CREATIVESPACE

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE EXPLORING MUSEUM AND GALLERY SPACE AS A CREATIVE MEDIUM

5 - 7 April | 2004
What kinds of museum spaces do we need at the beginning of the 21st century?

Through an exploration of recent museum developments and a focus on the practices and decision making processes of museum building and exhibition design, Creative Space will focus on the nature, character and possibilities for museum space.

At no other point in their modern history have museums undergone such radical reshaping as in recent years. Challenges to create inclusive and accessible spaces open to appropriation and responsive to contemporary agendas have resulted in new architectural and spatial forms for museums. One result of this large-scale and varied remaking of museum space is that the space of the museum is increasingly recognised as an environment created through a complex of practices and systems of knowledge. Museum professionals are beginning to recognise the constitutive and transformative capabilities of museum space as well as the ability of museum users and museum professionals to reshape museum spaces through practices of appropriation. Museum space then, is now recognised as a space with a history of its own, a space active in the making of meaning and, most importantly, a space open to change.

This recognition is undoubtedly linked to the substantial new building projects which can be identified internationally and which have begun to challenge traditional concepts of museum architecture and suggest new possibilities for display and experience. Museum building projects are making tangible newly imagined possibilities for museum space. However, the rethinking of museum space is not simply architectural. Many museums are working to reposition both collections and visitors in order to generate new spatial forms, without large-scale architectural developments. These shifts are variously characterised as creating spaces for lifelong learning, spaces of mutuality and inclusive spaces where physical, intellectual and cultural barriers to access may be overcome.

Creative Space will document and review a series of recent architectural and professional projects, exploring the social ideals and visions behind them and the spatial solutions finally realised in museums in recent years. Creative Space reviews these developments alongside a series of research projects exploring the nature of museum space, the production of museum space and the impact of specific spatial characteristics on the museum experience. The conference will pull across a number of areas of museum research and practice which, for very practical reasons, tend to be approached as discrete fields of practice (for example, visitor studies, audience development, exhibition design, project management). By bringing together the voices of museum professionals, architects, designers and academics, this conference will provide a useful forum for actively engaging with museum space, recognising the importance and malleability of museum space and reflecting strategically upon recent developments in museum space.

Acknowledgements
Thank you to the staff of the Department of Museum Studies, the support and sponsorship of Haley Sharpe Design and the University of Leicester, the Vice Chancellor’s Office for hosting the reception, the hard work and enthusiasm of the conference speakers listed in this programme and the chairs, Stuart Davis, Alessandro Goppion, Dinah Casson and Mark O’Neill. Thank you also to the small group of people who helped in the initial conference planning and pulling together of the programme, Richard Sandell, Ross Parry, Jocelyn Dodd, Simon Knell and Helen Rees Leahy. Also to David Fleming, Roger Miles and Eilean Hooper-Greenhill for offering some thoughts on the shape of the conference early on in the planning stages. I am grateful to The Public, West Bromwich for hosting the visit and to Claire Sedgwick, National Museums Liverpool, Pat Jones, Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Peter Higgins, Land Design Studio for the loan of models. Particular thanks go to Barbara Lloyd and Jim Roberts for all their hard work in making the conference happen.

Suzanne MacLeod, Leicester, March 2004.
**SUNDAY**

4.00pm **Registration**  
Gilbert Murray Conference Centre

6.00 **Vice Chancellor's Reception**  
Gilbert Murray Conference Centre

7.30 **Dinner**  
Villiers Hall

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**MONDAY**

9.15am **Welcome**  
Dr Simon Knell (Department of Museum Studies)

9.20 **Introduction**  
Suzanne MacLeod (Department of Museum Studies)

9.30 **Keynote lecture**  
Dr David Fleming (National Museums Liverpool)

*Session 1. On the Nature of Museum Space, chaired by Stuart Davies (MLA)*

10.00 **Threshold fear**  
Elaine Heumann Gurian (Museum Consultant, VA, USA)

10.30 **Coffee**

11.00 **Black-box science in black-box science centres: architectural expressions of science in science-technology museums**  
Dr Richard Toon (Arizona Science Centre)

11.30 **Civic seeing: museums and the organisation of vision**  
Professor Tony Bennett (Open University)

12.00 **Space and the machine: adaptive museums, pervasive technology and the new gallery environment**  
Dr Ross Parry (Department of Museum Studies) and Dr Andrew Sawyer (mwr)

