

The Museums Quartier, Vienna, an Austrian Cultural Experiment

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Introduction

This paper focuses on an important Austrian development, which on closer examination enables consideration to be given to;

Austrian Government cultural sector policy, practice and funding attitudes

The nature of the structures, organisation, stakeholders, and legal relationships chosen to manage and market the MuseumsQuartier.

The tension between the individual autonomy of institutions and a state imposed umbrella organisation.

The characteristics of creativity in comparison with the requirements for conformity.

The compatibility of facility and programming management.

There is no pretence in providing a survey of museum cultural or creative quarters throughout the world or analysis of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that may be associated with this approach to urban regeneration. It is unashamedly a detailed analysis of a major cultural development, which may have value for the future management of similar projects. Perhaps more significantly it provides a useful insight into the Austrian approach to arts policy and management.

Austrian Cultural Policy Influences

The Austrian government in office since February 2000 has been emphasizing from the margins the need for new economic structures for culture, the arts, education, science and even social affairs. Severe cuts of public subsidies have been a consequence of this policy which have also impacted on institutions within the MuseumsQuartier - though the political intention to build and maintain this quarter mainly out of public funds remains beyond question. However the claim that "creativity should more and more become part of economics" (Franz Morak, Austrian Secretary of State for the Arts) introduces a radical break with traditional Austrian cultural policy and poses serious problems for artists and arts institutions in Austria.

To understand this situation it seems necessary to describe two main features of Austrian arts policy:

Austria defines its national identity to a high degree in terms of artistic and cultural values. To other countries and foreign citizens it presents itself as a "cultural nation". Foreign observers are often astonished by the big public attention artistic events attract - but this interest is very superficial with the engagement centred on events such as festivals, international concerts and of course cultural scandals.

A second characteristic of arts policy in Austria has been until recently the extremely close relation between politics and the arts. The arts have been almost 100 percent financed by public means, private sponsorship has scarcely any importance at all. That's why the artists depend to a very high degree on the benevolence of politicians and bureaucrats.

The roots of this situation are historical. The prosperity of the Habsburg territories was an important reason for the flourishing of the arts as well as for their dependence of state support. "Economic historians suggest that considerable portions of the Habsburg territories, and the Austrian lands in particular, which included Vienna, were highly prosperous at the end of the 18th century, at least in relative terms. Their per-capita incomes were probably well ahead of those of Brandenburg (Prussia) and very likely higher than that of France. Only England and the Low Countries may have been in a superior position. Prosperity brought great wealth to well placed members of the nobility and the small group constituting the upper bourgeoisie of Vienna and the nearby territories, among them Hungary and Bohemia (including Prague). They spent liberally, running their courts and mansions in a lavish style which included the services of many composers and performers." (Baumol and Baumol, 1994, p.73)

Furthermore, culture and the arts have traditionally been a means to promote the political ends of the Austrian state: "Already at the time of the monarchy cultural policy was not only patronage. Art as the highest means to build up a state, as an outstanding possibility of appropriating history, should help to ensure the unity of the diversifying national interests. The huge buildings of the "Ringstraße" built in the

second half of the 19th century (...) bear witness to these considerations." (Österreichisches Zentrum für Kulturdokumentation, -forschung und -vermittlung, 1992)

The generous public support for the arts as a characteristic of cultural policy has survived the end of the monarchy. "The state's support for culture continued in its own management the long-term practise of the royal court" (Pleschberger, 1991, p. 63).

It would be extremely attractive to ascribe the end of this kind of cultural politics to the political changes actuated by the change of government in 2000; as a matter of fact new ways of financing the arts have been in discussion for at least a decade now. The recent history of the MuseumsQuartier can be seen to coincide with this discussion: Missions for this quarter have been constantly oscillating between the idea of a "cultural manifestation" of Austria and the striving for the largest number of visiting tourists as possible. But the concept of bringing "creative industries" into the MQ in order to generate at least a moderate income from rents has gained momentum under the new government creating further pressure on small under funded cultural initiatives. As there is hardly any knowledge in Austria on how to find sponsors, and sell artistic products, at the moment, lip service is paid to the creative industries while in reality the big and traditional museums that are the most prominent parts of the quarter continue to be financed by substantial public subsidies.

So, up to now the new market orientation of cultural policy has not been much more than a catchword and/or a veiled menace for cultural initiatives. The above-described close relation between politics and the arts lead to a situation in which rules of accountability and measurability have never been clearly defined but were replaced by negotiating processes between officials and representatives of cultural institutions. For observers from outside Austria it is surprising how little information on hard facts such as revenue, visitor numbers etc. is available. Decision-making processes on public support for the arts are usually based exclusively on artistic judgements (often of a specialized jury). In this way, a broad room for arbitrariness is opened, as aesthetic quality is not really a category that can be measured. On the other hand, the broad room for negotiations enhances the flexibility of Austrian cultural policy that can be good for artistic innovations.

