

# Storytelling in art museum experiences

Applications and challenges of storytelling to enhance the novice's experience

Maia Elisabeth Sirnes

Department of Design

NTNU, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

## ABSTRACT

Stories have the power to educate in an entertaining manner, to evoke emotions and to help visitors connect with the objects on view. This article discusses storytelling as a possibility for enhanced art museum experience through a literature review. It investigates the possible impacts of storytelling to enhance chosen aspects of art museum visits: educational, aesthetic, social and transformative experiences. Findings suggest that storytelling has a large potential to give novices the context they need to experience art, and may help to generate long-lasting memories. But approaches where the museum constructs stories for the visitor, do not directly address all the visitors' needs, such as the social, nor does it allow visitors to contribute with their own perspectives. Museums must design experiences that connect with visitors and cater to their particular needs. This may contribute not only to increase visitor numbers in art museums, but also to redress balance their perceived authority.

**KEYWORDS:** Museum experience, storytelling, novice visitors, art museums

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Museums no longer view themselves mainly as protectors of objects, but as visitor-centred sites of experiences (Falk & Dierking, 2013). Most fine art museums today acknowledge that art is for everyone and that all people are capable of meaningful exchanges with objects (Sayers, 2011). Still, many art museums struggle to attract and engage amateurs and non-experts in order to increase visitor numbers, balance their perceived authority, remain relevant and gain sufficient funding. Non-experts constitute up to half of the art museums' visitors, yet many find art museums intimidating and do not know what to do in front of an artwork. The traditional 'white cube' exhibition interior displaying artworks on white, neutral walls, without the distraction of additional information and context,

is not enough to give novice visitors what they seek in a museum experience (Samis & Michaelson, 2016).

Various visitor studies have been conducted to understand how novices' art experiences differ from experts', and recent pedagogic strategies to reach young novices take on more emancipatory and dialogic approaches to presenting fine art in museums (Foreman-Wernet & Dervin, 2016). But in a digitized world where information is close at hand, art museums have to offer something more than objects and information – today, visitors will go to museums not only to learn about or look at art, but to experience something memorable and out of the ordinary, together with friends or family (Falk & Dierking, 2013).

Consider *Loving Vincent* (Kobiela & Welchman, 2017), the hand-painted biographical film about the painter Vincent Van Gogh, as an example of a compelling and accessible way to experience art. It sets off with the suspicion of Vincent's old postman, Roulin, that the painter did not die by suicide as was reported. Roulin sends his son back to where Vincent spent his last years, to investigate the mystery. The film is packed with Van Gogh's famous paintings, dynamically woven into the scenes. Many museums types use films and other forms of storytelling in their exhibitions. Could art museums do the same?

This article discusses storytelling as a possibility for enhanced museum experience, because of its power to inform and educate in an entertaining manner, to evoke emotions and to make visitors connect with the objects on view. The main question of focus is: How can storytelling help art museums to enhance the museum experience of novices and build longer-lasting relationships to make visitors revisit?

### 1.2 Method and structure

The article will examine the role and value of stories and storytelling in on-site art museum experiences, through a review of literature gathered mostly from research journals within museum experience design, museum and visitor studies, art curatorship and education, and conference proceedings from *Museums and the Web*. Following the introduction, definitions and descriptions of key terms are presented in part one. Results are presented in parts two and three, first examining what is lacking in today's novice art museum experience, then how storytelling might impact the experience. The goal is to illuminate art museums' challenges in engaging young novice visitors and to determine how a selection of storytelling approaches may help in meeting them. Finally, part three discusses the challenges of applying storytelling in art museums and whether on-site applications really help in building long-term relationships with visitors.