12.30 **Questions & Answers**

1.00 **LUNCH**

*Session 2. Architectural Reshapings chaired by Alessandro Goppion (Goppion Laboratorio Museotechnico)*

2.00 **Title tbc**  
David Rolland (Rafael Vinoly Architects)

2.30 **Building on Victorian ideas**  
Lawrence Fitzgerald (Glasgow Museums Service)

3.00 **Spatial culture, way-finding and the educational message: the impact of layout on the spatial, social and educational experiences of visitors in museums and galleries**  
Dr Sophia Psarra (Welsh School of Architecture)

3.30 **Afternoon Tea**

4.00 **Sainsbury wing vs. Castelvecchio: space as a powerful variable in museum experience**  
Kali Tzortzi (Bartlett School of Architecture)

4.30 **From temple of culture to cultural consumer experience - The Manchester Art Gallery expansion project**  
Moira Stevenson (Manchester Art Gallery)

5.00 **Questions & Answers**

8.00 **Conference Dinner**
**Session 3. Inside Spaces chaired by Dinah Casson (Casson Mann)**

9.00am Towards a new museum architecture: narrative and representation  
Lee H Skolnick (Lee H Skolnick Architecture + Design Partnership)

9.30 Inside out: redefining the boundaries of museums  
Alisdair Hinshelwood (Haley Sharpe Design)

10.00 When worlds collide: the contemporary museum as art gallery  
Dr Christopher Marshall (University of Melbourne)

10.30 Coffee

11.00 The studio in the gallery?  
Dr Jon Wood (Henry Moore Institute)

11.30 A practitioner’s perspective  
Michael Wilford

12.00 LUNCH

1.00 Depart Leicester for The Public, West Bromwich

3.00 Reception at The Public  
Group A Receive update on the building project aims and progress whilst Group B take the Site Tour  
Group B Receive update on the building project aims and progress whilst Group A take the Site Tour

5.30 Depart for Leicester

8.0 Dinner

**Session 3. Inside Spaces, cont...**

9.00am Representing Enlightenment space  
Dr Beth Lord (Lord Cultural Resources)

9.30 Identity, exhibition and museum design  
Yani Herreman, (Centro de Estudios de Posgrado.CIEP Fac. De Arquitectura. UNAM)

10.00 Constructing and communicating equality: the social agency of museum space  
Richard Sandell (Department of Museum Studies)

10.30 Questions & Answers

11.00 Coffee

**Session 4. Exploring renewed museum spaces: towards a vision for the future, Chaired by Mark O’Neill (Glasgow Museums)**

11.30 Architecture as communal place  
Peter Higgins (Land Design Studio)

12.00 Producing a public for art: gallery space in the 21st century  
Dr Helen Rees Leahy (University of Manchester)

12.30 Not monuments, but experiences  
Stephen Greenberg (Metaphor)

1.00 LUNCH

2.00 Conference summary  
Mark O’Neill (Glasgow Museums)

2.30 Questions & Answers

3.00 Afternoon Tea, conference closes
Elaine Heumann Gurian
Museum Consultant, USA

THRESHOLD FEAR

Members of our museum community write often about inclusion and of the ‘new town square’ that they wish museums to become. It is the contention of this paper that there are physical as well as the better-known programmatic constructs that can make it difficult for the uninitiated who might otherwise wish to experience the museum. Since there has not been much discussion within the museum field about the physical ingredients of museum space needed to assist in providing welcome, and thereby help build community, there has been a disjuncture between museums’ programmatic interest in inclusion and the architectural program of space development, which this paper hopes to redress.
Dr Richard Toon
Education and Research Director at the
Arizona Science Centre, Phoenix Arizona, USA

BLACK-BOX SCIENCE IN BLACK-BOX SCIENCE CENTRES

This presentation deals with the relationship between the message science-technology museums create about science and the spaces within which they express them. Drawing on examples from North America, an exploration is made into the ways such centres present science and their claims to knowledge and power and the ways architectural expression in museums can reinforce these claims.

The epistemological issue is examined using Bruno Latour’s use of the term ‘black-box,’ which refers to ‘ready-made’ scientific knowledge, equipment, or procedures that professional scientists assume as part of their daily work. One of the main activities of science-technology centres is the ritual re-enactment of scientific practices that recreate or illustrate black-box phenomena. The discoveries of science, isolated from their social construction, are presented as simple aspects of nature and form the staple of science-technology museum content.

