

Student design workshop with specialist communities proves inspirational

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ABSTRACT: Student workshops not only provide a meeting place for varied specialist communities, they also are a form of training. In this article, the benefits are outlined and discussed of holding workshop classes in an historical townhouse in the Main Market Square in Kraków, Poland. These classes were held in December 2018 at the Spiski Palace. The subject of these innovative classes was design of the arrangement of a number of the historic Spiski Palace interiors, intended for a printing and historical books micromuseum. Included with the workshop were numerous lectures, meetings and discussions, as well as sessions spent visiting other museum sections. This activity and form of contact with specialists from various disciplines enriched the knowledge of students and inspired interest in the heritage of Kraków city culture.

INTRODUCTION

As a part of their education in the Faculty of Architecture at Cracow University of Technology (FA-CUT), Kraków, Poland, students - aside from mandatory and elective classes - also participate in scientific clubs, competitions and workshops. In the study presented here, the students had signed up in a sizeable group for a design workshop that lasted several days. The workshop was held between 8 and 12 December 2018, and had been advertised on the Faculty of Architecture Web site. The workshop organisers included employees of the Descriptive Geometry and Digital Technologies Division (A-43) (i.e. the authors of this article), as well as a private developer, the owner of the Spiski Palace.

In preparations for the event, an agreement was signed between the owner of the building and the FA-CUT. The document was prepared in accordance with a proven model of co-operation between FA-CUT and the business sector. The agreement included clauses concerning the general rules of carrying out both the workshop entitled *Multimedialne Mikromuzeum Oficyna Schedlów* (Schedel Publishing House Multimedia Museum), as well as the competition. A statute was formulated, in addition to a detailed programme, the value of prizes, and so on. Speakers were also invited as representatives of various communities: for example, universities and other institutions, as well as design and conservation companies. Invited guests included:

- art conservators;
- academic university employees of Jagiellonian University (responsible for introducing workshop participants to the subject associated with the printing shop and the Schedel family publishing house); Cracow University of Technology (responsible for presenting directions for the design of contemporary museums);
- architects - designers of the Europeum, a branch of the National Museum in Kraków;
- employees of the Descriptive Geometry and Digital Technologies Division at Cracow University of Technology (responsible for providing supervision and advice concerning computer-aided design);
- art historians and scholars of historical architecture.

The initiator of the event was the owner of the Spiski Palace, who plans to create a contemporary museum in some of the interiors of the building. It is meant to be a reference to the Schedel family print shop that operated there in the 17th and 18th Centuries. The developer invited students of the FA-CUT to participate in the formulation of a conceptual proposal of a new space for culture. The owner prepared workspaces and provided access to the historical interiors for a couple of days.

SCHEDL PUBLISHING HOUSE MULTIMEDIA MUSEUM: STUDENT WORKSHOP

The conceptual design of a micromuseum that the students were preparing concerned the use of spaces in the Spiski Palace historical building, located at the Main Market Square in Krakow, address number 34. It covered two spaces

with a floor area of about 100 m², set on the first floor, in the back section. Access to the spaces was to be available from the hall, from the side of a set of reconstructed representative two-run Baroque stairs, the so-called imperial stairs.

The dominant qualities of the spaces included in the design were their historical palatial character, preserved late-Renaissance polychromes, significant height (5 m), large windows, double doors and an enfilade layout (i.e. a suite of rooms aligned with each other).

The main guideline for the interior arrangement was the maintenance of the multi-layered character of the historical site highlighting the variety of traces of past centuries surviving within the palace. Furthermore, the museum was to fulfil a representative function. The essence of the idea was to create a modern, multi-functional space, friendly to every member of the audience, regardless of age. At the same time, highlighting and underscoring the weight of the context and history of this truly special place in the heart of Kraków was a priority. The primary goals of the exhibitions planned in the spaces were the provision of information about the:

- functioning of the Schedel family publishing house, the furnishings and machinery used;
- development of printing in Kraków;
- printed works from the period of the publishing house (particularly those surviving to this day);
- illustrators', graphical artists' and printers' work.

