

# Theater museums in the system of using excursion programs

## Abstract

The author refers to the specifics of the theater museums involved in updating knowledge and raising the professional level, developing practical skills and professional competencies of tourism service specialists in the field of a holistic presentation of the history of the development of such a museum as a specific sociocultural institute. It touches on the interesting history of the creation, formation and composition of collections, as well as the modern activities of major museums and the latest museum centers around the world, hosting tourists.

**Keywords:** theater museums, sociocultural consciousness, historical and cultural heritage, translators of values, museum-excursion interaction

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## Introduction

The rapid entry into the human life of information technology is constantly making changes in the socio-cultural environment. The traditional ideas about the role and place of cultural and educational institutions in the life of a modern person are changing, their purpose, functions and the list of services they provide. This is all reflected in the tourism sector, both in general and in the formation of excursion programs. Museums at different times performed very different, sometimes deeply conflicting functions. Now the process of their evolution is on the path to finding new cultural paradigms and is characterized by the creation of a new sociocultural institution.<sup>1</sup> The importance of updating museums through the creation of open cultural and educational sites is enhanced by rapid processes to transform society, and in many respects it depends not only on modern technical equipment, updating expositions, strengthening the material base, but also on professional development of both museum staff and guides. That is, the readiness of the personnel of these institutions to use new principles of interaction in working with visitors, including guests from other countries.

Museums as custodians and translators of cultural heritage belong to institutions that contribute to the formation of a single historical and cultural space of national identity. In a modern country, the policy of preserving cultural heritage has not yet acquired sustainable development, as there are cases of destruction of protected areas, underfunding of projects for the restoration of historical and cultural monuments and maintaining the activities of cultural institutions in good condition. This threatens with the loss of many layers of artistic heritage, the destruction of the cultural and natural environment of man.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, there is a steady trend towards the revival of ethnographic, folklore traditions, the restoration of religious and national shrines, new dimensions are opening up in the study and evaluation of cultural monuments.

## The mission of theater museums

The social significance and relevance of museum collections, including theatrical ones, is increasing in conditions of a revival of interest in the region's history and genealogy, which contribute to

the personification and spiritualization of national history. Theater museums, as well as another profile, are called upon to preserve and pass on from generation to generation the cultural and historical code of the nation, artifacts of skill and achievements in the field of this art. In this sense, the theater museum is not just a mirror image of history; it appears as a meaning-forming social institution. Today, developed countries are actively conducting museological research to increase the role of various museums in the cultural space, using interactivity as a means of developing a museum institution, identifying ways for museums to interact, in particular, creating a network covering museums of different levels and types: national, regional, local and galleries.<sup>3</sup> The idea of developing a territory through culture, including through a theater and stage, both at the city and region level, is relevant. The idea of developing cities through culture suggests that the museum, as well as the theater, have a great burden not only to ensure their own existence and service to visitors, but also to conduct actions that would draw attention to the region and help create its unique image.<sup>4</sup>

## The role of theater museums in tourism programs

Theater museums are a special phenomenon; theater museums are not in all capital cities and even countries. Such museums also face the issue of establishing PR communications with the public. There are no departments or specialists in museums who would specifically deal with the institution's advertising, new expositions and exhibitions. Competently compiled travel programs can solve this problem, often being reviewed and more relevant for modern time, the type and characteristics of the audience. "The theater, like no other art form, reflects the surrounding reality in life forms that are obviously accessible to perception. The peculiarity of his ideological and aesthetic influence, the dialectic of the relationship of the theatrical work with the audience, the secret of the most active sensory perception, based on empathy with the hero and the author, lies in this accessibility. Modern theater strives for diversity; It is interesting not only for people highly educated or related to the professional art field, but it attracts an increasing number of viewers, testifies to the expansion of the social profile of the audience, to the education of the

public, open to artistic contacts. Just as a performance is a complex, multifaceted, synthetic education (since it combines the work of a director, actor, artist, composer, decorator, sound engineer, etc.), the subject and structure of theater expositions is wide. The abundance of theatrical ideas, meanings, forms, styles of “behavior”, goals, ratings, orientations of the theater ensures the development and updating of artistic culture due to a new combination of its structural elements”<sup>5</sup> The circle of life material (objects) is truly unlimited, from which both museum specialists for theater exhibitions and excursion programs, and tour guides can draw ideas. Theater tours can be sightseeing and specifically thematic, city, suburban and inside museum. The latter are of particular importance, because most clearly reveal the essence of theatrical art, its masters, the process of preparing performances and its other aspects. Museum funds contain rich documentary materials on the history of theaters. Theater art in all its individuality, which is difficult to fix, cannot be preserved for history other than a museum. The specificity of the museum’s attitude to theatrical heritage determines the uniqueness of the theater museum as a cultural phenomenon of world scale.

