

Scenography in Museum Design: An examination of its current use, and its impact on visitors' value of experience

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Abstract

This research examines the use of scenography in museum design and investigates how scenography can impact on visitors' value of experience. This research contributes to existing knowledge on visitors' experiences, museum design and the relationship between them, and aims to inspire new thinking on the potential of scenography to enhance visitors' value of experiences. With ever increasing and improving competition for the public's free time museums are more widely recognised as part of the leisure industry. To remain culturally relevant and financially sustainable museums have had to develop a more profound understanding of not only who their audiences are, but what users require from their experiences, and how they can offer this. Taking influence from the service industry, this research focuses on the visitor as investor and uses the concept of 'value of experience' to examine what people seek when visiting museums.

The study began by reviewing the use of scenography in theatrical performance and considering if this aligns with the role of museums. I analyse existing examples of scenography in museum design and reflect on personal experience to consider the impact of these on visitors. Summarising literature into visitors' experiences, I recognise six types of value that are most commonly sought or recognised by museum visitors. These six values are presented in the 'visitors' value of museum experience groupings', an original system developed for the purpose of this research. The visitors' value of museum experience groupings were tested then used as a framework to review the impact of scenography in museum design. Triangulating data collected from field visits to museum, interviews with museum staff, and consultations with museum visitors I use the value groupings as a guide to investigate the impact of scenography in museum design on their visitors' value of experience.

The research demonstrates that there is an ever increasing use of scenographic components in museum designs and reviews the ways in which these can be applied to support some of the core aims and objectives of museums. Though the impact of scenography can be mutually beneficial for visitor and museum, there are fundamental differences in museums and theatres which mean some principles of scenography cannot be easily transferred to museum spaces. The museum frame is unlike the theatrical frame. Theatres enjoy an artistic licence with which they can choose to be illusionary, exaggerated and deceptive. The theatrical frame sets expectations and behaviours which encourages audiences to suspend their disbelief and engage in personal meaning making. Meanwhile, museums are trusted as places of accuracy, perceived as places of unique learning, and celebrated for being the carers of authentic collections. Considering these factors, the ability or willingness of museum visitors to overlook limitations and read design on a symbolic level is unclear. Though scenography may be able to support museums in offering a range of values, the most unique and fundamental characteristics of museums must be respected and celebrated if they wish to maintain a competitive edge within today's competitive leisure industry.

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1. Introduction

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation

Scenographic devices such as scenery, props, theatrical lighting and costumes all appear to have become commonplace in contemporary museum designs. Before this research, as a scenographer visiting museums, I recognised an increasing similarity between the methods and styles of exhibition designs and those of my own design work for theatrical performances. More and more I found myself wandering through museums only to stumble upon Victorian streets or Amazonian rainforests, replicas of other worlds and other times. Objects freed from case, presented in new ways that put them in to context. These settings felt to me like stages, and the theatricality of these environments seemed obvious. It was not only these literal reproductions of places that had notable comparisons with the scenography of theatrical performances. I also recognised an emergent trend for using the design of exhibitions to create an atmosphere that complements the mood of the topic, a principle rooted in the fundamentals of scenography. I began to wonder what had caused museums to pursue such avenues; was this trend driven by visitor demand, or just experimentations by adventurous exhibition designers?

Whilst studying for my MA in Interior Design I was involved in an industry partnership project with Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust, in which I helped develop concepts for the main gallery space of a proposed new museum. The client's brief specified exploring more 'theatrical approaches' to museum exhibitions that would offer 'new and engaging visitor experiences'. Participating in that project furthered my interest in the possibility of using principles of scenography in museums to create more appealing visitor experiences. It also introduced me to the critical and unique considerations that need to be made when creating museum spaces. It was this which prompted me to undertake this study, partly an investigation into the development of scenography in museums, but also a desire to explore the potential of scenography in museum design.

Hoping to better understand the evolution of museums and museum design, I began this study with a review of existing literature. It quickly became apparent to me that the use of scenographic components

in museum designs has been in line with a series of radical changes in museums over the past thirty years. The evolution of museums during this time can best be summarised as being motivated by an increasing awareness of visitors and the need to meet their requirements, whilst trying also to appeal to more diverse audiences. 'The most fundamental change that has affected museums is the now almost universal conviction that they exist in order to serve the public' (Hudson in Kotler and Kotler, 2004: 167). Museums are increasingly becoming considered as part of the service industry and there is growing pressure on museum managers and policy makers to operate as such (Alcaraz, 2009). Upon recognising museums' increasing consideration of visitors' needs, I decided that I wanted to support museums in fulfilling their new role as more service based centres. I planned this research so it would have value to the museum industry and to the people creating museum designs. The study has been conducted and written with 'museum developers' as the primary audience.

1.2 Rationale

1.2.i Recognising values

Today museums are regarded very much as both a public service and leisure attraction. There is an ever increasing need for museums to be able to demonstrate not only what they do, but the impacts and benefits of doing it. In 2005 The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) released a report titled *Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Culture- the value of museums*. In that report they looked to celebrate the achievements of England's museums, as well as the future challenges and opportunities for change. The report stressed the critical importance of museums understanding their users, stating: 'Consistent and convincing bodies of evidence about museums and what people get from them can strengthen the impact and work of the museums' (DCMS, 2005: 25).

The role of contemporary museums is gravitating more towards a 'service' function than the traditional custodians of objects. Skramstad (2004) claims museums are now part of the 'experience business' and claims that they must recognise it is the distinctive theme, context and value of the experiences that will increasingly define their success (*ibid*, p127). The shift to a more service or experience based operation has seen museums thrust in to a competitive leisure market; this is a trend that not only exists in literature but is felt very much on an operational level by the staff working in museums. During

interviews with museum professionals many mentioned the increasingly visitor focused role of museums, and their need to compete with other leisure attractions;

I think there has been a temptation for museums to become more visitor focused, more true for a charging site (Lee, in interview, 2009).

There is lots of things for people on a Saturday afternoon. Instead of thinking; oh I will go to the museum, they think I will go the shopping centre, and there is a lot more competition: museums are upping their game plan (Derbyshire, in interview, 2009).

Owing to a large proportion of British museums being government, charity or local authority funded, there is an on-going pressure for them to demonstrate their value in terms of contributions to society, communities or the public. The value of museums has been in the recent past concerned with economic-rationalism, centred on government priorities relating to increased access, greater social cohesions and improved societal well-being (Scott, 2006: 69). Demonstrating value in a community-wide fashion is not without benefit for museums, particularly when trying to maintain public support, and when applying for funding¹. In comparison to the variety of studies and frameworks that demonstrate museums' values to wider society, only a small body of research exists that considers the outcomes and benefits visitors seek from museum experience; 'previous research has not focused directly on what consumers want from the encounter' (Alcaraz, 2009: 221). To help fill in this gap in knowledge, this research is focused on the visitor as investor, and examines the values they seek from museums to justify their investments in the experience.

Museums are not ignorant of the need to understand their audiences, but there is much more that can be done to improve the quality and the type of audience consultation that museums are doing. In a follow up to the 2005 report, DCMS released a further report looking at the priorities for England's museums, in which they state; 'If the strength of our museums lies in their diversity, then one of their weaknesses is the lack of consistent and comparable evidence of their collective and individual value' (DCMS, 2006: 25). If museums wish to compete and succeed as financially sustainable organisations then they must accrue greater business acumen and use more commercially orientated systems for monitoring visitors. Alcaraz (2009) argues for museums adopting more service-centricity in order to

¹ Evidence on a museum's community value or impact is often required in application for funding from local authority or government funded bodies such as Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund.

become more sustainable. He discusses how understanding the customer dimensions of service is essential to help increase visitor numbers and improve value for users (*ibid*, p220).

The entire ‘cultural sector’ (including libraries, theatre, galleries and art centres as well as museums) could learn from the attempts of anthropologists, ecologists, businesses, and public services in discovering better methods to demonstrate outcomes of their work (Holden, 2006: 13). Over the last 15-20 years researchers in the service industry have developed more advanced and in depth ways of looking at users experiences, and methods of demonstrating benefits to investors and consumers. Service based organisations measure outcomes not only based on customer satisfaction but on a number of performance indicators such as: perceived service quality; brand loyalty; emotions stemming from consumption; behavioural intentions, and value. For this research I have chosen to look at just one of these systems, value.

I use Zeithaml’s definition of perceived value which is described as ‘the consumers overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given’ (Zeithaml quoted in Cronin *et al*, 2000: 14). Value (as used here) is a measurement tool, which involves balancing inputs and outputs in the assessment of a service against its efficacy, benefit or worth. For a service or product to have value it must provide outcomes or outputs that equal or justify the input/s (investment). Cronin *et al* (2000) refer to the investments in a service as the ‘users sacrifice’ (*ibid*, p201). The most obvious sacrifice any investor makes is usually financial, but inputs can extend beyond cost and should include non-monetised factors such as time, or perceived effort (Nicholls *et al*, 2009: 31). Holden claims that a person does not truly recognise the value in something unless they have made a sacrifice in encountering it (Holden, 2004: 42) and this concept is true also for museums. Even if a museum is free to enter, a visitor will have made other sacrifices in attending and will have certain expectations and requirements from to justify those investments. This research seeks to contribute to existing knowledge on visitors’ experience by examining the types of value that visitors seek or recognise when visiting museums.

1.2.ii The changing role of museum design

The design of museum spaces has always been directly impacted by their aims and operation. In recent years the increasing focus on the requirements of visitors has led to drastic changes in the design of

museum spaces, particularly exhibitions. Museum began as places for the wealthy to display their private collections; ‘The desire to collect things and the desire to show them to other people, this is how museums were created’ (Burcaw, 1997:15). It was not until the mid-18th century that public museums were opened in the United Kingdom (such as the British Museum in 1753). Even then, access to the public was restricted and a museum visit was an honour (Burcaw, 1997:19). At that time the role of museum design was to create spectacles of objects, to provoke and amaze (Hughes, 2010: 12). This is how museums remained for many years. Even as they became more increasingly open to the public, the experience of witnessing marvellous collections was one which a visitor should be grateful for, and the design of museums reflected this attitude. Hughes describes museum design at that time;

Many curators saw themselves as trustees of important collections; meeting the needs of the public was often regarded as a chore rather than a duty, an attitude that was reflected in a hushed atmosphere and the barriers put between the viewer and the artefact (Hughes, 2010: 13).

In the 1980s the increasing popularity of independent, charging museums and a rapid growth in the variety of leisure attractions all competing for visitors’ free time, put additional pressure on museums and their ability to attract visitors. With both public and private funders imposing performance indicators based on attendance numbers, the role of the museum began to shift, from collection-centric organisations to public spaces. This had significant impact on the design of museum spaces. To compete with other forms of leisure attractions museums altered the designs of their spaces and offered new methods of interpretation and new experiences for visitors (Kotler and Kotler, 2004). Writing in the late 1990s Blais described how museums design were being led by market forces and pressures to persuade families (and other visitors) that visiting museums was a serious alternative to visiting theme parks or other leisure centres (*ibid*, 1997: 43).

Visitor studies and audience research have become increasingly useful to inform many areas of museum work, from day-to-day management, to long term planning and policy. Kotler and Kotler explain how audience research helps in planning museum designs; ‘In recent years, audience research has been providing data which illuminates visitor perception and attitudes, thus enabling managers to respond proactively to the visitor needs and design environments and experience visitors can enjoy’ (Kotler and Kotler, 2004: 173). Museum design, particularly exhibitions, is now centred on the visitors’ experience. Exhibitions serve as the museum’s changing face and are a vital tool in attracting new audiences and/or inciting repeat visiting. If it were not for visitors and their want to experience collections, then there

would be no need at all for exhibitions, artefacts could remain in secure, environmentally controlled backrooms. This would be much more fitting for conservation and preservation, and far more convenient for curators. However, museums are not the owners of artefacts; rather they are the carers of collections. Their role is to not only to open up collections to the public; their survival increasingly depends on their ability to do this in an engaging and inspiring way.

Once an after-thought or tag on to the development of exhibitions, design is now respected as a ‘primary factor’ (Lorenc *et al*, 2007: 22) and often a key variable in an exhibition’s critical success (or failure). Some museum professionals have even claimed that the ‘physical elements’ of an exhibition may be more integral to a visitors interpretation than text because people respond to the 3D environment first. If the 3D environment is interesting and appeals to the viewer and engages them then they are more likely to move on to look more at an object or label (Ellefson *et al*, 2001:4).

Museum design is no longer driven by the display of collections and aims not to teach visitors all there is to know on a matter, but inspire them to go on and discover more themselves. The purpose of an exhibition is not to be a comprehensive source of knowledge on a subject, the role of the exhibition is to be an introduction; an enlightenment to a subject, ‘It [a museum or exhibition] is a theory; a suggested way of seeing the world. And like any theory, it may offer insight and illumination. At the same time, it contains certain assumptions, speaks to some matters and ignores others’ (MacDonald and Fyffe, 2004). A good exhibition provides a stimulus that inspires enthusiasm and interest in the subject, selling the topic in a way that motivates visitors to further learning. The design of museum exhibitions on the primary methods of interpretation has evolved beyond didactic teaching and presentation of artefacts, into the provision of memorable experiences, Hughes describes modern museum design:

Modern designers stress that exhibitions are concerned with creating visitor experiences rather than displays in a traditional sense. The distinction is important because it moves the boundary of the design task from physical display—the mounting of objects for visitors to see from a safe distance— to the more demanding task of altering and engaging the visitor’s perception of the exhibition subject. Increasingly, designers are concerned with creating galvanizing and transformative events that provide memorable impressions (Hughes, 2010: 78).

The evolution of museum and exhibition design has been in response to the overall changes in museum operation, with increased consideration of visitors and providing them engaging and memorable experiences. This has involved making the collection more accessible to wider audiences, breaking down

the physical barriers which kept objects out of the public's grasp, as well as changes in the approach to interpretation, and increased interactivity and participation. This trend looks set to continue way in to the future, with most current discussions in museums being centred on interactivity, narrative interpretation and co-production with users.

1.2.iii Similarities in theatrical performance and museum experiences

Scenography should not be mistaken for 'theatre design'. Scenography is much more than the physical constructs of the theatrical stage, it is created in the moment of live performance, and then evolves during the performance. Scenography is multisensory, engaging audience's different physiological senses and bringing in to play different emotions (Alsfeld & David, 1991: 16). I shall further discuss the emotional quality of performance in chapter 2.3. Scenography is comprised of individual elements; the staging, lighting, props, costumes and so on, but it is only in their collective consideration of the entire stage space and its development through the time of a theatrical performance that it becomes scenography. In this research I review the use of both scenographic devices (the components or physical constructs) and scenographic principles (the theoretical underpinnings). I describe and explain these in more detail in 1.5. As discussed in 1.1, prior to starting the research I felt there was an increasing use of scenography in museum designs. Though I was unsure of museum designer's reasons for using these methods, I was aware of similarities between theatrical performance and museums which could explain their use.

One feature that underlies both museums and theatrical performance is the telling of stories and use of narrative. The terms 'story' and 'narrative' are often used interchangeably but there are differentiations in the two. Story is the necessary components or facts; who did what, when and where; 'Essentially story is the basic narrative outline; plot the means by which narrative events are structured, organised and presented' (Aston and Savona, 2003: 21). Narrative goes beyond the simple outline; it is about problem solving, conflict, interpersonal relations, human experience and the temporality of existence (Ryan, 2007: 24). Narrative considers not simply what happened but why a character behaved this way, what they were thinking or how an event or occurrence influenced the way other people would have felt, this is sometimes known as 'a foregrounding in human experientiality' (Herman, 2007: 11). Theatrical performance has always communicated using narrative, not only telling the story but exploring the characters and hidden meanings, and visually conveying the underlying mood or tone.

Narrative approaches are much more recent in museums, but are becoming rapidly widespread as museum developers recognise the benefits, and visitors interest in more human experientiality.