The MuseumsQuartier is a typical outcome of this policy with a commitment to state funding based on the value of the arts to Austrian society as an intrinsic part of life. It does seem problematic that no performance indicators are given to the highly subsidized institutions that will be part of this project and that the MQ company is able to run an annual deficit (Waldner, CEO, QM).

A Description of the MuseumsQuartier

The MuseumsQuartier is a "brand name" for a particular physical single cluster site, the Imperial stables, which at present comprises about 40 diverse cultural organisations¹ and culturally related activities occupying 53,000 square metres of useable space. This includes two new museum buildings, and two discrete theatres with seating capacity of 1,200. Additional exhibition space is available for hire along with offices, workshops and ateliers. This short-term space has been grouped together under the brand name Quarter 21. Many of the smaller cultural organisations are included the Quarter 212, (see note 2 for a description of Quarter 21) described as "a structure of self-responsible, constructively competing content-entrepreneurs, a modular-action platform for independent small institutions, culture offices and temporary initiatives". (Waldner, MQ company) Alternatively it can be described as the vehicle for a cultural industry cluster with a focus on creative activity, new and multi media technology.

Common facilities are also incorporated into the overall scheme such as signposting, an information centre (infopool), toilets, seating areas, and public courtyards.

In addition to these institutions there are also private tenants, restaurateurs and shopkeepers as well as those who have rented space over the years and have their homes there.

A typical smaller cultural organisation found in the MuseumsQuartier is basis wien, a documentation centre with online database on contemporary art in Austria that also aims at presenting and discussing contemporary art. basis wien relies on grants from the State Government and the City of Vienna and found itself in a major financial crisis in summer 2002, when fundings of both bodies were reduced as well as paid out very late and a mainly EU-funded project was therefore at risk. Its precarious financial situation also places the organisation in a weak-negotiating position when determining its future with the MuseumsQuartier company. However, contrary to other smaller and critical institutions such as depot and public netbase that have been driven out of the MuseumsQuartier basis wien could come back to its quarters within the MuseumsQuartier after having spent more than a year in an interim location.

The major institutions such as the Leopold Museum, which perceives itself as a national museum and is funded almost entirely by the state government, forms one of the key MuseumsQuartier landmarks. It is a private foundation set up to care for and display the collection of Professor and Mrs Leopold, comprising over 5,200 items in perpetuity. The Foundation is the single most important collection of the Austrian 20th century artists, Egon Schiele and Gustav Klimt, and was established in 1994 with the purpose of preserving Professor Leopold's collection and retaining it in Austria. The collection valued at 6.5 billion schillings by Sothebys New York in 1994 was handed over to the foundation by the Leopold family on condition that the state and the National Bank of Austria (a sponsor) paid them 2.2 billion schillings in 14 instalments up to 2007. (Parnass, Tenth special edition of the Art Magazine) In addition the state agreed to provide premises in the MuseumsQuartier, covering the costs of the new building, supplying the Foundation with an annual budget for purchases and will also cover the Foundation's annual operating deficit. The Foundation board of governors, which is responsible for the all aspects of its work, comprises four members appointed personally by Professor Leopold and four members appointed by the state, drawn from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture on the one hand and the Ministry of Finance on the other hand. It is not difficult to see how closely this is related to government and the incestuousness of the Austrian cultural establishment

All members are remunerated and serve for five years with the exception of Professor and Mrs Leopold who are life members. The board has established a Directorate and approved the appointment of Professor Leopold as the Museum Director for his lifetime. Incidental to but an example of the closeness of the museum to the development of the MuseumsQuartier was the appointment by the board of the then Director of the MuseumsQuartier Development Company to the Foundation as the Business Director for six months. Both Directors were given powers to conclude contracts on behalf of the Foundation approved by the governors. (Interview Romana Schuler) This is not untypical of the Austrian approach to managing the arts and enables a small cultural establishment under the political auspices of the city and state to shape and control cultural provision and programming.

The Influence of a Building and Location

The MuseumsQuartier cluster of cultural activity forms part of the historic city centre and is expected to strengthen the existing provision, primarily museums such as the Kunsthistorische Museum (Museum of the History of the Arts) and the Natural History Museum situated in the immediate neighbourhood, by adding a more active and lively contemporary dimension. At the same time, it is intended to provide an up to now missing link between the Imperial Palace with its museums and the narrow meandering streets of an old suburb at the rear of the stables. It is easily reached by the metro and tram system. The vision is to create a major cultural focus in the historic city centre for visitors.

The Imperial Stables, a seriously decaying national heritage site, presented a significant physical and restoration challenge in the sense of marrying in a single location the needs of a wide variety of organisations with the severe limitations of important but decaying 18th century buildings.

