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## EXHIBITION PLANNING – A NEW FUNCTION OF OLD BUILDINGS

## WYSTAWIENNICTWO – NOWA FUNKCJA STARYCH OBIEKTÓW

### Abstract

Modern architecture of exhibition spaces represents a wide range of different solutions. For instance, the first museums were housed in palace buildings that often maintained their original interior design. Nowadays, a new trend has emerged regarding the use of post-industrial buildings to find a new function for them, including their adaptation for exhibition requirements. This phenomenon is driven by different concepts. One of the ideas is to blend into the nature of the original function and spatial advantages of the building and to introduce parts of the exhibition as an additional element. Another idea is to give a “museum” feel to the original place, sugar-coating the reality. Finally, the third idea opts for the most invasive transformation of the original place, leaving only the outer shell, turning railway stations, mines or gas plants into museums. These are choices that have to be made when trying to keep post-industrial complexes alive: opting for truth or for lies, depending on the adopted aesthetics.

*Keywords: exhibition, place of display, museum, relation*

### Streszczenie

Współczesna architektura przestrzeni wystawienniczych to gama wielu różnorodnych rozwiązań. Na potrzeby pierwszych muzeów adaptowano budynki, np. pałacowe, często utrzymując pierwotny charakter wnętrz. Obecnie pojawił się nowy trend – wykorzystania licznych budynków poprzemysłowych, szuka się nowej funkcji, m.in. przystosowując je do potrzeb wystawienniczych. W tym zjawisku zauważalne są rozbieżne koncepcje: pierwsza to wpisanie się w charakter pierwotnej funkcji i wartości przestrzennych, jakie one niosą oraz wprowadzanie elementów wystawienniczych jako dodatku, druga to tworzenie skansenu z pierwotnego miejsca „lukrując” rzeczywistość, oraz trzecia – najmocniejsze-ego przekształcenia pierwotnego miejsca; pozostaje tylko skorupa zewnętrzna, już nie stacja kolejowa, a muzeum, już nie kopalnia, a muzeum, już nie gazownia, a muzeum. To wybory, jakie muszą być dokonywane przy próbie utrzymania przy życiu kompleksów poprzemysłowych: szczerłość lub kłamstwo w imię przyjętej konwencji estetyki.

*Słowa kluczowe: ekspozycja, miejsce eksponowania, muzeum, relacja*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 FUNCTION AND EXPECTATIONS

Exhibition planning is being used increasingly often as a new way of functionally reviving buildings. Mansions, manor houses, palaces and other buildings of the kind are commonly

accepted for this kind of adaptations, which is in line with the history of the institution of the museum itself. Originally existing facilities of various functions were adapted for exhibition purposes, such as, for instance, the Uffizi Gallery, palaces and mansions converted into museums, an example of which is the Royal Louvre Palace. The private quarters and offices of well-known personalities were well-suited for displaying private collections.

Nowadays, many post-industrial facilities have been transformed into museums, such as the former d'Orsay station in Paris built for the 1900 World Exhibition and redesigned as a museum by Gae Aulenti with her team in 1980–1986<sup>1</sup>. Another example is Tate Modern in London – one of the largest European contemporary art museums – which was formerly a gas plant and redesigned by Herzog & de Meuron<sup>2</sup>. To keep the old or create the new? To bear witness to the past of the place or create a new image of the existing space? Is a new beautiful exhibition displayed in an adapted space a lie, or perhaps the truth about its present state? These are questions the present article will seek no answers to. It is more likely there are no answers to them at all. The research task for the author is to compare strategies adopted for exhibition purposes in adapted spaces. The question is how the original character of the facility affects the character, quality and narrative of the spaces created and whether it is possible to breathe new life into the interior while maintaining its original character.

## 1.2 PLACE OF DISPLAY

Museums are viewed as temples of art, places of contemplation, interaction with beauty and knowledge. Such statements regarding the institution are often automatically extended to exhibition spaces and exhibitions themselves. Museums are to be special places. As early as the mid-eighteenth century, museums emerged as centres open to the public for gathering, protecting and sharing various collections for scientific purposes, but the first new buildings serving this new function began to be built only in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Museum buildings from this period drew inspiration from ancient temple buildings. The building of the Altes Museum designed by Karl Friedrich Schinkel is a clear reference to ancient temples with a row of columns lining the front facade and a portico. Another example is the National Gallery in Berlin designed by architects who continued Schinkel's style. Raised on a high pedestal, the building's uniqueness is highlighted. Even the name "museum" has its roots in a Greek word "mouseion" which designated a place within a temple complex. Before the Berlin museums were built, buildings serving similar purposes had already been created, but Schinkel's complexes had the most profound and long-lasting influence on subsequent European and world museum designs, combining ancient references with the newly established institution.

