

Friends of the Ludwig Museum Annual Report 2008

Membership

At the end of 2007, Friends of the Ludwig Museum members numbered 240. By the end of 2008, membership increased to 319 (257 + 62), with 83 expires.

Our ongoing campaign for renewals has met with considerable success. As a result of the possibility of online registration on the Ludwig Museum's new website, we received a number of registrations in electronic format. The remarkable growth of memberships is partly due to support from MKB Bank, who subscribed to 72 Family Memberships for members of the Professor's House. Thus representatives of the scientific and higher education elite have become members of the Ludwig Museum's Friends.

In previous years, MKB Bank supported our LUMU 10–10 programme. In return for this, we made available 30 additional membership cards for the Bank's employees. Five additional cards will be awarded to winners of a prize-drawing. In 2008, the Concorde Asset Management also provided additional support by subscribing to 25 individual membership cards for its employees.

Support Received in 2008

Concorde Asset Fund Management	HUF 1 000 000 for the support of the Friends, and an additional sum of HUF 175 000 for the purchase of membership cards
Unilever	HUF 1 000 000 for the support of the Museum
Embassy of the United States	HUF 1 200 000 for the support of the Keith Haring exhibition
Strabag	HUF 750 000 for the support of the Museum
MKB Bank	HUF 720 000 for the support of the Friends
Baumax	HUF 250 000 for the support of the Friends
Hungart	HUF 250 000 for the support of the Friends
Raiffeisen Bank	HUF 5 000 000 for the support of the Keith Haring Bus. This project, a long cherished plan of the Friends aimed at bringing school children from socially disadvantaged or remote regions of Hungary to the Ludwig Museum. This package, offered to the Bank by the Museum's Department of Communications, was an immediate sold-out success in bringing school groups to the Keith Haring exhibition

Support for the Museum's exhibitions

The Friends of the Ludwig Museum, and Chairman Samuel Havadtoy, provided a vital assistance to the Museum to realize one of its most prominent exhibitions. Samuel Havadtoy

proposed the exhibition and with the support of director Katalin Néray started to organize a retrospective exhibition of works by American graffiti artist Keith Haring. During the interim following the passing of Ms Néray, Mr. Havadtoy continued efforts with curator Krisztina Szipócs to help realize the exhibition. Owing to Samuel Havadtoy's invaluable contacts, the collaboration with the Keith Haring Estate went smoothly. Havadtoy provided significant financial assistance for expenses related to the visit of the negotiating partners as well as to international communication. A support from the USA Embassy made it possible to edit and publish a bilingual (English-Hungarian) exhibition brochure to accompany the Keith Haring exhibition. In 2008, we renewed our collaboration with Promix Unit Magazine. They provided complimentary ad-space to display the exhibition posters inside Budapest's metro trains. The exhibition opened on August 16, 2008, and on view through to November 16, met with considerable success, bringing a new record number of visitors in the history of the Museum. In 2007, The Friends had earmarked the support provided by Yoko Ono for financing a festive finissage and a gala dinner related to the Keith Haring exhibition. Owing to the actual and anticipated financial situation of the Association, however, the Board decided to abandon the planned event to reserve the allotted sum for the expenses of the Friends' activities, for the fulfillment of our commitments.

Services Provided to Our Members in 2008

The Friends of the Ludwig Museum holds it of paramount importance to return in various ways the support received through the different membership fees our members pay. By way of offering special programmes for our members, we would like to express our gratitude for the members' commitment and contribution to the growth and reinforcement of supporters and lovers of contemporary art and of Ludwig Museum.

The fact that our members are lovers of contemporary art, and that the artists featured in the Museum's collection are our contemporaries, presents us with the unique opportunity of organizing exciting meetings with the artists who then talk about their lives and work. Living Classics is a series of programmes we have launched to embrace this exceptional opportunity to visit art, artists and their exhibitions. Each event is a bilingual programme with volunteers of our Docent Programme providing simultaneous interpretation.