The discussion of artefacts and the narrative of museum exhibitions was in the past told through the curatorial voice (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007: 563). The authoritarian system has become replaced, perhaps not from a questioning of curators' authority, but due to an increased public interest in social history and personal stories. Kavanagh (2000) recognised how in the post war years emphasis in museums shifted from antiquities to social, cultural and industrial histories (*ibid*, p7). It became difficult for museums to explain history through objects alone, and increasingly unjustified to believe visitors should be able to understand history in this way (*ibid*, p7). In 2005 Hilton wrote a paper for the Museums Journal titled *The Object Is Not Enough* asserting that objects alone are not able to narrate; 'while objects are the foundation on which all museum work is built, museums must accept that there may sometimes be better ways of communicating with their audience' (Hilton, 2005: 14). Without further interpretation or explanation museum artefacts are not able to reveal the truths and stories of their context. Hilton goes on to say that exploring narratives in museum collections is essential to enabling interpreters to move beyond bland displays and provide a human voice (Hilton, 2005: 15). Communication through museum exhibitions is no longer about presenting, it is about 'telling stories' to audiences who are hard-wired to receive information this way (Lorenc *et al*, 2007: 8).

The way in which scenography is used in theatrical performance to communicate story and narrative can be demonstrated by looking at the four levels of operation within the stage picture; functionalistic, sociometric, atmospheric and symbolic (Aston and Savona, 2003: 146). I will use these four levels of operation when reviewing the use of scenography in museum design in sections 2.3, 2.4, and throughout chapters 5 and 6. On the functionalistic level the stage picture is meeting the practical needs of the text, such as providing the appropriate physical components as required by the play text. The sociometric operation is when the stage picture is used to define social status. Aston and Savona use the example of Greek masks as an index of rank and gender to demonstrate sociometric operation (*ibid*, p148). It is on the sociometric level that scenography is helping to convey the story or plot, by providing visual clues to the time or place in which the action is set, and any changes in setting. An obvious example would be the provision of a painted backdrop to show location. The sociometric operation of the stage picture helps the audience to follow the narrative and offers simple visual clues. Knowles describes scenography's functions as:

The provision of “scenery”, most often understood as illusionistic realism, the establishment of setting (place and period), or the provision of decorative background; the construction of appropriate or revealing environments for “characters”, naturally conceived and identified according to class, taste, and social position. (Knowles, 2004:30)

It is on the atmospheric and symbolic levels that scenography can help communicate narrative. When the stage picture is providing a visual representation of the mood of the narrative, this is operating on the atmospheric level. Knowles describes this atmospheric role of scenography as ‘the provision of atmospheric support or expressionistic reinforcement of what is most often constructed as a logocentric directorial “concept”, “central idea”, or “theme”’ (Knowles, 2004: 30). An example of scenography operating on atmospheric level would be the use of subdued colours and low light levels during a sombre scene or performance. Using scenography for atmospheric support can help audiences to better understand, but also begin to share in the feeling of that mood and relate to the performance in an emotional way. I will further discuss the emotional capacity and response to theatre in 1.5.ii. The final level of scenography’s operation is symbolic. Aston and Savona describe the symbolic operation as when ‘the stage picture stands as a metaphorical condensation of the texts ideological preoccupations’ (ibid 2003: 149). When the stage picture is operating on the symbolic level the audience is expected to (and typically will) engage in personal meaning making. It is widely acknowledged that the act of witnessing theatrical performance is one in which the viewer is a mentally active receiver and not a passive spectator (Allain & Harvie, 2006: 204). Theatre audiences are not only mentally active, but are considered the ultimate meaning makers. I will explain more on personal meaning making in theatrical performance later in this chapter (1.5.ii) when describing the scenographic principles considered as part of this research.

If museums are considered using the four levels of operation of the stage picture (Aston & Savona, 2003), we can easily identify examples of museum designs operating on the functionalistic, sociometric and atmospheric levels. The functionalistic operation of museum design involves making sure the space meets the most basic requirements of both users and artefacts; that they are safe, comfortable and necessary amenities are provided. As museum spaces are already well practiced in operating on this level, I shall not go in to any great depth of discussion on the functionalistic operation of museum design during this study. Examples of how scenographic components are used to help museums operate on the sociometric and atmospheric are discussed in the research context (chapter 2). The sociometric

operation of museum design is also reviewed in chapter 5.3 when investigating the impact of scenography on collections values, and the atmospheric operation is examined in 5.4 when I consider the impact on emotional values. At the start of this research I was uncertain if, or how, museum design operates on the symbolic level. In the past museum visitors were considered to be passive receptacles; sponges which absorbed the messages and information presented to them. That ‘transmission model of communication’ is generally accepted as no longer appropriate to the modern ‘active museum audience’ (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007: 532). Many authors² advocate that museums should now recognise visitors as being mentally active and ultimately in control of their museum experience; ‘cultural critics also underestimate the visitor’s capacity to answer back, to disassociate from museums and what they say, and to find their own meanings’ (Kavanagh, 2000: 6). The symbolic operation of museum design is later explored using observation during field visits to museums and is discussed in 5.2.ii.

As scenography is inherently linked to theatrical performance, in the planning of this study it seemed logical to look at ‘performance in museums’ when reviewing the use of scenography in museums. Performance in museums has gained increasing popularity and growing presence in museums over recent years, and this has been in line with the rise of popularisation and more entertainment based exhibitions (Blais, 1997: 41). From roaming first person gallery characters to fully scripted theatrical pieces, today’s museums visitors are somewhat accustomed to the presence of performance as part of their museum experiences. I chose to review the scenography of performance in museums in the hope it would illuminate some of the differences in design for theatrical performance and museum exhibitions, and possible benefits to the wider application of scenography in museum design. I examine design for performance in museums and look at how it is incorporated in to museum spaces in 2.3, and later evaluate the unique way in which performance is incorporated into ‘real spaces’ in 5.3.

1.3 Aims and Research Questions

1.3.i Research aims

From the original research proposal to the commencement of the actual study, the research aims were adjusted quite significantly. This was done for three reasons; firstly as the original aims were felt to be lacking in clarity and direction, which made the formulation of a clear and realistic research

² (see Hetherington in MacDonald, 2004, Falk and Dierking 2000 and Falk 2009)

methodology difficult. Secondly, to limit the scope of the study, as the potential outcomes were overestimated in the original planning. Finally, the research aims were adjusted to make the research findings more relevant to those working within the museum industry, particularly persons involved in planning and designing visitors' experiences and the design of museum exhibitions. The original research aims were:

- Establish the current place of scenography within museums, using critical analysis to identify potential opportunities and issues in the development of a framework.
- Identify the methods of scripting in museum design and theatre design, with specific reference to scenography's place within them.
- Critically evaluate 'value' in current museum experiences, incorporating value methods and the perceived value of museums.
- Use the findings of this research to create a testable, framework applicable to museum design which may enhance the users' value of the experience.

The original research aims were developed with the intention of being able to prove the potential of scenographic principles in museums, by somehow testing these in practice. Upon commencing the study I realised that this was realistically unachievable within the given time frames and the insufficient body of existing research to build upon. The revised research aims are devised so that findings can work on a practical level for those in the industry, as well as have relevance to academics and researchers. This desire to remain relevant to practising industry and reflective of contemporary practice heavily informed the approach taken to complete the study and the selection of research methods, both of which are detailed in chapter 3.

Aim 1. Examine the current uses of scenography in museum design.

The first aim of this research is to identify and review current uses of scenography in museums. The term scenography is used for convenience, but what is examined is the use of 'scenographic devices' and 'scenographic principles'³. To be reflective of most current industry practice I reviewed the use of scenography in museum design primarily through field visits to a range of museums nationally. This is supported by the review of literature, and interviews with persons involved in the development of

³ Explanation of scenographic principles and scenographic devices is given in 1.5.

museum design. I sought to identify what components of scenography are currently used in museums, how these are incorporated in to museum designs, and consider the motives for using such methods.

Aim 2. Critically evaluate visitors' value of museum experience.

Having recognised the increasing service based operation of museums, I chose to review visitors' museum experiences using the theory of 'value of experience', a system widely used in the service industry. The types of investments people make when choosing to visit museums are somewhat obvious and already well researched; so in this study I have opted to examine the outcomes that visitors seek or recognise to justify their investments. The purpose of examining visitors' value of experience was to focus and structure the investigation into the impact of scenography in museum design. The review of visitors' value of experience began with the evaluation and summary of literature on visitors' experiences, supported with observations at field visits and early interviews with museum staff. At the start of the study I assumed that existing research into visitors' experiences would present a suitable model or system to outline visitor's value of experience. When no suitable model could be recognised, an original framework was developed for the purpose of this research. The visitors' value of experience groupings are outlined in chapter 4, along with details of how this original framework was tested.

Aim 3. Review the impact of scenography in museum design on visitors' value of museum experience.

The successful accomplishment of the third research aim was dependent upon the level to which the first two aims were achieved. To comprehensively review the impact of scenography on visitors' value of museum experiences required an understanding of how scenography is currently used in museum design, and the types of value that are sought and/ or attained by visitors. This is not to say that the investigation into scenography's impact on visitors' experiences could not begin until the first two aims were fully completed. Field visits to museums commenced at the very start of the study. During early field visits I sought to identify the use of scenography in museums designs, and used personal observations and reflections to consider its impact on visitors' experiences. Later in the research I used the visitors' value of museum experience groupings as a framework to guide field visits.

Aim 4. Identify similarities and differences in users' experiences of theatrical performance and museums.

The final aim of the research is focused on identifying where there is synergy in the experience of theatrical performance and museum experiences, as well as recognising fundamental differences in the two. The purpose of this line of enquiry was to assist in making the research more valid and usable for the museum industry. By recognising the similarities in the two types of experience I hoped to be able to identify ways in which scenography may be most efficiently used, with advantageous outcomes for both user and institution. Alongside this, it was hoped that identifying differences in the experience of theatrical performance and museum experiences would illuminate possible barriers and limitations to more considered applications of scenography in museum design.

1.3.ii Research questions

The research questions were devised to fulfil the research aims and underpin every area of the study. It was therefore intended that each research question would be considered at every stage in the research process. In practice, certain questions lend themselves more to certain methods, and so are more prevalently discussed in different chapters.

Question 1. How is scenography used in theatrical performance, and is this congruent to the role of museums?

Aims addressed: 1, 2 and 4

Identifying the use of scenography in museum design first requires sound understanding of what scenography is and how it is used in theatrical performance. Later in this chapter I highlight the components (devices) and principles considered in this research (see 1.5). I reflect on the role of scenography in theatrical performance to consider if it is fitting to the role of museums. This is done to ascertain if there is realistic opportunity for scenography in museum design to have advantageous benefits to users and/ or institutions. Furthermore, this was done to ensure that the use of scenography in museum designs would not impede or have detrimental impact on the fundamental role or operations of museums.

To recognise the essential purpose and unique role of museums I completed an extensive review of existing literature (summarised in 2.2) and kept up-to-date with industry publications. Most advantageous in helping me answer this question was on-going discussion with museum staff and

academics. This includes conversations in structured interviews, but also discussions at conferences, symposiums, networking events and training workshops, all of which I regularly attended⁴.

Question 2. How and why are components or principles of scenography used in museum design?

Aims addressed: 1, 3 and 4

The ways in which scenography is used in museum design were established from field visits to museums. In chapter 2- Research Context, I outline ways in which I had recognised scenography used in museum design before starting this research. These are illustrated using photos collected during field visits. Further examples of scenography were identified in museum design during field visits⁵. These are discussed in chapter 5, when I examine the impact of the use of scenography in museums on visitors' value of experience.

I attempted to identify why scenographic approaches have been adopted in museum designs through interviews with museum staff, but this often resulted in discussion of performance in museums. Though this had some relevance to the research aims, it did not help in understanding why scenography has been used in museum design. Towards the end of the data collection phase I visited *Enchanted Palace*⁶ at Kensington Palace, which incorporated a much wider variety and more dominant use of scenography than any other museums I had visited previously. *Enchanted Palace* was produced in joint collaboration between the staff at Historic Royal Palaces and Wildworks Theatre Company. I interviewed two of the staff involved in creating this original exhibition, one from each of the organisations involved. During these interviews I questioned the developers on their reasons for choosing such scenographic approaches, and discussed the impact of the *Enchanted Palace*, and the response from visitors. These two interviews were central to answering this research question, as well as research question 4 (below). Findings of these two interviews are discussed in chapter 5.

Question 3. Are there values of experience that are unique to museums or critical to visitors' experiences, and how does scenography impact on these?

Aims addressed: 2, 4

⁴ In appendix 1 I have listed all of the events and training undertaken during this study.

⁵ Database of all museums visited included in appendix 3

⁶ Further details of *Enchanted Palace* are included in appendix 16

At the start of this study I hypothesised that there may be many different types of value that visitors attribute to museum experiences, and there could be innumerable ways in which scenography could impact on each of them. To maintain focus to the study, I planned to identify the key values of museum experiences, and consider scenography's impact on those. I also hypothesised that the impact of scenography may be undesirable or disadvantageous to visitors' value of experience. Identifying and then examining key values would help to ensure the most critical or unique values of museum experiences are not overlooked, or impeded by the use of scenography.

In other areas of the research I draw heavily on personal observation and findings from consultation with industry professionals. To reduce bias I wanted to gather insight from museum visitors. Therefore, in identifying the most common, critical and unique values of museum experience I decided to undertake consultation with museum visitors. Consultation with visitors was done through an online survey (further details of this are included in chapter 3). The results of the online survey with museum visitors were also used to help test the visitors' value of the experience groupings (see 4.2), as well as look for trends in visitors' experience (see 4.3).

From reviewing the differences between museums and theatrical performance, and examining trends in value of experience, certain types of value presented themselves as being those that should be reviewed in more detail. In the final stages of the research I looked at scenography's impact on just three of the six values identified in the visitors' value of experience groupings. I outline all six types of value of museum experience in chapter 4. Then in chapters 5 I review the impact of scenography in museum design on intellectual, emotional and collections values.

Question 4. What is the industry response to the uses of scenography in museum designs and the impact these have on visitors' experiences?

Aims addressed: 1, 3 and 4

At the start of this research I was able to recognise several examples of museums designs that were appearing to draw from principles of scenography, but I wanted to know if museum staff were aware of the scenographic styles of these designs, and what their opinions were on such approaches. Beginning this study as somewhat of a novice in the museum and heritage industry, I wished to make myself aware of the sector's general attitudes and thoughts on the changing role of museums and museum design,

and the increasing use of scenography during these changes. This area of investigation intended to test the potential of scenography in museum design. If museum staff were found to be cautious, unreceptive or perhaps out-rightly opposed to the existing use of scenography in museums then there would be little hope for its further use.

As part of this area of investigation I also sought to identify visitors' attitudes towards and responses to exhibitions using scenographic principles. This was explored through two on site surveys at museum experiences I had identified as using obvious scenographic principles. I conducted two onsite surveys at *The Street* exhibition at Thackray Medical Museum, and the *Night in the Trenches* event at Staffordshire Regiment Museum (further details in methodology). These two surveys were used to examine the impact of scenography on visitors' value of experience of these two encounters.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This report is divided in to six chapters: chapters 1, and 2 provide the background to the study, chapter 3 outlines the decisions made in planning the research and explains the process of data collection. Chapters 4 and 5 then discuss the findings of the research, and chapter 6 draws together the final conclusions and reviews the overall process and outcomes.

So far, this chapter has outlined the underlying justification and need for this study, based on the ongoing relationships between the changing role of museum design and the increasing need for museums to better understand their audiences and offer more engaging and memorable visitor's experiences. Later in this chapter I will outline the parameters of the research by discussing the focus (1.5) and explaining the factors which were considered when assessing the feasibility of the study (1.6).

Chapter 2 provides the background and context in which to situate the research. I summarise literature relevant to the study and explore some previous examples of scenography in museums. I begin by outlining the current understanding of museum visitors' experiences based on findings of previous research, and by reviewing some of the leading models from professional practice (2.2). In 2.3 I begin examining the use of scenography in museums. I start by looking at performance in museums; I provide a brief historical overview of the rise of performance in museums, and consider how performance is incorporated in to museum spaces by drawing on real examples from museums (2.3.i). I review how

design for performance in museums is discussed in literature and used in practice (2.3.ii). Finally, in 2.4 I outline examples of scenography in museum design that were recognised prior to starting the research. These have been organised in to three types; scenography used for context and setting (2.4.i), atmospheric designs (2.4.ii) and immersive exhibitions (2.4.iii).

Chapter 3 details the research methodology. In 3.2, I outline the philosophical underpinnings of the study, including the chosen approach, ethical considerations, and the process taken to ensure the data collected was valid and reliable. In 3.3 I explain each of the primary research methods used during the research. I review each method explaining why each method was chosen to answer the research questions, and provide an overview of the data collection process, and summary of the results.