Many modern science-technology museums present this black-box science in ‘black-box’ galleries – literally, spaces without natural light – to a non-scientifically trained public. Using architect Antoine Predock’s Arizona Science Center in Phoenix as an example of a typical U.S. science-technology museum, an examination is made of the way the building and its galleries, planetarium, and giant screen theatre reinforce a particular notion of scientific knowledge.
Museums, in their modern form, are pre-eminently civic institutions. As such, they have been committed to promoting a range of forms of civic self-fashioning among their visitors. The forms of civic virtue they have been concerned to foster have, of course, varied from period to period and from one type of museum to another: from the cultivation of patriotic sentiment in the revolutionary conceptions of the museum’s function that guided the establishment of the Louvre, through the imperatives of progressive self-development promoted by evolutionary museums, to the promotion of cross-cultural diversity characterising the reformist aspiration of many contemporary museums. Whatever their specific aspirations, however, museums have pursued their civic objectives via the promotion of specific forms of ‘civic seeing’ through which the visitor is inducted – sensorily, imaginatively and intellectually – into the forms of self-fashioning in question. This paper will explore these questions by examining some of the main forms of civic seeing that are discernible in the development of the modern museum form. In doing so it will focus on the ways in which museums have pitched themselves against the forms of distracted attention that have been imputed to popular forms of visual entertainment.
Museums are an adaptive medium. Throughout their complex and varied histories, they have continually changed according to the demands of their audiences, their patrons and the nature of their collections. From sacred temple, to the storehouse and treasury, from repository of precedent, to the cabinet of curiosity, and from civic/civilising institution, to public and community space ... in each case the museum as medium changes - its shape, its display technologies, its function, its appeal. The museum is not static – it is in a constant state of adaptation.

Within this shifting environment (and even before the digital era) museums have always been affected by information and communication technologies. Through history, galleries have been shaped to accommodate specific display techniques, and museums have been built according to certain assumptions concerning the arrangement and access of information. In each case it is the technologies of display and information management that have been inherent within the museum – an essential element of what a museum is.

More recently, digital technology has made its own special contribution to this story of change. In particular, there appears to be a reciprocal and enduring relationship between digital media and, specifically, the building space of the museum – not just in-gallery multimedia, but also in the new architectures now made possible by computer aided design.

Working from these assumptions - the adaptive museum, the long history of ICT and the impact of digital media on museum space - this paper attempts to chart the emergence of digital media technologies within the gallery space and comment on the environment where technologies are becoming ever more pervasive and embedded. It suggests that due to the agency of new media [and the message all media inevitably carries with it] and the new high cultural resonance that digital technology now carries in the informational age, the value of new media has, in recent years, been recast. Whereas before, the application of digital media may have been rationalised by viewing it as ‘merely a tool’ and only ‘a means to an end’, this paper contends, instead, that today this technology carries a much more complex set of meanings and significances for the modern museum.

Focusing on the way digital interactives have, over the last three decades, permeated gallery spaces (from being separate and conspicuous, to being integrated and ambient) the paper will suggest that ICT is, arguably, becoming ‘innate’ within our notion of the modern museum. By drawing upon a series of key examples of new museum builds and exhibition designs, the paper will explore the extent to which digital media is being used less as an afterthought, an overlay, or something adjunct, but instead as an intrinsic, defining quality of exhibition space.

The paper concludes by looking to how this view of ‘innate’ media technology within the adaptive museum might continue our renegotiations of what a museum is as an institution, what a visit involves and how the distinctions [or, rather, the lack of distinctions] between on-site and off-site, on-line and off-line might impact upon our concept of gallery space.
David Rolland AIA, JIA, NCARB
Project Director, Rafael Viñoly Architects

A PRACTITIONER’S PERSPECTIVE

David Rolland (AIA, JIA, NCARB) is a director of the internationally acclaimed Rafael Viñoly Architects PC.

Currently, Mr Rolland is project director for three of the firm’s museum projects, and recently served as project manager for the completed 1.5 million sq ft David L. Lawrence convention centre in Pittsburgh.

The design of each museum under Mr Rolland’s direction addresses the evolving nature of the institution in terms of its iconography, circulation, education, conservation, public space and fundraising.

