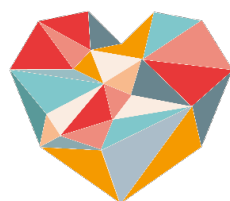




M HKA

Good practice nominated by

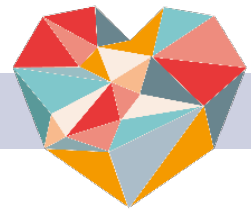


Dementia
in Cultural Mediation



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The activity



Name of the activity

We have two dementia projects: Meet Me @ M HKA and MUSEUM E!.

Summary

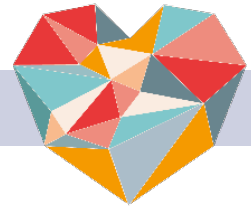
Meet Me @ M HKA

Interactive guided tours for people with dementia and their caregivers at the museum.

Museum E!

It is a project on contemporary art in a residential care home in which both collection works (installations, video works, paintings, sculptures, etc.) from the museum and artists temporarily move into the residential care home.

Content



Target group

Meet Me @ M HKA

Guided tours for people with dementia and their caregivers. Both people who still live at home and those who live in a residential care home are welcome. You book a visit as a group or, if you live alone, as a duo: the person with dementia and a caregiver. Initially, we focused on people with young-onset dementia, but not anymore because we noticed that the residential care homes then dropped out. So there are no restrictions in terms of profile. Even though the interactive aspect is central, we always find a way to involve every person in the guided tour. Only working with people who are deaf is more difficult.

Museum E!

This is a project for the residents, their 'families' (in a broad sense: spouses but also children, grandchildren, other visitors, etc.) and the staff members of the residential care home. A priori, we do not exclude anyone. We always strive to ensure that anyone who wants to participate can do so. The staff at the residential care home invite the end users to take part. They can sometimes sense who is interested and where support might be needed.

Objective

Meet Me @ M HKA

- A nice activity for both the person with dementia and the caregiver.
- Strengthening the bond between both.

Museum E!

Creating an environment that focuses on more than just care. It is important not only to place works of art in the residential care home. Activities must also take place with the residents in the context of the works of art.

The "E!" stands for "experience": in the past, the present and the future. People with dementia also have a future. We take the power of imagination as a starting point to bring people together.

Partners

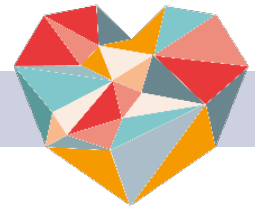
Meet Me @ M HKA

- The programme is inspired by the MoMA (NY) project of the same name. This museum offers their knowledge and methodology open source.
- We worked together with the University of Antwerp to give the guides a specialised training and in parallel to do a small evaluation study based on observations during test-tours (what works, what doesn't, what language is desired,...). We also questioned the participants about their experiences what effect the visit had had on them. This was done both immediately after and ten days after the activity.
- We also worked together with the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Van Abbemuseum. Both museums in the Netherlands have a similar project. We exchanged methods with them.
- For the communication of the activity and addressing potential participants we work together with several umbrella and expertise organisations on dementia, e.g. Alzheimer League, Flanders Centre of Expertise on Dementia, ...

Museum E!

- The partner is a local residential care home "Immaculata". We have been working together for five years now.
- The municipality of Edegem supports the project, for example financially, in terms of communication, press, ...

Practical



Venue

Meet Me @ M HKA

The guided tours take place in the museum.

The guides select the galleries on the basis of audibility and acoustics.

Museum E!

As regards the setting, we initially provided a studio space for the artist in residence: a separate room with all the comforts for artistic work (washbasin, outside light, ...).

We recently decided to move the studio to the cafeteria of the residential care home because we noticed that the studio always reached the same residents. The cafeteria is the heart of the residential care home: you reach more people here. The disadvantage is that it offers a less 'safe space' for both artists and participants. Some artists therefore choose to work in the residents' rooms.

Day, time & duration

Meet Me @ M HKA

We organise the visits (90 minutes) during the opening hours of the museum. This has some disadvantages, e.g. in terms of noise pollution, but we think it is important to promote the inclusiveness of the participants. We aim to get participants back into the cultural life.

We always organise the visits early, at the opening of the museum, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. This is often the quietest time in a museum. Participants are also more active.

Getting there is often a big hurdle: providing parking nearby is therefore important.

Museum E!