I had planned to use a pre-existing model of visitors' value of experience to guide the investigation in to the impact of scenography. As the review of literature did not present a suitable model a new system was devised for the purpose of this study. Chapter 4 explains how the visitors' value of experience groupings were developed and tested. I provide a definition for each of the types of value identified (4.2.i) then explain the processes used to test this original framework (4.2.ii). The value groupings were tested using an online questionnaire with museum visitors and through interviews with museum staff. The data collected from these two methods was also used to identify trends in the different types of value, which are discussed in 4.3. To allow a more detailed focus and ensure the research could be completed on time, I chose to examine the impact of scenography on just three of the six types of value identified. I explain the reasons for prioritising these values in 4.3. Section 4.3 is split into four sections. I give further detail on interpersonal, physical and community values in 4.3.i, before looking in more detail at intellectual (4.3.ii), emotional (4.3.iii) and collections values (4.3.iv).

Chapter 5 investigates the impact of scenography in museum design. It is split into three sections looking at the impact on intellectual values (5.2), collections values (5.3) and emotional values (5.4). I draw on personal observations at field visits to museums, findings from interviews, and findings from the two onsite surveys. When explaining the impact of scenography on intellectual, collections and emotional values I refer on several occasions to *Enchanted Palace*, and reference the interviews with staff involved in the exhibitions development throughout chapter 5⁷.

⁷ I first visited Enchanted Palace towards the end of the data collection phase, and so was unable to complete an on-site survey with visitors to *Enchanted Palace*.

In the final chapter I draw together the conclusions of the research. I summarise the research findings (6.1) before reviewing the study in 6.2. I evaluate how effectively I have been able to achieve all of the research aims (6.2.i) and review the effectiveness of different methods in answering the research questions (6.2.ii). In the final part of 6.2, I evaluate some of the limitations of the study and data collection, and review how this impacts upon the generalizability of findings. In 6.3 I look at the significance of the study by considering how the findings may inform museum practice (6.3.i), and I offer recommendations for future research building on this study (6.3.ii).

1.5 FOCUS

1.5.i Scenographic devices

In its most true definition scenography is inherently linked to theatrical performance, but the aim of this research is to consider how scenography is used in museum design. Therefore the terms 'scenographic principles' and 'scenographic devices' are used. 'Scenographic devices' is used here to refer to physical components of scenography, the building blocks of the mise-en-scene that the scenographer brings together. Scenographic devices may also be referred to as scenographic components or scenographic tools. There are many components of scenography in theatrical performances, within this research I have chosen to focus primarily on just some. Scenographic devices identified and considered in museum design include: costume & makeup, props, scenery, scenic painting, theatrical lighting and audio-visual technologies (such as projected image or video, and audio soundscapes).

1.5.ii Scenographic principles

'Scenographic principles' are the philosophical or theoretical understandings of how scenography is produced and received. They are essentially unwritten rules that are widely accepted by scenographers and audiences. As with scenographic devices, there are many principles of scenography that could be considered, and so to maintain focus I have chosen to consider just some principles of scenography which are outlined below.

Personal meaning making

The experience of witnessing theatrical performance is a complex system of cognitive processes, but much research has been done to try and understand how performance is received and understood. Unlike almost any other form of human experience, it is implicit that the audience will be required to actively make meaning from what is presented to them in a theatrical performance. In *The Cambridge Introduction to Scenography*, McKinney and Butterworth (2009) discuss ‘the special characteristic of stage space is that anything that happens in it is offered for the attention, reception and consideration of the audience and is presumed to have some kind of intended effect or meaning’ (McKinney & Butterworth, 2009: 104). Meaning is not created in the scenographer’s intention but in the reception and interpretation of the people who experience it: scenography is best defined ‘in its realisation and performance rather than its intentions’ (McKinney & Butterworth, 2009: 5). The meaning of a theatre performance is ‘produced’ by the audience rather than being ‘received or interpreted’ (Knowles, 2004: 9). Each audience member is affected by their prior personal or cultural experiences and understanding. Therefore, personal meaning making (as its namesake suggests) is personal. This means it is both unique to the individual, but also it is done innately and naturally, often without conscious consideration or discussion.

One common theory for understanding the way in which audiences make meaning of theatrical performance is semiotics: the study of signs. Semiotics is not exclusively a theatrical study, it forms part of the understanding of audience meaning making in many other fields, such as; the arts (in literature, film, art and design) social sciences, anthropology, and architecture. A ‘sign’ as understood in semiotic theory, is anything that ‘stands for’ something else. Within the contexts of a theatrical performance, even the most mundane and everyday objects can become a sign, potentially laden with a variety of meanings. Elam (2002) has extensively studied semiotics in theatre, and explains:

A table employed in dramatic representation will not usually differ in any material or structural fashion from the item of furniture that the members of the audience eat at, and yet it is in some sense transformed: it acquires, as it were, a set of quotation marks (Elam, 2002:7)

Signs are not only visual, in *The Basics of Semiotics*, Chandler (2005) explains how signs may take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects (*ibid*, p2). Within semiotic theory there are several formalized systems which categorise different types of signs, and offer more structure to the complex process of decoding signs. To look at these systems in any further detail here would tangent from the core research aims. For any readers wishing to look in more detail at theatre semiotics, I would

recommend the following texts: Aston and Savona (2003) *Theatre as Sign System*; Chandler (2005) *The Basics of Semiotics*; Elam (2002) *Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*; and Knowles (2004) *Reading Material Theatre*. Within this research I have taken a simplified view of semiotics, looking for examples of museums design operating on symbolic level, but not further categorizing these into different types of signs or symbols. I discuss the process of personal meaning making and the success of museum design operating on a symbolic level in chapter 5.2.ii.

Emotions

Some theorists feel semiotics is not the best system for understanding the process of meaning making in theatrical performance. They claim it suggests too much conscious cognitive action on behalf of the viewer, and the reception of scenography and the response to performance is much more instinctive and subconscious. McConachie & Hart (2006) claim that most cognitive scientists recognise emotions as central to the audiences' construction of meaning in the theatrical performance experience; 'Cognitive science suggests that empathy and emotional response are more crucial to a spectators experience than the kind of decoding that most semioticians image' (McConachie & Hart, 2006: 5). Emotions are central to the arts in both production and reception (Konijn, 1999: 172). Emotion is not only a possible outcome of theatrical performance but can be the key purpose or motivation. Some art, including theatre, is created purposely to elicit a strong emotional response from the audience (Brown & Novak, 2007:13). There is potential therapeutic value in emotional response, and so some individuals attend performances with the intention or hope of being moved (Brown & Novak, 2007:13).

When witnessing theatrical performance emotion may result from sources or objects in the fiction (i.e. the content) or from source or objects in the artefact (i.e. the form). Five items are identified as being cause of emotion in the artefact; stage design, text, sounds or music, special effects and actors performance (Konjin, 1999: 176). This suggests scenography can cause (or contribute to) a viewer's emotional response. However, Konjin highlights that spectators' emotional responses are more commonly stemming from the objects in the fiction than in the artefact. In chapter 5.4 I examine emotional values in museums experiences, and the extent to which these are caused by scenography in the design, and how much they are stemming from the objects or stories being presented.

Emotive outcomes in arts performances can be differentiated as positive (such as concentration, excitement and admiration), negative (including; confusion, irritation, boredom) or empathic (pity,

involvement, affection) (Konijn, 1999: 178). Konijn has found empathy to be one of the most intensely experienced emotional responses in theatre experiences. In evaluating the interrelations between different emotion categories he identified that empathy was moderately and equally related with all the other emotion categories, implying that empathy is ‘contagious with other emotions’ (or the other way around) (Konijn, 1999: 187). Empathy in witnessing theatrical performance begins almost instantaneously and helps the viewer to understand the narrative. McConachie & Hart (2006) explains empathy to be; ‘a mode of cognitive engagement involving mirror neurons in the mind/brain that allow spectators to replicate the emotions of a performers physical state without experiencing that physical state directly’ (McConachie & Hart, 2006:5). Empathy allows the audience to gain insight into the emotions of a character, without having to encounter those emotions themselves. As more museums chose narrative approaches and explore human stories, the role of empathy has become a more critical part of visitors’ value of experience. Through this research I have explored the relationship between narrative and visitor empathy, and reviewed the impact of using scenography to enhance the emotional value in this style of interpretation (see 4.3 and 5.4.ii).

Framing

An important construct in the audiences’ experience of theatre is the ability to recognise the theatrical frame. The theatrical frame is the way in which the start and end of the performance are established; ‘For every genre, in every culture there are usually very clear markers signalling the start and finish of a public performance’ (Schechner, 2006: 240). Framing of theatrical performance can take a physical form, such as the proscenium arch, or there are more psychological and abstracted ways to signify the start and end of the performance and the physical parameters of the performance area, such as the dimming of lights or the arrangement of the audience in relation to the stage space. Whatever its form, the theatrical frame creates a distinctive separation from the real world and enables theatre to take on great illusory feats’ (Thorne, 2003: 47). Aronson (2005) describes a frame as a form of visual organisation that creates a self-contained space, and claims the theatrical frame is the key to the audience comprehension (Aronson, 2005:90). McKinney & Butterworth (2009) explain that a frame also sets expectations of a performance: ‘The framing nature of stage space and its contained objects suggests and stimulates expectations of the action that is about to take place’ (McKinney & Butterworth, 2009: 104).

A frame offers a logical differentiation, allowing the action within the performance space to break rules of conventional reality and what we accept to be possible. The audience use different cognitive operations to process what they encounter within the theatrical frame, compared to those used in everyday life. Aronson (2005) describes this as an internal logic, explaining that it: 'imparts a sense of order and a consistent ontology that allows us to comprehend what we see' (*ibid*, p90). Theatrical performance can choose to be illusionary, deceptive, exaggerated and artificial (Davis & Postlewait 2003: 8) and it is the framing nature of stage space that allows it to break conventions of reality and normal behaviour. Within a frame the boundaries of reality and logic can be broken and viewers accept and embrace these new possibilities for sake of the enjoyment and entertainment. This is sometimes referred to as the 'suspension of disbelief' and the framing of stage space can help encourage the spectator to do this (Thorne, 2003: 47).

When a viewer suspends their disbelief they overrule rational logic and buy into a sense of another reality for the sake of entertainment and enjoyment. Willing suspension of disbelief is not a process of fooling viewers in to believing they are witnessing another reality, but helps explain the phenomena where audiences can 'believe' in a reality that defies logic or actual possibility. It explains how we can be moved by the actions of a character that may never have existed. There are however limitations with this theory and it has been questioned that if a person has suspended logic to believe in a presented reality, then how can they remain disjointed from it to react to occurrences outside of this created reality? Recently some theatrical scholars drawing on developments in neuroscience research have expanded or dismissed the phenomena of willing suspension of disbelief. McConachie & Hart (2006) discuss Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) theory of 'conceptual blending' which proposes that persons are not required to willingly and entirely disengage from reality but can blend concepts from different areas of cognition. In the context of reading theatre, concept blending suggests audiences are able to maintain awareness of surrounding and context but choose not to project these into a 'mental space' (McConachie & Hart, 2006: 18). This mental space is created on acceptance of the frame of performance and allows spectators to enjoy the 'doubleness' or falsity of performance (McConachie & Hart, 2006, 19). Concept blending reemphasises the importance of the frame, as without this the viewer will not create the mental space that allows them to accept and enjoy performance without letting the limitations and distractions of reality impede upon that. In this study I look at the ways in which museum experiences using scenography are framed, and if this framing has the same effect as in theatre (see 2.4 and chapter 5).

1.5.iii Organisations

The term ‘museum’ is often used to represent and signify a wide range of heritage and cultural attractions. In their book *Learning from Museums: Visitor Experiences and the Making of Meaning* Falk and Dierking, use ‘museum’ as a generic term to refer to an array of institutions (*ibid*, 2000: xi). For the purpose of this research I use the term museum in the same way, but I have expanded on the list of attractions and institutions Falk and Dierking incorporated.

Within this research the following types of institutions are considered under the bracket of museums:

- Museums (of all subjects)
- museum and art galleries
- science centres
- historic homes
- living history sites and open air museums
- archaeological sites
- heritage attractions
- working museums
- open air museums
- zoos, aquariums and arboretums

The evolving role of museums, and the resulting changes in the design of museum spaces, has in some instances blurred the lines between museums and what are often referred to as *visitor attractions*.

Hughes uses the term visitor attraction to describe leisure attractions that may appear similar to museums, but emphasize the visitor experience over the acquisition or display of collections (Hughes, 2010: 218). Visitor attractions may portray characteristics of display or learning but differ from museums in their integrity of authenticity and accuracy. It is intended that this research will remain respectful to the unique considerations and requirements of museums, though findings and suggestions may also be beneficial or insightful to visitor attractions.

Geographically, the focus of this research is centred on museums within the United Kingdom, all first-hand site visits referenced are at museums within England, Scotland and Wales. However, as no significant differences have been identified in the practices of British museums and those in other parts of the Western world, secondary literature and research conducted elsewhere in Europe, in the United States of America and Australia, are discussed in the research context.

1.5.iv Museum design

There are multiple levels of design in museums. Kotler and Kotler divided museums' offerings into five elements that help to identify some of the different design practices and considerations within museums:

- 1- The museum setting itself (exterior and interior architecture and designed spaces)
- 2- Objects, collections and exhibits
- 3- Interpretive materials such as labels, texts and catalogues
- 4- Museum programmes (lectures, performances and social events)
- 5- Museum services (reception, orientation, food, service, shopping, seating) (Kotler & Kotler, 1998: 174)

During this research I have focused primarily on the design of *the museum setting* (including the design of galleries, permanent and temporary exhibitions, exhibit cases and displays) and to a lesser extent *museum services* such as the café or transition spaces. I have chosen to focus on museum setting and services for two reasons. Firstly, as it complements my past experience in designing internal 3D spaces, including theatrical performance and interior design. I also decided to review museum settings and services as these are the components of museums that are created almost entirely for visitors. Exhibitions are created for visitors (McLean, 2004) with heightened consideration of users' needs (Rice, 2008: 49).

1.5.v Museum experiences

With increasing engagement through social media and web-sites, and the encouragement of continued learning, a person's actual museum experience may extend before or after the time spent on site. In order to provide focus to this research 'museum experience' here concentrates on the value sought from encounters during attendance on-site⁸. It is recognised that the museum experience and the value derived from it may be impacted upon by numerous variables, many of which are outside of the institutions' control. Some of the external variables which impact on visitors' value of experience are examined in chapter 4. The term *audience/s* is often used by scholars and researchers when referring to museum visitors and non-visitors collectively. Though much museums work is focused on attracting new visitors and targeting non-users, it was decided that the review of visitors' value of experience here should focus on the types of value currently attained from museum experiences by existing users, and

⁸Site means the physical boundaries of the museum building.

not attempt to meet the much wider objective of identifying or suggesting new types of value, or ways of targeting non-users. The focus of this research remains on existing museum visitors and does not extend to consider the needs of ‘target audiences’ or ‘potential markets’ who do not currently visit museums. Primary research methods are devised to consult with existing visitors and the visitors’ value of experience groupings are designed as a reflection of the values sought and attributed to museums by people who already do visit.

1.6 Feasibility

Important in constructing an appropriate and achievable research design is ensuring the study can be accomplished within the given parameters. Factors that I considered in the development of the research design include; the given timeframes, the researchers’ skills and experience, estimated costs and the available resources. Some of the actions put in place to ensure the study could be completed on time have already been discussed in outlining the focus of the research in the previous section.

As a researcher I had access to training to equip me with all the necessary skills to complete the research. I completed a Postgraduate Certificate in *Research Methods*, and attended a training programme called *Understanding Audiences*, organised and run by (former) Museum Libraries and Archives Council. The training programme was aimed at giving participants the skills and confidence to undertake visitor research in museums. I participated in several of the workshops between September 2008 and July 2009, including training on conducting visitor observation, hosting focus groups, planning questionnaires, personal meaning mapping, analysing quantitative data, and analysing qualitative data⁹. Another important factor in being able to realistically complete the research was identifying possible risks, and having strategies in place to either minimise risk, or resolve possible complications. Below I have outlined some of the identified risks and considered solutions.

