

JAN DOLÁK, PETRA ŠOBÁŇOVÁ

**MUSEUM PRESENTATION**  
(2018)

*Olomouc: Palacky University Olomouc, 378 p.*

Museum presentation is one of the basic communication tools used by a museum. Temporary and permanent exhibitions not only fulfil the role of cultural creator, but also shape the place of museums in the mind of society. This particular process of creation covers a great number of aspects which are decisive for the museum presentation to have a favourable result.

The authors of this monograph have combined the results of their research in museum presentation and published their findings jointly in the monograph “Museum Presentation”. They have been working in many areas related to this issue for a long time, as can be seen by their previous monographs: Petra Šobáňová: *Muzejní expozice jako edukační medium* [Museum exhibitions as a medium of education] and Jan Dolák: *Múzeum a prezentácia* [The Museum and Presentation].

The book “Museum Presentation” deals with the way of finding an adequate type of museum presentation. It provides a well-rounded view of contemporary museum presentation via a museological approach. On a broader level, it presents the issue of the theoretical side of museum presentation, moving seamlessly on to the practical side, where it describes the most sought-after methods of presentation: the museum exhibition. The authors also describe optimal methods of museum presentation, taking into account the contemporary needs of our society and current trends in museology.

The English title of the publication “*Museum Presentation*” gives away the fact that the text of the book is in English. Thanks to the chosen language, it also addresses foreign readers. The publication is divided into seven chapters, which are further divided into subchapters. The introductory chapters deal with the theoretical side of museum presentation and its development. They provide

---

a cross-section of the development of museum presentation and define the terminology of this subject. A separate chapter is devoted to the collection item, from the process of musealisation to its participation in the museum presentation. The authors also devoted particular space to research on contemporary approaches to the development of museum presentation with a basic classification of exhibitions. The fifth chapter describes innovative elements as part of museum presentation. In the subchapters, the authors set out several reasons for applying various innovations, including for example: children as visitors, disabled visitors, interaction with visitors, new media and didactic elements in the exhibition. The penultimate chapter deals exclusively with the process of creating a museum presentation. The final chapter provides a summary of recommendations for creating exhibitions and summarises contemporary trends and the most frequent errors in museum presentation.

The basic factors for improving the level of museum presentation which the book focuses on are professionalism in the creation of exhibitions with a pedagogical aspect, and the absolute need for professional exhibition criticism. The authors also include a plea for the extensive adoption of technological developments in this field. In the book they point out that its aim is not to provide one specific manual for creating a perfect presentation. However, based on the many examples from working practice and concrete elements in the presentation, they have without any doubt described a conceptual path to improving museum presentation. They also define it as a creative and planned process reflecting the contemporary state of museological thinking. The text is comprehensible, engaging and easily focuses attention on the collection item, as the conceptual foundation stone of the museum presentation, the principle communication tool between the museum and visitors. The method of presenting the truly extensive number of examples reflecting both the strengths and weaknesses of museum presentation is also well thought out. The publication is suitably complemented by illustrations which give a clear idea of the described examples (tendencies) of museum presentation.

The book “Museum Presentation” presents many of the inspiring thoughts of the authors themselves, P. Šobánková and J. Dolák, as well as the specific views of specialists from several specialised areas, possible approaches to the issue and examples also put into practice, all of which come together to make up a high quality, useful publication on the subject of museum presentation.

*Marianna Tomašková*