Later, many unusual buildings were created and new styles and trends in architecture and art meant that the building shape ceased to be directly associated with temples. Nevertheless, museums and temples are still linked by their uniqueness, grandeur and distinction from other buildings.

Museum complexes serve many complex functions indicated by the definition of a museum. Organizing exhibitions is one of them, both in permanent and temporary

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<sup>1</sup> J.M. Montaner, *Neue Museen. Räume für Kunst und Kultur*, Krämer K. Verlag, Stuttgart-Zürich 1990, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> P. von Naredi-Rainer, *A Design Manual. Museum Buildings*, Birkhäuser, Basel 2004, p. 226.

exhibition spaces. The arrangement, route planned to guide the visitor, lighting, details, proportions – all these factors are decisive. The character of the interior strongly affects the possibilities offered for the purposes of the exhibition. The exhibition can complement it, triggering a mutual relationship that creates a completely new quality. There are also exhibitions where the relationship between the space and the exhibition is neutral, the exhibition simply filling the space, and the arrangement neither taking advantage of it nor confronting it. The third type of relationship is when the creators of the exhibition neutralize the features of the exhibition space and direct the visitors' attention only to the content of the exhibition. The best example of the latter relationship is the permanent exhibition of the Polin Museum. When entering the exhibition, the visitor is engulfed by it and loses the sense of place. These three most common types of relationship between the exhibition and the exhibition space differ in terms of emphasis placed, but their common feature is the coexistence of both components.

### 1.3 THE BUILDING AS AN EXHIBIT

The purpose of an exhibition is to present objects or an issue in an existing or adapted space, but more and more often the exhibition function is introduced in places that we want to protect and display. This fundamentally changes the emphasis of the relationship, the place of display simultaneously becomes an object of display. It is by no means a new phenomenon. Adaptations of palaces, castles or mansions for exhibitions are a perfect example. Nowadays, however, the range of building types adapted for such purposes is expanding. Within this group, we not only have places that, due to their availability, purpose and function, were used by people, but also places that, due to the purposes they served, were inaccessible, and even dangerous, such as post-industrial buildings and technological complexes, many of which are valuable in the civilizational sense. Two examples mentioned earlier, d'Orsay Station and the Tate Modern, are adaptations of an old place to a new function, where only the external form and proportions remain from the original building, but the purpose has changed – this is one of the solutions. But how to reconcile the new life of the building with the original essence of its function and show it?

## 2. CASE STUDY

### 2.1 RED DOT MUSEUM, ZOLLVEREIN FACTORY AND RUHR MUSEUM IN ESSEN

Fritz Schupp and Martin Kramer were the designers of the building complexes in Shaft 12 of the Zollverein Coal Mine in Essen (Ill. 1), which was built in 1927–1932<sup>3</sup>. The architects designed the buildings and the part above ground. In its years of glory, Zollverein was one of the largest mines in the world. The buildings in the complex were given a very characteristic look, with the walls made of red steel frames filled with dark brick, reminiscent of German timber-framed walls. The straight divisions of the walls dotted with windows gave the buildings a geometrical order. The buildings lack any intricate details and are an example

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<sup>3</sup> P. Gössel, G. Leuthäuser, *Architecture in the 20th Century*, Taschen, Köln 2005, p. 206.

of harsh industrial architecture, albeit a majestic one. The whole complex is dominated by symmetry and large geometric forms.

In 1986, mining activities were suspended and the mine was closed. The state of North Rhine-Westphalia decided to take the entire complex under its protection<sup>4</sup>. One of the aspects that influenced the decision was the homogeneity of the architectural form. Thus, the buildings of the complex were renovated.