Risk: Museums vary in many ways, such as; visitor numbers, subject, and funding/management. The research needs to include a fair representation of different museums.

Solution: To ensure the findings are reflective of different museums I planned to visit a range of museums nationally, varying in size, subject, funding and region. To help manage this process I created a

⁹ Details of all training taken during the study is listed in appendix 1.

database detailing all of the sites¹⁰. This database details the name, estimated size (based on size of site and estimated audience numbers), and type or main subject of the museum. As the database was produced in Microsoft Excel, it could be used to arrange the sites visited so far by any of the recorded details. This helped to identify any regions/ types/ size of museums that were underrepresented, and was referenced continually in the planning of field visits and interviews with museum staff.

Risk: As it is only recently that museums have widely acknowledged a more service oriented and user focused role they are currently under-represented in literature of the service industry and discussion of user experiences. There is a lack of consistent research into the value of museum experience. In comparison to the studies and frameworks that demonstrate museums value to wider society, only a small body of research exists that considers the outcomes and benefits visitors seek from museum experience (Alcaraz, 2009: 221).

Solution: To overcome the lack of research specifically exploring visitors' value of museum experience, I widened the focus on the types of studies reviewed to include research examining various aspects and constructs of visitors' experiences. I searched for literature studying what makes satisfactory or quality visitor experiences, the outcomes visitors seek from museums, the ways in which visitors engage with museums, and the expectations of and motivations for going to museums. This wider search offered a wide range of literature. By collectively reviewing a range of literature on visitor's experiences I was then able to develop an original framework that could be used for the purpose of this research.

Risk: Selecting interviewees who are involved in museum design, and who have relevant authority to support claims (Bergman, 2010: 14). There is a limited number of museum specific designers practising in the industry (Lorenc *et al*, 2007). Tight operation budgets do not permit many museums to employ in-house design staff, and the design of exhibitions is often fulfilled by non-design trained staff¹¹, or in collaboration with external designers¹².

¹⁰ Database of all museums visited is included in appendix 3.

¹¹ The development and design of exhibitions is often a collaborative process amongst several members of staff from different departments.

¹² There are professional design agencies that specialise in exhibition or museums design. These agencies may have relevant knowledge of museum design overall, but do not have the inside knowledge of visitors that is acquired by staff working at museums. I wanted this research to be relevant to the people working in museums who are involved in developing exhibitions, and who have relevant experience with visitors. I therefore chose not to interview external design agencies, and focus on museum staff.

Solution: Rather than interview persons of a specific role or title, I developed a criteria checklist that ensured interviewees had relevant insight and authority. This checklist specified that interviewees should meet the following criteria: interviewees must have been employed within a museum setting for at least one year (to ensure that they have relevant experience and insight); they should have input in to the design development of museums exhibitions and or galleries; and interviews should have knowledge of visitor research and/or first- hand experience with visitors at a museum site.

Chapter 2

Research Context

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review and assess existing literature relevant to the topics and issues addressed in this study. This chapter also examines examples of scenography in museums that were recognised prior to the start of this study (as discussed in chapter 1). In 2.2 I summarise literature and research on visitors' experiences that was later used to formulate the visitors' value of museum experience groupings. I highlight the subjectivity and unpredictability of visitors' experiences, and review the influential research into people's motivations, expectations and outcomes of museum visiting.

As part of examining the use of scenography in museums I looked at the use of performance in museums, an area where a body of existing literature already exists. In 2.3.i I review literature on performance in museums to understand why performance has become so widespread in museums, and identify the benefits of its application. In 2.3.ii I examine scenography for performance in museums, firstly by looking at discussion of design for performance in museums, then by examining examples in practice. From this I am able to recognise some of the fundamental problems encountered in the design and implementation of performance in museums, which may also be relevant to the wider application of scenography in museum design.

In 2.4 I analyse examples of scenography used in museum design not connected to performance. A comprehensive review of literature revealed very little discussion of these practices. Existing literature does on occasion discuss 'theatrical' design approaches in museums, but implies a definition of theatrical as excessively dramatic and exaggerated. To demonstrate uses of scenography in museum design that were recognised erstwhile, I draw on industry practice and use photographs from field visits to illustrate discussion.

2.2 Visitors' Museum Experience

2.2.i Subjective, unique and unpredictable

Falk (2009) and Umiker-Sebok (1994) have both discussed how the museum experience cannot be understood simply by looking at the physical attributes encountered. To understand the museum experience one must also understand the museum visitor, and consider the relationship between the two. To assist in understanding and analysing visitors, researchers have devised numerous systems for dividing or categorising audiences. The most commonly used system to categorise museum visitors is to compare across demographics such as age, gender, social class and ethnicity (Hughes, 2010: 34). The usefulness of this data to museums is questionable; 'Most visitors surveys are very basic and yield data that classifies visitors but does little to help museums and galleries understand them' (Morris Hargreaves & McIntyre, 2005: 8). As well as providing very little usable insight for museums, analysing visitors based on demographic can pigeon-hole individuals and lead to judgements based on stereotypes. Dawson and Jenson reviewed museum visitor studies and found that:

Such segmentation essentializes and reifies visitors' identities, directing attention away from the diverse multiplicity of motivations, interests, desires and needs that draw individuals to engagement experiences in cultural institutions (Dawson and Jenson, 2011: 128)

Though there are a plethora of systems for categorising and evaluating visitors, many of these are rigid structures that rely upon understanding just one or two simplified attributes of a person's character or behaviour. What I require for this research is not a tool for categorising visitors into individual, distinct groups, but a system for reviewing visitors' experiences which can help in analysing the impact of scenography in museum design.

In chapter 1, value was defined as the assessment of worth, balancing the outcomes and benefits against the investments made. The investments in museum visiting are quite easily recognised; Hood outlined the cost of a museum visit as; time, money, travel, mental saturation, fatigue and inconvenience (Hood, 2004: 153). The outcomes of museum experiences are more difficult to identify. One of the greatest issues in recognising the outcomes of museum visiting is that they are often intangible and so difficult to identify and measure; 'it cannot be over-emphasized that many if not most of the critical qualities of good museums cannot be measured numerically' (Ames in Moore, 1997:23).

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Museum visiting is also unpredictable and subject to many variables. The range of stimuli that any one visitor will encounter at a museum is perhaps innumerable, all of which may impact on the value of experience. When one thinks of what defines a museum (and therefore crucial components in a visitor's experience), we may think immediately of the core products, those things that make a museum unique: the collection, the exhibitions and interpretation strategies. Important though these facets are, they are not the only factors that may impact on visitor's judgement of the experience. Features and facilities added to a museum (perhaps for functional purposes or to add competitive edge as a leisure attraction), may be of equal if not greater importance to a visitor and their value judgements. Visitors may consider just some of the museum experience, but will often judge and value the experience as a whole, considering all aspects of the visit. Black (2005) discusses differences in the constructs that impact individuals' museum experiences:

For some visitors, the emotional aesthetic and intellectual response to direct engagement with the site/ and or the collections will be all that matter. For the majority the quality of their experience will depend on all aspects of the visit, a complex combination unique to the individual or to the individual social/ family group (Black, 2005:96).

As well as the variables within the museum experience, there are a range of inherent variables within each individual that will impact on their personal judgement of their museum experience. Factors such as mood, agenda, preference, needs, visiting group and past experience can all affect a visitor's experience, meaning that no two visitors will have the same value of experience even if they encounter the exact same stimulus; 'No two people can have the same experience - period. Each experience derives from the interaction between the staged event and the individual's prior state of mind and being' (Pine and Gilmore 1999: 12). John Falk is a leading researcher in museum experiences, publishing several books investigating many areas of museum visitors' behaviour, museum learning and audience research (see Falk, 2009; Falk et al 1998; Falk & Dierking 1997; Falk & Dierking 2000). Throughout his works, Falk reiterates how visitors do not arrive at museums as 'blank slates'; each visitor has a unique combination of expectations and motivations, different levels of knowledge, skill, attitude, beliefs and experiences, all of which combine to affect the quality and outcomes of their personal visit (Falk & Dierking, 2000: 79). Falk has completed several studies looking at people's reasons for going to museums, and has identified six 'entering trajectories' that prompt visitors to go to museums. The six entering trajectories recognised by Falk are: place, education, life cycle, social event, entertainment and practical issues (Falk et al, 1998: 108). Looking at these entering trajectories can help illuminate some of

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the outcomes that visitors may value. ‘Practical issues’ relate to external factors such as the weather, this does not help to identify the outcomes visitors seek. Other entering trajectories such as ‘education’, ‘entertainment’, and ‘social day out’ provide more insight to the outcomes those visitors may value. In collaboration with Moussouri & Coulson, Falk investigated the relationship between an individual’s motivations, and then their onsite behaviour. They concluded that: ‘visitor’s pre-visit agendas directly influence their in-museum behaviour and learning’ (Falk, et al, 1998: 116) but this is not always definitive. Though there are common trends in people’s reasons for going to museums and notable links between these and people’s likely behaviour, visitors can (and often do) respond in surprising ways. Museum experiences are immensely varied depending on a complex web of internal and external variables, and are also unpredictable and changeable.

2.2.ii Summarising outcomes of museum experiences

Although we cannot assume or accurately predict the outcomes of an individual’s museum visit, a comprehensive review of existing research has highlighted trends in visitors’ experiences overall. Summarising previous research I have identified certain outcomes that are more frequently sought or attained by visitors to museums. One of the most influential studies into visitors’ museum experiences is the research done by Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre’s (2005). Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre are a heritage consultancy, and from their on-going work with a wide section of UK museums, they have identified four key drivers for visiting museums and art galleries: social, intellectual, emotional and spiritual (Morris, Hargreaves & McIntyre, 2005). These four drivers have been used to evaluate both motivations for attending museums and the outcomes from visiting. Based on studies at several museum and galleries Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre ordered these four drivers into a framework which they call the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement*, which they compare to Maslow’s *Hierarchy of Human Needs* (see table 1) (Morris Hargreaves & McIntyre, 2005: 9). I have used the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement*, as a basis for summarising my own analysis of the value of museum experience, and compared it against other literature on museum visitors’ experiences.

At the bottom of the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre recognise a number of social outcomes relating to the museums as a place to be with friends and family. Many studies have demonstrated the importance of the social aspect of museums, highlighting value in museum visiting as an opportunity to spend time with other people. Kavanagh (2000) evaluated several

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studies that examined peoples' recollection of museums visits. Kavanagh summarised that the significant common ground in many of these studies is the 'social and enabling aspects' of visiting and how successfully or not these have been achieved (Kavanagh, 2000: 151).

Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement		Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs	
Spiritual	Escapism	Self-Actualisation	
	Contemplation		
	Stimulate creativity		
Emotional	Aesthetic pleasure	Aesthetic	
	Awe and wonder		
	Moving	Cognitive	Esteem
	Personal relevance		
	Experience the past		
	Nostalgia		
	Insight		
	Sense of cultural identity		
Intellectual	Academic /professional interest		
	Hobby interest		
	Self-improvement		
	Stimulate Children		
Social	Social Interaction	Social	
	Entertainment		
	To see, to do		
	Inclusion, welcome		
	Access		
	Comfort, security, warmth	Safety	Physiological

Table 1 *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* compared with *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* (Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre, 2005)

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Under the heading of social engagement Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre also segment a small subgroup of safety and physiological. Rand identified similar physical encounters and human needs in museum experiences in *The Visitors Bill of Rights* (Rand, 2004) which outlines what it is that visitors require from museums. The bill states the following demands: comfort, orientation, welcome/belonging, enjoyment, socializing, respect, communication, learning, choice and control, challenge and confidence and revitalization (Rand, 2004). On the most basic level, museum visitors require a safe and comfortable space, and a welcoming environment in which they can interact with friends and family. If we applied Aston and Savona's four levels of operation of the stage picture to museums, then this would compare to the functionalistic level of operation (*ibid*, p146).

The next level in the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* is intellectual engagement. From my review of literature into visitors' experiences I can concede that learning constitutes the majority of what has been written about museums visiting. Almost all of the research I have examined on visitors' experiences discuss the intellectual aspect of museum experiences. Many researchers recognise it not only as a responsibility of the museums operation, but as something that visitors expect and actively seek out during their museum experiences; 'Knowledge is now well understood as the commodity that museums offer' (Hooper-Greenhill quoted in Kavanagh, 2000:148). There is both a wide range of, and depth of detail in the research into museum learning. Museum learning is established as having unique qualities which distinguish it from other learning experiences. Some of the key aspects of museum learning which help demonstrate its value includes the free-choice and hands on nature, and the ability to link with the past (Scott, 2006: 70). There are many models and systems that categorise and summarise the types of intellectual outcomes of museums. Looking at both research and industry practice I suggest the most widely used model of museum learning is the *Generic Learning Outcomes*¹³ (GLOs) created by the former Museum Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) (MLA, 2008). The GLOs were developed to help museums measure what they do, but are also used by many heritage attractions to help inform planning and development. The GLOs take a very broad view of learning which includes a variety of outputs that may not conventionally be considered as learning. Under the heading of 'attitudes and values' MLA recognise feelings, perceptions, increased motivation and empathy as of signals of learning, and under the heading of 'enjoyment, inspiration and creativity' they include having fun, being surprised and innovative thoughts (MLA, 2008). MLA categorise these outcomes as being types of learning, but in other models (including the *Hierarchy of Engagement*) these are categorised as 'emotional' or 'spiritual' outcomes.

¹³ Details of the Generic Learning Outcomes can still be found on the MLAs archived web-site: <http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/toolstemplates/genericlearning/> (last accessed 03/12/2013).

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Emotional outcomes are positioned just above intellectual engagement in the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement*. Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre include nostalgia, awe and wonder, personal relevance and sense of cultural identity as some of the types of emotional engagement in museums. Emotional response to museums was first studied in the early 1990s. At the 1993 Visitor Studies Conference, Perry (1993) discussed that learning is important at museum exhibitions, but not more so than enjoyment, interest, developing positive attitudes as well as what she describes as 'affective responses' including curiosity, feelings of comfort, empowerments and awe (Perry, 1993). Roberts analysed the 'affective domain' of visitors' experiences which she described as including interests, attitudes, values and emotions, and commented how many professionals struggle to address such matters (Roberts in Bicknell & Farnelo, 1993: 96). Although emotions have been discussed in museums for around twenty years, it appears that many museum professionals still struggle with this affective dimension, and emotions remains the focus of very little in-depth research. Emotional outcomes of museum visiting are less frequently discussed in existing research than the social or intellectual outcomes, but it is an area in which there appears to be growing interest and discussion and possible links with theatrical performance. I examined visitors' emotional responses to museum experiences using the primary data collected in this study (discussed in chapter 4), and have reviewed the impact of scenography on emotional values in chapter 5.4.

At the top of Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre's *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement*, they propose it is spiritual engagement that visitors can achieve, such as escapism and contemplation. Packer (2008) noted similar emotional and spiritual components of museum experiences from research conducted at The Queensland Natural History Museum. Packer explored the beneficial outcomes that visitors seek and obtain from museums, he identified museums offering visitors psychological well-being, mental restoration and a sense of peace, relaxation and/or tranquillity (Packer, 2008: 52). Packer found these not only to be valued outcomes, but one that can form part of a person's reasons for going to museums (Packer, 2008). Another study which recognises a spiritual capacity to museum visiting was Falk's (2009) research into what the public perceive museums as good for. Falk examined visitors' experiences and found that the public perceive museums as good for five basic things, several of which correlate with Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre's findings in the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement*. According to Falk two things people perceive museums as good for are: 'the yearning to immerse one's self in a spiritually refreshing environment' and 'the aspiration to experience that which is best and most important within culture' (Falk, 2009: 245). These can be compared to the emotional or spiritual engagement in the

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Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement. Falk's research also found that visitors value museums for the ability to 'satisfy personal curiosity and interest', and 'the desire to further specific intellectual desire' (Falk, 2009: 245) which reflects the intellectual engagement discussed in the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement*. The final thing that Falk's research demonstrates museums are being good for, is that people perceive museums as being able to 'fulfil the wish to engage in a meaningful social experience with someone you care about, particularly children' (Falk, 2009: 245) which is similar to the social engagement identified by Morris Hargreaves and McIntyre. Another study that corresponds well with the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* is Pekarik *et al* (1999). Pekarik *et al* conducted research into satisfying museum experiences according to visitors. The study demonstrates the social, intellectual, spiritual and emotional value of museum experiences that we have so far discussed. It also indicates value in encountering objects.

