



## 5.1 Affirmative function of cultural mediation

Cultural mediation is described as affirmative when it serves the function of communicating the publicly acknowledged missions of an institution of high culture. By “publicly acknowledged”, we mean missions which institutions have inherited or, in some cases, which have been defined in writing by professional associations. For instance, in the case of → *museums*, they include the duties associated with the definition of a museum defined in 1986 in the statutes of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) as a “non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.”

→ *Museum* [http://www.museumbund.de/en/the\\_museum/aaa/0/](http://www.museumbund.de/en/the_museum/aaa/0/) [12.2.2014]

The affirmative function of cultural mediation treats the arts as specialized domains in which specialized knowledge is transferred. Practices frequently associated with that transfer consist of lectures and other events, and the production and provision of media intended to provide introductory or accompanying information, such as film programmes, director’s talks, tours led by specialists, pamphlets accompanying theatrical plays and wall texts or catalogue texts for exhibitions. These are created by people authorized to speak for the institution who are addressing a specialist public, or at least a self-motivated one.

Accordingly, the following aspects of the affirmative function of cultural mediation are problematic: its exclusivity, its tendency to confirm exclusions and its assertion of a fundamental validity for its contents.