### 1.3 Museum visitor experience

The museum visitor experience is defined as 'an individual's immediate or ongoing, subjective and personal response to an activity, setting or event outside of their usual environment' by Ballantyne and Packer (2016, p. 133), in an effort to synthesize research done on various personal and emotional experiences reported by museum visitors. They present a multifaceted model of ten possible components of museum experiences: Physical; sensory; restorative; introspective; transformative; hedonic; emotional; relational; spiritual; and cognitive (Packer & Ballantyne, 2016, p. 136). Museum experiences depend on complex system perceptions and myriad other factors – a continually shifting interaction between the visitor's personal context, the physical context of the museum and the socio-cultural context [Figure 1] (Falk & Dierking, 2013, p. 26). The whole visit to a museum can be understood as a chain of experiences, each shaping interpretation of the next and impacting the visitor's takeaway impressions (Packer & Ballantyne, 2016).

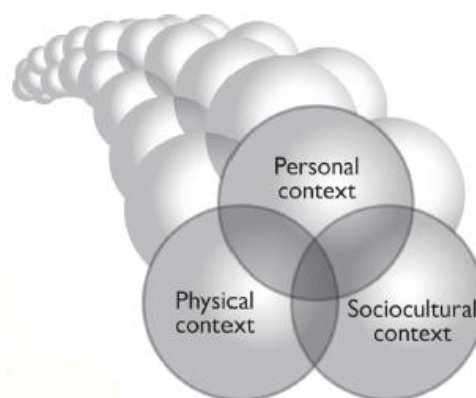


Figure 1: *The Contextual Model of Learning*. From "The Museum Experience revisited," by Falk & Dierking, 2016, Routledge, p. 26. Copyright © 2013 Taylor & Francis.

A 'visitor journey', interpreted from a service design perspective, spans from deciding and preparing to go to the museum, to the physical or virtual visit, and finally to interpreting and

digesting the visit afterwards. If the goal is to create long-term relationships with visitors to keep them returning to the museum, one may expand the idea of the visitor journey to an on-going continuum with physical visits along the way.

#### 1.4 Novice visitors

This article refers to novice visitors as persons that do go to museums, but that are *relative novices* or amateurs in viewing, interpreting and experiencing art. It does not look into marketing concerns nor attempt to determine whether storytelling can help to attract new audiences of non-visitors.

#### 1.5 Storytelling in museums

A story is a telling of events. Storytelling is the way the story is told (Wong, 2015), affecting how it is experienced: it sets a spatial setting, directs attention to certain parts, and leaves out others. Within psychology, stories are understood to be closely connected to human experience, and an important part of how humans learn, think and feel (Bruner, 1990). This applies not only for instance when bringing young children into a culture (Madej, 2008), but also for adults to continue to shape and define their identity (Bedford, 2014). Storytelling can also be seen as a two-way interaction between teller and listener, where the story emerges from cooperation between the involved parts (National Storytelling Network, 2018).

In art museums, the 'storytelling' term is often used more broadly to cover the communication of stories about a collection of objects, as in (Wyman, Smith, Meyers, & Godfrey, 2011), as an addition to direct delivery of facts. Traditionally it is applied to help to give objects context and meaning in the mind of the museum visitor, through guided tours, theatre reenactments and written information on physical exhibits. Museum scholar Leslie Bedford makes a distinction between stories used to package exhibition content into a sequence, and compelling 'true narratives' that evoke the

visitor's emotions and imagination (Bedford, 2014).

A common structure for stories derived from western literature is a linear plot, with a pattern of rising and falling tension that facilitates emotional compassion with the characters (Lupton, 2017; Zak, 2015). The traditional or classical narrative arc often labelled 'Gustav Freytag's triangle', is a sequence of events with a beginning, middle and end. It consists of the following phases: exposition; rising action; climax; falling action; and denouement (Lupton, 2017; Zak, 2015). Another storytelling model is the 'hero's journey', which can be recognized in myths and legends (Ibid.). But stories may also take a less linear and more spatial form (Madej, 2008; Wong, 2015). If another principle than time is used to give order to a story, then this must be indicated to the reader, to avoid loss of coherence (Wong, 2015). Both physical and digital spaces are experimented with for their narrative capacities, for instance to tell stories from several perspectives at once, through a range of media and devices, or to allow the visitor to influence the story herself (Wong, 2015).