An assumption was made that visitors would learn of the beginnings of the culture of early modern books in the context of the then-contemporary publishing operations of the Schedel family publishing house. They would learn the history of printing products, old prints and printing machines, as well as be familiarised with other Kraków-based publishing houses of the period.

At present, the Spiski Palace fulfils various and changing functions that are residential, commercial and educational, as well as providing an exhibition space. It is also being renovated, under the supervision of conservation authorities. The spaces that had thus far remained unused have been worked on by art conservators for three years. Research work is being performed, in addition to preparing diploma projects by students from *Jan Matejko* Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków, Poland of the Faculty of Conservation and Restoration of Art, under the supervision of Professor Władysław Zalewski.

The workshop had been planned such that the students first familiarised themselves with the place and its history, and then could focus on design work. Workshop participants acquainted themselves with the historical and artistic values of the Spiski Palace and the Schedel family publishing house, thanks to contact with the authors of studies, as well as numerous explanations and commentaries, in addition to access to conservation documentation (this, thanks to the courtesy of art conservators).

The history of the Spiski Palace was presented to the students by a scholar of the residential buildings of Kraków, Waldemar Komorowski, as well as the owner of the building, Bogdan Steinhoff. The material was outlined in a broad historical context. The developer presented plans concerning the future of the palace, describing both those that were to be implemented soon and those that were more distant and visionary: the restoration of the palace to its former glory.

Participants of the workshop were taken on a tour of the palace by the designer and conservator, Andrzej Cygnarowski, who familiarised them with the details of ongoing conservation work. Participants were told of the late-Renaissance polychromes recently discovered on the walls. Identified were the most important elements in the interiors that were to be preserved and highlighted in the future printing museum. Also made available to the students was the full conservation documentation, prepared by Ewa Cempla-Dziadoń, Alicja Arkusiewicz and Andrzej Cygnarowski.



a)

b)

Figure 1: In the Spiski Palace; a) visiting the rooms of the Schedel family publishing house; and b) lecture on the history of the palace (Photographs: Paweł Sikorski).

Knowledge concerning the history of early modern books and the operation of the Schedel family publishing house was shared by a researcher from Jagiellonian University, Michał Czerenkiewicz who conducts a research project under the auspices of the National Science Centre (Narodowe Centrum Nauki), entitled *Kultura wczesnonowożytnej książki w*

kontekście produkcji wydawniczej oficyny Schedłów (the culture of early-modern books in the context of production at the Schedel family publishing house).

As a part of the lecture, Michał Czerenkiewicz presented the history of the printing shop that operated at the Spiski Palace in the years 1636 to 1708, which, at the time was one of the most well-known and dynamically developing printing companies in Poland. Mentioned were the number of books printed by the Schedel family (more than 700 titles), among them two significant works for engineers on geometry and architecture: *Geometra Polski*, in three parts, as well as *Architekt Polski*.

Early printed books considered both as the artifacts of the printing office and the media of the literary texts are investigated in the context of the social, political, and confessional transformations of the 17th and the beginnings of the 18th century, as exemplified by the editorial production of the famous Schedels' printing house [1].

The educational programme of the workshop also included a curatorial tour with architect Jolanta Wodyńska, who was the lead designer of the adaptation of a famous granary into the Europeum European Culture Centre, a branch of the National Museum in Kraków. During the meeting with students, discussed was the course of the work on changing its function, presenting an entire array of conditions that occur in the completion of a museum interior for valuable collections of paintings and sculptures. The meeting took place in the main exhibition halls of the Europeum, which enabled direct observation and the asking of any questions students might have had for the author of the design.

The students were interested in the exhibition of old prints and the sources of design inspirations, in addition to the permissible scope of interfering with historical matter. It should be mentioned that the museum, apart from the museum role, ...will also fulfil educational functions. Its role is to inform the 21st century audience [about] lasting centuries belonging [to] our culture and art [in] Europe. Exhibitions, events, concerts, lectures regarding the European culture will take place in Europeum [2].