The ornately decorated Winter Riding School, formally designed reflecting the tradition and expectations of the empire at that time, now contrasts with the comparatively austere functionalism of the adjacent Kunsthalle of the City of Vienna, Leopold Museum, and Museum of Modern Art. The exterior of the Kunsthalle is entirely built of red brick and truncated at both ends. Inserted at either end is a gleaming metallic cantilevered surface. The Kunsthalle is an independent structure that is, however, placed very closely to the longitudinal front of the Winter Riding School and whose brick roof overlaps the ridge of the latter.

The exterior of the Leopold Museum is a white stone cube. It is contrasted by the leaner dark grey stone block of the Museum of Modern Art Foundation Ludwig Vienna.

The juxtaposition of the historical and contemporary is a surprising and successful feature which epitomises an underlying philosophical approach to the development, that of integrating the past with the present. It is, however, a characteristic of the quarter that is only visible from the inside. Externally the new structures cannot be seen; the main front of the building is the original 18th century facade. This solution is the result of a long fought over compromise between those who wanted the Viennese city centre to retain its historic form and those advocating contemporary architecture.

There are at least six to eight restaurants, cafes, and bars, with some cafes open until 4.00am. In addition there are museum bookshops in the Leopold Museum, Museum of Modern Art Ludwig Foundation Vienna, and the Kunsthalle, a large art bookshop with an attached café in the main entrance leased out directly by the MuseumsQuartier Development Company. The chairman of the MuseumsQuartier Development Company describes this as "the landlord with his own shop in his own home" and does not perceive this activity as contrary to the purposes of the company such as facility manager or an exploitation of a unique

position. In all cases these facilities are sub contracted out to private operators and it is expected that they will compete with each other for business and similar facilities in the individual museums.

Little attempt it seems has been made to avoid duplication and overlap in order to provide the visitor with choice and maximisation of income for the operators. It seems that competition is viewed in this case as healthy and an example of diversity and autonomy at work. However these activities are an important source of revenue for the MuseumsQuartier Development Company and the museums and will ultimately rely on a substantial regular flow of visitors throughout the year if they are all to succeed.

Other facilities include a general bookshop, the infopool, a visitor centre, toilets, seating areas, clear signposting and special tours for groups in German and English. The MuseumsQuartier Development and Operating Company provide all these facilities.

A State Instrument: The MuseumsQuartier, (MQ), Company

The MuseumsQuartier Developing and Operating Company, the umbrella organisation, was set up in 1990 to manage the MuseumsQuartier on behalf of the State and City Governments. It is a limited company with shareholders, a board of directors and a Chief Executive. The federal government established the terms of reference as:

- "1. The objective of the enterprise is (...) the planning, construction, maintenance, the administration of the real estate and the management of the MuseumsQuartier (...).
2. The company is (...) entitled to all businesses and measures that are necessary and useful to achieve the aim of the company. The competences of the museums (...) are not affected by this entitlement
3. Above all the following activities can be carried out by the company:
 - a) Planning, management and realization of investments to create the MuseumsQuartier including the acquisition of areas necessary for the MuseumsQuartier;
 - b) to make available and keep ready rooms, equipment and services for the institutions of the Republic of Austria, above all for the collections and museums of the Republic.
 - c) the acquisition, planning, preparation, organisation and carrying out of exhibitions and events as well as the organization and carrying out of related fringe events and leisure time programmes;
 - d) the letting and leasing of rooms in the MuseumsQuartier,
 - e) in connection with the MuseumsQuartier the running of cinemas, distribution and marketing of movies as well as production, showing, distribution and marketing of videos;
 - f) advertising and P.R. as well as edition of publications for the MuseumsQuartier;
 - g) visitor services by arranging visits of artistic and educating events etc, also in commission of third parties;
 - h) running of an information service."

(Grundsatzliche Überlegungen zur Unterricht und kulturelle Angelegenheiten an den Ministerrat vom 26 September 1996)

This company is wholly owned through a share distribution by the state government and the Vienna City Council, the landowners.

The MQ company has extensive powers, which go well beyond that of typical facilities management functions for a particular site. It has a clearly defined creative programming role.

The letting arrangements a key remit of the MQ company as facility managers are inevitably complex in such a large scheme. The major institutions, for example, are independent organisations with substantial funding from government. However, the city and the state are the primary MQ shareholders, and the main contracts are let to them and they in turn sub - let the contracts to the organisations they fund.

Consequently through this mechanism the city and the state determine the tenants for the MuseumsQuartier. In the case of the smaller organisations the contracting takes place through the Quarter 21 administration, which is also managed by the MuseumsQuartier company. In every case the contracts include a service charge to include keeping the site clean and tidy, which - in combination with the rents - provides a major source of revenue for the company.