## 2. ART MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

### 2.1 Art museums today

Originally, museums were seen purely as educational institutions, playing an important role in creating and disseminating knowledge (Bedford, 2014; Bennett, 2007; Sayers, 2011). Art museums specifically grew to become more focused on collecting and protecting objects than on educating up until the 1920s (Sayers, 2011), and have long been perceived more as elite temples of the arts than democratic centres of learning (Bennett, 2007). Since the 1930ies, art exhibits have been governed by the modernist aesthetic ideal of clean and functional 'white cube' interiors to display art, which aims to invite contemplation and immersion without any

distraction of additional information and context (Giebelhausen, 2007; Samis & Michaelson, 2016).

The recent years have seen a shift back towards visitor-centred principles, (Falk & Dierking, 2013; Samis & Michaelson, 2016), supported by visitor studies and a wider range of studies like psychology, anthropology and design (Bedford, 2014). Already in 1977, anthropologist Graburn wrote that museums must understand and satisfy three (possibly overlapping) types of human experiential needs: the *associational*, which is 'an excuse or focus for a social occasion' where the museum is analogous to other leisure sites; the *educational*, which is the need to learn and expand one's horizons; and the *reverential*, which is the need for 'a personal experience with something higher, more sacred and out of the ordinary than home and work are able to supply' (Graburn, 1977, p. 3). According to Falk and Dierking (2016), these needs seem to reflect the main categories of reasons art museum visitors report when asked the question 'Why did you come here today?'. We will use them as a starting point to examine and discuss art museum experiences.

Generally, art museums reckon themselves as sites of leisure activities for everyone, parts of the 'experience economy' where experiences are measured in terms of memories (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). They acknowledge that they must understand and cater for a range of audiences, and build long-term relationships to keep visitors returning (Falk & Dierking, 2013).

## 2.2 Aesthetic object experiences

In light of the frameworks for understanding museum experience described in the introduction, this section further explores on-site art museum experiences in particular. In what ways do art museums offer social, educational and reverential or at least aesthetic experiences to novice visitors?

When it comes to art museum experience specifically, the aesthetic object experience,

which Packer and Ballantyne (2016) categorise within sensory experiences, might be seen as the core component (Kesner, 2006). In understanding aesthetic experiences, art historian Kesner (2006) argues that methods of conceptualizing and categorizing museum experience come up short: '[...] any substantial encounter with painting or sculpture in an art museum—that is 'seeing', 'perceiving', 'understanding' or simply 'experiencing' work of art—involves *perceptual*, *cognitive* and *affective* components, which cannot be neatly packaged into distinct subcategories, not even for analytical purposes.' (Kesner, 2006, p. 7) (emphasis author's).

According to Kesner, a visitor's 'cultural competence', or 'ability to exercise the perceptual activities that artworks require', is one of the main factors in achieving satisfying art museum experiences (Kesner, 2006, p. 5). Attentive viewing, with awareness and appreciation of the object as an artwork, is traditionally considered to be the sophisticated way of experiencing art (Ibid.). But 'inattentive viewing', in the meaning of being open to the possibilities afforded by the artwork, and to surrender to a more immersive experience of what the work depicts, is as important for the aspects of aesthetic experience that come close to the reverential (Ibid.). In presentation and interpretation of art, one should encourage and stimulate switching between modes of attention, and thus lead to a spectrum of perceptual engagement, from attentive analytic viewing to absorbed or even trance-like absorption (Ibid.).