Mr Rolland is based out of the New York office of Rafael Viñoly Architects PC.
Lawrence Fitzgerald  
Museum Manager, Museum of Transport,  
Glasgow

BUILDING ON VICTORIAN IDEAS

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum is a one hundred years old, Grade A listed building described as housing “one of the supreme European civic collections” (Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum). By the 1990s, the building’s services, infrastructure and facilities were succumbing to the passage of time and the displays and education facilities were failing to meet the needs of the Museum’s increasingly diverse prospective audiences. In 1998, Glasgow City Council staff embarked upon the largest research and consultation exercise in the Museum Service’s history to shape re-development proposals. Over four years, extensive quantitative and qualitative evaluation, involving visitors, non-visitors, staff, the Museum’s Friend’s organisation, educational organisations, community groups, disability groups and museum peers, and research into orientation and display methods involving the construction of complete prototype displays was carried out to inform the final £25 million scheme. The position of themes and facilities within the building drew upon experience of customer management in the retail sector and upon research into visitor flow carried out by Cardiff University Architecture Department.

The proposed scheme, currently on site, completely reconfigures the theming, facilities and operation of the Museum and reinvents the Victorian idea of the encyclopaedic museum for the new century. Many current large-scale museum projects fix the content, design and intellectual rationale in so-called ‘permanent’ displays and thereby act not just as repositories for old objects but old ideas. Staff at Glasgow Museums developed and evaluated the idea of self-contained and flexible ‘story’ displays within larger flexible ‘themes’ to ensure that the new displays are responsive to future research and audience interests, needs and aspirations.
The success of museums and galleries is measured in large part by the numbers of visitors they are capable of attracting. This depends on the quality of the collections as much as on the quality of the building itself. But while the role of museum architecture in attracting a large audience is effectively understood, there is little acknowledgement of the impact of the layout on the character and the quality of the visit. This paper addresses the ways in which the spatial characteristics of museum design affect the ways in which visitors move, locate the collections and grasp the exhibition content. It presents four museum studies undertaken as part of research and consultancy work. These are: the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, the Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, the Burrell Museum in Glasgow and the Natural History Museum in London.

Using computer modelling techniques and detailed observation surveys of visitors’ flows these studies analyse and predict the use patterns of existing spaces and new development plans. The aim is to provide design solutions that can assist museum managers, curators, architects and exhibition designers in improving the spatial, social and economic sustainability of museums and galleries.
Kali Tzortzi
Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL

SAINSBURY WING VS CASTELVECCHIO: SPACE AS A POWERFUL VARIABLE IN MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

Much emphasis has recently been placed on the architecture of the museum in terms of the container. The aim of this paper is to examine the museum’s micro-scale through the microstructure of the gallery space, and to contribute to the description and understanding of the intricate pattern of interdependencies between the parameters of gallery space, spatial configuration and exhibition layout. The paper reports the comparative analysis of the Sainsbury Wing, the extension to the National Gallery, London, and the Castelvecchio Museum, Verona, and identifies a surprising pattern of differences. Both constitute interesting cases as the planning of the display and the design of the galleries by Robert Venturi and Carlo Scarpa respectively, were developed together. Firstly, this paper explores the spatial structure of the layout, and shows that in one instance, the exhibition design uses and exploits spatial potential to maximize the impact of objects, and in the other, exhibits are manipulated to enhance space. Secondly, it analyses the morphology of movement, both global and local, from the manipulation of circulation to the orbits of the moving observer, and demonstrates that the patterns of space use are explained by syntactic properties. Thirdly, it examines the conceptual strategy of the arrangement of objects and its relation to the construction of the route, and by implication, the rhythm of perception and the viewer’s exploration and exposure to information. The conclusion is that space is a powerful variable in museum experience, and that the latter is a synthesis of both space and exhibits, to a higher level than each on its own.
Moira Stevenson
Assistant Director, Manchester City Galleries

FROM TEMPLE OF CULTURE TO CULTURAL CONSUMER EXPERIENCE: THE MANCHESTER ART GALLERY EXPANSION PROJECT

Manchester Art Gallery Expansion Building Project comprised two significant listed buildings (one inspired by the architecture of Classical Greece and the other by the Italian Renaissance) and a modern extension linked by a glazed atrium in Michael Hopkin’s design scheme of 1995. This design formed the basis for the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund that in 1997 secured an initial £15 million grant towards an ultimate cost of £35 million for the building and its fit out.