One of the first restored and commissioned facilities was the boiler house designed by Fritz Schupp and Martin Kramer in the spirit of Bauhaus. The renovation carried out in 1997 involved reconstruction of the facade, removal of subsequently added parts and renewal of machine parts. The project of renovation and adaptation of the building to the new function was designed by Lord Norman Foster + Partners<sup>5</sup>. The boiler house was transformed into the North Rhine-Westphalia Design Center and the Red Dot<sup>6</sup> Museum<sup>7</sup>, where the award-winning works are presented at permanent and temporary exhibitions. One of five furnaces was left in the boiler house as an example of industrial technology from the 1930s, the remaining furnaces being partially opened and combined with the reinforced concrete structure, which offered Norman Foster some additional display cases. The added structure only minimally covers the industrial details of the old furnaces, and the exhibition is mostly arranged with, for instance, the interior of the furnace as the background. In the project description, Norman Foster emphasizes his ideological assumption to maximally preserve the original character of the building<sup>8</sup>.

As part of the reconstruction project, a conference room, office spaces and some exhibition spaces neutral in style were created as well.

Visitors to the Red Dot Museum start from a high ceiling hall with a preserved furnace and installations, which dominate the first impression of the interior. However, after a second glance, the visitors will notice modern lamps hanging from the ceiling (Ill. 2) and a vertically suspended car body (Ill. 3). The visitors slowly feel drawn into a kind of game, in search of exhibits that have been entwined into this industrial environment, positioned on the steps of the stairs or suspended against the backdrop of technical devices and walls (Ill. 4). This astonishing arrangement makes some exhibited objects difficult to find or at times it surprises with their location. However, it provokes us to simultaneously admire on the one hand the exhibition, which presents the most cutting-edge designs of modern industry, and, on the other, details of the interior of the boiler house and even the inner parts of the old equipment (Ill. 5). In their concept of the exhibition space, the artists managed to introduce some variety, so the exhibition takes place both in those industrial spaces, but also in interiors of a more subdued nature, which reduces fatigue and introduces

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<sup>4</sup> V. Grabe, *Zollverein – była kopalnia węgla kamiennego w Essen na liście światowego dziedzictwa kultury UNESCO. Miejsce pracy, turystyki, sztuki i imprez kulturalnych. w materiałach pokonferencyjnych*, [in:] *Dziedzictwo kultury przemysłowej jako szansa rozwoju turystyki europejskiej* [Materiały pokonferencyjne z III Międzynarodowej Konferencji Naukowo-Praktycznej, Zabrze 15–16 wrzesień 2006 r.], Górnośląska Wyższa Szkoła Handlowa, Urząd Miejski w Zabrzu, Katowice 2007, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> *Red Dot Design Museum by Foster + Partners* [in:] Metalocus, [www.metalocus.es/en/news/red-dot-design-museum-foster-partners](http://www.metalocus.es/en/news/red-dot-design-museum-foster-partners) (access: 06.2020).

<sup>6</sup> Red Dot is an annual design contest with an international jury.

<sup>7</sup> V. Grabe, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>8</sup> *Red Dot Design Museum* [in:] Foster and Partners, [www.fosterandpartners.com/projects/red-dot-design-museum/](http://www.fosterandpartners.com/projects/red-dot-design-museum/) (access: 06.2020).



- III. 1. Zollverein view from the roof (author's photo)
- III. 2. Ret Dot Museum – exposition (author's photo)
- III. 3. Ret Dot Museum – main hall exposition (author's photo)
- III. 4. Ret Dot Museum – exhibition inside the furnace (author's photo)
- III. 5. Ret Dot Museum – exhibition inside the furnace (author's photo)
- III. 6. Ruhr Museum – exhibition (author's photo)

diversity. The idea of the exhibition itself is also worth pointing out. The items are exhibited in post-industrial facilities surrounded by preserved equipment that bears witness to the history and achievements of the place. It is a very logical and reasonable assumption, but everything depends on the form of the exhibition. It can be either engaging or give the feel of a museum. In the Zollverein boiler house, the artists managed to avoid this by introducing new elements while maintaining the character of the space. The solution introduced in the boiler house of the XII Zollverein Mine Shaft combines the history of industry with its present. The idea behind the creation of the Red Dot Museum sits well with the whole concept of a new function for the Zollverein complex. Many of its buildings have been rented to companies dealing with the creative industry, art, graphics and design. It even has a Dance Centre and hosts numerous artistic events<sup>9</sup>. In 2001, important decisions were made regarding the fate of the mine. The area was to be based on culture and design industry. The new master plan for the transformation of Zollverein was developed by the OMA architectural office, owned by Rem Koolhaas, and completed in 2010. The idea was to preserve the old heritage, adding new features particularly related to art and design<sup>10</sup>. One such facility was created nearby – the School of Management and Design in Zollverein – designed by the Japanese SAAN Architectural Design Consultancy.