Living Classics

In 2008, we organized one tour outside Hungary, two tours to provincial cities within Hungary, and three visits to galleries in Budapest.

A Chronology of the Friends' Tours in 2008

February 16, MODEM – Modern and Contemporary Art Centre, Debrecen. Our main destination was the retrospective exhibition of works by Imre Bukta, complemented with an exclusive and exciting guided tour by the artist. We also took the opportunity to visit the Imre Ámos exhibition, as well as the Vincent van Gogh tribute exhibition presenting works by major international contemporary artists.

March 15, Octogon Gallery, Budapest, visiting Sándor Pinczehelyi's exhibition, with the artist

guiding us through his exhibition, expanding our understanding of his work.

July 27, Municipal Museum of Art, Győr, visiting the retrospective exhibition of Károly Kelemen, where an informative discussion, even a stimulating debate, developed among the artist, exhibition curator Endre Lehel Paksi, art historian Andrea Bordács and art historian Katalin Keserü. From Győr, we drove to the Danubiana Museum in Slovakia, close to the Hungarian border, where we viewed an exciting selection of works by contemporary Russian artists, to be followed by a visit to Bratislava, walking through eight of the most important venues of the 13th Sculpture and Object Biennial with Júlia N. Mészáros, director of the Győr Municipal Museum of Art, as our tour guide. We concluded our day trip with enjoying Slovakian beer and a delicious dinner in Bratislava's main square.

October 18, Art Factory, Budapest, presenting an exhibition of Hungarian graffiti art related to the Ludwig Museum's Keith Haring exhibition. Délia Vékony, curator of the gallery and the show, provided us an interesting glimpse into the Hungarian graffiti art scene.

November 7–8, trip to Pécs, with the exhibition of works by the late El Kazovszkij as our first stop. Our trip was partly a tribute to this excellent artist, who had died just a short time before. Afterward, we visited other beautiful art exhibitions in the city of Pécs, including the Csontváry Museum, the Zsolnay Museum, the Cella Sepidorium, the Janus Pannonius Museum's photo exhibition entitled Multiethnic Dimensions 1916–1920, and the amazing Statue Park of Nagyarsány. Since it was a two-day trip, the cultural programme was complete with more profane pleasures, such as an evening of wine tasting at the Gere winery, and a morning bath in the thermal bath of Harkány, where we had our accommodations for the night.

December 12, Knoll Gallery, Budapest, the artist Ákos Birkás presented his recent works to our interested members.

Art Portfolio (Artfolio)

Encouraged by the success of previous year's artfolio featuring Tamás Konok's work, we produced the István Nádler artfolio in 25 numbered copies in 2008, related to the exhibition, ...vertical... István Nádler – New Paintings.

Website

In 2008, the Friends web page finally appeared in a due form and with a proper content on the Ludwig Museum's website, containing relevant information on the Association, involving updated programmes as well as past events and annual reports. The bilingual web page also offers a possibility of online membership registration.

Docent Programme

Volunteer Docent Training Programme

In 2008, the Volunteer Docent Training Programme had two semesters, with curators of the

Ludwig Museum and acknowledged representatives of the profession holding lectures on contemporary art processes and the involved artists featured in the Ludwig Museum's collection. Based on the participants' expressed interests, alongside the art historical lectures we introduced a, "NOW" topic in the second term, focusing on various aspects of contemporary art and issues related to art collectors, auctions, art gallerists, the art market, fakes & frauds, and market values. The art-related lectures of the Docent Training Programme were open to the general public.

In addition to the series of lectures, we had exclusive workshops centered on the methodology and practice of guided tours and public communication.

We had requested the lecturers to provide us with hand-outs, which the course participants received as resource material for the curriculum. The lectures were also videoed as a learning aid for future use.

Guided Tours

Our docents led weekly guided tours through the permanent exhibition of the museum's collection, where visitors were often invited by the very staff members and volunteers of the Friends, thus increasing the number of visitors, as well as spreading knowledge about the Museum's activities.