Organisational Simplicity, Confusion and the Creative Dilemma

The adopted organisational structure for the MuseumsQuartier is based on a land ownership model, with a limited company, the MQ company as the umbrella organisation responsible for the site and its operation including the renting of space. (Gesellschaftsvertrag der MuseumsQuartier - Errichtungs - und Betriebsgesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung. 29 März 1999.) The company rents space to the nearly 40 cultural organisations such as the Leopold Museum and the Museum of Modern Art Ludwig Foundation,

Vienna. (These organisations are autonomous with their own boards of management and constitutions.) This stakeholders require all the rentable space on the site to be let in order to minimize the annual deficit and enable the company to generate surpluses, which can be used to cross, subsidize the rent for the poorer and smaller cultural organisations.

At one level the organisational relationship is that of landowner and tenant, however, structural disjuncture occurs when the MQ company engages in cultural promotion and presentation activities or attempts to control the autonomy of the individual organisations through the introduction of common ticketing and telephone systems as it believes it can. The Mission Statement of the MuseumsQuartier emphasizes this "(...) by seeking as much autonomy as possible and pursuing as many common interests as necessary, the MuseumsQuartier strives for the degree of joint facilities needed for the successful operation of the complex as a whole." (Gesellschaftsvertrag der MuseumsQuartier- und Betriebsgesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung, 29. März 1999)

This has the result of a loss of independence for tenants and increased competition between tenants and the landlord leading to a reduction of efficiency and a predictable lack of cohesion.

This general situation causes confusion and at times friction over roles and responsibilities, with the independent cultural organisations guarding their autonomy as much as possible and resisting stakeholder funding pressures to conform.

These complexities are amplified with the Quarter 21 concept, which is a mechanism to enable the MuseumsQuartier company, to directly control the smaller spaces by choosing the tenants through a selection procedure for the Quarter 21 spaces owned, managed and let on a short-term basis by the MuseumsQuartier Co. Consequently there seems to be a blurring of the MQ company role as facilities manager with that of cultural patron, and promoter. This becomes all the more obvious if one takes into account that the implementation of Quarter 21 not only brought new institutions to the MuseumsQuartier but drove out other institutions at the same time. Public Netbase, the Institute for New Culture Technologies, and depot Art and Discussion - both small institutions that participated in activities against the Austrian right-wing government - were not given acceptable leases within the Quarter 21 although they had been active in the MuseumsQuartier already during construction works.

The management structure of the MQ company has no formal constitutional relationship with the occupants of the Museums Quarter which is surprising given the size and nature of the site as well as the number and diversity of tenants. For example there are no representatives from the 20 tenants on the MQ company Board of Directors although there is a formal sub committee, which includes all tenants chaired by the Director of the MuseumsQuartier Company who reports to the Board. In addition no tenants association or equivalent independent organisation exists to act on the behalf and represent collective interests of the tenants.

The management model for the MuseumsQuartier is hierarchical with the company controlled by the state and the city that indirectly determine the strategic policy and operational decisions. This involvement goes well beyond the conventional facilities management role incorporating the active engagement in promotion, ticket sales and programming. Although the organisations in the MuseumsQuartier are constitutionally independent the majority are directly or indirectly funded by the state or city. Consequently the level of autonomy to act independently of the MQ company is severely curtailed. This situation became especially problematic in the years 2000-2002 when the city government was social-democratic while Austria was governed by a coalition of Christian-Democrats and the extreme right Freedom Party. The habitual competition for public recognition between these two bodies was thus enhanced by their political differences.

Individual programming of events such as exhibitions remains a competition between individual tenants and the MQ company. Whilst there is a desire to recognise "richness in diversity" by the MuseumsQuartier Co., the demand for cohesion and synergy seems to be the preferred policy.

The difficulty with a hierarchical structure and control management system is that they fetter the creativity of tenants because creative activity is often about breaking rules extending boundaries and challenging conventions.

Hegel describes breaking rules and challenging conventions as the means to arrive at new ways of seeing and interpreting the world, that is new knowledge.

"-the absolute freedom of art, by which art can attach itself freely to any substance it chooses in order to exercise the imagination on it, has made of the new artist a tabula rasa. Infinitely susceptible to new shapes because no shape can be regarded as final, he is in a state of perpetual self - transformation, engaged in what Hegel quaintly calls unendliche Herumbildung, an infinite plasticity." (Aesthetik II, p232.- p236.)

The questions, then, for the MQ company is whether through the existing management structures creativity can be fostered and whether the company can live with the consequences of the outputs that may be at times unpopular and controversial as Hegel aptly describes. This poses less of a problem for the MQ company, in its relationship with the large state or city funded organisations such as the Leopold Museum where the creative controversy will often rest with the interpretation by the curatorial staff of the collections. However the conceiving, making, production and presentation of the contemporary arts presents entirely different challenges to the MQ company managers. There does however seem to be an implicit policy that those chosen to occupy space in Quarter 21 are expected to operate as businesses, by paying rent, and meeting their annual operating costs rather than focus on creative activities.