While the contemporary architecture has done much to change the physical appearance of the Gallery it is not the only and, arguably, not the most significant element in the transformation and repositioning of the Gallery’s image and role in the minds of our stakeholders and audiences. This paper will explore the research, organisational structure, management process and staff and design developments which were put in place to deliver the Gallery’s interpretation and redisplay programme and visitor services. It will describe the audience and other research undertaken prior to developing the concepts for interpretation and display and examine the processes and structures put in place to manage the relationships between architects, designers, curators, education and marketing staff, in order to develop the total visitor experience. The results of visitor attitude surveys and observational studies of the transformed experience will be explored. The paper will aim to establish how the architectural and other developments have repositioned the image of the gallery in the eyes of our visitors, what we learn from the results and how it can shape future developments.
Lee H. Skolnick, FAIA
Lee H. Skolnick Architecture + Design Partnership, New York

TOWARDS A NEW MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE: NARRATIVE AND REPRESENTATION

The new century finds Museums in yet another life cycle transition. Issues of varying new media for high speed access to information, evolving roles and programmes of civic institutions within society, and changing styles of teaching and learning - including the long term effects of media/information cognitive paradigms - have had an unexpected impact on the role of museums in their immediate communities and in the world. Interestingly, they have only become more popular. This is due to a myriad of factors, including an increase in the appeal of social environments for learning and the growing distrust of other public sources of information. Obviously, this represents a double-edged opportunity for museums: they have the perfect chance to experiment with new ways of interpreting information and a greater risk of being held accountable if they don’t get it right.

The challenge for designers, architects and other museum professionals is to collaborate in leading the way towards new methods of conceiving of and executing visitor experiences which take into account constantly shifting and progressing modes of thought and understanding. It is also incumbent upon us to find new strategies which serve to render those experiences fresh and invigorating, while realising that certain aspects of visitor behaviour and comfort are in fact more predictable and fixed. In this presentation, we will explore the role that narrative can play in the conceptualisation, planning and design of the overall museum experience, including its potential to encompass and integrate site, architecture and exhibition. Over the course of twenty-five years of practice, Lee H. Skolnick Architecture + Design Partnership has used narrative as a means of tapping into an innate human tool used for understanding, as a design generator, as an organizational device, and as a method of embodying the conceptual and thematic within the spatial and experiential.

Through reference to historical and contemporary examples, we will make a strategic and qualitative distinction between the concepts of ‘embodiment’ and ‘representation’ as they refer to architectural design in general. We will then demonstrate why an understanding of these points, their particular significance to the field of museum design, and their relationship to the use of an expanded definition of narrative, constitute a promising and fertile area for creative exploration and inquiry. Finally, we will discuss how this potent mix, inherently inclusive of the many voices (curator, designer, educator, etc.) which can contribute to the ultimate success of the visitor experience, offers a new dimension in the creation of meaning.
INSIDE OUT: REDEFINING THE BOUNDARIES OF MUSEUMS

This paper explores two themes from the points of view of a practitioner: contemporary trends in the design of interior museum spaces; and the way relationships between the interior and exterior spaces of museums can be used as an effective interpretive design tool. As the museum strives to become both a community focus and a forum for the democratisation of access to culture, its interior needs to become physically, intellectually and visually more inclusive. Functionally, museums are being designed to incorporate spaces for contemplation, for community use, for creativity and education, for interaction and feedback. Emotionally, museums are becoming more dramatic, less documentary, in the ways objects are presented and visitors are engaged with them.

The necessary and parallel development is that interpretive planning and exhibition design should influence or even drive architecture. More often, museum designers are presented with a fully designed building to work in and around. Recent years have seen an increase in demands for museum designers and interpretive planners to consider the ‘total visitor experience’ when approaching both new-build and rehabilitation museum projects. This involves understanding the messages, impressions, emotions, and interactions engendered in visitors by the spaces around them - not only within buildings, but in the physical relationship of the museum to its site, its surroundings and the way people approach.

Another strand of the interplay between inside and outside spaces is in the development of historic site interpretation. The objective is to bring displays of collections relating to a site closer to visitor understanding of the landscapes to which they relate. Key features of this process are the management and ‘exhibiting’ of historic features, emphasis on the proximity of artefact to archaeological source, and the increasing use of integrated interpretive activities to ‘bring the past to life’ on the spot where it happened.