## 2.3 Learning experiences

Most art museums follow a constructivist view, which assumes that people learn best through active involvement and constructing their own understanding in meaningful ways (Foreman-Wernet & Dervin, 2006). Psychological and visitor studies show that increased knowledge and familiarity with art leads to increased interest and liking (Ibid.). This suggests that information and interpretation provided on the novice's level will lead her to revisit later on, gradually building

cultural competence. Art museum educator Sayers (2011) recognizes two different approaches to learning in art museums: a scholarly paradigm, where the goal is to reach an objective truth; the other emancipatory, where negotiating subjective meanings together is more important.

The white cube ideal of art museum exhibits follows the scholarly paradigm of art education and relies on the visitor’s previous knowledge to give context and meaning to the objects (Samis & Michaelson, 2016). Consequently, novices experience intimidation and feel like they don’t know how to find meaning in the objects on view (Ibid.). This may be explained at least partly by lack of previous knowledge, the perceived authority of art museums, and the ideas of ‘good viewing’ and ‘objective truths’ about art which some experts propagate (Kesner, 2006). According to Samis and Michaelson (2016), museums should not put the objects’ ability to speak for themselves to the test at all, because it is the visitors that end up feeling tested.

In addition to in-person guides, many museums use technology in form of audio guides or websites to provide context that the white cube ideal omits. Michaelson and Samis (2016) make a point that most visitors choose not to use such aids and that they might be a pretence for museums that do not want to change their ways. They suggest that the exhibition itself must provide context about objects right as visitors stand in front of them. (Ibid.).

**2.4 Social experiences**

Visitors studies show that having a companion during arts museum visits plays a big role in the museum experience (Debenedetti, 2003). An important motivation for going to the museum in the first place, especially for non-experts, is sharing a social time together with others (Falk & Dierking, 2013). According to Debenedetti, visiting together with friends or family is shaped by and fulfils several needs: *Mutual enrichment*, where visitors position themselves in uncertain situations and clarify their understanding through

verbal exchange; *Recreation*, where the presence of family and friends allow visitors to relax and have fun; *Reassurance*, where discomfort is eased by companions’ emotional support; *Prestige*, where the visitor’s social standing within the group is increased through discussion; and *Transmission of knowledge*, usually between parents and children (Debenedetti, 2003, pp. 56-57). The study suggests that it is experts who walk around by themselves and experience deep bonds with the art as it is – novice visitors talk to each other to reflect upon and construct meaning of the artworks.

Table 1 summarises the mentioned museum experience frameworks and their key aspects.

Author	Graburn	Falk & Dierking	Kesner
Frame-work	Visitor Needs	Learning Contexts	Aesthetic experience
Key aspects	- Associational - Educational - Reverential	- Personal - Socio-cultural - Physical	- Cognitive - Affective - Perceptual

Table 1: Overview of museum experience frameworks

**3. STORIES AND STORYTELLING IN ART MUSEUM EXPERIENCE**

This section explores possible applications of storytelling in art museums and discusses whether they would enhance the experience for novice visitors.

**3.1 Storytelling to enhance learning**

Advocates of storytelling in museums to give context and meaning to objects refer to the view within psychology that humans make sense of the world and ourselves through narrative, and that information structured as a narrative might be easier to remember (Bedford, 2001; Bruner, 1990). In the context of an art exhibition, a

narrative told by the museum to visitors may direct attention to specific works, and connect information about them to a meaningful sequence that is easier to remember. Such a narrative can be told through different types of media, perhaps most commonly textually or orally. It can also be distributed throughout the room in a more spatial and less sequential form or made into a digital storytelling experience.

Sequentiality is one of the main characteristics of stories – without order, the components of a story fail to make sense (Bruner, 1990; Wong, 2015). The tendency to think of narrative as one cohesive linear story that represents ‘the truth’ is the background for some scepticism toward storytelling in museums (Wong, 2015). Sceptics argue that stories may lead to overly dominant, subjective, didactic and unnuanced renderings of events (Macleod, Hanks, & Hale, 2012; Wong, 2015). Wong disagrees and suggests that one can avoid this by making more use of the spatial dimension of stories as well as the sequential, to tell the story from several different perspectives at once (Wong, 2015).