The MuseumsQuartier Company understands its role as a developer, facilities and promotional manager not least because this is enshrined in the terms of reference and mission determined by the state government when the company was set up. The facilities and promotional management roles are the priorities over the next 12-18 months as the site becomes operational and the requirement to attract visitors increases, however the management of artistic programming of the site has commenced with Quarter 21 and the engagement in creative programming stemming from the progressive commissioning of the "common" exhibition and display spaces.

The Stakeholders, State trusts, foundations and related legal structures

The critical stakeholders of the MuseumsQuartier are the Vienna City Council and the Federal Government. Not only do they own the site but also have the controlling interest in the MuseumsQuartier company and fund directly or indirectly the majority of the organisations occupying the site. The annual subsidies going to the different institutions are estimated at around 14,5 Millions Euro (= 14,3 millions US\$) if neither the subsidies for the Vienna Festival of 150 Millions ATS nor the annual rates for the purchase of the Leopold Collection are taken into account. These stakeholders have a multiplicity of interests that is the development of an important site in the historic city centre, the perpetuation of major cultural institutions and support for contemporary arts practice which are all connected with the promotion of Austria as a world cultural centre. The civil servants see it from the city and the state perspective as a mechanism for re-positioning Austria in the modern world by celebrating the past and showcasing the contemporary.

The Leopold Foundation, one of the major tenants, is a private foundation with a board of governors 50% of which are state nominees. Although there are aspects of the foundation structure that reflect the particularities of the Austrian legal system it is recognizable as a model found in other parts of the world. The state trust model, a similar convention to the foundation is used in the MuseumsQuartier by the tenants and one used by governments as a means of exercising devolved control for example Sheffield Museum and Gallery Trust (Roodhouse 2001).

In particular national museums have been established, as state trusts with a board of Trustees and are autonomous of government, although government approves all the appointments to the board and receives an annual revenue grant from the state. It supposedly gives the managers of the museum or cultural organisation greater freedom to manage and the Austrian government more flexibility to choose how and at what level to fund the organisation for "agreed" purposes.

Other legal structures that have been adopted are limited companies, which is the preferred model for the MuseumsQuartier Development company. The association model is popular with smaller cultural organisations as it is relatively easy to establish at low cost and has little direct government interference, although it is possible for the State through grants to influence their governance.

This diversity of legal structures generates additional complexities for the MQ company as the facilities manager, requiring different tenancy agreements that recognise the legal independence of each organisation. The common factor however, is that either the state and /or the city of Vienna fund most if not all of the cultural organisations the MuseumsQuartier directly or indirectly.

Financing the MuseumsQuartier and its Inhabitants: A Public Sector Dinosaur?

The capital cost of converting the stables into workable space and building two new museums is estimated to be over \$200m, which has been provided by the city and state governments both as grants and as guarantors for the banks (to facilitate cash flow), who have lent the money to the MQ company. It has been recognised by the city council in particular that the MQ company vehicle was the most efficient devolved mechanism available to city and state for the purposes of a major capital project and subsequently leasing the rentable space. (Boris Marte, Buero des Stadtrates fur Kultur der Stadt Wien)

The revenue needed to operate the site and provide the facilities as well as service the debt is derived from the rents of the occupants. It is expected that the rental income and the service charges will, when the site

is fully let cover all the costs incurred by the company in repaying the capital debt and servicing and maintaining the site.

However, the city and state governments provide the subsidised rentals for the poorer cultural organisations by allowing the company to run an annual deficit.

There is very little private sector involvement in the MuseumsQuartier and the commercial activity seems to be centered on the selling of food and drink, and books. All venues sell tickets and this on average amounts to 10% of the annual revenue for these organisations.

Sponsorship is evident and the MQ company is actively looking for sponsors, unfortunately, a coordinated strategy with the tenants is not well developed. In addition it is recognised by the Federal Government that sponsorship is difficult to attract in Austria, as there are few major international companies and the traditional source of patronage, the aristocracy is no longer in a position to fulfill this role.

From whichever financial perspective the MuseumsQuartier is considered, the city and the state governments are the biggest and most important capital and revenue funders. In reality the Federal Government is Austria's primary cultural patron replacing the aristocracy and supported by city councils.

(Ministerialrat Dr Rudolf Wran, Bundesministerium fuer Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur.)

In general there seems to be little pressure on the managers of the MQ company to attract visitors because the bulk of the income is derived from the leases and that is largely guaranteed by the city and/or state governments. In its first full year of operation the MuseumsQuartier attracted 1,116 millions of visitors. Visitor numbers thus only slightly exceeded the forecasted 1,1 millions based on a conservative calculation of the 1999 performance of the key museums and centres. However national and international critical acclaim matters and at this stage, in the development of the MuseumsQuartier, visitor numbers, do not seem to be a critical success factor in financial or cultural terms. Consequently there is little interest in performance indicators.

