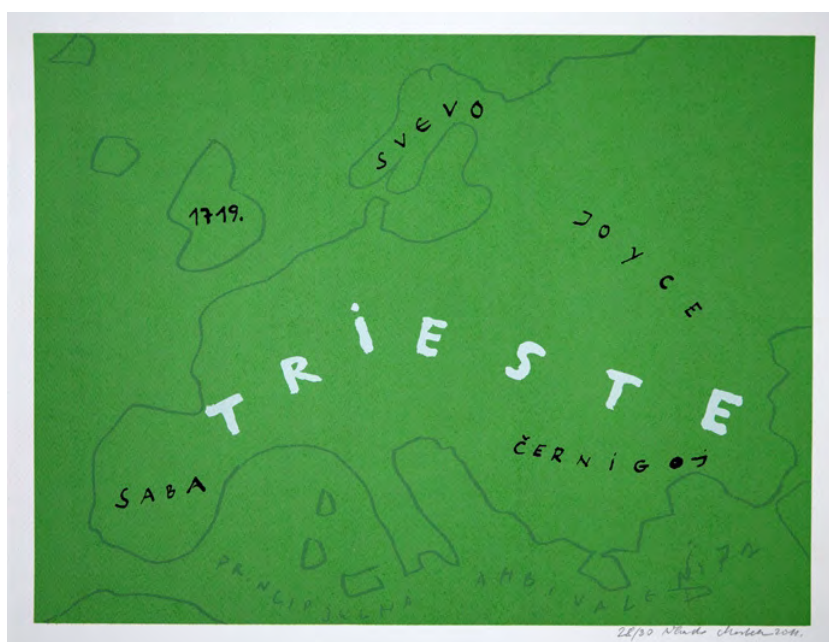
Michael Müller, *Index der Willkür* [*Index of Arbitrariness*], unfinished, 2010–2011, 153-part work



The works of contemporary art play a crucial role. They are meant to broaden historical tales on the one hand, as well as generate mood and emotion on the other. They are intended to colour the presentation venue, to put visitors into a certain mood. Michael Müller's work *Index der Willkür* [*Index of Arbitrariness*], for example, broaches the issue, in a humorous way, of how a canon or an encyclopaedia is invented and which factors (from power politics to personal sympathy) possibly play a role. This work is suitable for one of the Beacon Modules (key word: Canon).



Luther's room and stool, Wartburg, Germany, Thuringia



Vlado Martek, *Europa-Triest*, 2011

### B 3 Site-specific Artworks and Historical Exhibition Venues in Plovdiv and Beyond

8,000 years of cultural and settlement history have left the city with many traces and stories from its Thracian, Greek, Roman, Bulgarian-Slavic, Byzantine, Macedonian, Islamic-Ottoman and Soviet past. These need to be brought into the public's mind and an exhibition venue illustrating 8,000 years of European history has to be created.

Working locally is therefore of great importance, as is the inclusion of existing influences, objects and traces. The exhibition should



Baltchikovo Monastery, founded in 1083



Belintash, a Thracian place of worship, is approximately 40 km from Plovdiv

thereby serve as a *Catalyst of Visualisation*. Some artists will develop site-specific artworks, just as existing local venues will be interwoven and activated directly. That is to say, 'addressing' those objects and situations already on the scene along with their past, as



well as taking Bulgarian history and the power of specific localities as starting points for many of the themes. Places already considered within the urban area, alongside the Clock Tower on Sahat Tepe mentioned above, are the Hippocrates Pharmacy in Plovdiv's Old Town, the Soviet cinema Kosmos, buildings in the style of the Bulgarian Revival and the Soviet monument Bratska Mogila. Somewhat beyond the city boundary are Batchkovo Monastery and the Thracian cult site Belintash, in which Sabazius – a historical predecessor of the Hellenic god of intoxication and fertility, Dionysos – was worshipped.



Hippocrates Pharmacy in Plovdiv

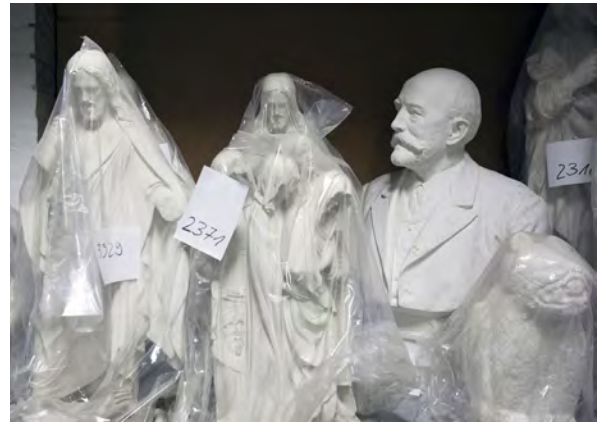


*Hand of Sabazius* in the Museo Nacional de Arqueología Subacuática [National Museum of Underwater Archaeology] in Cartagena

## B 4 Souvenirs and Reproductions

As many of the desired works of art, objects and buildings will not be available as originals, *Mnemosyne* will also work with reproductions and souvenirs (from French, meaning to remember). Originals as well as souvenirs from the whole of Europe will be in the exhibition, in addition to models, plaster casts, death masks and 3D prints of significant objects.

This not only poses the pressing, theoretical question, as yet unanswered, as to 'the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction' and originality, but opens new dimensions to the curatorial. This decision means that a practically unlimited archive of memory objects and memorabilia is available, which can be set in the dialogue as 'noble art'.



Replicas wait in the Gipsformerei [Replica Workshop], founded in 1819, at the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin [State Museums of Berlin], to be sent all over the world.



During the 19th century in Bavaria (South Germany), taxidermists began joining prepared body parts from different species together, in order to sell them to tourists as jackalopes

## B 5 Virtual Reality & Cooperation with INVr

Together with the Virtual Reality Production Studio INVr, Bublitz is developing new ways of digitally presenting exhibitions. All the modules will be available in virtual space and patrons will guide visitors through the exhibition.

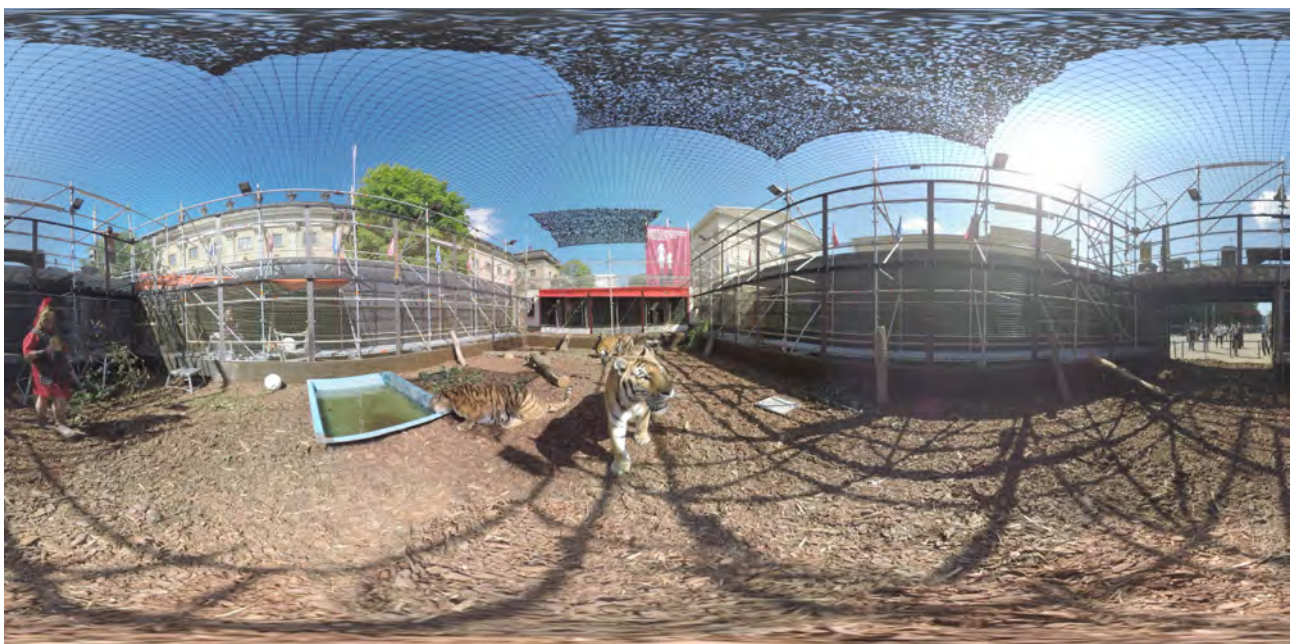
It must be emphasised that the virtual reality (VR) presentations of the exhibition modules are not conceived purely as substitutes but stand independently. Just as certain experiences can only be made in physical space or real life (RL), we are aiming to further develop the narrative potential of this new technology.