Other critics argue that stories demand an emotional, rather than intellectual response, and that what you remember from stories is how they made you feel, rather than the content. But emotions can also be symptoms of interpretation or understanding that deviates from the known and expected – doors into insight and personal development. Proponents of storytelling in museums emphasise its power to make visitors connect to the content, motivate them to want to see what happens next, and make the learning experience more entertaining (Wong, 2015).

### **3.2 Storytelling to enhance aesthetic experience**

Stories also support personal interpretation and imagination. The storyteller decides which parts are important and which are left out (Wong, 2015). By leaving ‘gaps’ in the story, she allows the listener to fill them in based on their own thoughts, feelings and memories (Bedford, 2001). In other words, stories are generative – one story

told generates another in the listener’s mind. Bedford (2016) proposes that these aspects are especially important both for educative and aesthetic museum experiences.

Museums might also apply storytelling to stimulate the kind of switching in attentive modes that according to Kesner (2006) are important for aesthetic experience. While there are few examples of such practices, one might imagine that stories that stimulate interpretation and imagination may also stimulate a kind of ‘inattentive viewing’ that makes visitors plunge into what the works depict and lead to immersive experience. At the same time, encouraging this way of experiencing artworks might lead visitors’ minds to generate more stories by themselves while viewing other objects. Notably, some might view such effects as distracting to ‘good viewing’.

### **3.3 Storytelling games for social interpretation and participatory meaning-making**

Ioannidis and Vayanou (2017) propose a generic storytelling game approach to achieve engaging group activities within art museums and thus cater to the social motivations of coming to the museum. Generic storytelling games are games where players make up stories about something, and then tell the story to the rest of the group (Vayanou & Ioannidis, 2017). During a storytelling game, players are particularly engaged in the triggering story elements. In order to construct a story about an object, they carefully observe and reflect on its possible meanings, uses and perspectives (Ibid.). When telling the story to the group, personal viewpoints are shared, which leads to discussion and further enhances the players’ connections to story elements.

Ioannidis and Vayanou (2017) developed the game “Find the Artwork behind the Story”, in which players construct a story based on one of the artworks in the exhibition, and the others vote on which artwork they think the story was based on. The results of the study suggest that such an approach significantly impacts visitor engagement with the artworks. Participants found the game fun, and many appreciated that

it did not require prior knowledge. Some even reported that it gave them an increased understanding for, and interest in, fine arts (Vayanou & Ioannidis, 2017).

### **3.4 Immersive storytelling to give memorable experiences**

The storytelling applications covered thus far have aimed mostly to enhance educational, social and aesthetic experiences in art museums. From an experience economy perspective, when people buy an experience, they pay to spend time enjoying memorable events (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Storytelling approaches that make use of the whole exhibition space, may make art museums more memorable by offering deeper and more immersive experiences than expected. A common way to do this is to create a room or space related to or depicted in an artwork. This way, visitors can be inside, or even part of, the story event. Storytelling might be done by live actors acting out scenes like in a play, or by 'object theatre' where objects tell stories themselves.

The most technologically upfront initiatives use digital technology to create immersive storytelling experiences, much like video games where the story is generated according to the player's choices. Within this category is the completely virtual museum only is experienced in VR, but also use of digital technology to create immersive storytelling experiences within the museum.

An example of such immersive storytelling is *Becoming Vincent*, a virtual experience concept designed in 2014 to take tourists on the same journey that Vincent Van Gogh went through and to sympathise with him by 'becoming Vincent' themselves (Calvi & Hover, 2018). The designers used the 'Hero's journey' storytelling model as a tool to create a coherent story framework out of the painter's life. Thus far, two Oculus Rift experiences have been developed, where viewers can see the story events in virtual reality. The most recent one is set in a church before Christmas 1881, when Van Gogh announced to

his parents that he would devote his life to art, rather than follow his father's footsteps as a vicar (Calvi & Hover, 2018). Amongst other challenges along the design process, the authors mention the dilemma of fact versus compelling story in writing the dialogue script. For instance, the writers wanted to let Vincent slam the door of the family house and have his father lock it behind him for dramatic effect. But such an event is not historically documented, and not all stakeholders were prepared to tweak the facts in order to touch viewers emotionally (Calvi & Hover, 2018, p. 287).