Pekarik *et al* suggest satisfying museum experiences are categorised in to four types:

- Object experiences: seeing rare/ uncommon/ valuable thing, being moved by beauty or thinking what it would be like to own such things.
- Cognitive experience: gaining information or knowledge or enriching understanding
- Introspective experiences: imagining other times or places, reflecting on meaning of objects, recalling memories or feeling a spiritual connection.
- Social experiences: spending time with friends/ family or other people.
(Pekarik *et al*, 1999)

The value of the collection is not established in *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* but it is discussed in other research. Weaver suggested that the public seek out experiences where they can encounter 'real' artefacts and this provides a valuable hook to attract visitors; 'this craving for authenticity is an ace in the hole for museums; we have the real "stuff" that our potential visitors crave' (Weaver, 2007: 29). Skramstad (2004) suggests that a museum's content or collections are not self-revealing guides to knowledge, but a means to an ends:

In developing experiences, museums have an advantage over their competitors, whether they be electronic media, theme parks or other entertainment venues. The real and authentic objects, stories, ideas and lives that are the subject matter of museums experiences have a resonance that is more powerful than all but the most compelling imaginary experiences (Skramstad in Anderson, 2004: 128).

Summarising the literature I had reviewed, I originally felt that the value of a museum's collection lies in its use as a resource to provide other outcomes, mostly intellectual or emotional engagement. From

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the process of ongoing data collection and analysis during this study, I later recognised intrinsic value in encountering museum artefacts. I explain how I came to recognise ‘collections values’ in chapter 4.3.iv.

I have used Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre’s *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* as a basis to explore the types of beneficial outcomes that visitors expect or appreciate in museums. The model is one of the most rigorously tested systems in the heritage industry owing to Morris Hargreaves and McIntyre being an independent agency working with many museums and heritages sites nationally. As I have shown in this chapter, the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* correlates well with other research, and reflects industry practice. What is unclear in Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre’s *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* is the structure of this model as a hierarchical system, and if motivations/ outcomes are in some way proposed as being sequential or related. It is unclear if Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre are proposing that visitors must attain lower levels of social and intellectual engagement before being able to reach emotional or spiritual outcomes. The social, intellectual, emotional and spiritual groupings proposed in the *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* align well with other research into visitors’ experiences, yet there is no grounding to suggest these are in anyway sequentially experienced.

What makes Morris, Hargreaves, and McIntyre’s *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement* so useful for the museum industry, is that having implemented and tested the framework at numerous institutions, they have been able to develop a *Benchmark of Norms* (table 2) which demonstrates visitor’s main motivations for visiting, as an average across the field (Morris, Hargreaves & McIntyre, 2005: 10). According to Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre’s research almost half (49%) of museum visitors are motivated by relatively simple factors such as social interaction or entertainment. It also claims that only a small proportion (13%) have emotional motivations and only 3% have spiritual motivations (ibid, 2005: 10). One problem with the data presented by Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre in the *Benchmark of Norms* is it indicates only the main motivation. There is no reference to the number of participants who have multiple motivations, or the proportions of visitors who may have intellectual, emotional or spiritual motivations as supplementary or tertiary to social motivations.

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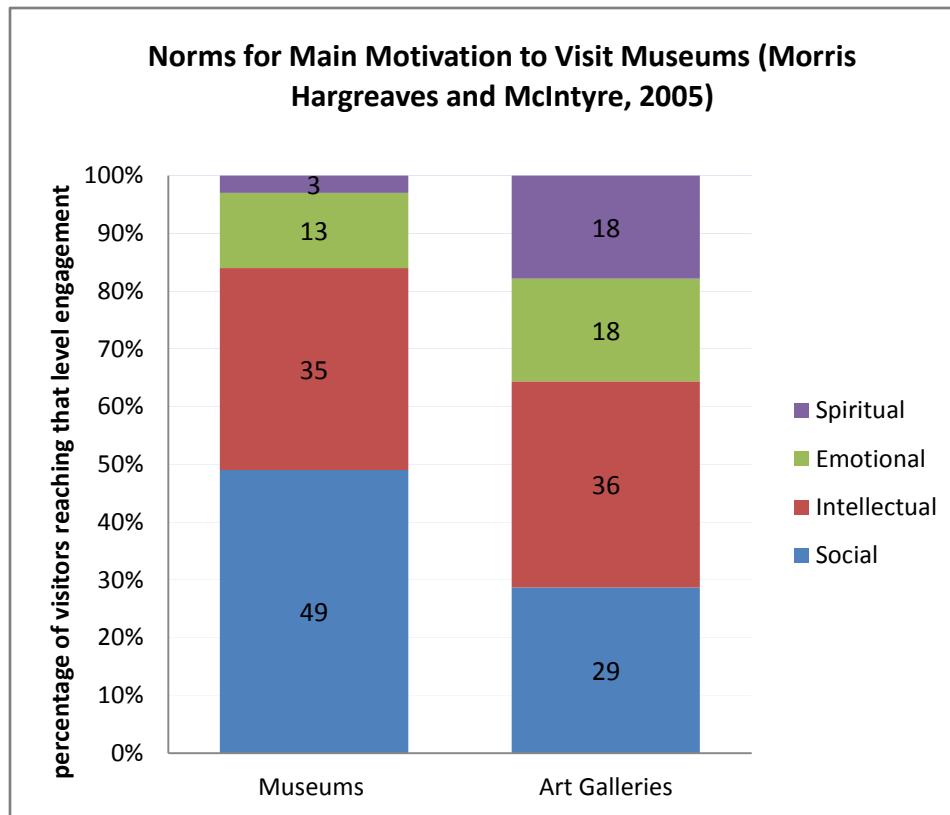


Table 2 Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre's *Benchmark of Norms* showing percentage of visitors achieving each level of engagement at museums and art galleries. (Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre, 2005)

Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre used the same categories of visitor engagement to evaluate the differences in visitors' expectation and outcomes of museum experiences¹⁴ (figure 3). From that research, Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre claim that there is notable difference in visitors' expectations of the museum experience if compared to the actual outcomes. That study indicated that though the majority of visitors have relatively simple expectations (social or intellectual) many visitors were engaged on the higher emotional and spiritual levels. Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre do not offer explanation for the differences in participants' expectations and reported outcomes. Pekarik *et al* (1999) also noted differences in visitors' stated agendas and the outcomes valued; 'a substantial number of visitors who were most looking forward to a cognitive experience when they entered the museum, found an introspective or an object experience more satisfying in the end' (Pekarik *et al*, 1999: 172) but they also fail to explain the reasons for the difference in expectation and outcome.

¹⁴ Unlike the other models that are based on findings across multiple sites, the difference in visitors' expectations and outcomes is based on findings from one study at *The British Museum*.
<http://www.lateralthinkers.com/Comment/Never%20Mind%20the%20Width.pdf> (accessed 30/07/2012)

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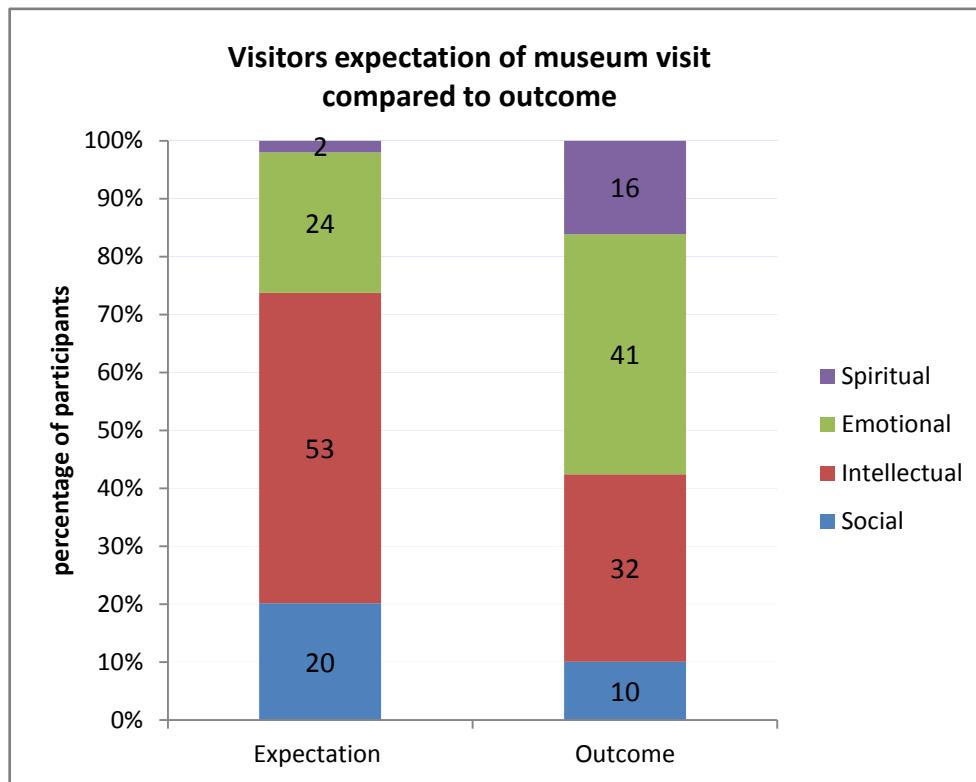


Table 3 *Expectations vs. Outcomes* (Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre, 2005) Showing comparisons of visitors expected level of engagement compared to actual level of engagement. Based on study at British Museum.

2.3 Performance in Museums

2.3.i Incorporating performance into museums

Performance in museums grew most rapidly in popularity during a period of change for museums between the late 1980s and early 1990s. This time brought about many changes for museums including a need to justify funding, and popularisation to compete with other leisure attractions. Hughes (1998) outlines the changes which led to the increasing popularity of performance in museums to be stemming from three overarching movements in thought: ‘the history of presenting one view where artefacts are truth; the view of truth as relative and a need for context; and the growing prominence of education and communication’ (Hughes, 1998: 18). During the 1980s, when performance in museums first began to grow rapidly in museums, it instigated a series of discussions on its appropriateness within the sector. There was some controversy and contestation over the use of drama in museums, which Jackson & Kidd (2007) describe as stemming from a perception of it as ‘a general shift towards a ‘theme park society’ in which the cultural establishment promotes a nostalgic, reassuring, entertaining and profoundly inaccurate view of history’ (*ibid*, unpaged). Concerns were expressed that the use of performance in museums was not congruent to museums learning objectives and its application was pandering to the masses’ desire for entertainment. Speaking in 1977 when performance in museums was first becoming widespread, Marten (quoted in Snow, 1999) claimed: ‘Learning progress through entertainment has severe limitations and we note other museums which have benefited little from the seemingly appropriate theatrical approach’ (Marten quoted in Snow, 1999). Even today, some professionals criticise performance in museums as being ‘Disneyfication’ and ‘edutainment’ (Jackson & Kidd, 2011: 1). Despite doubts, performance has become consistently more commonplace within museums as outcomes and benefits are recognised. In 1999 Walker argued that whether museum professionals loved or loathed it, live interpretation was ‘here to stay’, as interpretive audits frequently demonstrated that visitors not only enjoyed it but were beginning to expect it (Walker, 1999: 23). There are many types of performance that have come to be used in museums, some of the most common, (and those that have been considered and reviewed in this research) are; costumed interpretation, living history and museum theatre¹⁵.

¹⁵ Museum theatre is often used as an umbrella term to refer to all styles of performance in museums, here it is used to refer to performance pieces which frame and distinguish themselves as ‘performance’ or ‘theatre’ and as something separate to the rest of the museum experience.

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Performance in museums is both popular with visitors and is able to assist with fulfilling museums objectives. One of the most widely recognised benefits of performance in museums is its ability to support or improve learning. Performance is recognised as being able to assist learning in museums in two ways. Firstly as it makes it more enjoyable for the visitor and it also improves communication with visitors who are less inclined to more traditional interpretive strategies like labels. Furthermore, performance in museums is successful in transmitting bodies of factual knowledge due to the inherent ability to provide ‘visual clues’ (Blais, 1997: 47). Performance in museums can also be advantageous in helping to interpret and provide context to artefacts, which Harper (1984) recognises as the core of a museum’s purpose (*ibid*, p1). Rachel Knight (head of exhibitions) at Imperial War Museum North explained how they often use performance to help interpret the collections, and find it particularly advantageous when trying to interpret larger artefacts such as tanks (Knight in interview, 2009). Alsford & David claim the strongest advantage of performance in museums is not its educational ability, but its ability to bring into play a range of the audience’s senses and emotions (*ibid*, p16). In chapter 1.5 I discussed how emotions are a fundamental part of how visitors view and understand theatrical performance. The emotional quality of performance has in the past been seen as not congruent to the aims of museums. Hughes discusses how the emotional quality of theatre is often thought as inappropriate to museum settings, but claims that this opinion is dissolving as people recognise that performance has a unique advantage in being able to link between cognition and affect (Hughes, 1998: 52).

Another matter that concerns some museum professionals with the use of performance in museums is anxiety over loss of accuracy, and the fear of causing confusion amongst visitors: ‘some curators continue to oppose museum theatre adamantly because of its inherent extrapolation of known facts, they fear misinformation and misunderstanding’ (Maloney & Hughes, 1999: 102). Accuracy and truth are key concerns for museums, and the responsibility of museums to present accurate and non-misleading information is not entirely self-prescribed. Many visitors assume what is presented to them at a museum will be true as they perceive museums to be ‘essentially places of fact and knowledge’ (Blais, 1997:51). Concerns about lack of accuracy when employing performance in museums are not without justified cause, examples can be easily identified where performance in museums has knowingly exaggerated or adjusted known truth. Rees Leahy discusses how much criticism for performance in museums is found in the broad range of professionalism and quality of work, and personnel have questioned the rigour of research that some performances are based on (Rees Leahy, 2011: 28). Not all

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performance in museums is created in this way; most performances in museums are developed with the same concern for accuracy as other interpretation devices. It is only in some instances that we find extrapolation of truth or sugar-coating of history. This is typically done for the sake of visitor comfort or enjoyment, and may be a response to the growing pressures of competing as leisure attractions. It is more common in sites tending more towards visitor attractions than in museums. Living history sites are also known for providing a rose-tinted view of history which may not be historically accurate but is more pleasing for visitors. Blists Hill Victorian Town is an extensive living history site based on the late Victorian era, but unlike the actual Victorian era the town is clean and sanitary, it heavily blinks the less savoury and congenial behaviour of the Victorians. Snow discusses an example of where living history has knowingly slackened on levels of accuracy at Plimoth Plantation in America, and he explains the reasons for taking a more rose-tinted view of history (Snow, 1999).

Snow describes how at Plimoth Plantation re-creations of special events (such as weddings and court trials) are usually based on historical records, with some poetic licence applied to glamourise or enhance the event, in order to be more interesting to the general public (*ibid*, p88). Plimouth Plantation is foremost a business and a charging site, special events are used as a hook to attract visitors. Snow describes the extent of falsification at the Plimoth Plantation describing one annual event as being clearly intended to entertain and not to duplicate history (*ibid*, p101). There are many potential problems in this method of interpretation, as Snow himself mentions; ‘Few visitors know enough about the period to be aware of the inauthentic aspects of the wedding’ (Snow, 1999: 102). This could bring in to question the reputable perception of museums as places of accuracy and truth. If museums are perceived as trustworthy places of accuracy and authenticity, then visitors may not think to question the validity of what is presented to them, and therefore assume inaccurate representations to be wholly true. If inaccuracies and limitations are not highlighted and pointed out, could visitors be misled and unknowingly taught a lie? And what impact does this have on the visitors’ value of experience, and the reputation of museums? Snow questioned if the enhanced nature of the events at Plimouth Plantation goes against the primary purpose of education (Snow, 1999: 44). Theatrical performance does not have this responsibility to be accurate and truthful. A director or scenographer may take it upon themselves to strive to remain accurate in their historical representations, but it is not expected by the theatre audience to the same degree as it is expected by museum visitors. Theatre can be reputed for its illusionary and deceptive nature: a direct contrast to the museums preoccupation with accuracy and authenticity.