By means of virtual reality the exhibition will be made permanently accessible for everyone, without site specification. Moreover, people whose financial means do not permit a longer trip can nevertheless visit and be involved in the exhibition.



Teaser image for the 9th Berlin Biennale, 2016

The transforming of the city into an exhibition site covering 8,000 years with cutting-edge technology, the linking of the city's inheritance with the present and the vitalisation of visitor experience are all perspectives arising only through the most up-to-date technology. The full potential of these must be exploited.



In 2016, INVr transformed an initiative by the pan-European artist collective 'Zentrum für politische Schönheit' ['Centre for political Beauty'] into Virtual Reality

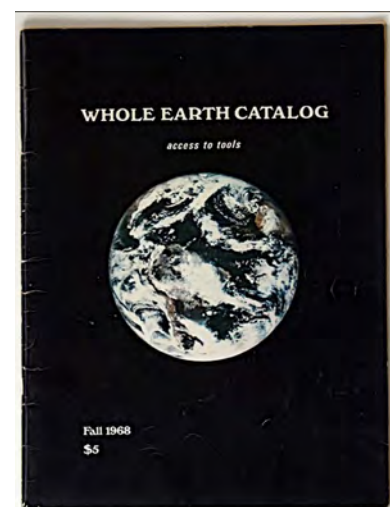


## B 6 Sustainability and Perspectives

Sustainability is an important topic in all Bublitz projects. As far as the *Mnemosyne* project in Plovdiv, beginning in 2019, is concerned, this means in concrete terms that we are aiming to permanently establish 2–3 exhibition modules within the urban space and its museums. This undertaking not only creates new jobs, but also improves the city's tourist infrastructure and reputation. These stationary modules also link Plovdiv to those places in Europe, where the project will be continued. These are some of the physical aspects of its sustainability. It is equally vital, however, to highlight the ethical goals. The project programme thus targets capacity building and empowerment. Every single visitor should be made aware that they have the means available, or that they will be given the means, to continue their research and education. The sustainable impression of Europe's genesis, a better understanding of European history and neighbours leads to a reduction in resentments and the realisation that culture has always been shared.

Additional to these aspects are the workshops and training courses to become video reporters, which in the long term will teach pupils and students new mediums of expression, which themselves can be developed further.

The combination of exhibition, narrative, participatory project and the activating of historical sites builds a bridge between the past and the present, and opens new mindsets and perspectives for and in the future - in the future of the past and one's own positioning in this.



In the 'Whole Earth Catalogue' the question of sustainability was posed for one of the first times in the mid-60s.

## C MEDIATION AND PRESENTATION | MEDIA AND THE SUPPORTING PROGRAMME

'All men by nature desire knowledge.'

Aristoteles – Metaphysik

'A democratic civilization will save itself only if it makes the language of the image into a stimulus for critical reflection – not an invitation for hypnosis.'

Umberto Eco

The exhibition's module form, spread throughout the entire city, has already been explained above. In the following, we would like to outline how the *Mnemosyne* project combines all kinds of different techniques and media, in order to reach the widest audience possible in Plovdiv, Bulgaria and all over Europe. This extends from the use of virtual and augmented reality, through the *#Snapthefuture* workshops and avatars as guides, to the use of souvenirs, comics and the development of the game *Mnemosyne's Palace*.

### C I A participatory project: Homo Ludens – Participation through Play and Curiosity

Participation and inclusion are both central elements of the *Mnemosyne* project.

Crucial to the presentation of the contents is the development of a presentation form and a display attracting visitors on any level. Not only those with previous knowledge, but also laypersons and children should gain impressions, have fun with and enjoy the knowledge being imparted. *Mnemosyne* is consistently mindful of appealing to and reaching the widest and most diverse audience possible, in the sense of both a European Capital of Culture and the European Project. In order to guarantee this, Bublitz undertakes a schematic division of the public into three categories (A/B/C). These are



Asterix (left) & Obelix (right)

obviously only meant to be understood as guidelines, because as with every schema, there is nothing live that is actually recorded by this.

- A Visitors without prior knowledge
- B Visitors with prior knowledge
- C Experts (on each theme)

Each module and every theme is examined under this aspect, for it should never be a case of adopting the famous ivory tower approach and only addressing experts. Instead, it is essential to find (different) language styles, which reach everyone. It is a matter of developing heuristics, combining anecdotes with historical facts and building mnemonics, providing accesses and tempting visitors with knowledge.

The multimedia exhibition has therefore purposely been conceived as a participatory project in many parts, which uses the possibilities offered by new media and technologies in a fun way – with your smartphone in your pocket, so to speak. This is based on the conclusion, confirmed by behavioural psychology and neurology, that it is generally not only more attractive, memorable and exciting, but also more motivating to access information, make connections and perhaps even to become poetic by means of one's own research. Instead of directly confronting visitors with ready-made information packs, the play instinct – the *homo ludens* – and our drive to success will be aroused and encouraged. We call this *participation through play and curiosity*.

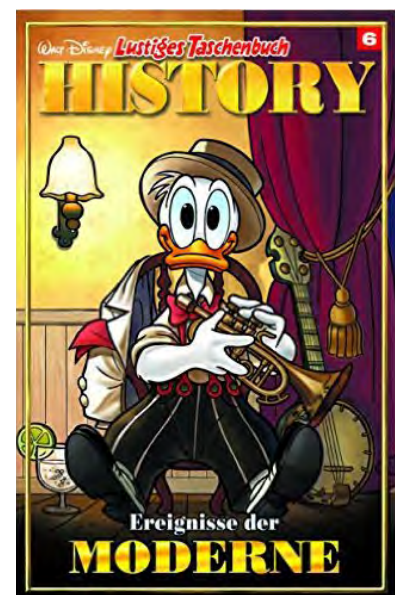


## C 2 Multimediality and the Use of 'Trivial Media'

We are convinced that communication with a wide audience is particularly facilitated by this usage of 'trivial media'. The barrier to addressing issues is lowered and, as experience has shown, any inhibitions concerning major issues disappear. At the same time, experts can likewise learn from them. Congenial characters will accompany people through the exhibition. These could be Asterix and Obelix, or figures from the series *Once Upon a Time* by Albert Barillé. Both series have been successful for decades and have been translated into more than 20 European languages. They primarily target children, even though they convey contents, which are of importance or even more important for adults. Their frequently very tight summaries are ideal for visualising and presenting history. They imprint ideas and pictures of historical courses of events, when the 'consumers' are at a very decisive age, and they automatically construct a bridge to the (younger) public.