There are three types of theater museums: general-purpose museums, general (universal), covering the development trends of world theater art; museums of a narrower focus, at theaters, with permanent exhibits, collecting materials related to the history of the development of this theater and its troupe; memorial museums dedicated to the life and work of prominent figures of theatrical art (artists, directors, playwrights). Theatrical museums collect and preserve the material theatrical culture, represented by a different objective world, facing visual, partly auditory perception. They provide scientists with their funds (handwritten, iconographic, decoration photos and video materials) for studying stylistic techniques, features of creative personalities, staging principles of sets and costumes of certain historical periods. Directorial explications of performances, memoirs of theater figures, their epistolary heritage, on the basis of which it is possible to present individual facts and events of theatrical life, are among them. Unlike art museums, where the materials are divided according to the technique of execution, there is no such clear division, since the performance is a single whole. After all, it is important for the viewer to mentally imagine the characters in costumes and the stage environment, to get into the creative laboratory of the director and artist, to understand the stages of creating stage images. The principle of fund formation used in theater museums allows preserving the unity that was originally laid down in iconographic or decorative material, which in turn greatly helps and facilitates the study of the art of the theater as a whole. However, excursions for tourists are not always an integral part of the theater museums, and tourist programs are limited to independent visits, despite the demand for such areas. At present, methodological manuals for all expositions have not been developed (in the form of excursion text with a goal definition and ideological settings for tourist groups).<sup>6</sup> In many ways, the harmonious combination of one of the main forms of museum work is lost - an educational tourist tour at the exposition. “Expositions of the most famous theater museums: the A Bakhrushin Theater Museum (Moscow), the Theater and Musical Culture Museum (St. Petersburg), the State Academic Bolshoi Theater in Moscow and the Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, the Grand Opera Paris Theater, Milan’s La Scala Theater, London’s Covent Garden Theater, and New York’s Metropolitan Opera are based on the spectacular nature of theater art with its specifics. In such museums there are rather large archives, where manuscript materials, plans, directorial work for staging performances, which testify to the preparatory process, are stored. Memorial museums are of the

most chamber character (KS Stanislavsky’s House-Museum, MN Yermolova’s House-Museum, G.S.Ulanova’s Museum-Apartment, etc.). The memorial museum, as a rule, represents the theatrical figure in the most diverse manifestations of his character, conveys the atmosphere where famous personalities lived and worked. Over time, the exhibits of such museums become invaluable as the rarest evidence of their talent, especially when many pages of theatrical history are forgotten, the audience (theatergoers) will be glad to meet with the phenomena that these artists were for world culture”.<sup>7</sup>

Extensive materials belonging to theatrical museums have now written and published many works on the history of the theater and theatrical and decorative art, monographs and individual articles about major directors, actors, playwrights, stage designers. These are significant theoretical works of MN Stroeva, VV Vanslov, MM Pozharskaya, F Ya Syrkina, EM Kostina, RI Vlasova, VM Gaevsky, VI Berezkin and others, who can greatly help in the conceptual selection and content of excursion programs, reflecting the importance of the theater museum as a center for the popularization of national art. The generation and influence of museums on the cultural national space can contribute to the search for self-identification in new historical realities in the context of the realization of their social mission: collecting for the sake of preservation for future generations to serve the community and its development.<sup>8,9</sup> After all, in such a ministry responsibility is shown before social development on the basis of cultural values and everyone’s responsibility for the future is formed. Awareness by museums of their role in the formation of public consciousness, the broadcast of culture, the establishment of mutual understanding between peoples and the humanistic education of a person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will enhance their importance as a factor in the formation of a modern image.<sup>10</sup> A step in this direction should be the roadmap of the program for the development and enrichment of culture, where an important place is occupied, among other things, by updating the national theater cultural heritage.

## Conclusions

Monuments of culture and art are valued and stored only when the whole society sees in them the values that should be preserved for future generations. This important noble task of enlightenment should be served by the collections of the oldest and newest theatrical museums, and hereinafter with all their extensive information material, their clear organized structure of expositions and storage funds. Museums contribute to the understanding of the history of the theatrical schools from a humanitarian perspective and allow us to trace the relationship between the histories of the country, the region, the history of the fate of an individual figure, and feel like part of the historical process. The new organization of museum business is called upon to accumulate this experience, translating the accumulated values into the sphere of collective sociocultural consciousness, thus integrating the pages of the theater’s history and concrete experience into the universal context.

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## Conflicts of interest

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