The building of the coal washing plant of Shaft XII in Essen was transformed into the Ruhr Museum in 2010. It was designed by Rem Koolhaas' OMA in cooperation with Heinrich Böll and Hans Krabel<sup>11</sup>, the German architects who also worked on the renovation of the boiler house. The museum collection was based on the Ruhr Land Museum. The concept is fairly unusual, the arrangement and selection of the exhibition pieces combines nature with the art and history of the region, including its industrial history, as well as predictions regarding its future. This is also the title of the permanent exhibition "Nature, Culture and History of the Ruhr Area"<sup>12</sup>. It is a museum with an exhibition that is difficult to be classified unambiguously based on the exhibited content. Different parts of the exhibition differ in terms of the subject matter. To give an example, the geological exhibition or the natural history exhibition combines into a single story with, for instance, an exhibition of medieval or antique objects. The "glue" that links them is the industrial interior. The author of the exhibition design is the architectural office HG Merz<sup>13</sup>. Just as in the case of Norman Foster, who decided to keep the furnaces, the installations and machines were also left in the coal washing plant. Visitors are led to the 47m high building through an escalator to a height of 24 m, where there is an information point, a shop, a cloakroom and a cafeteria, as well as access to the main staircase. The original equipment above this level has been preserved. As part of the tour, a viewing platform is available on the roof. It can be accessed through the rooms with the aforementioned preserved equipment.

The tour of the museum exhibition begins from the entrance level down, through a very distinctive staircase with intense orange-red backlight, which leaves a great impression in a dark interior. The staircase leads to three levels with permanent and temporary exhibition rooms. The rooms with varied ceiling heights and limited access to natural light posed

<sup>9</sup> V. Grabe, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>10</sup> *Zollverein Masterplan* [in:] OMA, [oma.eu/projects/zollverein-masterplan](http://oma.eu/projects/zollverein-masterplan) (access: 06.2020).

<sup>11</sup> *Ruhr Museum* [in:] Detail, <https://www.detail-online.com/article/ruhr-museum-14210/> (access: 06.2020).

<sup>12</sup> Ruhr Museum, [www.ruhrmuseum.de/en/museum/](http://www.ruhrmuseum.de/en/museum/) (access: 06.2020).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*.

many challenges for the exhibition designers. The convention adopted involved equipping the place with furniture and exhibition structures, keeping their scale and arrangement subject to the requirements of the space (Ill. 6). The authors of the exhibition combined conventional solutions with multimedia display techniques. The latter were kept rather discreet, blending in with the narrative. This is important, as no additional dividing structures were used for the changing parts of the exhibition, leaving the original space intact. The thematic content of the exhibition transitions in a smooth way. Since more intense elements of one part could affect the perception of neighbouring ones, this was avoided by installing large projection screens almost parallel to the ceiling, which can be viewed from a sitting position or at a short distance (Ill. 7). The most interesting example of the use of the space is the middle level, which can be accessed by another staircase. This part of the exhibition has a clearly divided structure, resulting from the original technology and the presence of old coal chutes.

The exhibition combines the presented items with the industrial interiors. The visitor is led through a labyrinth of small rooms. It was necessary to introduce a mezzanine floor, perfect for the purposes of presentation. For example, from the platform one can view a collection of huge ammonites in the coal chute (Ill. 8). This level also features a small intimate room with paintings from the ancient and medieval periods (Ill. 9). The designers of the exhibition took full advantage of the space, creating an interesting exhibition while highlighting the area. For the purposes of the exhibition narrative, special structures were designed. The spatial story needs some background, and in this case part of the coal washing technology was used as a context. The whole should be viewed based on the principle of contrasting scale, matter and exhibition symbolism.

The Ruhr Museum exhibition program also features a room with an audio-visual presentation and a viewing platform on the roof.

The temporary exhibitions zone is located on the middle level with an access to the main staircase. It is not a neutral space, but rather forces the exhibition authors to consider its scale and character.

## 2.2 OLD MINE SCIENCE AND ART CENTRE IN WAŁBRZYCH

The former bituminous coal mine “Julia” closed in 1996 was transformed into a science and art centre named “Old Mine”. The building complex of the mine includes several free-standing historic structures that are now listed buildings. The new urban, architectural and exhibition concept was developed by Nizioł Design International. The functional program for the new centre is a combination of science, culture and art. It houses the Ceramics Centre and, in the future, will also feature a mining and geology museum. The first part was opened in 2014, and new zones are being commissioned gradually<sup>14</sup>.