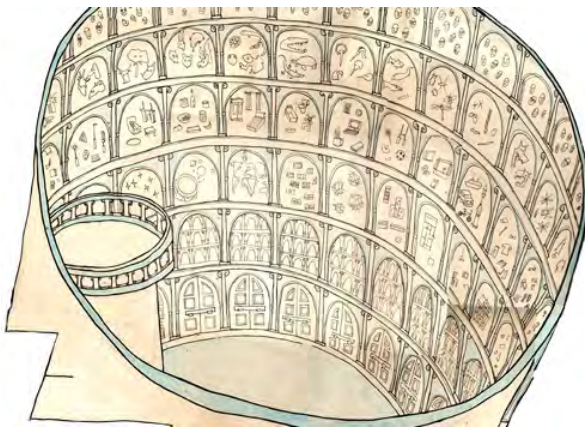
Maestro, the narrator of the series 'Once Upon a Time'



Ducktales: Stories of Modernity

### C 3 The House of Memories: Mnemosyne's Palace

The past is a vast area and a deep well, as Thomas Mann said. We quickly lose ourselves, however, in the hectic times of the present, which are geared to progress. It is exactly this 'backwards space', the confrontation with the past, which can offer orientation towards



Carmen Robertson, *The Inner Palace*, 1983

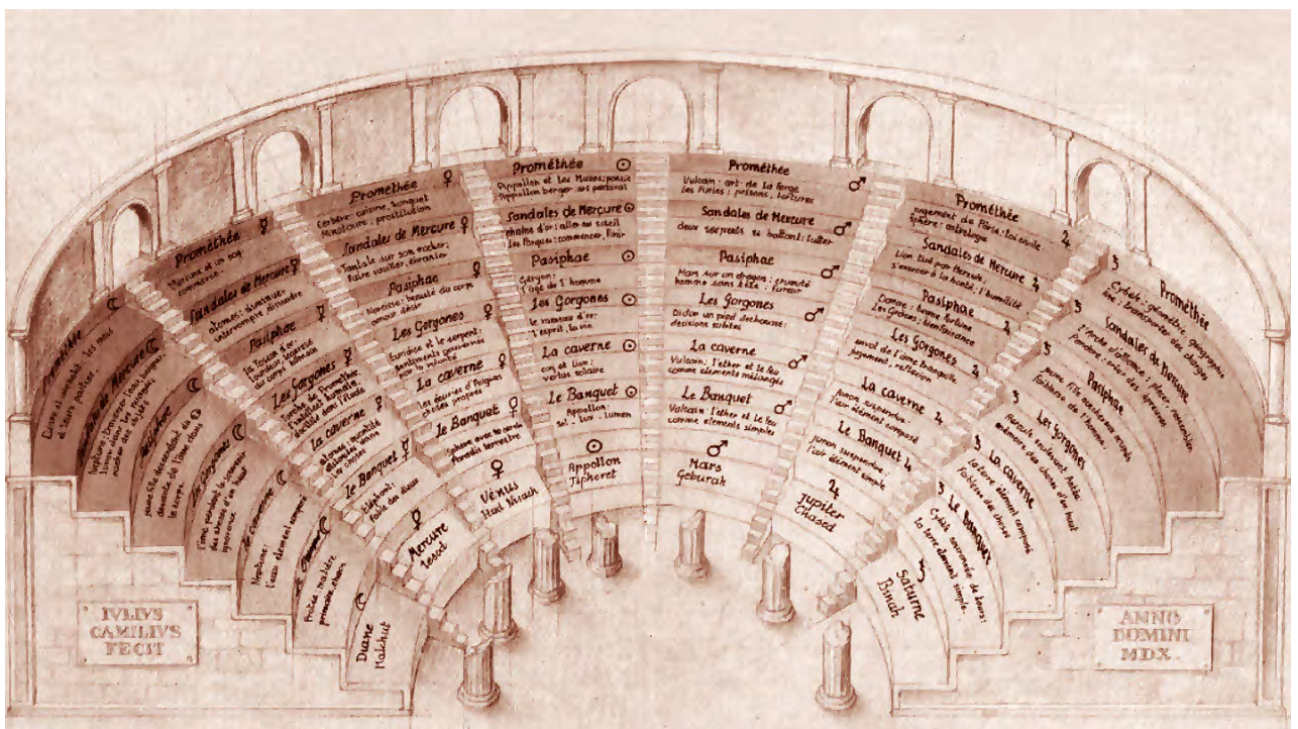
the future. A key question in the exhibition is, therefore, how culture and history can be designed to be perceptible and tangible. How can it be conveyed that these are not merely a sum of events from the mists of the past, but that they intrude in the present, sometimes define it, and that everyone can learn from them individually and profitably. A second, just as central decisive challenge is to forge a link between the many different modules and themes.

These challenges inspired us with the idea of conceiving a game about the exhibition. The game *The House of Memories: Mnemosyne's Palace* is based on the concept of mnemonics (the Loci method), which was developed by rhetoricians such as Cicero in ancient times and is still used today. The fundamental idea is to design in one's imagination a fictive or known place with several rooms. Memories (in



rhetoric: arguments) are placed in each of these rooms and thus linked to a picture. During discourse and the attempt to remember, the subject goes through this building and can recall the memories linked to a place one by one. Our game will be constructed as a sort of detective game, for cultural-historical work often exhibits parallels with that of a detective. In the same way, the visitor must gather evidence, and try to form this into a uniform picture, in order to reconstruct a 'crime' in the past.

This grounded approach is an offer for visitors, available on the Internet and within the exhibition, because to establish a coherent picture of the past, it is important to make skilful combinations. There are various aids to assist the players, such as a timeline and different maps. In addition, they order their own memories, their private archive, according to personal or given categories, such as beauty, significance, links with other objects and similar aspects. Each player thus creates their own order on the basis of a common memory culture.



Giulio Camillo's *Theatre of Memory*, 1550. This was developed from the ancient loci method.



Roman Double Herm, probably 100 A.D., Prado

One fairly new idea, which has so far not been realised to this extent, is the so-called Patronage Idea. This is based on the well-known principles of namesakes and patrons. Each individual exhibition module is thus intended to have at least one historical or fictitious figure as patron. In the case of the Etymological Module, which is explained later on, concerning the prefix 'eu', Christ and Epicure would be suitable for assuming this role. The one advocated the concept of Eudaimonia, the other brought us the gospel (Evangelium in most European languages).

A further example could be Edith Stein. The German-Jewish philosopher who converted to Catholicism and joined the Carmelites and was murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau, a place of European extermination, in August 1942. Since 1999, she has been known as St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross and, as such, is one of the patron saints of the Roman-Catholic Church for the whole of Europe. In the Vatican, there is a 6-metre-high statue in her honour. There is likewise a monument to her in the guise of the nun Haruspica in Heinrich Böll's *Group Portrait with Lady*. (In 1972, a year after the book was published, Böll received the Nobel Prize for Literature). This is both an example of a media change from reality to the level of a novel, and also of a literary tribute to a woman who, as a Jew, Christian and philosopher, showed a

profound interest in Thomas of Aquinas, and studied with Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, two of the most important philosophers of the 20th century.

Culture is vibrancy, particularly in the examples provided by people. This energy should be recuperated and transferred. In the exhibition, patrons build another network of references and are intended to act as guides and partners for visitors.



Edith Stein, circa 1924

## C 5 Capacity Building

### a Volunteer programme in cooperation with the University of Plovdiv / Live speakers

In cooperation with the University of Plovdiv, students and older pupils will be trained as live speakers and guides, who can then assist visitors to the exhibitions by answering questions and giving guided tours. In addition, a programme to train video journalists, developed together with Leon Krenz, will engage its very own dynamics of reporting, involvement and awareness.

The entire European Capital of Culture 2019 will profit from the video reporter training and the involvement of young citizens. Presentations and results will be featured on a separate website.



An impression from Wrocław, Cultural Capital of Europe 2016

### b Training as video and exhibition reporters

The content of the video workshops covers the presentation of all the possibilities offered by online and mobile video, in particular including mobile journalism, social video, Snapchat, Instagram stories, Facebook live videos and the planning of web series. During the sessions, workshop participants will learn the complete production process in a practical way. They therefore produce everything themselves, from the concept to the finished video. The workshop offer is geared to all age groups, from beginners to experts, because the content will be individually adjusted to each target audience. The workshops will range from short, intensive, impulse units to longer modules lasting several days. Technically, the sessions will focus on the rapid and simple production of media content with the aid of mobile devices. The exhibition reporters' results will be distributed on a dedicated website and on social networks and be freely available there.