It does not seem as though the managers in the MuseumsQuartier are under the same pressures of colleagues in North America, Italy, France, the UK or Australia in attracting more and more visitors and alternative revenues. For the MuseumsQuartier cultural manager emphasis is placed on the importance and significance of the cultural product and/or service in national and international terms. Artistic critical acclaim is seen as the primary performance indicator.

Cultural Programming, A question of control?

With the number and diversity of cultural organisations involved in the MuseumsQuartier all with a direct interest in programming as the central focus of their work, it is no surprise to find limited cooperation particularly if artistic critical acclaim is the primary performance indicator. Jealousy and mistrust between the organisations and collectively with the MuseumsQuartier over programming is evident, largely as it relates to the core identity and purpose of the organisations themselves, in other words their rationale for existence. Although at an informal operational level there is evidence of information exchange the mechanism for formal interchange and exchange of ideas, plans and future activities, have noticeable limitations as a communication tool. In particular, the representatives of the institutions are only able to make recommendations for action, which can be accepted or rejected by the MuseumsQuartier board and management.

This safeguarding of the individual organisational identity through the protection of programming is unsurprising although there is an inevitable danger, in duplication, overlap and confusion. Consequently there is little in the way of formal joint exhibition and event planning as it is expected that as programming is a "creative" activity organisations and individuals will build up their own relationships over time, which may lead to future collaboration. At present there is no incentive to collaborate and particularly with the MuseumsQuartier. The diverse and ad hoc nature of the programme offerings is perceived as strength and the quarter's attractiveness to the visitor. This is underlined by the Federal Government, " which values the freedom of the arts" sees no need for "artistic" cooperation and does not wish to interfere directly in the affairs of individual cultural organisations, even though it funds them (Ministerialrat Dr Rudolf Wran, Bundesministerium fuer Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur).

This "richness in diversity" approach has conveniently side stepped other complications such as joint education and marketing programmes. In the case of education the large museums, the children's museums and creativity centre as well as the Architektur Zentrum Wien all have a direct interest in children, and relationships with schools. A similar pattern can be detected for public lectures and discussions. Staff are employed on behalf of their organisations to develop and deliver education and marketing programmes

with no formal interaction or channels of communication to facilitate the sharing of practice, ideas and information between the tenants and the MuseumsQuartier Company.

Marketing and branding the MuseumsQuartier, conflict or co-operation?

The one obvious area of common interest and mutual benefit for all concerned in the MuseumsQuartier is marketing including branding and yet confusion abounds and fragmentation exists between the individual organisations and the MQ company over roles and responsibilities. There is a general lack of internal communication between the tenants and the company - a central tenet of marketing- with no agreed marketing strategy -, which includes all parties and their activities. The Leopold Museum, for example, is developing its own marketing plan without reference to the Museum of Modern Art or the Kunsthalles. Similarly the Vienna Festival plans seem to have little relevance to the Architektur Zentrum Wien programme, Quarter 21 and the Children's Museum activities let alone the museums and galleries. The company, however, accepts responsibility for marketing and branding of the quarter as a location, and that the marketing of programmes is an "individual" matter left to the tenants themselves regardless of how confusing this may be to visitors.

It is expecting to "arouse the curiosity of the old and new target groups" (MQ Company marketing Plan 2001) with an annual expectation of attracting 1.1 million visitors with the Leopold Museum as the star attraction with around 250,000 to 300,000 visitors a year.

For all this there has been limited consultation and discussion between the MQ company (location and branding marketers) and the tenants (specific brand image/communication concept marketers) about how they want to be represented in the marketing literature produced to promote the location. This is indicative of the structural fault lines, which has resulted in a lack of effective communication channels. Although there is an established logo for the MuseumsQuartier, described as "simple, practical, effective, consciously non-artistic" (MQ Briefing Information 2001) it has not yet been enthusiastically adopted by the tenants and used only partly in their literature and general marketing.

Many of the organisations generate temporary exhibitions and tour these shows nationally and internationally with related lecture programmes and education services for children, all of which need marketing. There is little evidence of working collaboratively, a lack of understanding of the benefits of supporting each other in strategic partnerships and the MQ company failing to promulgate these concepts. For the company to do this requires an overall strategy to be developed, agreed by all concerned, resourced and realised.