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Not all performance in museums is questionable in its accuracy or authenticity; some performances in museum go to great lengths to present an accurate replication of history. The appropriateness of changing or adjusting narratives becomes particularly pertinent when the site is a ‘real’ site (the place in which the narratives actually happened) or when dealing with topics and issues of certain sensitive natures. Dark tourism (sometimes referred to as dark heritage) is a field of study focused on sites associated with death, grief and disaster. These may be the real sites where macabre and shocking events occurred, or can be places where it is simulated to show the original conditions or acts (Goodacre & Baldwin, 2002: 18). Sites of dark heritage must be careful to avoid ‘inappropriate exploitation’ (Lennon & Foley, 2000: 164) and so the narratives of the place are carefully and respectfully shared in detail, regardless to the shock or upset that it may cause to visitors. Lennon and Foley have extensively researched dark tourism, questioning what it means to ‘experience’ something, asking if dark heritage is wanting visitors to experience the original or just understand it through experience (Lennon & Foley, 2000). Goodacre and Baldwin suggested that theatre could be used to explore the ‘moral values’ of dark heritage experiences (*ibid*, p81) which may add to the visitors intellectual value of museum experiences. In chapter 5.3.ii I review the scenography of site specific performance in real spaces, (which can include dark tourism sites) and analyse some of the problems facing scenography when presenting authentic spaces and places.

Overall literature on performance in museums is very successful in distinguishing its benefits, including; using multiple narratives (Baum 2001, Bridal 2004, Hilton 2005, Maloney and Hughes 1999), engaging visitors more than other exhibits (Bridal 2004, Gard 1994), making history come alive (Bridal 2004, Swift 2004), being able to approach ethical dilemmas and explore ideas from different perspectives (Hughes 1998), and being enjoyable and entertaining (Bridal, 2004). In interviews with museum staff I found that many recognised the benefits of performance in museums, whether or not they chose to implement it at their sites. Mark Dennis (Curator at Library and Museum of Freemasonry) commented that though the museum does not regularly use costumed interpretation he understands why it is popular; ‘if it’s good quality it works, as by their nature performers are there to engage and to catalyze reaction’ (Dennis in interview, 2009 ii). Janine Derbyshire (Principal Keeper at Pickford House Museum), also discussed the benefits of performance in museums, explaining how they use costume interpretation with children and school groups as it helps creates a more enjoyable and memorable experience that brings history to life (Derbyshire in interview, 2009).

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The benefits of performance in museums are well documented in literature and understood in practice, but existing research is less detailed and thorough in the consideration of the design of performance in museums. It is therefore difficult to establish the role of scenography in contributing to the beneficial impacts of performance in museums. In the following section I shall discuss some of the existing literature on the design of performance in museums and look at how it is integrated in to museum spaces.

2.3.ii Scenography of performance in museums

The majority of literature addressing design for performance in museums focuses on practical matters, such as how to make museum spaces appropriate to host performance, or staging practicalities such as allowing for entrances and exits, and storage. This kind of basic practical guidance is important as the responsibility of designing for performance in museums may often fall into responsibility of someone with little or no performance design training or experience. Even museums fortunate to have in-house theatre or performance teams are unlikely to have a dedicated and experienced person responsible for design. In an introductory guide to creating performance in museums, Bridal explains that a designer may or may not be from a theatre background, and lists standard questions that they are likely to ask including: budget, where will it take place, how many actors, who will maintain the set? (Bridal, 2004:102). Bridal goes on to specify questions that a designer may or may not think to ask, but are important to successfully completing the task: will the audience be coming and going, will there be audience participation in the show, will the set remain up between performances or be taken down, who will take it down and where will it be stored, how long will the set and props be in use? (ibid, p102). Though suggesting a somewhat considered approach to design, all of these questions focus on the practical and physical considerations of the space, Bridal does not discuss the designers possible interest in the story, the characters, the mood or atmosphere of the performance; all critical things that guide the development of scenography in theatrical performance.

Brawne (1982) highlights some of the practical differences between museums and theatrical performance, including the heightened consideration of security in creating settings in museums, and the presence of service arrangements as part of the scenery (Brawne, 1982:38). Ellefson *et al* (2001) compare what makes good exhibit spaces and what makes good performance spaces, and they highlight

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some conflicts of interest. According to Ellefson *et al*, a good performance space requires a large area, the ability to be contained, and able to control sound and light to focus the audience's attention on the performance. In contrast, a good exhibition space is full of different sounds and experiences which are randomly-accessed by roaming and free-flowing visitors (Ellefson *et al*, 2001: 5).

There are various ways in which performance in museums can be incorporated within museum spaces. To outline some of the ways in which performance is integrated in to museum spaces I will discuss examples identified during field visits. Despite the variety in the range of ways that performance is staged within museums, there is one similarity that they all share: limited capabilities for scenography. Museums that regularly put on performances may house purpose made performance spaces, but even these dedicated spaces are often limited in their scenographic capabilities. On a visit to the Science Museum in London in December 2008, I witnessed a short performance based on the life of Marie Curie. The performance was staged in *The Theatre*, a small space on the ground floor which appeared to be a former lecture room. The room was modified and equipped with some necessary lighting to be able to accommodate theatrical performance. *The Theatre* provided a limited amount of theatre lighting, a projector and a small backstage area to accommodate the storage of some scenery/props and an entrance/ exit for performers. Though technologically superior to most other performance spaces in museums, *The Theatre* was still very basic if compared to even the most simple theatre space. The carpeted floor and blue and red painted walls of *The Theatre* dominated the overall aesthetic of the space, and restricted the range of moods or atmosphere that could realistically be created. The lack of masking around the performance area and the fixed seating arrangement further limits flexibility in design and transitions. *The Theatre* at Science Museum is a space originally created for another purpose and then adjusted to stage performance pieces; in some museums performance spaces have been considered in the planning of the site and integrated in to the main galleries.

The Royal Armouries in Leeds is one such site, where integrated performance spaces were planned in the design of the galleries¹⁶. The performance spaces at Royal Armouries Leeds vary in size and layout but are again all limited in their scenographic capabilities, owing to minimal technical equipment, lack of masking and fixed arrangements. All of the performance spaces at Royal Armouries offer some form of

¹⁶ Up until a few years ago, the Royal Armouries Leeds had a regular programme of performance events which were staged across the different performance spaces. The schedule of more theatrical performances has been drastically scaled down, but the spaces are put to good use for other activities such as interactive sessions, school workshops and gallery talks.

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physical boundary or marking to separate the performance area from the rest of the gallery, some are enclosed as self-contained spaces, as seen in figure 1, whilst others remain visually open to the rest of the gallery, see figure 2. One issue with creating physical barriers to create dedicated performance spaces is that the space can be rendered useless, uninhabited and unanimated when not in use. This makes such performance spaces a real luxury, affordable only for the museum where space is not a premium.



Figure 1 Enclosed performance area at Royal Armouries
Leeds



Figure 2 Open performance area at Royal Armouries
Leeds

An example of performance space well integrated into a museum gallery was identified in the *Prehistoric Gallery* at Museum of London (see figure 3 below). The ‘events area’ is almost indistinguishable amongst the cases and interpretation boards, situated in one corner, it offers no masking, no backstage area and no barrier or marking to differentiate it from the remainder of the gallery. It comprises a printed image showing the inside of a prehistoric dwelling on the back wall and at either side of that are panels demonstrating construction techniques of the time. Simple replica artefacts are stored nearby and used as props. These modest components serve to provide a backdrop to the performance, and offer visual prompts to the audience, but during non-performance times the area does not look out of place and visitors move through the area as they do the rest of the gallery. This more open approach has the limitation of not providing any masking or backstage areas, without which there is little opportunity to hide or disguise the mechanics and equipment used to create the ‘illusionary feats of theatre’ (Thorne, 2003: 47). It also means that spectators are exposed to other stimuli in the gallery, and therefore may be less focused on the performance. The benefit of this open approach is that it permits visitors to drop in and out of the performance. For the visitor this means less commitment and potentially increased likelihood to participate.

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Figure 3 Events area in Prehistoric Gallery at Museum of London.

Dedicated spaces segregated from galleries allow more opportunity for scenography and better ability to focus visitors' attention, but add to the challenge of drawing in an audience. In chapter 1.5 I discussed the importance of the theatrical frame in the audiences' comprehension of theatrical performance. The same principle of framing applies to performance in museums, and is perhaps even more critical than in theatre. Visitors to museums and historic sites do not go expressly to see performances and so their responses to it are complex and varied depending. A visitor's response to theatre may depend on that person's pre-existing attitudes and inclinations, as well as the style and setting of the piece (Jackson, 2010:3). Unprompted performance in museums can be greeted with mixed enthusiasm and does not guarantee the same captive audience as a traditional theatre (Bridal, 2004: 9). Clearly and appropriately framing performance in museums helps the audience to first recognise that it is performance, and decide whether or not they wish to stop and experience that performance. Jackson (2011) states the importance of what he calls event frames in determining the quality of engagement and the extent of learning taking place (*ibid*, p16). In the same publication, Hughes contributes a chapter looking at the role of the spectator in museum theatre, she writes: 'Sharing the rules of the stage with the audience and clearly making visible the frame enables the spectator's informed participation, for without the spectator actors lose their *raison d'être* (Hughes, 2011: 193).

In some instances the design of the gallery can even become a part of the frame, and viewed as part of the scenography of the performance. At the Verulamium Museum in St Albans a monthly costumed interpretation piece is held in one of the bigger and less furnished galleries (see figures 4 and 5 below). Two walls in this gallery remain mostly unfurnished or decorated, whilst the other two display a small

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collection of well-preserved Roman mosaics. The blank walls are punctuated with some simple scenery replica Roman columns with capitals. The mosaics and the simple staging components give reference to the Roman era of which the costumed interpreter claims to be part, and they help the audience to imagine the Roman soldier in his original setting or context. Both the gallery features and the artefacts have become a part of the scenography of the performance.



Figure 4 Costumed interpreter at Verulamium Museum. Roman style columns seen in background



Figure 5 Costumed interpreter at Verulamium Museum. Artefacts can be seen in background

If we analyse the types of stage picture created in performance in museum using Aston & Savona's four levels of operation (*ibid*, 2003: 146) we can see that they operate mostly on functionalistic and sociometric levels. It is very infrequent that scenography of performance in museums operates on an atmospheric or a symbolic level. Scenography of performance in museums is typically focused on the practicalities of the text and the audience comfort, and is used to help establish setting or character. There is heightened concern for accuracy, meaning that the scenography of performance in museums tends to be more naturalistic, and non-fantastical compared to that of theatrical performance. Living history in particular is stringently focused on accurate, realistic and believable replication. Living history practitioners usually associate 'theatre' with the 'naturalistic' styles (Magelssen, 2007) which were popular in theatres in the late nineteenth century. Some secondary literature¹⁷ does discuss different theatrical styles in living history, but this is focused on the acting style rather than design. Magelssen (2007) claims the necessity of historical accuracy in designing for living history as being key to ethically good practice: 'The idea that the closer one can get to the real or authentic original, the better the representation, implies that accuracy is the criterion for ethically good academic and touristic practices' (Magelssen, 2007: intro). Accurate and detailed replication may be argued as being ethically good

¹⁷ see Goodacre & Baldwin, 2002; Magelssen, 2007; Snow, 1999

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practice in museums, but may also be a cause of confusion. Whilst visiting living history sites I have encountered a sense of confusion and uncertainty owing to the design of environments. Settings can be replicated in great detail, and so good are some of these replications it can become unclear what are original artefacts and what are purposely made props; ‘living history is the re-creation of history and not the “real” thing, but it is often difficult for the visitor to separate the two’ (Hughes, 1998: 37). Some visitors may not question if items are authentic or objects or not, leading to an incorrect assumption that everything is real (original artefacts). Conversely, due to the theatrical nature of some living history it is possible that some visitors may perceive these recreated environments as theatrical stages, hence false, and containing only replica items.

Within literature on performance in museums, there is some discussion of design, but this is not as widely researched, or considered to the same depth as scenography for theatrical performance. Scenography for performance in museums is subjected to additional challenges that are not imposed on theatrical performance. Scenography for performance in museums must respect the publics’ perception of museums as place of accuracy and authenticity, and the responsibility and limitations in displaying a collection (and the costs and requirements of doing this safely). By looking at the way in which performance is integrated into museum spaces, we can also see that the scenography for performance in museums is more restricted and subject to additional challenges than its theatrical counterpart. Creating scenography for performance in museums faces additional challenges in how the performance is integrated into the rest of the museum gallery, and the limited scenographic resources available in museums compared to theatres. Some of these issues were identified as being potentially relevant to the wider application of scenography in museum design. During field visits to museums, I analysed the methods of framing scenography in museum designs and some of the additional considerations of being accurate and not misleading. The findings of this are discussed in chapter 5. In the next section I shall introduce some examples of scenography in museum design not connected to performance.

2.4 Scenography in museum exhibitions

2.4.i Context and setting

Perhaps the most easily recognisable example of scenography in museums is when the design is operating on the sociometric level; used to establish the geographical or historical setting. When scenography operates on a sociometric level in museum design it is used to create a setting or offer visual clues to the wider context of an artefact, or the subject matter. Scenographic components can be found in museum designs to offer context in several ways including: offering wider context to the subject, putting artefacts in their original setting, and dressing spaces to look more like their original state. Creating settings can be achieved in a variety of ways, ranging from basic and simple tricks to full scale detailed replicas that resemble theatrical stages.

The most obvious and widely used scenographic component that I have recognised in museums is scenic painting. Scenic painting is used in museum designs to help clarify an object's previous setting, show how an object was used, or offer give visual prompts to how a play may have looked in the past. It is an approach used by almost all museums, of every subject and size. Newport Roman Villa on the Isle of Wight, is not much larger than the surrounding domestic homes, and is run almost entirely by volunteers. The site houses the remains of a Romano-British Farmhouse, and despite its small size and limited resources, it is not sparse with its use of scenic painting to demonstrate how the rooms may have looked during its Roman occupation (fig 6). A similar approach can be achieved using printed scrims as backdrops instead of physical painting. Brading Roman Villa is just a few miles from Newport, it uses hanging gauze to the same effect as the scenic painting at Newport, but showing the outside of the building as it is believed to have looked. Both methods are effective in helping visitors to envision the site and respect the grandeur of the building that once occupied the place in which they stand. A similar printed scrim was seen at London Transport Museum atop a Victorian horse drawn carriage (fig 7). It helps visitors to understand the use of the artefact, showing how the driver would have sat atop the carriage and not upfront like today. Scrims have the advantage of being relatively cheap and efficient to produce and easy to assemble, meaning they are easily moved or replaced allowing scope for change within the space.

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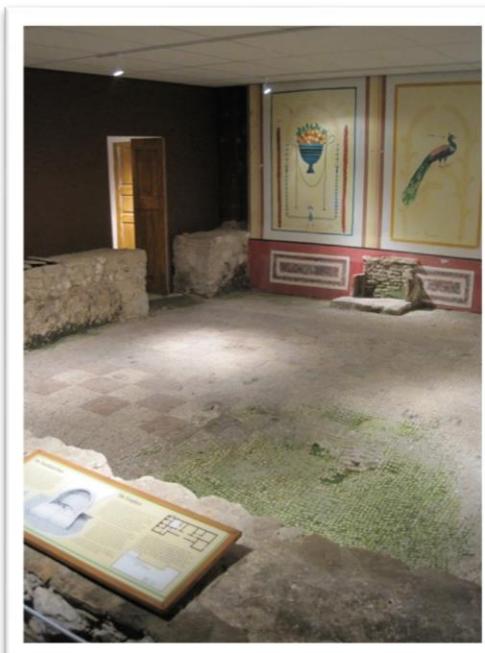


Figure 6 Scenic painting on back wall showing how place may have looked, at Newport Roman Villa



Figure 7 Hanging gauze shows how Victorian carriage would have been operated at London Transport Museum

Larger, more detailed scenographic components can be seen in museum dioramas, which can be closely likened to theatrical stages. Dioramas use scenery, scenic painting, props, costumed mannequins and sometimes theatrical lighting, to create a replica of another time, place or event. Like theatrical stages, dioramas are clearly framed and the visitors look upon them from a distance. Domestic rooms are a very popular form of diorama in museums. Domestic dioramas were found at Corinium Museum (fig 8) and Portsmouth City Museum (fig 9) and as these two examples demonstrate, dioramas allow for as much or as little detail as the designer deems necessary to convey the original setting. At the Corinium Museum, the diorama is built around an authentic Roman mosaic floor. The well preserved Roman mosaic floors are a valuable part of the museum's collection, and so the level of detail within the diorama is kept minimal so not to distract from the valued artefact. In comparison, the 1960s lounge at Portsmouth City Museum is very detailed, it is filled with a hybrid of 60s artefacts, modern replicas and obvious props including food items and board games. Dioramas are good for demonstrating cultural trends from their respective times, and they grant a level of universal understanding, allowing visitors to make comparisons to their own lives.