### **3.5 Storytelling for individual transformation**

Stories help us to make concrete representations of larger abstract concepts and help us to sort out our values and beliefs (Bedford, 2001, 2014). They can encourage personal reflection and urge visitors to take their own moral stance (Bedford, 2001). Interactive storytelling games may be a way to directly put visitors into the shoes of characters connected to objects on show, and allow them to make choices that affect the rest of the story. Jones (2007) points to an example of such a game, the award-winning *Price of Freedom: Causes and Consequences of the Civil War* exhibition, where the following text is attached to a 150-year-old cracker:

*Hardtack was a food issued to soldiers as a part of their rations (food from the army) and it's actually not very tasty at all. It's made of flour and water, and if you're lucky – salt. It's so hard that it can chip your teeth if you eat it without dipping it in liquid first! How does that sound? Actually, it sounds delicious because right now, you don't have hardtack. In fact, you have not eaten in 3 days. Soldiers are usually issued their rations every three days... and knowing that you would have to carry your food with you, you ate all three days of rations at once. And now it's the third day, but no new rations have arrived yet. You are feeling desperate for food. Your camp is near a local farmer's crop of ripe corn.*

*He seems to be an older gentleman of at least 60. But your general has issued an order to the local people authorizing them to shoot soldiers caught taking food and supplies from civilians. It could be dangerous to attempt to take some corn, but if you don't eat you could become too weak and sick to fight. What do you do?*

*Here are your choices:*

- 1) Hope that rations will arrive soon. Wait it out.*
- 2) Raid the old citizen's corn crop*

The visitor understands something about the hardship of the war in general by reading and taking his particular choice. Will he steal to survive and fight on for his cause, or take the moral high ground? Such interactive storytelling in museums may be viewed as a way to include and engage the visitor's own views, allowing for alternative subjective versions of stories (Westin, 2011). But they can still be regarded as disciplinary in the way they force pre-written specific responses from visitors and subdue others. Westin (2011, p. 46) writes that participatory technologies are 'an impoverished realization of a two-way communication', in an article that acknowledges the effectiveness of technology for museum education, but holds that it prevents new solutions from being expressed (Ibid.).

#### **4. CHALLENGES**

There are both practical and principal challenges in implementing storytelling in art museums. Many relate to professionals' and visitors' conceptions of what roles art museums should play in society, and how they should do it. Most of the practical challenges are consequences of the fact that storytelling in art museums is a fairly novel practice: a lack of competence in storytelling; the fact that art museum buildings are built for the white cube experience, not immersive story oriented experiences; and a lack of easily available tools to manage non-linear or

immersive storytelling in museum spaces (Stein, 2016). Additionally, large museums naturally have greater resources to implement novel technology than smaller ones.

While many professionals hold that playful and informal learning, interactivity and immersive experiences is the future of museums (Westin, 2011), others do not think entertainment fits within a museum experience at all (Jones, 2017). Arguments might resemble those against the use of technology and new media within museums, which sceptics see as '[...] threatening the authenticity of the artifact, the authority of traditional sources of knowledge, and as vulgarizing museums, turning them into commercialized sites for "edutainment".' (Henning, 2007, p. 302). Any application of storytelling in art museums would challenge the ideal of no distractions or management of the aesthetic experience, which the white cube interiors facilitate. But what experts find distracting or overly steering, may be experienced differently by novices – a user-centred design approach is necessary to develop solutions that cater to different kinds of audiences.