There is a general consensus that the MuseumsQuartier and its marketing activities are expected to increase visitor numbers for the tenants and that this growth is largely through international tourists. Much of the evidence and understanding of the existing audience is derived from tenant ticket sales. For example the Kunsthalles with around 160,000 visitors in 1999 has identified that 80% of them are under 40 years old, 51% come from the city and 24% are overseas visitors. There are an equal number of men and women with a high number of students. The Museum of Modern Art Ludwig Foundation, Vienna, attracted between 110,000 to 150,000 visitors in 1999 to its two sites in the city and expects to at least maintain 150,000 visitors in the new premises in the MuseumsQuartier with a higher proportion of overseas tourists. The Vienna Festival is well established and with the new and expanded facilities predicts paying audiences of around 200,000.

The smaller organisations are largely serving local, regional and national cultural markets often associated with practitioners, critics and curators. It is expected that the MuseumsQuartier will act as a "honey pot" for practitioners and a visible focal point for international collaboration. How this is to be measured remains unclear, and, whether this reflects the nature of creative practice is yet to be seen. For all this, there remains deep distrust between the tenants and the company and between tenants themselves and consequently there is a reticence to share what is perceived as sensitive "commercial" information about visitors.

Conclusion: The last of the Big Spenders or an International Exemplar?

What is perhaps the most surprising aspect of this project is the willingness of the Austrian government at national and city level to commit substantial levels of capital and revenue funds on cultural activity in a time of public sector constraint. This can be regarded as a bold and welcome example to the world or the last vestiges of an old empire, just as France and the United Kingdom have been required to reinvent roles as a result of the loss of empire. The close interrelation between the state and the arts can be understood as a legacy of Joseph II, the son of Maria Theresia, who started this tradition (Marchart 1999). What ever else is said regarding this project the management challenges are considerable and the key to future success is how the MuseumsQuartier reinvents itself after the building works are complete and the business of

attracting visitors comes to the fore along with the need to make the Quarter 21 work as a centre for the development of creative businesses.

Is this however the ultimate cultural palace? The quarter can be described as the ultimate cultural palace as far as the city and the state is concerned but the problem lies in the perception of the cultural tourist, which has yet to be seen.

Although the Quarter has set out to combine the business of presentation with practice epitomized by the establishment of Quarter 21 alongside the Leopold Museum it has yet to be proved whether this combination will work. There are no formal mechanisms for genuine interchange between tenants to encourage interaction between presentation and practice. There is also a danger that the practice activity is seen as a showpiece for the public which has never worked in the past and is likely to drive creators elsewhere.

What also follows from this is whether the management and related structures are capable of encompassing the essential anarchy of artistic practice. The indications are that the structures that have been put in place are set up to enable the state and city to exercise control and hence aesthetic judgment as public patrons, public netbase and depot being cases in point. Is this a desirable model for the well being of cultural activity in Austria?

What is difficult to understand in the Quarter is whether the original intention of saving a national heritage site and meeting the housing needs of a number of cultural organisations has been overtaken by a desire to engage in the new cultural agenda, the creative industries. Consequently, the need for a long term negotiated agreed and realistic strategy has never been stronger and a shared vision has yet to materialise.

Disappointingly, there is little evidence to suggest that this development will make a tangible difference to the individual practitioner in the city except for those who are lucky enough to be chosen to occupy ateliers as artists in residence or rent space in Quarter 21. If anything there are emerging concerns that cultural resources from the city and the state will be jeopardised as the Quarter 21 develops.

Although this development makes best use of an important set of buildings, and answers the housing the arts crisis it is doubtful if any measurable expansion of the activity in the city is likely to occur as a result. However there is little doubt in the early stages the Quarter will be an attractive focal point for cultural activity.

In a wider context, however, the MuseumsQuartier has already changed cultural activity in Vienna as it is clearly attracting cultural initiatives to the surrounding area. Small galleries and arts mediating institutions settle down around the MQ complementing in this way the small creative businesses in the area behind the MQ. While the success of the MQ itself still has to be proved its animating effects on its surroundings can already be seen.

The reputation of the organisations can be enhanced by being associated with the quarter and in particular the smaller organisations stand to benefit from this clustering far more so than the large organisations. In the case of the larger organisations benefits are likely to accrue from increased international visitors and an enhanced profile on the world cultural stage if the MuseumsQuartier is marketed as a location effectively. What happens if one or more cultural organisations fails to attract the target number of visitors and others exceed theirs? How are these issues to be resolved and the culture of blame avoided?

Jobs are being created in the quarter and a set of buildings have been brought back into use along with the first glimmers of increased creative industry activity in the immediate vicinity. There is a potential through Quarter 21 to develop creativity and businesses, as well as "artistic endeavour", which may provide a catalyst for further expansion of creative businesses in the city if the management system is flexible enough in the future.

The MQ concept is a gamble, which can be only judged once the project is complete and been, operating for some time; however there is no doubting the commitment of the city and the state to succeed.