Haley Sharpe Design’s recent and ongoing projects across the world provide much useful material for commentary upon all these issues, ranging from their work with Daniel Liebeskind’s ‘Crystal’ extension to the Royal Ontario Museum to the re-interpretation of Jamestown Island, Virginia, the birthplace of English colonial settlement in North America.
Dr Christopher R. Marshall
Senior Lecturer in Art History and Museum Studies, University of Melbourne, Australia

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE: THE CONTEMPORARY MUSEUM AS ART GALLERY

Since the time of their origins in the separate Renaissance zones of the museo and the galleria, museums and art galleries have traditionally grown out of related but nonetheless distinct traditions. Recently, however, increasing levels of convergence have been noted between these and other institutionalised spaces of contemporary entertainment and education. One aspect of this trend that has not yet attracted the attention that it deserves is the increasing presence of contemporary art and/or art-inspired displays in museums of science, nature and social history. These are often introduced in order to open the museum out to more evocative, experiential and less traditionally text-based modes of communication.

This paper will examine the premises of this recent phenomenon and assess its effectiveness in varying museum settings. It will focus on recent Australian examples, including the Museum of Sydney, the Melbourne Museum and the National Museum of Australia, while also referring to other instances internationally. It could be argued, for example, that the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. has adopted a highly successful and innovative communications strategy in filling one gallery with discarded Beuys-like shoes and layering the walls of another with a bank of Boltanski-esque photographs. Yet these undeniable successes nonetheless also run the risk of creating ambiguities in the minds of visitors. We might even conclude that the museum has created a field of potential uncertainty – alongside its undoubted gains of increased dynamism and flexibility of address – as a by-product of this conflation of its spaces and modes of communication with those of the contemporary art gallery. The process of recognising and analysing these uncertainties might help designers and users alike to further refine the nature of their communication across this renewed dimension of museum practice.
Dr Jon Wood
Henry Moore Institute, Leeds

THE STUDIO IN THE GALLERY?

Using the 2002 exhibition ‘Close Encounters: The Sculptor’s Studio in the Age of the Camera’ [with its large studio photographs which evoke the studio and invite the gallery viewer to imagine how the gallery room could ‘be a studio’] as a starting point, I look at how the museum and gallery space has been variously transformed into a studio space. This occurs both physically (walls, floors etc.) and through the introduction of artist (and ‘studio’) into the space to make work and ‘perform’ - not just ‘in residence’ but ‘on display’. I look at how this phenomenon relates to the strategies of so called ‘installation art’ and of Mike Nelson’s in particular. I will also contrast briefly with the ways in which contemporary artists have themselves, in turn, dealt with the question of studio reconstruction within their own work and with the ways they explore its fictions, its representation, its relation to site and its ghostly relation to themselves. Do these endeavors make these more ‘lively’, ‘interesting’, ‘spectacular’, ‘authentic’ spaces for the visitor, or are they misplaced ways of using the physical and poetic spaces of the museum and gallery, and indeed studio?

Michael Wilford
A PRACTITIONER’S PERSPECTIVE

In 1960 Michael Wilford joined the practice which James Stirling created in 1956. The Stirling/Wilford partnership was established in 1971 and continued until James Stirling’s death in 1992. From 1993 to 2001 Michael Wilford worked in partnership under the name of Michael Wilford and Partners. In London Michael Wilford is now working in collaboration with MUMA and in Germany has established Wilford Schupp, based in Stuttgart. Michael Wilford’s work has gained international renown and includes significant public buildings such as performing art centres, art galleries, museums and libraries located around the world. In this presentation, Michael will share his experience of designing museums internationally, discussing critical architectural issues and museum design from a practitioner’s perspective.
A number of recent exhibitions have attempted to represent the Enlightenment museum space, not only to display the art and objects collected at the time but also to show how these collections were understood, organised and displayed at the time they were collected. These exhibitions not only represent the Enlightenment; they literally re-present it. Most recently, the British Museum has launched the Enlightenment gallery in the King’s Library. Other prominent examples include Art on the Line: The Royal Academy Exhibitions at Somerset House 1780-1836 at the Courtauld Institute Gallery (2001-02), the Darwin Centre at the Natural History Museum, and Medicine Man: the Forgotten Museum of Henry Wellcome, also at the British Museum (2003). Expressed in different ways, these exhibitions share an ambitious aim to increase visitors’ understanding of the history of the museum space, and to challenge them to consider the nature of museum representation itself.

