

## Museen in Quarantäne – Neue Chancen für Sammlungen II

Online-Symposium des Departments für Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaften am  
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The confined museum. A reflection about the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga activity and communication in pandemic times



***The confined museum: a reflection about the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga activity and communication in pandemic times***

**ABSTRACT**

Experiencing complicated times as far as museums and cultural management are concerned, different local contexts and different institutions had to adapt to the moment we are experiencing, either due to the pandemic or the state of alarm that prevails in most of the countries. It is in this context that the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, in Lisbon, adopted a series of relative measures based on the indications of closing doors given by the Portuguese Government.

Although closed to the public, the MNAA remains active and the institution has adjusted its activity and communication plans to address not only confinement, but also the needs of the public. This reflection seeks to answer what activities and projects that the museum has been developing online, how its communication strategy has worked, what the public is receptive to these solutions presented and yet, what will be the other potential challenges that the institution may be facing at the moment and how it is dealing with them.

Even though we know that not enough time has passed to present matured results on this topic, we will try to give the most complete and well-founded answers at the moment, taking into account not only the information that the museum provides, as well as supporting this analysis with the possible and very young existing bibliography, in the sense that this study can also serve as a tool for future work by the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga based on this experience.

Even so, these projects carried out by the educational service of the museum, in partnership with the communication department and the area of conservators, consolidated not only a broader knowledge of the public about the works of the MNAA, but also increased the reach of this museum in matters of social networks, through their good use, content sharing and interaction generated at a time like the pandemic and in the post-pandemic, as well as allowing educators and museum management to

evaluate, through the number of views and interactions which they are the ex-libris of this museological institution; how can works of art be enhanced and thus attract more visitors. It is, therefore, an education for cultural heritage that also complies with the aims of public instruction that are wanted from a space like a museum.

Maria Isabel Roque has a very interesting point of view on this issue explaining to us that it was thanks to this extreme situation caused by SARS-Cov2 that most museums rethought the use of information and communication technologies and put communication as an instrument vital to your strategy. The researcher also believes that this transition to *“digital technology”* will be an integral part of *“future museological action”*, having worked during quarantine as an *“alternative to isolation and an occupation of time”*.

In addition to this character of company, there is also the educational point of view, which makes the public feel a sense of belonging to the different institutions they visit remotely. This at a time when the main museums with locations in areas or cities with a greater tourist exposure, suffer falls in the order of 75%-80% in their revenues, translating this into thousands of Euros lost weekly.

From the point of view of cultural management, it should be noted that the conception of ideas like those presented in this communication ends up obeying a low and easily profitable production cost. For any cultural manager or director of an institution such as the National Museum of Ancient Art, it is necessary to have an audience for this type of spaces and organisms to remain alive, even so, the ability to adapt to situations like the one we have all faced in the past is also necessary. months. That said, an idea that only implies using the people who already work at the museum, a few external elements – be they the audio visual professionals – and that can be done behind closed doors, without having to invest money to provide a service to the public, turns out to be profitable.

In any case, we can only be sure of such facts when the number of tickets sold to this museum in the post-pandemic and the number of people who visited this institution and participated in its activities are evaluated. Museums will resume their programming

and visitors will eventually return. The paradigm has changed, and we still don't know the magnitude of its transformation.

**YouTube link for the project “A arte é uma ponte que nos une”:**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRSOKe19\\_J4&list=PLtgdEsibz4MwSquOQprg4eU7RqKe15l\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRSOKe19_J4&list=PLtgdEsibz4MwSquOQprg4eU7RqKe15l_g)

**Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga Official Website:** [www.museudearteantiga.pt](http://www.museudearteantiga.pt)

**Online catalogues made available by the Museum during the quarantine:**  
[www.museudearteantiga.pt/educacao/mnaa-em-casa/publicacoes-online/publicacoes-incm](http://www.museudearteantiga.pt/educacao/mnaa-em-casa/publicacoes-online/publicacoes-incm)

[www.museudearteantiga.pt/educacao/mnaa-em-casa/publicacoes-online/catalogos-sala-do-tecto-pintado](http://www.museudearteantiga.pt/educacao/mnaa-em-casa/publicacoes-online/catalogos-sala-do-tecto-pintado)