In the first stage of the project, the buildings in the complex were renovated, including the Chain Bath, where the tour of the mine begins. It is also here that performances and cultural events are held. The old Boiler House houses temporary exhibitions that are independent of the main sightseeing route. In the Forge, one can see some of the original mining devices, while the Cooling Tower, the tallest structure, serves as a viewing platform and an exhibition space.

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<sup>14</sup> Archirama.pl, archirama.muratorplus.pl



- III. 7. Ruhr Museum – exhibition (author's photo)
- III. 8. Ruhr Museum – exhibition of ammonites (author's photo)
- III. 9. Ruhr Museum – exhibition of ancient collections (author's photo)
- III. 10. Old Mine in Wałbrzych (author's photo)
- III. 11. Old Mine exhibition interior (author's photo)
- III. 12. Old Mine Temporary exhibition rooms (author's photo)

A modern information and reception building was added to the complex, and it connects to the sightseeing route (III. 10). In terms of the exhibitions, the space is half-ready. Some museum projects and exhibition interiors have not yet been finished (III. 11). The exhibition

designs of Nizioł Design International provide for the creation of an exhibition coherent with the space, but one that introduces modern solutions.

The temporary exhibition zone is available and operates in a space adapted to historical interiors (Ill. 12). The area of the mine and the location of the buildings allowed for the creation of a series of interconnected public spaces where mine equipment and machines can be displayed and artistic events hosted.

As of 2019, there are two independent sightseeing routes: one for temporary exhibitions and the other for the mine infrastructure. Due to the dispersion of rooms and buildings, it is not possible to visit them without a guide. At present, the exhibited items include devices and their technological background. During the on-site visit, the complex was cleaned, renovated and made available to visitors in its present shape without any explicit exhibition connections (Ill. 13).

### 2.3 THE SILESIAN MUSEUM IN KATOWICE

The new seat of the Silesian Museum in Katowice is located on the premises of the former Warszawa Mine. The author of the project is the Austrian studio Riegler Riewe Architekten ZT-Ges.m.b.H from Graz. The project was selected in a competition from 18 ideas. The new concept combines the buildings of the old mine with new architecture. In the machine room of the Warszawa Mine Shaft some restaurants were opened. The old clothing warehouse was renovated and adapted to the needs of the Polish Scenography Centre, similarly to the carpentry house. The main new part is hidden underground and houses exhibition spaces, conference rooms, maintenance rooms, other museum functions and a garage. Only a few glass cuboids are above the ground level, creating a dispersed composition. The project descriptions often mention this solution as one that managed to avoid the block structure dominating the historic architecture of the place. This balance of new and old forms helped to present the old buildings aesthetically while also contrasting them with blocks of similar proportions but neutral in colour and lacking in detail, which highlights the beauty of the old brick buildings (Ill. 14). Another advantage of this concept is the dispersion of the structure of the new complex; some parts are used for museum functions whereas others are cubes illuminating the underground spaces. Older complexes consist of several buildings of various sizes and structures, and the adopted concept is in line with this.

The museum houses six permanent exhibitions and a space for temporary exhibitions, including the One Work Gallery. The main exhibition space is a single, open, two-floor space. On the first floor, there are two exhibitions of Polish paintings and an exhibition of non-professional fine arts, while the lower floor features an exhibition of the history of Upper Silesia, an exhibition of the Centre of Polish Scenography, an exhibition of Silesian religious art and a room for temporary exhibitions with the height of the ceiling reaching to the top floor. The nature of the new exhibition space is definitely neutral. The upper floor is partly illuminated with natural light from the structures outside.