## c #Snapthefuture workshops

How can our Europe actually look in the future? In #Snapthefuture workshops, participants will develop answers to this question with the assistance of the Snapchat app; additionally, they will formulate their own ideas about the future of Europe, along with possible solutions for approaching problems, as Snap stories. During the interdisciplinary workshop format, participants become familiar with the app and use current images of the future, from both institutional and private trend and future research, as impulses for their Snap stories. The results will be viewed and discussed together, using the 'add nearby' function of the app. By means of the visual design process, different ideas arise regarding possible European futures. These will be used as mind openers during the discussion, and the resulting impulses will serve as approaches for further innovation processes.



#Snapthefuture workshop by Leon Krenz in Astana, Kazakhstan, 2016



Cinema Cosmos, as it is known today, in the 1970s

The Film scholar Thomas Scherer and the Bulgarian political scientist Svetla Koynova will present a film series in cooperation with the Collective Cosmos. This is, however, not a normal film programme, but rather an entire narrative, which is in correspondence with the exhibition and will in turn be supplemented by experts and discussions.

In an accompanying series of films, the exhibition is to be flanked by 19 films, in which film history will be presented as the diversity of relationship stories. The starting point is the thesis (of the film scholar Hermann Kappelhoff) that films have the ability to produce the present and the history of a political community by means of shared perception, feeling and evaluation. The cinema enables its public, for a short moment in the darkness of the projection room, to bridge individual, different perceptions of the world and share a common feeling and, based on this, to enter into a (critical, affirmative) dispute with this world view. Seen from this perspective, film can be understood as the continuous renewing of basic questions concerning society and coexistence. Film history thus results from the relationship of concrete films to one

another; while questions are being asked of the film, new alignments emerge, by means of which the films are put in relation to each other.

The film series will suggest a selection of such connections. As in other areas of the *Mnemosyne* project, artefacts available in situ will serve as starting points for thematically broad excursions. On the one hand the Soviet cinema Kosmos will serve as the location while on the other Bulgarian films will provide the starting point, in order to reflect a central question of the European project with and through films.

The decision as to whether one feels an affinity to the European project as an individual and to what extent one engages politically and in society, whether on a local, national or European level, depends on the society to which one feels one belongs based on experience. During the film series envisioned, basic models of individual lifestyles will be shown, which outline the area of tension of the individual and society between sacrifice, contribution and exclusion.

On the basis of *Privarzaniyat balon* (*The Tied Up Balloon*. Director: Binka Zhelyazkova; script: Yordan Radichkov, 1967) as the opening film, various dimensions of this fundamental issue will be illuminated by pairs of films, which will be shown as a double feature on one evening. Each Bulgarian film will be allocated another European film as a discussion partner. During eight evenings, directors such as Binka Zhelyazkova, Rangel Vulchanov, Javor Gardev and Georgi Djulgerov will thus meet with Lars von Trier, Jean-Luc Godard, Angela Schanelec and Miguel Gomes.



Binka Zhelyazkova, *Privarzaniyat Balon*, 1967

## C 7 Symposium, Catalogue

A symposium on individual programme focal points is planned within the framework of the exhibition. Scientists, literati and visual artists will consider these and discuss them in depth. The results and exhibition texts will be published in a 'Picture Atlas', both as a printed version and digitally.



Book display at the exhibition *Handlungsbereitschaft III* [Readiness to Act], 2013 in Dresden. The aim of the exhibition was to use artworks and so-called cultural artefacts (e.g. literature, music, advertising, news – recordings of formative historical events) in order to sketch a psychogram of the generation born between 1980 and 1990.





Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Bonaparte Before the Sphinx or Ōdipus*, 1867–1868

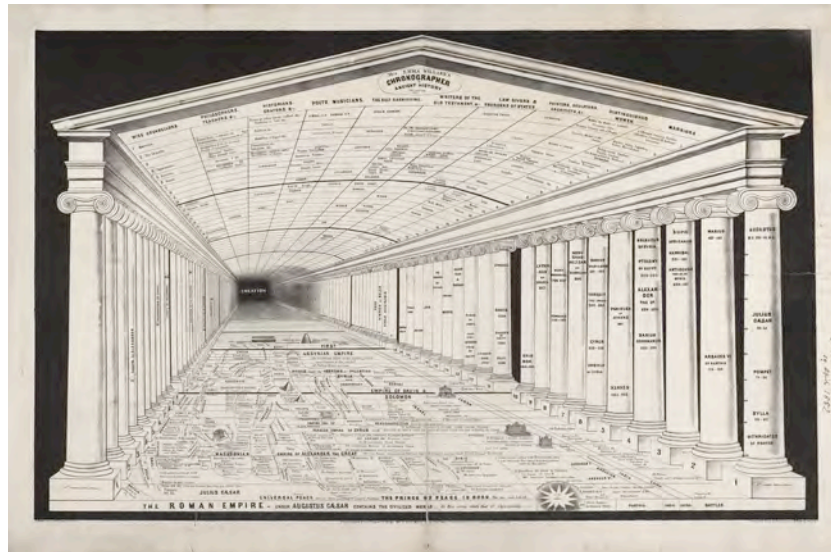


William Hogarth, *Time Smoking a Picture*, 1761



## D THE MODULES

### D I The Converging Point / The Cultures of Bulgaria



Emma Willard, *Temple of Time*, 1846

In order to create a converging point, we plan on finding an exhibition venue with circular architecture. Similar to an imaginary centre, an epicentre, the different (temporal) levels and elements of the exhibition should here be drawn together. The purpose of this place is, with a generally comprehensible picture, to create a consciousness for the interpenetration and dependence of past, present and future. This venue will serve as both the beginning and the end of the exhibition and, at the same time, provides a panorama of Bulgaria's rich and varied past.

At this exhibition venue, visitors will find objects from many different cultures and centuries:

- Thracian Objects
- Greek Objects
- Roman Objects
- Bulgarian Objects
- Byzantine Objects
- Ottoman Objects
- Soviet Objects
- Capitalist Objects



Bratska Mogila (Bulgarian: Братска могила [The Mound of Brotherhood])

## D 2 The Tower on Sahat Tepe / Danov Hill. The Central Point of Orientation in Plovdiv and the Exhibition

'Orientation' is an age-old concept. It stems from the alignment to the sun in early Christian and medieval church buildings (*Oriens*, East). Nowadays we understand by this a (cognitive) ability, comprising the orientation of a subject in time, space and in terms of the person themselves and their identity.

For us, orientation is made manifest in lighthouses, and so the starting point for the exhibition is to be the old Clock Tower on Sahat Tepe / Danov Hill (Turkish for clock hill). From the Tower, which was rebuilt in 1812 after a fire and has been standing empty for years, one can look over almost the whole of the urban area. The eye also sweeps towards the nearby Rhodopes, the mountain range shrouded in legend between Greece and Bulgaria, with its medieval castles and monasteries, neighbouring Thracian cult sites, such as Belintash and Tatul, as well as the home of the legendary prophet, poet and singer Orpheus. Therefore Orpheus, as one of the patrons in the exhibition, will be our guide in this Tower.

The Tower is split into three sections. Visitors ascend through the following areas:

- A Time
- B History
- C Revolution

A & B: Time and History

What is time without any people? Is there such a thing? How does time become history? Which time model, what calendar / time reckoning / computation of time do we have in the West and how does this differ from other cultures? Can a mythological origin of time be identified? These are just some of the questions to be addressed in the sections 'Time' and 'History'.

The 'Time' topic will be introduced by the clock as an object. We will thus encounter Markus Hoffmann's work of art *Chronos und Aeon*, and come face to face with Alicja Kwade's work *Gegen den Lauf* [Counter Rotation], in which every time the second hand turns clockwise, the whole clock turns anticlockwise, so it seems like



Alicja Kwade's, *Gegen den Lauf* (Counter Rotation), 2012–2014



Markus Hoffmann, *Chronos und Aeon*, 2015

the second hand is fixed. The possibly most surprising object, though, is a historical artefact – a clock from the time of the French Revolution. Wishing to describe nature as a perfect mathematical product was a part of the ideology of that era, so the clock counts ten hours in a day, every hour has 100 minutes and every minute in turn 100 seconds.