We ask the artist to be present in the residential care home for 10 hours per week, for a residency period of six months. The artist is asked to be present every two weeks on a Wednesday or weekend day, because the residential care home is very busy then. We also try, as much as possible, to take part in other activities organised at the home. Every Wednesday afternoon, an occupational therapist gives a guided tour at the residential care home of one work from the museum collection based on the Meet Me @ M HKA methodology (duration: one hour).

Group size

Meet Me @ M HKA

We prefer a group of 10 persons (5 caregivers, 5 persons with dementia).

The absolute minimum is 2 (1+1).

The absolute maximum is 16 (8+8).

Museum E!

We aim to reach everyone, so from 1 to 300 participants (= all residents of the residential care home).

Supervisors and hosts

Meet Me @ M HKA

- Provide one guide and one volunteer per group. The volunteer can take care of the group and, for example, accompany people to the toilet.

- The reception staff, who receive visitors, also have an important role, just like the museum stewards. We also give them training on how to deal with people with dementia. This consists of a shortened version of the training the guides received on how to communicate with people with dementia.

Museum E!

- The artist in residence, a number of technicians to install the works of art and/or to provide technical support to the artist. These people currently receive no training.

- Also important is the role of a caregiver from the residential care home, in our case the occupational therapist. The occupational therapist is the bridge between the artist and the end users, supports the activities of the artist, ... This person preferably has a strong interest in art and culture.

- For this project, we also have a steering committee that sets out the artistic line and selects the artists for example. This group consists of: (1) museum staff, (2) staff of the residential care home and (3) external advisors.

Materials & facilities

Meet Me @ M HKA:

- Be sure to provide museum chairs.
 - Each work of art is looked at at length, so sitting is pleasant.
 - In this way, everyone (e.g. people in wheelchair) – including the guide – is sitting at the same height.
 - The chairs offer participants an anchor point in the space.
- The guides always bring replicas of the art works they discuss. The replicas can be passed around.

Museum E!

What is needed depends on the artist and is agreed with the artist at the start of the process.

Costs

Meet Me @ M HKA

We charge the same price as any other tour: 75 euro/guide.

Once a month we organise a free guided tour for everyone with a valid museum ticket.

Museum E!

There is no charge for participants.

Name tags

Meet Me @ M HKA

We give everyone a name tag, including the guide and the volunteer. The tag mentions the first name of the person in question. This allows people to address each other directly by name.

Museum E!

Here we provide a 'visual name tag': each room has a display case in which something from the biography of the person living in that room is shown in a visual way. The occupational therapist makes this display case with each individual upon arrival at the residential care home. It is a useful conversation starter for the artists in residence to address the residents.

Memento

Meet Me @ M HKA:

Everyone gets a reproduction of their favourite work of art. Everyone will be asked what their favourite work of art was at the end of the tour.

Museum E!

This depends on the artist. Every artist leaves a work of art for the residential care home in any case, so in principle for everyone. Some artists also choose to offer something to the residents individually.

Afterwards

Meet Me @ M HKA

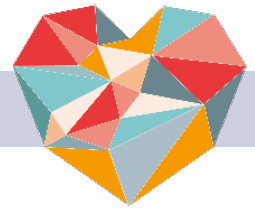
- We do not foresee any follow-up. For example, we are very reluctant to take and/or distribute photos.

Museum E!

- In the newspaper of the residential care home, there appears regularly a contribution about the project, for example, an interview with the artist, a retrospective, photos, poems that residents have made... A staff member of the residential care home, who also does the intake interviews with the people who arrive, keeps an eye on what material we can use from whom.

- At the end of each artist residency, there is a public moment for the general public.

Communication & Registration



Communication

Meet Me @ M HKA:

We communicate via:

- the M HKA website,
- several external websites (e.g. Uit in Vlaanderen), and
- a quarterly e-newsletter.

We also place flyers in the Antwerp region, for example in doctors' waiting rooms, dementia cafes, ...

We do not communicate about this activity on social media.

Museum E!

We communicate via the internal communication channels of the residential care home:

- the intercom,
- the newspaper of the residential care home,
- the television channel of the residential care home (to show video work or announce something), and
- the touchscreen in the entrance hall (aimed at residents and their family).

Registration

Meet Me @ M HKA

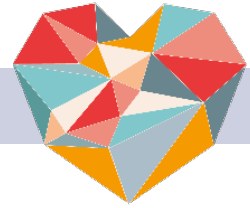
Participants must book via e-mail. They will receive a confirmation form afterwards, which also includes directions and a brief description of the programme.