A common trend amongst heritage attractions is to stage rooms to look as they would have been in their original use. The props used to create a more homely setting do more than make the space interesting,

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they open up new levels of interpretation and make the themes more accessible to a wider audience, widening learning opportunities. In 2009 Sandwell Museums were granted Heritage Lottery Funding for a project in which they used props to re-dress several of the properties to look as if still lived in by the original occupants. The aim of doing this was to ‘bring the buildings alive’ and for the properties to be better equipped for communicating the narratives of the people who lived there in the past. Garrett described the project; ‘it is about people, it’s much more about how they were used, how rooms were used, how people’s lives went on in those buildings, rather than this clock, that table’ (Garrett & Hanney in interview, 2009). As well as bringing the spaces alive, redressing the rooms created universal themes which a wider audience could relate to and compare to their own lives, regardless of economic, social or religious background (Garrett & Hanney in interview, 2009). In his book discussing engaging museum experiences, Black (2005) describes the impact that showing context can have on visitors understanding: ‘recreations of original contexts can support visitors understanding, particularly by enabling them to relate to their own lives and experiences’ (*ibid*, p278).



Figure 8 Diorama placed on top of Roman mosaics at Corinium Museum



Figure 9 1960s domestic diorama at Portsmouth City Museum

Billing (2008) claimed that museums are just discovering the joy of simple illusionary tricks that are age old in the theatre (*ibid*, p36). One special effect that originates in theatre and is now used in museums is Pepper’s ghost, a fairly simple illusion that can be used to make ghostly like figures appear as if from nowhere. I have found Pepper’s ghost used in museums to show artefacts in their original contexts or other environments. An example of a Peppers ghost style illusion was identified at Jorvik Viking Centre in York, where in the *Meet the Vikings* gallery four cases represent four different Viking trades.

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Character monologues are played on a TV screen, and a range of artefacts relating to that Viking trade are displayed in the case below. At the end of the monologue the lighting in the display case is changed, creating a Pepper's ghost illusion and making the artefacts appear as if in their original Viking context. The blacksmith's tools suddenly appear to be on his working bench to the wonder of visitors. The advantage of this technique is the ability to capture visitors' attention, stimulate learning and create more engaging spaces (Billing, 2008: 36).

2.4.ii Atmospheric support

Another use of scenography in theatrical performance is atmospheric support, where scenographic components are used to create an atmosphere that complements or visually conveys the mood of the narrative. This is known as operating on the atmospheric level (Aston & Savona, 2003). Increased consideration of visitors when designing museums spaces has led to a number of notable changes in the approach and styles of exhibitions, including the increased use of atmospherics (Alcaraz, 2009: 220). This was another way in which I felt museum design was becoming increasingly similar to the design of theatrical performance. In practice this type of atmospheric support is less prevalent in museum design overall than the many simple tricks used to offer context and setting. From my experience of visiting museums I have recognised that atmospheric designs are more common amongst visitor attractions and larger museums that have greater resources to dedicate to the design of exhibitions. Jorvik Viking Centre in York uses atmospheric design in several of its galleries. The attraction is perhaps best known for its ride in which visitors are taken through a replica of a Viking age town. Artificial smells, sounds and theatrical lighting, are all used to create an atmosphere that better demonstrates the grim, smelly atmosphere of the Viking era. The galleries prior to, and following on from the ride at Jorvik also use design to support the mood of the interpretation, but in much more subtle ways. The *Investigate Coppergate* gallery (fig 11) details some of the complex scientific processes used in archaeology to help understand the past; the space is slick and angular, with metal surface finishes adding to the high-tech, scientific interpretation. Following this gallery visitors move to the *Meet the Viking Ghosts* gallery, the space is darker, more earthy, with artefacts displayed in wood and stone lined cases (fig 10).

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Figure 10 Angular lines and metal finishes in Investigate Coppergate gallery at Jorvik Viking Centre



Figure 11 Wooden display case in Meet the Vikings gallery at Jorvik Viking Centre

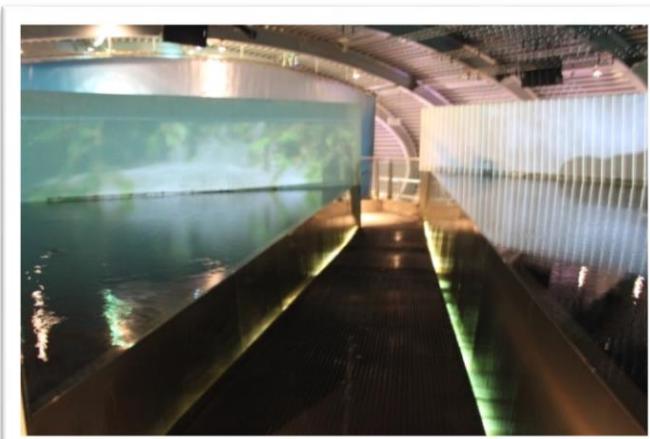


Figure 12 Theatrical lighting in water zone at Magna Science Centre



Figure 13 Theatrical lighting in earth zone at Magna Science Centre

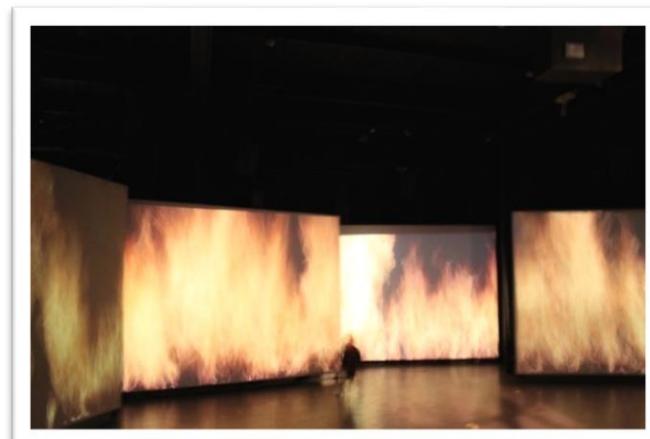


Figure 14 Theatrical lighting in fire zone at Magna Science Centre

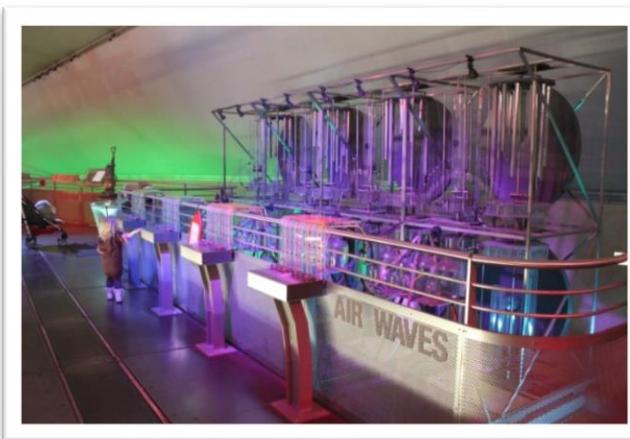


Figure 15 Theatrical lighting in air zone at Magna Science Centre

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The most widely used method of creating atmosphere in theatrical performance is lighting. Even the most basic of theatre spaces will usually have some form of lighting rig, even if no other scenographic components are available. Stage lighting is a craft that focuses light, varies intensity, plays with position and angle, and adds colour, shape, or texture to light. The outcome of using such lighting techniques is immensely varied; stage lighting can be used to stimulate almost any mood or atmosphere. Theatrical lighting can also be widely found in museum design. Owing to object care and conservation issues museums are often restricted to limited levels of sunlight and low levels of artificial lighting in galleries. This restriction seems to have encouraged exhibition designers to experiment with different lighting techniques.

At Magna Science Centre near Sheffield, theatrical lighting techniques are used as one of the primary ways of differentiating the four zones themed around fire, water, air, and earth. The use of lighting at Magna Science Centre is a strong component in creating the four distinctive environments for the different zones, and demonstrates the range of moods that can be achieved with clever application of lighting techniques. The projection of ferocious burning flames and low levels of warm reds and amber lights communicates the power and possible danger of fire (fig 14). In contrast to this the use of pink, calming purples, and green coloured light in the air zone give the space a sense of tranquillity and serenity (fig 15). Scenic lighting can be used to fill a whole space (such as in the examples at Magna), but it can also be used to highlight and draw attention to smaller areas, focusing the viewer's attention. Figures 16 and 17 below are both taken at Museum of London, and show lighting used to highlight artefacts. The theatrical lighting around these artefacts creates a more dramatic impression; the lighting grabs visitors' attention and encourages them to look at the objects from different perspectives- literally in a different light. The shards of broken pottery and damaged artefacts shown in figure 16 would not be put out on display, and in most museums these would remain in store as they have little or no interest or appeal to visitors. The use of a little theatrical lighting has added a sense of drama to these artefacts, making them seem less mundane, and making a more prominent and eye-catching display.

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Figure 16 Scenic lighting used to highlight artefacts at Museum of London

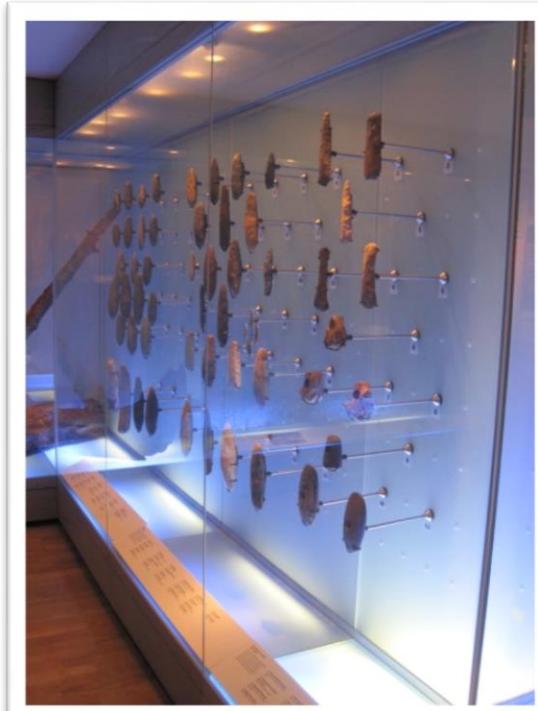


Figure 17 Scenic lighting used to highlight artefacts at Museum of London

Museum spaces operating on an atmospheric level can impact visitors in a very visceral and emotional way. In the previous section I discussed museum dioramas as a way of offering context and demonstrating setting. Museum dioramas are mostly static but I have identified some that are animated using scenographic components such as stage lighting and soundscapes. In the *Blue Zone*¹⁸ at the Natural History Museum in London, the rumbling roar of a T-Rex can be heard from the preceding gallery. The Jurassic monster is actually an animatronic robot that sits in front of a simple back-drop, with foliage painted on to wooden flats. The animatronic dinosaur provides an insight to visitors on the size and movement of a T-Rex, and the simple scenographic tools used to create the setting help to demonstrate the creature's natural habitat. As well as demonstrating setting, the surrounding staged environment uses scenic lighting and a tense soundscape that makes the experience of encountering this exhibition memorable, awe inspiring, or to some young visitors- rather frightening.

At the Imperial War Museum North, the entire building is designed on the premise of creating a space that gives a sombre and oppressing atmosphere. The main gallery of Imperial War Museum North offers

¹⁸ The Natural History Museum is split into different colour zones, the Blue Zone looks at life on Earth.

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no obvious route through, and the high and irregular angled walls create a space that is disorientating and awkward to navigate. Combined with the low lighting and muted palette the space is subdued and creates the optimal atmosphere to allow visitors to reflect on the central interpretive theme: the effect of war on people's lives.

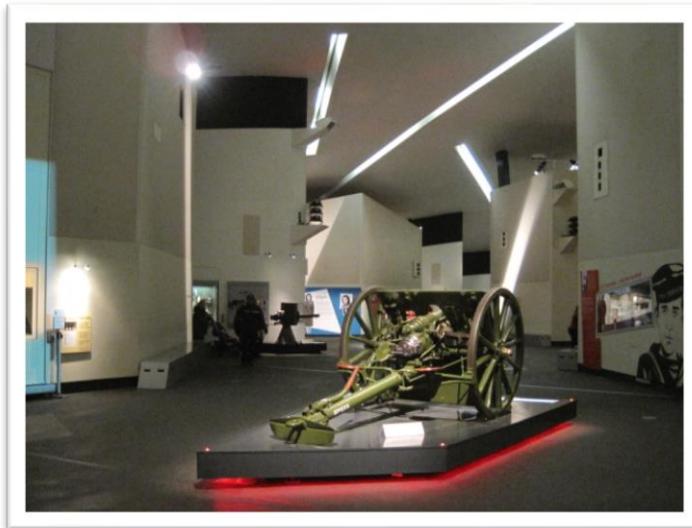


Figure 18 Main gallery space at Imperial War Museum North

Alke Gröppel-Wegner discusses the Imperial War Museum North in a chapter of *Performing Heritage* (Jackson & Kidd, 2011). Investigating the use of architecture to create performance experiences in heritage, Gröppel-Wegner describes how the design of the space makes the visitors experience of the Imperial War Museum North performative:

The overall effect is performative- thoughts are provoked by experiencing the building (the curving floor, the vast expanse of the Earth Shard, the walls that seem to be floating) that are in turn reinforced by the exhibition...the IWMN aims to make its visitors think and reflect on the conflict by the architectural strategies it employs' (Gröppel-Wegner, 2011: 39)

The emotions felt by a visitor in encountering a museums space are comparable to those experienced when witnessing a live performance (Gröppel-Wegner, 2011: 39). Visitors to the Imperial War Museum North often comment on the atmosphere of the space, and it is evident that this impacts people in a very affective way. The architectural experience of Imperial War Museum North complements the narrative themes, amplifying the emotional response within visitors.

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2.4.iii Immersive exhibitions

In this chapter so far I have reviewed design for performance in museums, noting that it mostly operates on a functionalistic and/ or sociometric level. Then In 2.4.i I analysed uses of scenography in museum design operating on a sociometric level (by providing context and setting), and in the previous section I reviewed scenography in museum design operating on atmospheric level. In this final section of the research context I shall look at a style of museum exhibitions which simultaneously works on a sociometric and atmospheric level. Immersive exhibitions adopt many scenographic components, and are gaining increasing regard in museums; ‘Increasingly, museums maximize the use of design through the creation of immersion experiences. Few museum experiences are more compelling to visitors than such experiences’ (Falk & Dierking, 2000: 198). Immersive exhibitions aim to replicate or create a place or setting, and then use atmospherics to immerse the visitor in the environment of that place. Unlike dioramas where a visitor is distanced from the created setting, visitors enter within immersive exhibitions to become submerged in the created atmosphere. *The Street* exhibition at Thackray Medical Museum is one example of an immersive exhibition (I shall discuss this exhibition in more detail later in chapter 5). Irene McNulty, (Marketing Manager) at Thackray Medical Museum discussed *The Street* explaining how visitors clearly do not believe they were in a slum, but the immersive exhibition helped them to better understand what it was like, she comments: ‘obviously they’ve come in a car, they’ve walked in through the door, they’ve paid their money- they don’t really believe they’re in Victorian Leeds but it’s getting them that step nearer to it’ (McNulty in interview, 2009). The simulated environments of immersive exhibitions often depict a real time or place Lorenc *et al* (2007) but the aim of immersive exhibitions is not to fool visitors in to believing they have entered another time or place, is it to put the visitors in contact with that setting and give an insight into how it may have been or felt.