Corresponding to this, different calendar systems with their religious-political-ideological significance will be introduced and discussed. 2016, for example, is the year 5777 in the Jewish calendar; but 1438 in the Arabic-Islamic one, whereas, according to the Iranian calendar, we are now in the year 1395. Walter Benjamin wrote: 'The day with which a calendar begins, acts as a historical time-lapse. And it is basically the same day, which always reappears in the form of public holidays, which are days of remembrance. Calendars do not count time like clocks. They are monuments of a historical consciousness, ... .



French decimal clock from the time of the French Revolution





Anniversary Stamp '400 years of the gregorian Calender'

C

The upper floor of the tower will be devoted to revolution. However; not primarily that of the political, scientific or industrial-technological. We will go back to its very origin. The term was introduced into general language use by Nicolaus Copernicus (*revolutio*, a turn around), to describe the rotation of celestial bodies



The *Nebra sky disk* is a round bronze disk inlaid with gold, obviously representing astronomical phenomena and religious symbols. It is estimated to be 3,700–4,100 years old and stems from the Bronze Age.

around the sun. On the ceiling of this room we find installed a facsimile of the *Nebra sky disk*, the oldest movable map of the sky ever found. On the floor, almost as a mirror-image, there lies the so-called *Voyager Golden Record*, a data plate with image and audio information, which was shot up into space with the two interstellar space probes, *Voyager 1* and *Voyager 2*, in 1977. This is a symbol of the canon, of that which should be handed on. On it are greetings in 55 languages, from Sumerian to Welsh, photographs of the human species and examples of their music. It has a life span of 500 million years. Between these two round objects hovers, illustriously gloomy, Felix Kiessling's *Anti Sun*.

It is our wish to open this module on a central European public holiday, 9th May (2018). Likewise, it is our determined desire to retain this exhibition over and above the Capital of Culture year and, together with partners, to generate the necessary financial means for such a venture.

### D 3 Historical Modules

'Every period has the renaissance of antiquity, which it earns.'

Aby Warburg – Italian Antiquity in the Age of Rembrandt



A glance into the library belonging to the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, successor to the Roman Inquisition, which was once responsible for books banned by the Pope. This is also the way a canon can be told: through negativity. The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* [*Index of Banned Books*], abolished by the Second Vatican Council in 1966, is an excellent example of this. We find scripts there, which today form the basis of our modern canon of values and our (scientific) view of the world. The Index almost reads like a 'Best of ...' for the past 500 years, with books by John Locke, Spinoza, Blaise Pascal, Immanuel Kant, Sartre, Victor Hugo, Montaigne, Galilei, Charles Darwin, Rabelais and Zola, amongst others.

In the historical modules, a range of topics, which significantly defined occidental thinking and continue to do so, will be outlined and visualised. Certain questions are a constant guide: Which historical narratives hold the most importance and exercise the most effect on the present? Where can cultural syntheses be best shown? What are cyclical processes, which crop up again and again under a new guise? And finally, from which (hi)stories can we learn the most for our present?

For example, what does progress mean and is the idea a primarily European-monotheistic concept? How crucial was the eschatological idea of a Messiah and the Day of Judgement? Did hell really exist in people's consciousness?

## a The mind-body problem in the Hippocrates Pharmacy and in Baltchkovo Monastery



Interior view of the Hippocrates Pharmacy

The Hippocrates Pharmacy was opened in Plovdiv's Old Town in 1872. It was orientated on the newer Viennese pharmacies according to the 'modern archetype', so that a large number of the instruments and elements of the inner architecture originated in the capital of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy. At this place, and also at the Baltchkovo Monastery, an issue such as the mind-body problem (also known as the soul-body problem), as it was formulated by the French philosopher René Descartes at the beginning of the 17th century, broached in an ideal-typical way. The historical pharmacy, with its classical busts of the great doctors of antiquity – according to legend stemming from the sex of Asclepius, the god of healing – with its herbal garden and the seemingly alchemical kitchen, already holds in store many elements, questions and answers.

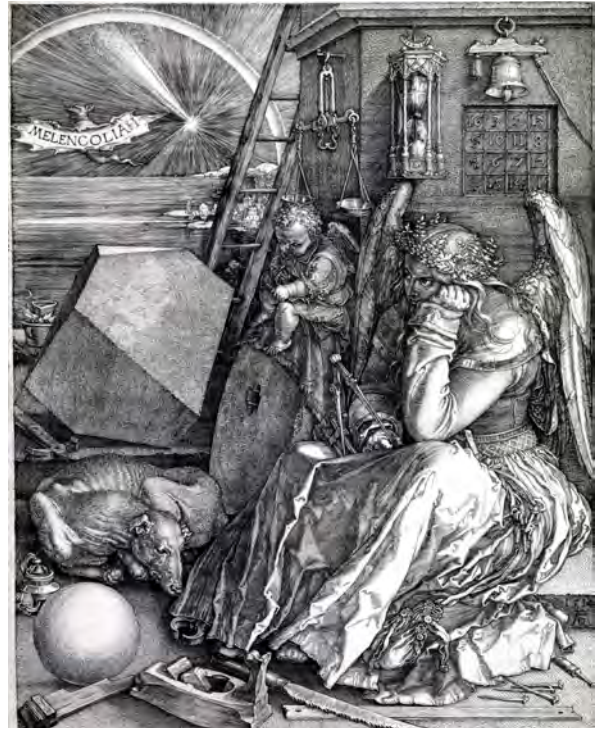
We can therefore fundamentally broach the issue as to where the difference between Hippocratic and modern medicine lies. Which conception of man underlies them? Taking that



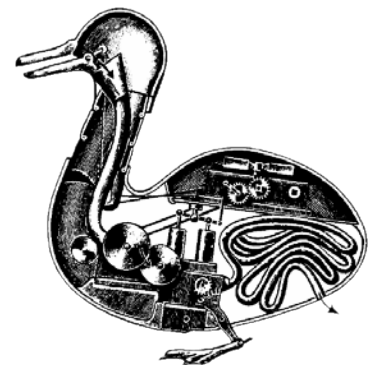
Portrait of the Greek god of healing, Asclepius, on the façade of the Hippocrates Pharmacy



into account, the question as to what Hippocratic medicine has to do with belief and the observance of the stars could further be considered. What influence does this have on monastic medicine still being practised today, and what is its connection to the ancient theory of the humours, humorism? The four temperaments, melancholic, phlegmatic, choleric and sanguine, will be presented and visitors will be introduced to this system in a fun way, by means of a questionnaire. Furthermore, the reasons why the separation of body and soul (object and subject) has been one of the primary issues of science and philosophy since the Renaissance could be represented. What has Dürer's *Melencolia I* to do with that? How can the dietary programme, which was formulated in this copperplate engraving in 1514, be linked with contemporary guidebooks? What does the snake symbol mean and what has this to do with the Olympian Asclepius? How is it that with the concept of hygiene we still indirectly honour his sister Hygieia? With these and similar questions and answers, visitors will be introduced to complex thematic areas. Previously primarily historical representation becomes 'activated and living history' by means of artistic works and other media, along with the personal involvement of each visitor.



Albrecht Dürer, *Melencolia I*, 1514



Jacques de Vaucanson, *The Mechanical Duck*, 1738



Austrian commemorative coin 2015, modelled on Gustav Klimt's portrayal of Hygieia

## b The Bulgarian Renaissance (as an example of the structure of 'enlightenments' and 'renaissances')

'It is not sufficient to make bees renowned if they are unable to turn what they find into something different and better.'