We also contacted expatriates residing in our country, including their clubs and groups, inviting an international audience to the Museum, including groups from Central European University, International Business School, International Women's Club, North American Women's Association, and Professional Women's Association.

The Docent Programme also organized a course to train English language tour guides for the Keith Haring exhibition. Thus, we were able to offer regular guided tours on a weekly basis for visitors, as well as for invited groups on special request.

We were very glad to meet the demand that English guided tours be held by docents for groups of expatriate children in Hungary, so some of our docents also joined in the museum education programme for children.

Our very active docents contacted all the foreign language schools in Hungary, popularizing the Ludwig Museum and inviting numerous groups of students to the Keith Haring exhibition.

The idea to launch a service of guided tours in sign language, contacting the Hungarian deaf-mute association SINOSZ, popped up again. We hope that in collaboration with the museum we are going to be able to get this programme underway in the near future.

Our docents also led guided tours in Hungarian for young Roma students of journalism, and presented the Museum, the permanent collection and the Keith Haring exhibition to other schools aiming to bridge the gap between the Roma students and their other mates.

Volunteering beyond Tour Guidance

A few of our docents did not venture into leading public guided tours at the end of the course. The primary goal for many of them had been to learn more about contemporary art. These

docents worked as volunteers for the museum. They assisted the Association by volunteering in public-opinion research, making analyses, preparing statistics. They also acted as simultaneous interpreters at the Museum's programmes and exhibition openings, or helped translate texts for the website and for the children's workbook developed for the museum education programme related to the Keith Haring exhibition.

The English language Docent Programme paid great attention to having the latest news of the Museum, the Friends and the Docent Programme published in the English-language printed and electronic media. To achieve this goal, the Docents organized media appearances, compiled, edited and distributed up-to-date monthly newsletters of information materials.

In addition to our docents, two interns from Yale University worked with the Friends on a volunteer basis, and a Fulbright Scholarship recipient expert also assisted our work.

International Relations

In 2008, a young American museum professional on a Fulbright Scholarship, who had conducted research on the activities of museum friends and docent programmes in numerous museums worldwide, continued to work with us as a volunteer till mid-June.

We received two Yale University Fellow students as summer interns from mid-June to mid-August.

In 2008, we started to prepare the six months' internship of an art history student graduated at the Humboldt University, Berlin, who is finally to work in the first half of 2009 with the Friends.

Owing to our international relations, the Friends' executive director was invited to an exciting conference on Art Museum Membership Management, (AMMMC) held in Santa Fe, USA. The AMMMC conference supported the director's participation in the conference, so the journey did not require financial contribution of the Association. The director had the opportunity to present the Ludwig Museum to the conference participants, an American and international audience of 180 members, in the form of a Power Point presentation that went through the Museum's history from the Ludwig family and the foundation of the Ludwig Museums all the way through to the development of the Budapest Ludwig Museum, including the activities of our Friends.

One of the major conclusions the conference made clear was that the network of the Ludwig Museums and the Budapest Ludwig Museum itself, has failed to gain international recognition. Another great experience was to witness that the circles of museum friends across the United States work in close collaboration with each other, offering preferential treatment to their members on a mutual basis, as well as organizing exchanges of working methods and social events. As they join forces and work in concord, they prove to be instrumental in achieving their museums' goals, which practice would be very useful to implement in Hungary as well.

Following this conference, the Friends of the Ludwig Museum made the first steps toward establishing contacts among the Friends of the Ludwig Museums worldwide. We have worked out a proposal for collaboration among the various associations of museum friends

within the international Ludwig Museums. The idea has found approval from the Budapest Ludwig Museum, the Aachen Ludwig Foundation, the Vienna MUMOK, the Cologne Ludwig Museum, and the Aachen Ludwig Forum. Hopefully, by the end of 2009, we will have managed to prepare a collaboration agreement among the circles of museum friends, to ensure mutual advantages for members of the museum friends, making it possible to know more about the involved museums, and foster exchanges of working methods.