For the visits on Saturday you do not need to make a reservation. You can just come to the museum.

Museum E!

Registration is not necessary here. The entire residential care home offers a group of participants who participate according to their interests.

Description & Program



Meet Me @ M HKA

Make sure the visitors receive a warm welcome!

Upon entering the museum, everyone is given a name tag. For the welcome moment, the guide then seeks out a quiet spot in the museum. Time is taken to get to know each other and the museum. The guide will tell you something about the museum and the building.

Then the guide introduces the central theme that connects the selected works of art. The guide also gauges the expectations of the visitors.

Afterwards, at least three and a maximum of five works of art are discussed together. Every work of art can be used, but we avoid works of art that are too loud, that consist of too many different elements, that are very small...: this mainly for practical reasons.

The guide always maintains the structure of the questions that are asked, namely:

- questions concerning the viewing experience;
- observing, or bringing things together from the work in an analytical manner;
- a moment of free association: what associations do you make with this work, what does it evoke;
- looking for connections with the personal experience.

Between each step there is a 'repeat step': the guide briefly summarizes what was said.

There is no single correct interpretation: all input is equally valid and valuable.

There is a strong emphasis on non-verbal communication. It is also important to allow spontaneous, mutual conversations to develop.

At the end, all reproductions of all works discussed are shown and discussed with the group. This is a moment of reflection. The participants are also asked which image they would like to take home with them.

Museum E!

This project has three pillars:

- the biographical display cases,
- the works from the museum that go to the residential care home,
- an artist who is given carte blanche to create own work and/or work together with the residents.

1. The biographical display cases are made by the occupational therapist upon the arrival of a new resident, together with the resident. They represent the life, the passions,... of the resident, or what they consider important.

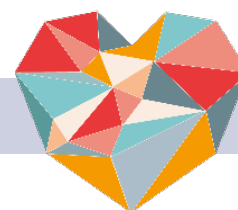
2. The works of art that temporarily move to the residential care home are chosen together, namely during a prior participatory process with the residents, their families, the caregivers, ... The only limitation is that it must be technically possible to move the works. Technicians from the museum come to install the works.

Interviews are conducted with the residents on the works they 'chose'. These interviews are part of the museum's archive. In addition to the museum insurance, an extra insurance policy is taken out.

The occupational therapist of the residential care home received training as a guide in the museum and provides guided tours of the works in the residential care home.

3. The third pillar consists of an artist's residence. An introductory event is organised during which the residents can get to know the artist and vice versa. This event is preferably linked to another activity where many people are present. There is also always a closing moment that is open to everyone. The artist's work is 'unveiled' there and there is a snack and a drink.

Evaluation



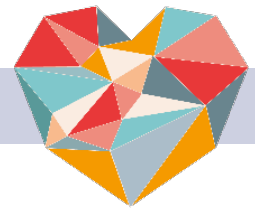
Meet Me @ M HKA

A first evaluation took place in cooperation with the University of Antwerp. In addition, each guide is followed up at least once a year by the coordinator of the project. The coordinator follows a guide's tour and both the guide and the coordinator fill in an evaluation form afterwards and put it next to each other to discuss.

Museum E!

There is a six-monthly evaluation of the program by the steering committee (staff of the museum, the residential care home & external experts). Every two years there is an evaluation with the residents and their relatives, which is done in a visual way. Staff members of the residential care home also follow up on the residents and report in between, if necessary.

Checklist, when to do what



Meet Me @ M HKA

One month before the activity

- Training the guides.
- Announcing and communicating the program.

The week before the activity

- The guide sends the preparation to the program coordinator for feedback.
- Confirmation mail is sent in case of reservations.

The day before the activity

- Making prints and reproductions of the works.
- Create list of names (in case of reservation or registration).

Day of the activity

- Brief the museum staff.
- Make sure chairs are ready.
- Create name tags.

Museum E!

For this project, it is not possible to give a general planning, as the artist's practice is integrated as much as possible into the functioning of the residential care home. Moreover, each artist's practice differs, ranging from workshops for about twenty people to individual co-creative moments, ...

Corona

Meet Me @ M HKA

Due to the restrictions, this activity could not take place during the Corona period.

Museum E!

This program has continued but with one and the same artist during the entire Corona period and taking into account the necessary measures.

Points of attention