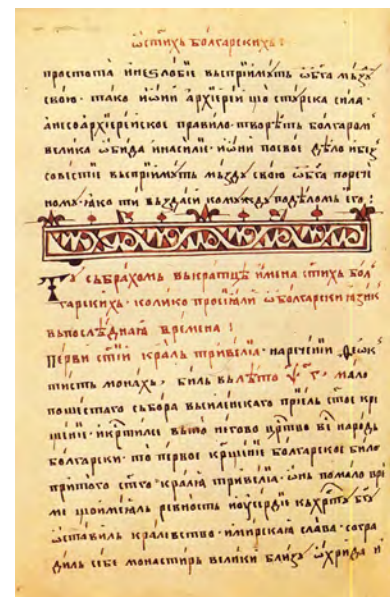
Petraca



Ethnographical Museum in the Kuyumdzhioğlu House, built in 1847, a typical example of Bulgarian Revival architecture.

As has been mentioned, Plovdiv is the ideal starting point for telling a great number of stories and making these come alive in situ. Using the example of the Bulgarian Revival (also known as the Bulgarian Renaissance), general structures can be shown, such as those evident in the Renaissance, Enlightenment or in classicism. It is, of course, important to emphasise that the Bulgarian Revival exhibits national characteristics, in particular as far as the development of a personal Bulgarian national consciousness is concerned.

Nevertheless, there are far-reaching parallels with other renaissances and enlightenments. The credo of Renaissance-Humanism: 'ad fontes' (back to the sources) is a cyclical movement, which can be identified as a more general course of any national or intellectual history recollection. This was likewise a leitmotif in Bulgaria: the monk Paisius of Hilendar, who began transcribing the first Bulgarian history book, *Slavic-Bulgarian History* in 1760, counts as one of the early 'activists' of the Bulgarian Revival. This provided a significant impetus towards developing their own national consciousness and the start of an extraordinarily dynamic period in



Paisius of Hilendar; *Slavic-Bulgarian History*, transcript dated 1765



the historical development of Bulgaria. The changes in cultural and intellectual life were propelled by the founding of the New Bulgarian Enlightenment Movement and the striving towards a separate Bulgarian church. Into this period falls the famous Revival architecture (Bulgarian Neo-Byzantine architecture, Bulgarian Barock, Bulgarian Neo-Gothic, Bulgarian Neo-Renaissance, Bulgarian neoclassicism), which characterises Plovdiv's Old Town.

Tradition is sought out and thereby actualised. Ideals from the past are activated, whereby both an economic and cultural heyday often follows. Plovdiv, as a main centre of the Bulgarian Revival, is the ideal spot to reflect on such a structure, and to envision it on a meta level as a general structure of renaissances and enlightenments.

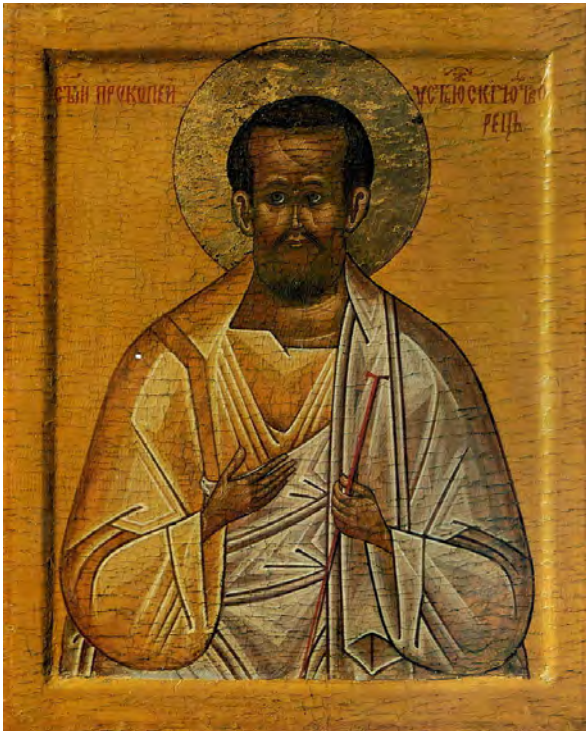


Erhard Schoen, *Five figures in a building*, 1538



The national poet Ivan Vazov at the Annual General Meeting of the Central Bulgarian Charity Society in November 1876 (back row, far right).

## D 4 Archetype module: The fool



Procopius of Ustyug, miracle worker, († 1303 in Veliky Ustyug),  
A Fool in Christ

We all know the famous and in part even archetypal characters in European literature and history: Don Quixote, the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance, Hamlet, the eternal doubter, Oblomow, the superfluous person, or Faust, the restless questioner. The figures of Don Juan, Till Eulenspiegel, Robinson Crusoe and Sherlock Holmes are common knowledge and, to a certain extent, proverbial beings. Most of them originated during the early modern period, which was myth making as only Greek antiquity otherwise was. The characters, which stem from the national literature of different European countries, have been absorbed into the common European cultural memory. There is a Russian Don Juan, a German Robinson, an English Don Quijote and a French Hamlet. They have also long been adapted and developed by other arts (there are around 1,000 adaptations of Robinson Crusoe material). One of these archetypal fig-



Rider-Waite-Tarot, 1910 by Arthur Edward Waite and Pamela  
Colman Smith





Mladen Stilinovic, *Artist at Work*, 1978

ures is presented here as an example; this is the figure of the fool.

We encounter him in medieval times at the latest, but characters such as Diogenes of Sinope already show parallels. As a soothsayer, admonisher and also a tragic figure, he is an 'apolitical political figure'. He enjoys the privilege of fools. The figure of the Fool for Christ (yurodivy) is also a recurring figure; in the Russian Orthodox Church, this embodies the saintly type of the godly or holy fool highly regarded by the people.

Contemporary fools are embodied by caricaturists, who have been caught in the crossfire of world politics during recent years, but also by comedians and other humourists as well. They still take on an enlightening function today, as in the older literature about fools, which, in describing human weaknesses by means of caricature and exaggeration, is intended as both instruction and critique of the zeitgeist.



John William Waterhouse, *Diogenes*, 1882

## D 5 Etymological module: The Prefix 'eu'

Nowhere is the future of the past as present as in a language; thus language history is always cultural history, too. In these modules we would like to examine, in an exemplary manner, the history and significance of individual concepts and words, their origin and materialisation in historical and contemporary figures and objects. One example strikes us as being quintessential – not least, because the exhibition is part of the European Capital of Culture – an investigation into the prefix 'eu'.

Eu, meaning good or beautiful, stems from Greek and was spread over the whole of Europe through Latin and Rome. The syllable is found in such common terms as euphoria and euphemism, but also in the term Evange-



Joan de Joanes, *Christ with the Eucharist*, 16th century



Eugenic chart from the 3rd Reich

lium, from the Greek word euangélion (happy or good tidings), whereby the original meaning still lingers, and also in first names such as Eugenia, Euclid or Eugen. The idea of Eudaimonia was a central concept in both Greek and Roman philosophy and ethics (Stoicism and Epicureanism). The concepts of euthanasia and eugenics, on the other hand, touch on the darkest chapter of delusional racial ideology and notions of modern human breeding. All in



Goslar Gospels, circa 1240

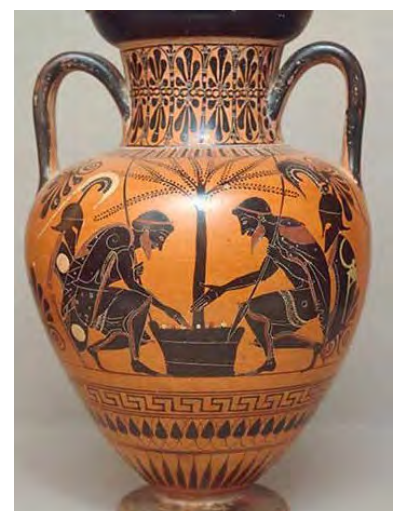


the name of the beautiful and the good.

Many other examples can be found and further networks created - for example, from euphoria (a feeling of well-being or elation), to amphora (bearing from both sides) to ambivalence (both are valid) etc. We consider it important to point out the actuality, presence and connective moment of the historical tradition in everyday speech in practically every European language. We can never speak 'a-historically'. It is important to sensitise people to this.



