



#### 3.1 Works and production as subject-matter

The content of cultural mediation which is both best known and most frequently addressed in practice concerns the output of institutions of (high) culture, such as museums, exhibition venues, theatres, opera houses and dance, concert and literary organizations. At centre stage is cultural mediation on the subject of works of art, presented in performances or exhibitions or, in the case of literature, released by publishing houses or presented in readings. In the visual arts, cultural mediation usually relates to an exhibition or a series of exhibitions, which may be thematically organized or may focus on the work of a single artist or group of artists, a period of history or a specific style. The presentation of an institution's own collection constitutes another focus, in part because unlike temporary exhibitions, the permanency of collections permits a more in-depth treatment and the development of a longer-term cultural mediation programme. Individually led or recorded audio exhibition tours offered in conjunction with practical workshops are a common format. Another popular approach is to concentrate on one individual work or one selected object: for instance, in many museums one sees the picture or the object "of the month" serving as the subject-matter of cultural mediation programmes. In the music world, we find cultural mediation about individual orchestral works or operas or the work and personality of individual composers in conjunction, for example, with a programme of concerts for children or matinee performances. In theatres and dance centres, cultural mediation focuses on pieces on the performance calendar – here, a commonly used format is the introductory discussion or director's talks.

The cultural mediation formats named above are generally explanatory in nature and designed to promote understanding of the works. Their primary aim is to produce background knowledge relating to the works and their creation. Cultural mediation can also have objectives which go further and thus use other ways of designing methods and formats for projects relating to the works and production of high culture.