In this paper I will look at museums’ current interest in representing Enlightenment museum spaces. I will discuss how the eighteenth-century philosophy of space and philosophy of nature determine the Enlightenment’s creation of museum space and consider why these themes are of renewed interest today. I will then look at several recent examples to identify the strengths, challenges, effectiveness and impact of representing Enlightenment museum space, and to suggest whether and how ‘the representation of museum representation’ can be a powerful theme for museums in the future.
Yani Herreman  
Centro de Estudios de Posgrado.CIEP  
Fac. De Arquitectura.  
UNAM  

IDENTITY, EXHIBITION AND MUSEUM DESIGN  

“"The museum is the colossal mirror in which man finally contemplates himself in every aspect, finds himself literally admirable, and abandons himself to ecstasy expressed in all art reviews” Georges Bataille.  

The first specialists interested in the impact of exhibitions on their visitors were psychologists involved in learning. Their interest involved promoting the learning process through an exhibition experience - emotional learning appeared on the scene. With the coming of the museum boom, sociologists like Bourdieu, Darbel and Graña theorized on museums from a point of view different from established patterns. Also, during the sixties and seventies, the input from anthropology and other social sciences changed the taxonomic presentation of exhibitions, adopting a more structuralism-oriented approach. Philosophers, sociologists and psychoanalysts became increasingly interested in the inner experience of the individual within an exhibition environment. This was the case with Foucault, Habermas and Bataille, for example.  

The Stendhal syndrome is only an example, a very tangible one, of what happens inside an individual while having a museum or exhibition experience. Individuals feel, see and perceive simultaneously while experiencing an exhibition environment. The effect of light, colour, size and texture has been explored but not from the identity point of view. In what ways do the different areas of the individual’s identity get involved during the museum experience? Is it here, in the individual’s identity patterns where we, as designers or communicators or mediators, could find the desired response to our exhibition proposal?  

This paper tries to reinforce the need to study the emotional perception of the individual in a museum environment. Important as a museum is as an education resource, it should also be looked upon as identity reinforcement, emotionally, socially and culturally speaking.
CONSTRUCTING AND COMMUNICATING EQUALITY: THE SOCIAL AGENCY OF MUSEUM SPACE

The spaces of the museum have often been characterised as means through which social inequalities have been constituted, reproduced, reinforced. The hierarchical arrangement of objects, the presentation of partial and biased histories, the marked absence of (certain forms of) cultural difference, have been understood as technologies through which museums have contributed to wider social processes of othering, disempowerment and oppression. Recently, however, it is possible to detect a growing confidence amongst cultural practitioners in articulating goals which might be seen to challenge these perspectives. Though these claims to agency may take many different forms, this paper focuses on one specific area - the museum’s potential to combat prejudice. These museums’ socially-driven goals may be addressed through a number of means but many seek to use their exhibitions and displays to communicate to audiences specific ideas predicated upon concepts of equality and human rights. Museum spaces, it might be argued, are being reinvented and, for some, endowed with the potential to effect positive social change.

Contemporary understandings of media-audience relations, however, suggest that visitors can construct wide-ranging meanings from a museum visit; meanings that might be entirely oppositional to those intended by the museum, exhibiting not tolerant or egalitarian attributes but rather prejudiced (for example, homophobic, racist, or sexist) ones. What role, then, might museums play in constructing spatial forms which enable meanings that combat, rather than enhance prejudice?

By addressing these issues the paper seeks to contribute to broader debates about the role and responsibility of cultural institutions. More particularly, it raises questions around the extent to which social and power relations, played out beyond the walls of the museum, should resonate, be ‘felt’ (and responded to) internally within museum spaces? How might museum spaces engage with, and take account of, the variously constituted forms of inequality and discrimination manifest within society at large?
Peter Higgins RIBA  
Creative Director, Land Design Studio  

ARCHITECTURE AS COMMUNAL PLACE

The original function of museums as a receptacle of thematic objects, originally art, archaeology and natural sciences, set up architectural protocols to enhance the concept of the sacred box. Modernism encouraged neutrality and detachment of object and container though this was to be challenged by the theatricality and art-specific work of Hans Hollein or the Guggenheim legacy. The unexpected proliferation of the recently invented ‘centres of interpretation’ have not been redefined in relation to this historical context nor developed in respect of specific criteria. Here objects, narrative, the need for media and the sheer complexity of such idiosyncratic building types have clients and architects commissioning and designing in a dazed frenzy.