Sandro Botticelli, *The Last Communion of St. Jerome*, circa 1495



Amphora, Achilles & Ajax playing a game of dice, circa 300 A.D.



## D 6 Everyday Modules

### a The history of the Karakachan

The Everyday Modules are concerned with a kind of present-times archaeology, examining products and things we encounter every day, without making much ado concerning their origin and (hi)story. One example could be investigating how citrus fruits find their way from China to Europe, for example, or the history of the digit 0. A wonderful example for the linking of yesterday and today, of differing cultures and influences, is the Karakachan. They are one of the oldest European so-called pedigree dogs, whose roots can be traced back to the 3rd century B.C. Also known as Thracian shepherd dogs, their present-day name goes back to the Karakachans, a Greek-speaking ethnic group of nomadic shepherds. At the same time, the name Karakachan is evidence of the Ottoman influence, for in Turkish *kara* means black or dark and *kaçan* fleeing. However, they also play a role in 19th and 20th century Bulgarian literature (Yordan Yovkov, Georgi Raitchev and Yordan Radichkov).

Suddenly archaeology is very close and all the threads influencing the present become visible. This realisation can take form with the aid of images, lectures, audio documents, artworks, performances and other media. The aim remains constant: to better understand and become familiar with humankind and our environment.

Conception and curating of this module is in cooperation with the European Cu Tenda project at the University of Plovdiv on presenting the living heritage of the Karakachan community.



Anniversary stamp from the exhibition Balkanfila, Plovdiv, 2010



Karakatschan and shepherd family, 1938

## b Roswitha Baumeister's Needle Stories

The needle has been an elementary tool since the earliest times in human history. At first glance, an inconspicuous object of everyday use, from which, however, cultural history and gender issues, as well as stories about economics, can be unfolded and recounted. Adam Smith thus taught rationalisation using needle production as an example, and Marx analysed the division of labour in factories by means of their manufacture.

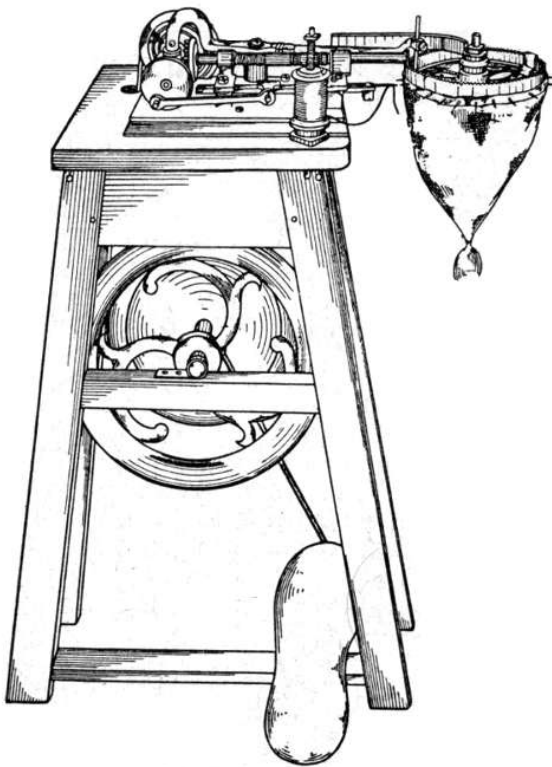
The artist Roswitha Baumeister embarked on a search for hidden and public, curious and intimate 'needle stories' at the end of 2014. Partly due to personal drive, but also because of an ever stronger fascination emanating from the unfurling 'needle world'. She integrates and converts her finds into works of art and narrates European history through the eye of a needle.



Needle cases and packets of needles with lavish illustrations, which have been found, showed a »Princess of Needles«, who as Princess Victoria conveyed the impression that German sewing needles were produced in England..

We are pleased to have acquired Baumeister's growing archive and the continually newly created artworks arising from this for the *Mnemosyne* Project. The artist personally introduces some aspects of her work in the following text.

My first exhibition in my birthplace Trier was the reason behind an artistic project entitled *The Return of the Needle Princess*. I was crowned the Needle Princess in a sewing competition by Singer sewing machines in Trier in 1971. This role reflects the whole ambivalence of those times. Challenging the traditional role of women, but simultaneously admiring the skills associated with them. Learning to sew – being able to create beautiful things – needlework. At that time already a romantic ideal, in fact, but desirable for me as both knowledge and skill. At the same time, my father familiarised me with a drill, saw and woodwork (building furniture). My mother was, however, responsible for banging in nails (a triviality, not treated with respect).



Nähmaschine des Balthasar Krems  
aus Mayen/Rhld. um 1800

At the time of the French occupation of Germany, Balthasar Krems manufactured the Phrygian (or liberty) cap, headgear mandatory under the French. In 1800, Krems developed a prototype of a sewing machine, the single thread chain stitch sewing machine.

### European History – Needle History?

The industrial mass product has been competing internationally for support and purchase at the latest since the industrial revolution. The English needle thereby determined the quality standard. This resulted in the curious fact that German packets of needles were also imprinted and promoted with a portrait of the British Queen Victoria on them. Additional and diverse illustrations evolved, heraldry motifs were newly defined, and genre scenes supposed to tempt women to buy a particular brand were interwoven. This search for needles led me through the haystack of Europe to numerous personal encounters and to needle stories.

1. In Aachen, the first and last needle-manufacturing centre in Germany, production can be traced back to the Spanish needle makers from Cordoba, who arrived in Aachen via the Spanish Netherlands. These needles were therefore called Cordobesas.
2. In the wake of the French Revolution which, in the course of the occupation of the left bank of the Rhine, stipulated the wearing of the Phrygian cap (also known as liberty caps), a revolutionary idea affected needles and the development of the sewing machine. Mr Krems of Mayen conceived the idea of needles with the eye further down behind the needlepoint. This variation meant he could satisfy the rapidly increased demand for Phrygian caps and he thus became one of the largest producers of these well-known symbols of freedom.
3. Whether on trade or escape routes, needles were always taken along during numerous sea voyages and treks. Large needles for sacks and sails. Middle-sized ones for buttons and patches. Small, extra fine ones embroidered various symbols of social orders on jackets, shirts and caps, as well as names on handkerchiefs.
4. Quality can vary a great deal. Spoilt by *Made in Germany* during the 60s and 70s, however, cut-price goods from China offered at dumping prices were surprisingly unusable. With the naked eye, I could see jagged and broken eyes on the needles. Close up, the needle surface of quality needles is also not smooth.

The sewing basket is a treasure chest. A hoarding place for memories, stories and secret letters. (According to Theodor Fontane's character, Effie Briest.)



Packet of needles »Nesthäkchen«. In its original German use, the Nesthäkchen (nestling/baby of the family) meant the bird that was hatched last. Later on, the term was used for the youngest child of siblings, who was the last to "leave the nest". From 1913 onwards, it was well-known as the title of a children's book series of the same name by Else Ury.



## E REMINISCENCES FROM THE MORTUARY. REMEMBERING AS A PEACEFUL PROCESS

'He who cannot remember the past, is damned to repeat it.'

Georg Santayana



*Europa Prima Pars Terræ in Forma Virginis* [Europe as the First Continent in the Form of the Virgin], an early map of Europe by Heinrich Bünting, 1582

In conclusion, we would like to emphasise that Europe – whether that of the cultures, regions or national states – draws its wealth from diversity and heterogeneity, which sometimes entail divergences right up to incompatibility. Yet the links within this very amalgam and tense relationship should be sought and represented. Unlike projects appearing at first sight to be similar, which confront a commemorative question, *Mnemosyne* will not concentrate on *Memories from the House of the Dead* – the title of the epilogue in the book *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* by the great British historian Tony Judt (2005).