During a lecture by the painter and Cracow University of Technology employee, Małgorzata Mizia, the students were familiarised with the interiors of museums of contemporary art. This presentation was an inspiration for them, constituting an opportunity to observe various exhibition techniques and the use of light in the formation of interiors.

A study trip to the Pałac Krzysztofory was an important element of the workshop, as it is a building in the vicinity of the Spiski Palace and is at present undergoing renovation. The palace's Medieval cellars were a particularly important part of this trip. The group was guided by the conservators, Stanisław Cechosz and Waldemar Komorowski. The students had the opportunity to see the authentic Gothic stoops (e.g. a small staircase) at the palace (the students had heard about this historical element during lectures on the history of architecture, but they had never seen the original elements).

The lectures, speeches, meetings and tours were summarised by a discussion panel, which included all students and speakers. The meeting was another occasion to exchange ideas and experiences, as well as to ask any final questions.

The complexity of the problem and the limited time to prepare the conceptual design meant the students performed design work in two-person teams. The design was produced under the supervision of mentors, both in the spaces of the Spiski Palace, as well as the premises of the Descriptive Geometry and Digital Technologies Division at 24 Warszawska Street. At Cracow University of Technology campus, the students had two rooms with computers at their disposal, equipped with hardware and software useful to their work.

The plan of the course of the event had to be precisely defined because of various circumstances. For example, because of the renovation of the cellars of the Krzysztofory Museum, it was necessary to adapt the tour of the underground section to a pause in construction work. In turn, because of the varied availability of the spaces of the Spiski Palace, meetings and lectures also took place on the campus of the Cracow University of Technology at Warszawska and Kanonicza streets.

Participants of the workshop were given a proposition to first use the floor plans and cross-sections prepared by the organisers to create a three-dimensional model of the spaces. Afterwards, using that as a basis, in addition to the remainder of the provided materials, they prepared their own solutions. It should be noted that the participants were not restricted in terms of the technique with which to prepare the design, which is why every team used the tools they were able to wield the most effectively.

Apart from classic drawing techniques, the students employed graphical modelling software, such as SketchUp and ArchiCAD, as well as Adobe Photoshop, GIMP (an image editor) and Adobe InDesign. They also had at their disposal photographic documentation of the structure, as well as a photogrammetric scan and spherical photographs of the rooms.

To facilitate objective assessment of the work, formal guidelines meant to unify the presentation of the projects were put in place. The teams prepared their designs on two B1-format sheets in a digital version, with a horizontal layout. The project included floor plans, views of the walls and a minimum of a single 3D presentation (visualisation, perspective drawing, sketches, axonometric projection drawings, and so on).

A multimedia presentation of the projects took place towards the end of the workshop. The teams presented and explained their ideas. The instructors' suggestions and feedback primarily concerning the graphical layout of the projects were of use to the students, with many of them applying the corrections to improvements in the final appearance of the competition sheets.

COMPETITION AND AWARDS

The workshop culminated in a competition and project exhibition. The competition jury included Bogdan Steinchoff, Małgorzata Mizia, Andrzej Cygnarowski and Piotr Szlezzynger, who deliberated at the Pałac Spiski. A main award was given, in addition to three distinctions.

The projects submitted for the competition combined the museum function with that of education and promotion of culture. They also featured spaces for permanent and temporary exhibitions, and research workstations, in accordance with the assumptions that modern spaces should be characterised by universality. The multitude of functions is meant to simultaneously open the Spiski Palace to the residents of Kraków (meetings with authors, lectures) and students (a cameral reading room), without being limited to tourists or one-time visitors. The decision was made to limit *traditional* exhibitions in favour of multimedia solutions. Based on descriptions presented by students, the award-winning conceptual proposal is presented below, in addition to the projects awarded with honourable mentions (see Figure 2a and Figure 2b; Figure 3a and Figure 3b).

Prizewinning Conceptual Proposal

First prize, with a cash award, was given to the team comprised of Maria Jaskiernia and Joanna Kłyś (see Figure 2a).

