



The Messner Mountain Museum Coronas, South Tyrol, Italy, designed by Zaha Hadid and opened in 2015

El Nuevo Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Guatemala City, previously an egg store, opened as a museum in 2012

#### Paulina Olowska, artist

The museums of the future will be shelters of humanity. They will function like mountain huts, offering respite from the hardships of daily walking. Last year I met a group of artists and we went trekking in the Gorce Mountains in southern Poland. We felt free and light-hearted. At some point, we lost our trail. Dusk fell. After a few hours we reached a mountain hut. We got a cup of tea and sat by the fire, drying our wet socks. Everything seemed friendly and inspiring. Nature was right outside the window. We were talking about deep observation, sketching, musing. A young scholar joined us and told us about his discoveries. We were thinking about next day, our planned route through the mountains.

What does this have to do with the museum of the future? I sense it is a vision of a coming community that may be focused around museums-shelters: communities based on spirituality rather than materiality, contemplative rather than pragmatic, seeking direct experience rather than mediated ideas.

The museums of the future will be an elaboration on the post-Romantic, Wagnerian concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, universalising and synthesising various forms of spiritual activity in places resembling today's mountain huts.