The space combines three different arrangements of exhibitions. The upper level provides access via a ramp to the lower level (Ill. 15), where, despite the fact that it is a single-space exhibition hall, each part is clearly separated and closed, without a smooth transition from the upper level (Ill. 16). Each permanent exhibition is an independent composition without any reference to a spatial relationship with the place of display, which was apparently the intention of the designers. They created a neutral interior, allowing their exhibitions to tell



- Ill. 13. Old Mine Machine Exposition Room (author's photo)  
 Ill. 14. Silesian Museum in Katowice – outdoor area (author's photo)  
 Ill. 15. Silesian Museum in Katowice slipway (author's photo)  
 Ill. 16. Silesian Museum in Katowice (author's photo)

their own stories. The One Work Gallery is a separate recessed wing with access from the main foyer as well as from the outside. The exhibitions in the buildings of the old mine are not connected with a passage for the visitors. They can only be accessed from outside and, as in the case of the old mine, they are free-standing buildings. The exhibition arrangement presents a new history of this place. References to the original function can be seen in the proportions and composition of the external zone, with strongly accentuated features that say a lot about the past of the place, but also make way for its future.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

#### 3.1 TRANSFORMATION OF THE ARCHITECTURE

The three cases presented differ significantly in terms of their historical and economic circumstances, the assumptions the designers had in mind, and the scope of the interventions carried out. They are definitely connected by a similar function and an idea for reviving the buildings through exhibition planning and connections with art. In Zollverein, the idea from the start was to preserve the features of the original architecture and the spirit of the place, and the interventions carried out are separate from the old form. Norman Foster introduced a concrete structure in the brick and steel architecture, while Rem Koolhaas added steel structures of coal washing facilities and a concrete staircase inside, but as a contrasting element he used sharp orange light, emphasizing their distinctiveness. In terms of scale, the introduced interference is not too significant. What influenced the overall look of the space was also the way in which the machinery and interiors were treated. The visitor has an impression that only the mining dust has been removed, with the walls and devices carefully cleaned, but not shining with the freshness of new paint. This decision regarding the aesthetics of the place helps to maintain the character of the place and tells the truth about it. Monumentality – the feature of the main buildings, with the main shaft and a very strong axial composition of the boiler house with a chimney have a grandeur worthy of a temple, but not the one that Schinkel was referring to.

The Old Mine is a place of educational, scientific and artistic value, whose transformation was left unfinished. The old buildings of the mine are intimate in proportion, and have light plastered walls, with details characteristic of industrial buildings from that period. The concept adopted consisted in restoring it to the original state as far as possible. However, as a result it lost traces of its original purpose and the role of a future exhibition should be to reveal the truth about its function and history.

When discussing and referring to the Silesian Museum in Katowice, one must take into account one of the aspects that distinguishes this complex from the others. The introduction of a strongly defined institution into the former mine area allowed certain decisions to be made and a balance struck between the exhibition and collection requirements on the one hand, and the value and tradition of the place on the other. The Ruhr Museum, the Red Dot Museum or the future Old Mine museum do not have such valuable collections as the museum in Katowice; their exhibition program was created for these places, with reference to their function and purpose.

The architectural concept of the Silesian Museum is the most extensive in terms of new cubature and exhibition arranged. Nevertheless, the designers managed to strike a balance so that the historic and newly created buildings complement each other.

#### 3.2 SIGHTSEEING ROUTE

The conventional functions of the institution of the museum include to protect and preserve, show, educate and entertain. However, new ones, such as social integration, emerge. The

impression of accessibility and transparency of sightseeing routes through exhibitions is particularly important in the adapted buildings.

In Zollverein's both museums, despite the exhibitions being arranged in spaces of former mining technologies, the designers managed to come up with such sightseeing routes that smoothly guide the visitor through the most interesting parts and help to maintain interest along the way.

In the Old Mine in Wałbrzych, sightseeing is the sum of many rooms that intricately lead through the buildings. In the Silesian Museum, sightseeing can be arranged as a single walk through various exhibitions or as independent visits to individual parts planned so that the dispersion and separateness of individual parts do not hinder sightseeing.

### 3.3 EXHIBITION PLANNING – A NEW FUNCTION OF OLD BUILDINGS

The scope of this article included only some highly distinctive post-mining buildings. The issue of the truth and lies in architecture is the starting point for the author's reflection. Arranging exhibitions in such spaces involves creating a kind of story about these post-industrial facilities that are made available to the public. It is necessary to determine what one wants to tell, the truth about the beauty of the buildings, or rather the truth about the place itself and its function. Will old mines with beautiful old architecture be closed in a few years, with just ones like the Old Mine in Wałbrzych or Essen still remaining? Exhibitions are one of the forms that bear witness about these facilities; the stronger connection they have with the place, the more suggestive they are. Not all complexes have to be frozen in time, though. The Silesian Museum in Katowice tells the truth of the future, while not falsifying the past.

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