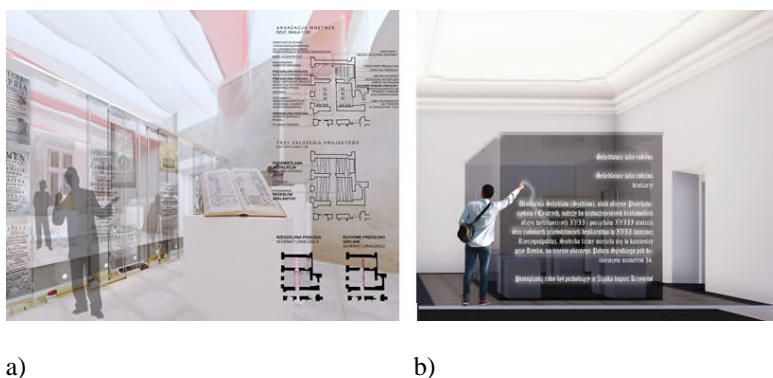


Figure 2: Parts of student projects: a) first prize - Maria Jaskiernia and Joanna Kłyś; b) honourable mention - Michał Kołodziej and Dawid Piórecki.

The authors designed an exhibition sequence in the form of vertical blinds fitted to guides suspended between the load-bearing walls of the building. The multi-functionality of this element of the interior would be provided by its mobility. As it is suspended above the floor of the structure, it would be possible for visitors to change the position of it. Another quality of the flexible exhibition that can be moved in this manner is the possibility of delineating separate spaces in the micromuseum. By completely opening up the spaces, a cameral presentation area could be obtained, with a multimedia projector in the smaller room.

Placing interior decoration on one side of the space, in turn, would make it possible to obtain a large surface meant for a larger group of people, with the possibility of organising cultural events. Another dominant interior decoration would be an installation designed under the surface of the ceiling. Located above the exhibition and the heads of visitors, it would resemble the thin pages of a book, additionally offering interesting visual experiences through colourfully backlighting the individual layers of the material and the ability to display images on their surface.

Placement of the remaining exhibits, along with multimedia screens, as well as listening and workshop stations could be changed within the interior. To make it possible to view them, they would be placed on tall plinths. Their mirror-like walls reflect the space of the micromuseum, producing an impression of a larger space and clarity of the interior.

Honourable Mention and Cash Prize (2b)

Honourable mention with a cash prize was awarded to the team comprised of Michał Kołodziej and Dawid Piórecki (see Figure 2b).

A glass cuboid, inside which there are special climatic conditions for the most prized exhibits, has been designed for the first space. Glass walls would be used to present information concerning the history of the place and its exhibits. Thanks to the use of glass as a structural material, the exposed polychromes, that are proof of the rich and changing history of the palace, will not be obscured. In the second room would be the remainder of the wall paintings and the

opportunity to participate in multimedia projections. The walls would feature presentations of reconstructions of interiors across the centuries. Another subject that visitors would be acquainted with during the presentation are graphics inspired by old prints and incunables.

Honourable Mention and Cash Prize (3a)

Honourable mention with a cash prize was awarded to the team comprised of Katarzyna Majka and Agata Małecka (see Figure 3a).

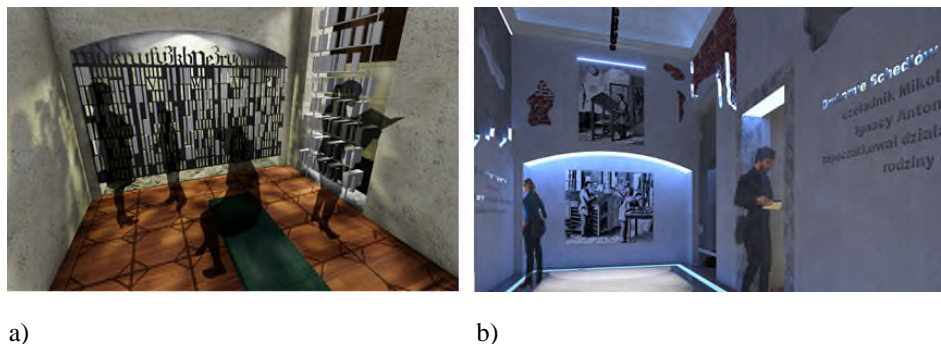


Figure 3: Parts of student projects: a) honourable mention - Katarzyna Majka and Agata Małecka; b) honourable mention - Natalia Olchawa and Dominik Pacholik.