Sources

Structured Interviews have been conducted during the period 2001-2 with the following:

Claudia Bauer, Kunsthalle Wien

Konrad Becker, Public Netbase

Thomas Hübel, Depot

Susanne Jäger, Depot

Mag. Bettina Leidl, Kunsthalle Wien

Ministerialrat Dr. Franz Loicht, Chairman of the Board of the MuseumsQuartier Errichtungs- und Betriebsges.m.b.H

Boris Marte, Büro des Stadtrates für Kultur der Stadt Wien

Mag. Robert Reitbauer, Museum moderner Kunst

Mag. Romana Schuler, Leopold Museum
Richard Schweitzer, TanzQuartier
Irene Strobl, Kindertheater
Dr. Wolfgang Waldner, Director and CEO of the MuseumsQuartier Errichtungs- und Betriebsges.m.b.H.
Ministerialrat Dr.Rudolf Wran, Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur

Documents:

Gesellschaftsvertrag der MuseumsQuartier-Errichtungs- und Betriebsgesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung.
29. März 1999
Bundesgesetz vom 7. Juni 1990 zur Errichtung einer MuseumsQuartier-Errichtungs- und Betriebsgesellschaft
Grundsätzliche Überlegungen zur Besiedlungs- und Betriebsphilosophie des MuseumsQuartiers Wien, 1996
Vortrag der Bundesministerin für Unterricht und kulturelle Angelegenheiten an den Ministerrat vom 26. September 1996
M. Wailand/ V. Weh, Strukturkonzept für das "Quartier 21" (Q 21) im MQ Wien, Kurzfassung (Stand 14.12.2000)
Mission Statement of the MuseumsQuartier

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Notes

SCR □ TIME \@ "d MMMM, yyyy" □ 27 October, 2003 □

1 Organisations involved in the MuseumsQuartier (except the organisations of Quarter 21; see Note 2)

the Architektur Zentrum Wien (a centre for exhibitions, presentations and debates);
the Art Cult Center - Tabakmuseum;
Basis Wien - art, information and archive;
the Kunsthalle Wien (an exhibition venue for international contemporary and modern art);
the Leopold Museum (which includes the largest collection of works by Egon Schiele);
the Museum of Modern Art Ludwig Foundation Vienna (which houses one of the largest collections of modern and contemporary art);
the Tanzquartier Wien (a centre for modern dance and performance);
the Theaterhaus für Kinder (a theatre for children aged 4 - 13 years which includes dance, musicals, puppet theatre and opera);
the Vienna Festival;
wienXtra (a children-oriented information centre);
Zoom (a creativity centre and exhibition space for children engaged in art, culture, society and science).

2 An explanation of The Quarter 21 mechanism

This mechanism is intended to address the question of the small-underfunded cultural organisations and how contemporary creative activity is incorporated into the MuseumsQuartier.

The elements of the Quarter 21 are:

the forum for cultural theory,
studios for artists,
platform for cross over activities,
cultural joint office,
digital media area (Internet café, independent media centre, media studios , platforms for music and film)
Arena, reading room,
creative industries (start up offices for design, film, photography, e-music, fashion, new media/IT,
literature/book stores, art publishers),
commercial users (book stores, bars and cafes).

The users are expected to take responsibility for their work, the outputs and to pay the rent for the space in the Quarter 21. The MuseumsQuartier Co., manages the general infrastructure and space such as the visitors centre, arena, conference rooms courtyards and the square in front of the building. In addition it operates the lease contracts for the users in Quarter 21 as it does for all other parts of the site however in this case there are three categories of lease, cultural (heavily subsidised), semi-commercial (subsidised), and commercial (no subsidy).

The management of the MuseumsQuartier has established an advisory board, "Network 21" which recommends to the Chief Executive which users should be offered a lease contract in the Quarter 21 and in which rental category. The Chief Executive can either accept or reject the recommendations and reports his actions to the board. It also has a wider remit to advise on content and programming for the common spaces.

Users once chosen rent a space of the size they can afford and this is maintained on their behalf by the company as part of the lease agreement. Any alterations to the space are also the responsibility of the company and the consequent costs incorporated in the rental charge.

General technical equipment is provided and maintained by the company.

Users must prove they have the financial means to meet their operational costs including all rental charges whatever the lease category.

Institutions currently included in the Quarter 21:

Electric Avenue

- > institut fünfhaus
- > MEDIENQUARTIER21
- > monochrom
- > quintessenz
- > SPOILER

transeuropa

- > A9-forum transeuropa
- > FOUND FOR YOU
- > Kiesler-Zentrum Wien
- > KulturKontakt Austria
- > polyklamott

Kulturbüros

- > AICA
- > Büro für Kulturvermittlung
- > Culture2Culture
- > DUB
- > EIKON
- > ImPulsTanz
- > Klangspuren
- > MKA
- > Schlebrügge.Editor
- > springerin
- > Galerienverband