It is important now to define how the construct of the contextual narrative and the introduction of appropriate communication media can inform and often empower the architectural process to deliver meaningful ‘fit for purpose’ structures. The emergence of the practitioners who help originate these all-important organising principles will be investigated, as will the collaborative process that helps produce public buildings that can support education and entertainment within architecture that has a genuine sense of communal place.
Dr Helen Rees Leahy  
Director, Centre for Museology, Manchester University

PRODUCING A PUBLIC FOR ART: GALLERY SPACE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

This paper examines the ways in which the contemporary ideology of the art gallery is legitimised and concretised through its spatial form and geographical location and how, in turn, the meaning of gallery space is continuously renegotiated both through visitor use and behaviour and institutional practice.

It is widely recognised that, since 1994, the use of Lottery funds to renew and expand the capital infrastructure of museums and galleries in the UK has been deployed as a driver both for internal organisational change, and also for the renewal of the relationship between the institution and its publics. Frequently, the creation and refurbishment of gallery space has been designed to accommodate an expanded repertoire of cultural and commercial consumption, in response to public policy targets for increased access, audience development and the promotion of lifelong learning. As a result, the position of the art collection may be physically and metaphorically de-centred within the overall gallery visit. Examples from London, Manchester and Sheffield show how the dominance of the spatio-temporal regime of the gallery enfilade has been undermined by its incorporation within a new architectural syntax of sequence, adjacency, and verticality. What are the effects of new architectural forms on the production of the gallery visit and on the double-coding of the visitor as both learner and shopper?

Just as the position of the collection has been dislocated within the institution, so too the creation of new art institutions in hitherto marginal sites and cities (such as Salford Quays, Gateshead and Walsall) has displaced cultural capital away from traditional centres and re-sited it on brown field sites. The paper considers how the politics of location has been deployed in the production of a public for art, and also how the relationship between gallery and city has been renewed via strategies of spectacular viewing, ocular dominance, and architectural metaphors of transparency and permeability.

Based on a programme of fieldwork in English museums and galleries, this paper will explore the relationships that are generated via these processes of structural renewal between the meanings of museum space, the narratives of redisplay and reinterpretation of collections, and the construction of visitors as (simultaneously) ‘learners’ and ‘customers’. It will also examine the actual and symbolic effects of museum building and refurbishment in relation to strategies to promote access and inclusion, and also the ways in which certain kinds of visitors are produced by the spaces and displays of the renewed and expanded museum.
Stephen Greenberg
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NOT MONUMENTS
BUT EXPERIENCES

One of the most interesting and important directions in which creative spaces are going is away from monumentalism and towards the creation of experiences. This shift in direction is being driven by the new technologies and by changing visitor expectations. More and more 21st century environments, and not just museums, will be made out of a range of media. Increasingly buildings will become programmable (i.e. changeable) spaces in which film, audio, testimony and artefacts are seamlessly woven together to create an experience in which the architecture is just one more enriching element. As a result the content of the programmes will be more important than the form of the buildings, and the director of the programmes more important than the architect.

Given these new trends architects need to move away from offering heavyweight, architectural solutions - such as roofing over the central courtyard of museums - to problems that would be better solved by the new thinking. When we masterplanned the V&A we avoided monumental thinking and instead started with an exploration of the visitor experience that led us to a new map that was about way-finding and 'the mind of the museum'. In this shift towards architecture-as-experience we will have to develop a deeper understanding of how different visitors experience these new spaces, their different learning paths and what they need from them. We will also have to develop new ways of working in which we allow producers to bring all the different elements together so as to orchestrate the experience. These spaces will need to be ‘produced’, and with high production values; creative spaces require creative directors.

In this paper I will use recent case studies - from the work of Metaphor and other practitioners, beginning with the Holocaust exhibition at the Imperial War Museum - to explore these ideas.
CREATIVE SPACE

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
EXPLORING MUSEUM AND GALLERY SPACE
AS A CREATIVE MEDIUM

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