In the competition design, the authors took into consideration the historical character of the two spaces. The first of these was the bedroom of Mikołaj Schedel, one of the owners of the printing shop in the 17th Century. The second constituted an enfilade room. Therefore, the planned micromuseum would be divided into two sections: the first, with a more *dual use* character, for reading and workshops; and the second, with a museum space dedicated to presenting educational materials, copies of graphics and a private collection of old prints.

The primary idea was to create a modern, multi-functional place that projected friendliness to visitors regardless of their ages. At the same time, it was a priority to highlight and underscore the significance of the context and history of this special place and create a space that would make it possible to present the discovered historical polychromes. The main motif connecting the entire proposal would be rectangular modules shaped such that they resemble books. The materials include tempered, reinforced glass that provides lightness to the composition, as well as an openwork-like character, in addition to steel and timber, which adds warmth to the interior and creating an ambient atmosphere.

Honourable Mention and Cash Prize (3b)

Honourable mention with a cash prize was awarded to a team comprised of Natalia Olchawa and Dominik Pacholik (see Figure 3b).

The conceptual proposal features a *path* for visitors: a sculptural installation in the form of a book that automatically rises above the floor surface during presentation. The illumination of sound and visuals from a projector placed above the exhibit introduces visitors to the history of the Kraków-based print shop, acquainting visitors with the qualities of the space in which they are located. Furthermore, a glass surface with a chronological timeline of the most important events would be placed nearby. A station where visitors could browse and touch reprints of works, imitations of covers and materials, or leave a signature in the guest book with a historical pen or font, would also be provided.

In the second space, in which there is no original floor surface, a resin floor with an illustration of the signature or coat of arms of the Schedel family printing house was proposed. The floor surface level was raised by about 10 cm due to the use of floor surface heating.

Project to Combine the Old and New

The project by Ludwika Pysz and Daria Rogozińska was inspired by the Schedel shop and combined functions of both a bookstore and a print shop. The corridor, a generally accessible space, was assigned for the fashionable and currently widespread bookcrossing. The first space of the museum would have the character of an old bookstore with a book storage space. The most outstanding works would be presented here, both in multimedia and original form. The second space would be assigned as a printer's workshop. One half of the space would be occupied by a printing press illuminated and underscored by illumination. The visitors would be able to make their own prints with it.

Project with Multimedia Solutions

The team comprised of Agnieszka Filipczyk and Barbara Czerwińska produced a conceptual proposal that creatively uses the small size of the exhibition space by featuring a predominance of multimedia solutions. This would make

it possible to present a broader range of content without occupying large spaces. The larger space (of the two) features a viewing plinth, so as to provide the proper exposition of the historical wall paintings. It would have a glass structure. This solution makes it possible to maintain the view from the floor surface, simultaneously making it possible to look at the preserved paintings from a new perspective. The stairs leading to the plinth also play the role of an exhibition case, in which old prints could be put on display. The work takes into consideration the use of VR (virtual reality) devices, with the help of which visitors will be able to watch, for instance, presentations of the appearance of the 17th Century print shop or the course of conservation work on the space.

The smaller space would be an audiovisual area, which, when needed, would also accommodate a small conference hall. It would feature a glass table, above which would be placed an interactive projector with the capability of displaying projects on glass.

Project to Illuminate through Digital Means

Teamwork by Jakub Pagacz and Paweł Mytnik: The designed exhibition assumes the introduction of a form that constitutes a linear element, a sculptural installation, placed in the exhibition space, so as to intuitively guide visitors. It is a sign within the space, suggesting the sequence of observation of the artefacts stored within the space. It has the shape of a continuous loop that penetrates the exhibition space. It refers to the workshop space of the 17th Century print shop with its character.

