

# **Viola Tamasova – Silvia Barnová**

## **Office Gallery – Art Closer to People**

### **1. Best practice selection criteria**

“Office Gallery“ project is an innovative example of how cultural education can be implemented in a way different from traditions, in an informal environment like workplace. At the same time it gives room to the mutual learning opportunity that opens up at the participating institutions.

### **2. Organization(s) / person(s) the best practice can be related to**

The originator of the project“Office Gallery“ is Ľudmila Pašková, gallerist and curator, managing director of the company Amymon s.r.o., who organizes exhibitions and symposia and implements domestic and international projects. She represents numerous renowned, mainly Czech and Slovak fine artists.

### **3. Stakeholders and beneficiaries of the best practice**

Within the framework of the“Office Gallery“ project Amymon Agency currently cooperates with 8 institutions in Slovakia and the Czeck Republic. The partner institutions supporting the project are:

- Accace Gallery SK: Accace Slovakia (Bratislava) – a company engaged in outsourcing and consultancy,
- Accace Gallery CZ: Accace Czech Republic (Prague) – a company engaged in outsourcing and consultancy,
- Audi Exclusive Gallery: Audi Centrum Bratislava – a vehicle showroom and sales company,
- BC Kerametal Gallery: BC Kerametal (Bratislava) – office block, rental of non-residential purpose property,
- Imunovital Gallery: Imunovital Centre (Bratislava) – sports medical centre,
- SG Mercury Gallery: Mercury School (Bratislava) – nursery, primary and secondary grammar school,

- TÜV SÜD Gallery: TÜV SÜD Slovakia – a company offering certification, auditing and teaching services,
- RVS Klub Studené (Most pri Bratislave) – mansion, restaurant, club.

The cooperation of the company Amymon with the partner institutions is based on personal meetings and good relations primarily. Within the framework of the project, the partner institutions offer the space for displaying the artworks of renowned artists free of charge, whereby installation costs are covered by Amymon s.r.o. This is a project which, for the above reasons, is not demanding financially. It is a good habit (but not obligatory) that the partner institutions buy some of the works of the exhibiting artist or order artwork connected to the operation of their company. For example, the works of art painted by Peter Hargaš about sports are currently exhibited at Imunovital Centre.

#### **4. Objectives and activities of the best practice**

The main idea of the project is to introduce art into modern administrative buildings, thereby bringing art closer to people. It gives the opportunity of getting into contact with the artworks of renowned artists both to the employees and the clients of the participating companies, at a non-traditional venue, i.e. in a workplace environment. When selecting the artworks, harmony with the inner space as well as with the nature of the company concerned was very important so as to avoid spatial dissonance. The project aims to bring art into the everyday lives of people who, for various reasons, do not visit galleries. As a partial goal, the participating companies should thus be able to create a cultured environment for their employees and clients, thereby changing the attitude of people moving about in the “Office Gallery” to cultural values so that they could establish a connection to fine arts, learn (and develop a desire) to live with it and be able to evaluate it. A natural end result of the project is an increased interest in learning about fine arts. In order to foster the attainment of the set objectives, in addition to looking at the works of art exhibited – which are regularly replaced by new ones – employees and clients also get the chance to meet with the artists who created the paintings as workshops with the artists concerned are regularly organized at the chosen institutions. In Mercury School the artists work with students; still in this context, too, one

can speak also of adult training as teachers, too, are present at the workshops, learn about the various techniques and enlarge their knowledge within the framework of informal conversations and presentations.

### **5. Area(s) affected by the best practice**

The project can clearly be categorized as an activity of cultural education since it indirectly shows the companies' employees and clients the way to receive fine arts experience, to think about respective works of art as well as culture in general. At the same time we can interpret the project activities also as a kind of aesthetic education in an informal environment, which in this case is a workplace.

### **6. Territorial scope of the best practice**

The project is implemented in Bratislava and its environs, and in Prague, i.e. it affects two regions in two countries, but there is an intention to extend it to other regions. It is very difficult to specify the territorial scope of the project since the clients of the institutions concerned come from all over Slovakia and the Czech Republic, considering which you can speak of a nationwide project, too.

### **7. The conditions (human, financial, technical) required for the best practice**

The project does not require any special conditions; it is based on the interest of partner institutions and their cooperation. It is an important condition that the partner institution should be able to provide the necessary space for the exhibition of the artworks (have rooms of suitable size, cleanliness, appropriate lighting, space where both employees and clients stay) and guarantee that the works cannot get damaged. Partner institutions are financially responsible for the artworks exhibited.

### **8. Results and short-, mid- and long-term impact of the best practice**

"Office Gallery" is a currently ongoing project the results of which are difficult to measure. All we can rely on are the subjective accounts of the participants: the organizers, partners and employees of the respective institutions. They have confirmed that the paintings exhibited contribute to

creating a cultivated workplace where both employees and clients feel good and where rooms no longer have a cold, impersonal atmosphere. It has become a habit to stop in front of a picture and have a conversation about it; the conversations reveal that the artworks have become natural parts of the place. They claim they are eager to know the works of which artists will come next. As Ludmila Pašková puts it: "The paintings and statues placed in a workplace environment have positive effects on people: not only on their mood but on their performance, too; at the same time they open up conversations among them."

### **9. Sustainability of the best practice**

Basic conditions for project success are devotion on the part of the project organizer, and interest in and commitment to participation in the project on the part of the institutions. Expenses and administration related to the implementation of the project are minimal; no special technical or personnel conditions arise.

### **10. Adaptability of the best practice**

The low financial and administrative requirements and the cooperation based on good relations make the project implementable by various institutions at various parts of the world.