There is a tension in the world of art museums between telling and preserving 'the truth', and valuing visitors' own truths. Most of the applications discussed in this article feature stories constructed and told by the museum, to be experienced but not influenced by visitors. Some voices contend that the future role of museums is not to tell their own stories but to be facilitators of dialogue - meeting places for the unique voices of the public. This was the goal of Tate Modern in London when it opened, as former Head of Interpretation and Education Jackson states (as cited in Sayers, 2011, p. 412):

*[...] It was a huge departure from the idea of the compliant, uneducated public who would be given meaning by the 'experts' at the gallery. Enabling multiple voices to speak about the art was an important feature and with that the primacy of the*



*non-expert voice. One of the key concepts that defined the department was about 'giving authority to those who have none.'*

Some art museums have experimented with allowing visitors to contribute with their own stories inspired by objects, for others to experience. One example is 'The Art of Storytelling', a project at the Delaware Art Museum (Fisher, Twiss-Garrity, & Sastre, 2008). Such projects seem to have great educational value for those contributing with stories, but many suffer from a lack of participation amongst non-experts. In order to motivate visitors to participate, museums must show that they value alternative views (Simon, 2010), and open for stories about what the visitors themselves find relevant and familiar (Fisher et al., 2008). Participation will be a challenge for novices as long as there is a perception of a correct way to view and interpret art.

In their implementation of storytelling into the experience, art museums may choose themselves what status or weight to give the stories they tell, in how they are presented. It is important to note the museums' responsibilities when they take a role as a defining power. There should always be room to discuss the stories told, room for other interpretations, and room for visitors to add their views to the story.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Storytelling has the potential to enhance the on-site art museum experience, especially to offer the novice visitor the context and information she needs to experience the artworks in a satisfying way. If learning about the artworks increases a visitor's interest and liking for art in general, then storytelling applications may make visitors return for more. Stories have the power to evoke emotions, to give immersive experiences and even change visitors' values and beliefs – effects that may generate long-lasting memories that span beyond the physical visit.

The article has pointed some ways storytelling could enhance the novice visitor experience, but in order to ascertain at what degree it would make visitors return, one would have to put theory into practice.

Storytelling applications where the museum constructs stories for the visitor to experience do not in themselves do anything to address visitors' social needs, which are central especially for novice visitors. Furthermore, truly engaging museum experiences are mutually shaped with the visitors themselves. Some museums are slowly including visitor choices or views in their exhibitions. But as long as there is a perception that there is a correct way to experience art, which the art museum holds the key to, it is not enough to merely invite visitors to participate. Museums must design experiences that cater to the novice visitor's needs in particular. This may contribute not only to increase visitor numbers in art museums, but also to balance their perceived authority.

## REFERENCES

- Bedford, L. (2001). Storytelling: The real work of museums. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 44(1), 27-34.
- Bedford, L. (2014). *The Art of Museum Exhibitions: How Story and Imagination Create Aesthetic Experiences*. Walnut Creek: Routledge.
- Bennett, T. (2007). Civic seeing: museums and the organization of vision. In S. Macdonald (Ed.), *A companion to museum studies* (pp. 263-281): Blackwell Publishing Ltd.  
doi:10.1002/9780470996836.ch16
- Bruner, J. S. (1990). *Acts of meaning* (Vol. 3). Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Calvi, L., & Hover, M. (2018). Becoming Vincent: A Multifaceted Story in a Multifaceted Ecosystem. In A. Vermeeren, A. Sabiescu, & L. Calvi (Eds.), *Museum Experience Design: Crowds, Ecosystems and Novel Technologies* (pp. 279-300). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Debenedetti, S. (2003). Investigating the role of companions in the art museum experience.