The installation would make it possible to attach light exhibits onto it, including old prints. The structure would be made out of a pipe with an internal diameter of 15 cm, which will contain the necessary installations to illuminate the space and the exhibits. This would make it possible to refrain from interfering with the historical partitions and floors of the building. The exhibits would feature an original printing press, which would be illuminated through a system of projection mapping, causing it to stir into digital life.

EXHIBITION

A vernissage (private view) of the exhibition entitled *Multimedialne Mikromuzeum Oficyna Schedlów* was organised on 27 February 2019 at the Cracow University of Technology Galeria GIL (24 Warszawska Street). Presentations of the work performed during the workshop were prepared by the Descriptive Geometry and Digital Technologies Division in co-operation with Galeria GIL.

The exhibition, which was visited by all participants of the workshop, was a chance for students to compare and analyse the conceptual designs of other teams. As a part of the workshop, the students worked on the same subject in two-person teams, without knowing the ideas of the other participants. This was associated with their taking part in a competition and striving to receive the main prize. Due to their actions being characterised by rivalry and competition, they were only able to see the projects of other teams during the exhibition.

The exhibition vernissage became an opportunity to meet again; to share ideas and engage in a discussion about the workshop and the competition. The main subject of conversation was the Spiski Palace and the future of it in the context of completing spatial arrangements prepared during the workshop.

Project authors were given sincere congratulations and thanks for their work and participation in the event. The vernissage visitors received a commemorative folder with illustrations of the projects and a text referring to the history of the Schedel family publishing house.

CONCLUSIONS

The intended goal was achieved for the *Multimedialne Mikromuzeum Oficyna Schedlów* (Schedel Publishing House Multimedia Museum) student workshop: organisers consider it an educational success. Despite the registration window for the workshop not lasting long (about two weeks), 30 people were willing to participate. Ultimately, 24 people confirmed participation. This proves that students view such events as highly attractive. When organising workshops, particular attention must be paid to selecting the date, so that it does not clash with the students' schedule. Another element that is necessary to ensure the success of such an initiative is to create a friendly atmosphere and comfortable working conditions, which will make it possible to increase participants' involvement.

The large amount of work required to organise such a project profits from being an event with outstanding educational value. During the few days of intense work, students have the opportunity to perfect and train in design and teamwork skills. Coming into contact with the reality of conservation work, they have the ability to experience historical matter and space in a direct way. Conducting the classes over several days in an historical building at such a prestigious location made it possible to acquaint students with the condition and context of the building. Students were forced to perform highly co-ordinated work and effectively manage their time to submit their conceptual design before the appointed deadline. Such workshops undoubtedly provide a chance to sensitise students to historical and cultural values, and to solidify their understanding through training.

The multi-aspect subject matter presented during the workshop, thanks to the engagement of architects, arts historians, conservators, scholars of culture and research division employees, who are familiar with computer-aided design techniques, opens students to broad design perspectives.

The students participated in lectures, presentations and museum tours, as well as a discussion panel during which they asked questions, seeking answers to matters of interest to them. The knowledge obtained during meetings with lecturers, architects and conservators was applied by the students in designing the arrangement of the Spiski Palace interiors. The projects submitted for the competition are proof of the knowledge and additional competencies the students gained as a result of working in an historical interior. The quality of the work produced also points to an excellent mastery of computer-aided design tools. Nine projects were made using digital technologies, one was drafted manually and one combined both approaches.

The workshop is a part of the educational policy of the Faculty of Architecture at Cracow University of Technology, in which:

Particular emphasis is being placed on the advancement of highly desirable practical skills and competences. Related to this, there are many activities and ventures that involve co-operation with local government and business enterprises [3].

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Of particular note is the conduct of the developer, Mr Bogdan Steinchoff, who, as the owner of the Spiski Palace, had made it available for research and education. In funding the organisation of the workshop, Mr Steinchoff adopted the role of Patron of the entire event. It was found that working and staying at such a prestigious place in Kraków was an occasion by which to expand knowledge of the varied and exceptional history of this establishment, for everyone involved in the workshop.

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