The exhibition is rather concerned with showing that history can also be understood in a different way, and that identity should be defined through positive narrative. The past

is not purely an expanse of ruins. When the exhibition begins, Western Europe will have enjoyed almost 75 years of peace. A lifetime. The past should be perceived and accepted as living memory, as a treasure and richness, offering orientation as well as admonishing. Of course the sorrowful stories of war and displacement, the Shoa, torture and violence, will and must find their place in the exhibition. However, they will emerge as one amongst many determinants of our common memory. Remembering can be a joyful process, as well as a painful one. Both aspects are necessary.

*Mnemosyne*'s fundamental objective is, to put it in a nutshell, fostering relationships; a relationship to the past, to the present, to one's own identity and future. Each visitor should be able experience these in a personal way



and confront them with multiple vibrancy. The past not as an abstract, but as the subject of interest, passions, indeed even a certain 'fan culture'. This is also the purpose of the various games, possibilities for participation, the avatars and patrons, the use of comics, virtual reality, workshops and other media and offers. It is our profound conviction that participation and identification (figures) are the easiest and most sustainable ways to learn about culture.



Ilya Efimovich Repin, *Barge Haulers on the Volga*, 1870–1873

Cultural identity, a feeling of *we* and *our*, needs a basis of understanding, a common memory of images, education and symbols. In this way a web of references is woven in this exhibition, which becomes ever denser. If the past is an ocean, then we must become fishermen.



## PROVISIONAL LIST OF ARTISTS

Murat Adash  
Johanna Adebäck  
Anita Albus  
Francis Alÿs  
Olga Balema  
Banksy  
Roswitha Baumeister  
Lothar Baumgarten  
Joseph Beuys  
Julius von Bismarck  
Christian Boltanski  
Martin Bothe  
Yane Calovski / Hristina Ivanoska  
Luis Camnitzer  
Janet Cardiff  
Libia Castro / Ólafur Ólafsson  
Ergin Cavusoglu  
Christo  
Daniel Gustav Cramer  
Tacita Dean  
Jeremy Deller  
Aleksandra Domanovic  
Michael Ende  
Haris Epaminonda  
Merve Ertufan  
Andreas Eucker / Frank-Udo Tielmann  
Petra Feriancová  
Ceal Floyer  
Josef Foos  
FORT  
Adrian Gheny  
Peter Greenaway  
Igor Grubic  
Camille Henrot  
Thomas Hirschhorn  
Markus Hoffmann  
Bethan Huws  
Arthur Jafa  
Janosch  
Samson Kambulu  
Selja Kamberic  
Franka Kaßner

Anselm Kiefer  
Edward Kienholz  
Felix Kiessling  
Willy Klotzek  
Fabian Knecht  
Vikenti Komitski  
Eva Kotáková  
Jiří Kovanda  
Johannes Kreidler  
Peter Krüger  
Alicja Kwade  
Mark Leckey  
Mangelos  
Vlado Martek  
Michaela Melián  
Michael Müller  
Henrike Naumann  
Hermann Nitsch  
Tanjas Ostojic  
Alessandro Rauschmann  
Meriç Algün Ringborg  
Julian Rosefeldt  
Daniel Rossa  
Moritz Schamatz  
Thomas Schütte  
Tino Segal  
Taryn Simon  
Mladen Stilinovic  
J. R. R. Tolkien  
Jorinde Voigt  
Zentrum für politische Schönheit

## BUBLITZ: GENERAL STATEMENT

Bublitz is a growing entity, collective and exhibition office. The fields of work of the decidedly political and civil society orientated organisation, which was founded in 2011, comprise various themes and areas.

The first exhibition cycle, on which, as far as its conception is concerned, the *Mnemosyne* project also leans, was the exhibition series *Handlungsbereitschaft – Skizze einer Generation am Ende der Geschichte* (*Readiness to Act – Draft of a Generation at the End of History*). In this series, which took place in various locations and different institutions in Germany, a sketch of the generation born between 1980 and 1990 was drawn up and presented. This was achieved by integrating the works and positions of about 70 artists and guests, as well as cultural artefacts and a big supporting programme.

Like the *Mnemosyne* project, these exhibitions, posed the question as to the identity of a generation and its age. *Mnemosyne* can also be understood as its continuation and expansion on a European level. Alongside the *Handlungsbereitschaft* series, which ranks among a cluster of socio-political exhibitions, Bublitz has further fields of activity. For one thing, there is our work in the area of *Thesaurós*, under which title ongoing work with so-called Outsider Artists – often virtually isolated persons without any public – is gathered. It is our concern to look after these artists, process their work and make it available to the public. Further exhibition cycles, such as *Xenien* (Greek for guest presents) or the series curated with L. M. Töpfer *The road leads back and back to the black square* follow. Whilst the topic area of *The road leads back and back to the black square* is primarily concerned with art and exhibition theory, in the series *Xenien*,

Bublitz presents smaller formats of the analysis of the present.

### Partners & the Public

Bublitz has no fixed exhibition space, in order to remain internationally mobile. In correspondence with specific exhibitions and themes, therefore, we constantly strive to establish long-term partnerships. The prism of our partners also thereby forms the spectrum of our fields of action. Thus, cooperation with institutions and collections, with associations and NGOs, with universities just as with private sector actors and artists, is a core area of our activity.

We can thus guarantee our finding an anchor in these partnerships, in spite of high mobility, as well as conceiving and implementing the best possible exhibition projects for our broad public through the exchange of expert knowledge, networks, art and other services. We believe civil society service begins exactly at the spot where one leaves the museum's walls and succeeds in infusing the contents long-term into society.

The public we address is, after all, very diverse and heterogeneous. Socio-political exhibitions specifically attract a different public than projects researching the magical worlds of Outsiders, or of those exploring in depth the functions of the social system 'art'. This merger of the different possibilities of exhibitions as mediums of communication forms a panorama of current potential for curating and displaying. Bublitz regards itself as a platform and nexus, into which the expertise of many flows together and, not least through our media programme, gains visibility and force.



## The Team

The team for the European Capital of Culture 2019 consists of 12 people, plus the company INVR, who are all directly involved in implementing the *Mnemosyne* project.

Within Bublitz the work is divided into the following sections: History of Ideas & Conception – Capacity Building & Communication/Media – Project Coordination. Various fields and disciplines – curators, art historians, directors, film scholars, archaeologists, adult education experts, communication and media experts, philosophers, historians, graphic designers, artists and journalists – join forces to ensure the success of this venture. This dialogue is enriched by the different cultural backgrounds of the individual team members: So far, Bulgarians, English, Germans, Poles, Syrians and Turks are working together on the draft of a future European identity.

## Collective

Julian Malte Schindele: Founder & Curator

Desislava Deseva: Coordination and Relations Bulgaria & Sponsoring

Talu Tüntas Emre: Events, Supporting Programme & Registrar

Nils Fock: Curator & Coordination International Partners

## Associated & Advisors

Martin Bothe: Visual Identity

Leon Krenz: Media Strategy / Capacity Building & Workshops

Maggie Bouqdib: Translation, Interpretation and Pedagogical Advisor

Thomas Scherer & Svetla Koynova: Curators Cinema Programme

Yasar Abudail: Coordination Gaming Programme

Michal Martychowiec: Artistic Advisor

Lukas Mathis Töpfer: Advisor

INVR: Concept & Realisation Virtual Reality Programme



How far can you see?

Michał Martychowiec, *How far can you see?*, 2013



## IMPRINT

Bublitz  
Reuterstraße 29  
12047 Berlin  
Germany

Phone  
+49 30 83031251

Email  
[info@bublitz.org](mailto:info@bublitz.org)

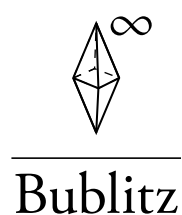
Website  
[www.bublitz.org](http://www.bublitz.org)

Plovdiv 2019 Foundation  
6 Arh. Hristo Peev Str.  
4000 Plovdiv,  
Bulgaria

Phone  
+359 32 632 970

Email  
[info@plovdiv2019.eu](mailto:info@plovdiv2019.eu)

Website  
[www.plovdiv2019.eu](http://www.plovdiv2019.eu)



## Partners