- International Journal of Arts Management*, 5(3), 52-63.
- Falk, J. H., & Dierking, L. D. (2013). *The museum experience revisited*. Walnut Creek, Calif: Left Coast Press.
- Fisher, M., Twiss-Garrity, B. A., & Sastre, A. (2008, 31.03.2008). *The Art of Storytelling: Enriching Art Museum Exhibits and Education through Visitor Narratives*. Paper presented at the Museums and the web 2008: Proceedings, Toronto.
- Foreman-Wernet, L., & Dervin, B. (2016). Everyday Encounters with Art: Comparing Expert and Novice Experiences. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 59(4), 411-425. doi:10.1111/cura.12181
- Giebelhausen, M. (2007). Museum architecture: a brief history. In S. Macdonald (Ed.), *A companion to museum studies* (pp. 223-244): Blackwell Publishing Ltd. doi:10.1002/9780470996836.ch14
- Graburn, N. (1977). The museum and the visitor experience. *Roundtable reports*, 1-5.
- Henning, M. (2007). New media. In S. Macdonald (Ed.), *A companion to museum studies* (pp. 302-318): Blackwell Publishing Ltd. doi:10.1002/9780470996836.ch18
- Jones, A. (2017). 7 Reasons Museums Should Share More Experiences, Less Information. Retrieved from <http://www.peakexperiencelab.com/blog/2017/3/24/7-reasons-why-museums-should-share-more-experiences-less-information>
- Kesner, L. (2006). The role of cognitive competence in the art museum experience. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 21(1), 4-19.
- Kobiela, D., & Welchman, H. (Writers). (2017). *Loving Vincent* [Feature film]. In H. Welchman, I. Mactaggart, & S. M. Bobbit (Producer). United Kingdom & Poland: Altitude Film Distributor (UK) & Next Film (Poland).
- Lupton, E. (2017). *Desian is Storytelling*. New York, USA: Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum.
- Macleod, S., Hanks, L. H., & Hale, J. (2012). *Museum making: narratives, architectures, exhibitions*: Routledge.
- Madej, K. S. (2008). "Traditional Narrative Structure"—not traditional so why the norm? Paper presented at the 5th International Conference on Narrative and Interactive Learning Environments Edinburgh, Scotland 6th–8th August 2008.
- National Storytelling Network. (2018). What is storytelling? Retrieved from <https://storynet.org/what-is-storytelling/>
- Packer, J., & Ballantyne, R. (2016). Conceptualizing the visitor experience: A review of literature and development of a multifaceted model. *Visitor Studies*, 19(2), 128-143.
- Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1999). *The experience economy*: Harvard Business Press.
- Samis, P., & Michaelson, M. (2016). *Creating the Visitor-Centered Museum*: Routledge Ltd.
- Sayers, E. (2011). Investigating the impact of contrasting paradigms of knowledge on the emancipatory aims of gallery programmes for young people. *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 30(3), 409-422.
- Simon, N. (2010). Preface: Why Participate? In *The participatory museum*. Santa Cruz, CA: The participatory museum. Retrieved from <http://www.participatorymuseum.org/preface/>.
- Stein, R. (Producer). (2016). *Storytelling: Tall tales, or the future of museums?* [Roundtable presentation] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBaWScKxgT4>
- Vayanou, M., & Ioannidis, Y. (2017). *Storytelling games with art collections: Generic game-play design and preliminary evaluation through game testing sessions*. Paper presented at the 9th International Conference on Virtual Worlds and Games for Serious Applications (VS-Games), 2017
- Westin, J. (2011). The interactive museum and its non-human actants. *Nordisk Museologi*(1), 45.
- Wong, A. (2015). *The whole story, and then some: 'digital storytelling' in evolving museum practice*. Paper presented at the MW2015: Museums and the Web 2015, Chicago, IL, USA.
- Wyman, B., Smith, S., Meyers, D., & Godfrey, M. (2011). Digital Storytelling in museums: observations and best practices. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 54(4), 461-468.
- Zak, P. J. (2015). Why inspiring stories make us react: The neuroscience of narrative. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4445577/>