Kotler and Kotler (2004) emphasise the need for museums today to create ‘experiences’ for visitors that help the overall museum experience become more memorable, and they state immersive exhibitions as one method of achieving this:

Generating experiences involves activities in which visitors can directly participate, intensive sensory perception combining sight, sound and motion, environments in which visitors can immerse themselves rather than behave merely as spectators, and out-of-the-ordinary stimuli and effects that make visitors experience unique and memorable (Kotler & Kotler, 2004: 173)

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In the previous section I reviewed the use of lighting to create atmosphere and mood in exhibitions, the same approach is often used in immersive exhibitions. The Falstaff Experience in Stratford-upon-Avon is a museum of Tudor life that attempts to recreate streets, buildings and rooms from Tudor times. The extensive use of stage lighting creates a grim and moody space that adds to the drama of the interpretation themes which include; poverty, injustice and the unsanitary conditions of Tudor times.



Figure 20 Theatrical blue lighting at Falstaff Experience



Figure 21 Theatrical lighting at Falstaff Experience

Edge (2010) reviews the success of a temporary immersive exhibition at Imperial War Museum London entitled '*The Ministry of Food*' suggesting its success was owing to visitors' interaction and involvement, where they were not just viewing the scene but becoming part of it (Edge, 2010: 50). By entering into another time or place the visitor is transformed from passive spectator to active participant in the museum experience. Gilbert has conducted detailed research on immersive experiences and describes them as such: '{immersive exhibitions} pull visitors out of the passive, one dimensional museum viewing ritual and transport them to a different time, place or situation where they become active participants in what they encounter' (Gilbert, 2002: 10).

Inviting visitors into the space does however mean they are in closer proximity to the physical constructs of the design, making it more difficult to disguise or hide limitations in the replication. The basis of

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immersive exhibitions is somewhat like theatrical performance in that it requires a level of suspension of disbelief or concept blending to overlook limitations and falsities. As discussed above, visitors to immersive exhibitions are not going to be tricked into thinking they have somehow been physically moved to another place, they will remain aware of the surrounding museum context but must choose to excuse or ignore this to become immersed in the experience. To assist visitors in being able to overlook limitations, immersive exhibitions will often try to hide or disguise service arrangements and building features (like air vents, water pipes, electrical switches and lighting fixtures) and will remove or limit the use of physical barriers and 2D interpretation. By removing barriers, immersive exhibitions present many issues in object safety and care, presenting a challenging situation for designers and curators. Without physical barriers, or unsightly instructional signage, it is difficult to prevent visitors from touching objects. Owing to the restrictions and difficulties in using artefacts and written interpretation, some museum professionals feel that immersive exhibitions are not suited to museums and are merely entertainment devices that do not help to achieve museums fundamental aims and objectives. Gilbert noted that some museums professionals worry about using immersive exhibitions as they are 'too Hollywood or that they are merely marketing tools and have little educational value' (Gilbert, 2002: 12). Gilbert conducted research with museum professionals in which she gained their feedback on immersive exhibitions. From their views she concluded immersive exhibitions are: successful as competitive leisure-time attractions, have greater holding power and memorability and are effective in conveying content and thereby increasing visitors learning (Gilbert, 2002: 10).

In later interviews with museum staff I found that some staff celebrate immersive exhibitions as a highly effective way of offering a different type of learning experience to visitors. McNulty explained that one advantage of the immersive experience of *The Street* is that it offers learning opportunities to a wider audience who may not engage with more traditional interpretation strategies (McNulty in interview, 2009). Jane Hanney, (Exhibitions Officer at Sandwell Museums) also believes immersive exhibitions can enhance learning, and discussed how Sandwell Museums use immersive experiences with school children, during interview she commented: 'they learn so much in a couple of hours from doing it and being in it. The sites, the sounds the smells it's very evocative...they can immerse themselves in it they can really be part of it rather than just looking at it' (Garrett & Hanney in interview, 2009). Hanney claimed that by being able to step into another time, school children are able to learn through participation, this not only improves understanding of the era but provides a 'big experience, they will never forget' (Garrett & Hanney in interview, 2009).

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By becoming physically involved and more mentally active in immersive exhibitions, visitors are able to encounter something like the conditions of another time or place, and this can be an emotional as well as intellectual experience. In the *Power Within* gallery at The Natural History Museum in London visitors can experience what it is like to encounter a powerful earthquake. The exhibition is designed to characterize a supermarket in Kobe, Japan where a devastating earthquake hit in 1995. A replica shop is built on a mechanical platform which is hidden from visitors view. The platform shakes the room violently in a way similar to the impact of an earthquake. The effect is supplemented with the flashing of lights and the sound of rumbling and smashing glass. The force of such an earthquake is something many visitors will not have encountered in real life and so the physical experience gives a powerful insight that could not be communicated through visual or audio devices alone. Rather than just understand what happens during an earthquake visitors are able to experience the feeling. Sceptics could criticise the extent to which this exhibition gives an authentic insight into the actual feeling of an earthquake, as visitors will remain aware of the museum context, and aware that there is no imminent threat of danger, and no feeling of genuine fear. Though this is true, I feel there is still significant value in these types of exhibitions as the physical response can help visitors empathise with the situation and realise the true extent, more so than would be achieved through other interpretation strategies. I further investigate the differences in remaining authentic and accurate when using scenography in museum settings in chapter 5.2.i, and consider the impact of encouraging emotional values in 5.4.i. I also review the role of empathy in museum experiences in chapter 5.4.ii.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology chosen. Prior to the technical outline I discuss the philosophical stance that guided the research design. The philosophical foundation of the research is important because: ‘it impacts every aspect of the research process, including topic selection, question formulation, methods selection, sampling and research design’ (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 5). I begin by explaining the reason for selecting a naturalistic inquiry and explain how this informed the research design and selection of research methods. I then outline the ethical considerations of the study and explain the processes used to improve validity of the findings.

In 3.3 I outline the research design and process. The emergent research design meant that not all methods were selected in advance, methods are listed here in the order in which they first occurred during the study, but the process was cyclical with methods happening concurrently and the findings of one method used to inform the planning and investigation of the next. For each of the different methods used I explain how it assisted in answering the research questions, and explain the relevant advantages and disadvantages of that method. I also outline the process of data collection and the data collected for each method used.

3.2 Nature of the Research

3.2.i. Approach

This study is classified as applied research, with ‘descriptive’ and ‘exploratory’ objectives (Kumar, 2005: 10). In aiming to identify current applications of scenography in museums it is descriptive. As the transference of principles from theatrical performance into museum designs is one in which little research already exists, the research also has exploratory objectives. The style of inquiry was chosen to suit the aims and objectives of the research, as well as my personal skills and beliefs as a researcher. I selected a naturalistic inquiry so it would be rooted in the setting investigated, in this case museums, and the ‘human instrument’ can be used as a primary data collection tool (Erlandson *et al*, 1993: xiii). In naturalistic inquiry the researcher is seen as being one of the most critical and

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central research tools using the process of personal observation and reflection. Erlandson *et al* wrote a guide to doing naturalistic enquiry, they describe the use of the human instrument as a research tool: ‘The process of observing, recording, analysing, reflecting, dialoguing and rethinking are all essential parts of the research process as we seek to develop it’ (Erlandson *et al*, 1993: 5). Naturalistic inquiry lends itself to an ‘unstructured approach’ that allows flexibility in all aspects of the research process (Kumar, 2005: 12) and accommodates for data to be collected at various points.

During this research I adopted a process of analytical induction, where data collection, data analysis, and theory generation were not one directional and I moved back and forth between stages. An advantage to using a process of analytical induction is that it allows for the researcher to adjust methods and respond to ongoing findings. The process of data collection and data analysis can generate new ideas and hypotheses; analytical induction allows the researcher to collect specific types of data using a particular sampling procedure (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 36). The flexibility of using a naturalistic inquiry and process of analytical inductions allowed me to remain open to discovery and responsive to on-going findings. However, it meant it was difficult to specify the research design or the required instruments prior to starting. With naturalistic inquiry, the appropriate research methods and tools emerge as the study unfolds (Erlandson *et al*, 1993: xiii) and this was true for this study. I used an emergent research design where the most appropriate research methods and instruments were selected based on the on-going analysis of data and indicative findings. Throughout the research process new research methods were introduced and existing tools were developed. The selection of methods was not however sporadic, unjustified or unconsidered. Research methods were planned based on their perceived suitability to address the research aims and issues, and a review of the strengths and weaknesses of research methods (chosen research methods are evaluated in 3.3). A variety of research methods was chosen to help overcome the weaknesses in individual methods and allow for data triangulation.

The naturalistic inquiry and the nature of the research aims favoured more qualitative research methods as these better suit the required flexibility of an emergent research design. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Leavy are leaders in the study of research methods, and co-authored *The Practice of Qualitative Research*, they describe qualitative research as being more suited than quantitative research when trying to understand a situation, or investing attitudes, feelings, behaviour, and in trying to understand meaning (*ibid*: 4). Qualitative analysis is done to establish the variation of a situation, phenomenon or problem, without quantifying it (Kumar, 2005: 12) which is

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what I sought to investigate in this study. The aims of the research were focused more on understanding how and why scenography is used in museum design, and the impact of this, rather than try identifying the proportion of museums using scenography, or try to numerically analyse the impact. The process of conducting a quantitative study follows a linear, step-by-step process. In comparison, the process of qualitative research is more flexible and iterative, and the researcher may move back and forth between the stages of defining the research problem, formulating hypotheses, designing methods, data collection, data analysis and conclusion (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 35). Based on the requirement outlined above, the following methods were selected to achieve the research aims and address the research questions:

- Field visits to museums
- Online questionnaire with museum visitors
- Interviews with museum staff
- On-site surveys of museum visitors

In 3.3 I review the appropriateness of each method considering how they fit the research approach and fulfil the research aims. I also evaluate relevant strengths and weaknesses, and give a brief description of the process and results of each method chosen.

3.2.ii. Ethics

Throughout this study I adhered to ethical practices, not only to guarantee the safety of stakeholders, but to ensure that the research process and researchers findings are trustworthy and valid (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 59). An important part of appropriate ethical practice for this study was maintaining moral integrity and working with ethical values (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 77). I acted ethically and relationally with all participants and stakeholders by remaining transparent and honest about the nature and purpose of the research (Butler-Kisber, 2010: 21). I gained informed and willing consent from all participants by making clear the nature of the research and their role within it (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 65). When museum staff were approached as potential interview candidates, the nature of the research was fully disclosed and the potential use of data explained. Permission was sought to audio-record interviews and all interviewees were given the right to remain anonymous. All interviewees gave permission for discussion to be recorded, and for

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them to be quoted using their name, role and site of employment at the time¹⁹. The nature of the research and use of data was also fully disclosed to participants in the online questionnaire and the two on-site visitor surveys.

To ensure confidentiality for all participants, the data collected during this research is used only for the purpose of this study and relating papers; participant's comments have not been discussed or quoted elsewhere. The only method used where expressed and willing consent could not be attained was observation of other visitors during field visits to museums. As willing consent could not be sought without influencing behaviour, I remained a passive observer during all field visits to museums, and did not go out my way to interact with other visitors. Purposeful interaction would be unethical, as it would impact on the individual's quality of visit, and could influence behaviour, making them act in a way they would not have otherwise. This in turn would introduce bias to the research findings, which would also be unethical (Kumar, 2005: 214). I have not included any detailed discussion of other visitors behaviour in the findings, and any observation of other visitors was only recorded anecdotally. Field visits were recorded using photographs, some of which include members of the public, I have been considerate of the privacy of members of the public and have not included any images where individuals can be easily recognised, unless their expressed and willing consent has been attained.

At the request of the hosting institutions, participants in the two on-site surveys were given a small gift as a thank you for their time. Some researchers feel it is unethical to offer inducements to participants as it may be seen as a bribe to participate, and may influence responses. I personally feel that unless there is a significant gain then small incentives are unlikely to have significant impact. People are usually willing to participate if they realise the importance of the study (Kumar, 2005: 213). To ensure the token gift was not seen as an incentive to persuade or bribe participants, they were offered to participants only after they had given their informed consent to participate.

3.2.iii. Validity and reliability of data

¹⁹ Participants views are their own opinions, they do not speak on behalf of the museum, trust or authority by which they are employed.

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Validity is not an end goal but a process (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 48). The concept of validity was applied to every aspect of the research process, considering if the research investigation answers the questions set out, and the appropriateness of methods used to do this (Kumar, 2005: 153). One of the limitations in naturalistic inquiry, and using the human instrument as a primary research tool, is possible bias in the collection and interpretation of data. Erlandson *et al* (1993) claim that for the findings of a naturalistic inquiry to be credible then the research should demonstrate the following; prolonged engagement in the setting, triangulate sources and methods, and conduct extensive member checks (Erlandson *et al*, 1993: 160). These three factors were taken in to account during the research planning and the ongoing processes of data collection and data analysis.

To ensure findings reflected prolonged engagement in the setting I conducted regular field visits at a range of museums, over a five year period between 2007 and 2012²⁰. To allow for data triangulation, research methods were planned to collect data from different sources, offering a balance of personal reflection, opinions of museum staff, and visitor insight. Reflecting on data from different sources invites new perspectives and helps to reduce bias; ‘knowledge is protected not by abstracting from all perspectives (the claim of objectivity) but by balancing multiple perspectives to constrain bias (the claim of fairness)’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 68). Rather than be comparative; data collected from different methods or sources is reviewed as being complementary to each other (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 51). In the analysis of data I looked for consistency between findings from different methods and sources, and across time (Hesse-Biber&Leavy, 2011: 52).

Member checking involves testing categories, interpretations, or conclusions, through continuous, formal or informal checking of data with stakeholders. Erlandson *et al* explain how the findings of naturalistic inquiry are not discovered, but are created through ‘the hermeneutic-dialectic interaction between and among the inquirer and various implicated groups’ (Erlandson *et al*, 1993: xiv). These ‘implicated groups’ are more commonly referred to as stakeholders. In the case of research based in a museum or heritage setting stakeholders may include: visitors; staff and volunteers; directors, board members and trustees; friends groups; the local community; local council, authority or funders. During this study I have consulted with visitors and staff, as they are both key stakeholders and the primary users of museums. I also invited staff to offer comments on the ongoing findings of the research, such as the proposed value groups. I presented the proposed value of museum experience groupings to museum staff scheduled for interviews, and invited their

²⁰ I continued to visit museums and heritage sites in to the final year of the study (2013) but these were not planned or structured visits recorded and analysed to inform the research findings. A full list of all sites visited as included in appendix 3.

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honest opinions and criticisms (further details on the testing of the visitor's value of experience groupings and feedback from museum staff are included in chapter 4.2).

Another form of member checking I completed was to agree the line of questioning for the two on-site surveys with the hosting organisations. As stakeholders with vested interest in the findings of the surveys, sharing questions in advance helped to develop a good rapport and sense of trust with the staff at the hosting institutions. It also helps to improve the validity of the data by offering transparency. 'Transparency has been mentioned as a way to enhance trustworthiness, as a way to be reflexive in the enquiry process, to share productively the enquiry process with colleagues' (Butler-Kisber, 2010: 21). To further improve the validity of findings I also sought feedback from peers and research stakeholders by discussing areas of the investigation at industry conferences and seminars. Doing this subjected my findings to competing claims and interpretations (Hesse-Biber & Leavy: 2011, 48). In chapter 5 I discuss one such session which I delivered at a symposium hosted by the department of Museum Studies at Leicester University. Details of other papers delivered in this research are listed in appendix 2.

Part of research validity is recognising the limitations of the data, and not making assumptions, or making vague relationships between cause and effect. When analysing data collected from field visits and on-site visitor surveys, I remained aware of the range of extraneous variables that may impact visitor's experiences, and mindful to the extent of the impact of scenographic principles as part of values recognised by visitors. In the analysis of data I reflected on my own personal observation and experiences at field visits, but in the reporting of findings in chapters 4, 5 and 6, I ensure to separate description from interpretation and judgement.

3.3 Methods

3.3.i. Field Visits

Field visits were planned primarily to help answer research questions 2 and 3 (see chapter 1.3), but the experience of visiting such a large and varied number of museums gave a valuable insight into museum practice, which helped in answering all of the research questions. From field visits I sought to identify examples of scenographic principles and scenographic devices in museum design, and to reflect on the impact these have on visitor's value of experience. Any examples of scenography identified in museum design were recorded and documented using written notes and photographs²¹. Personal reflections were recorded with written notes made during and immediately after the visit.

To evaluate the impact of museum designs using scenography I used the visitor's value of experience grouping system as a guiding framework. The reasons for creating an original framework, the process of developing the value of experience grouping system and the methods used to test it are further discussed in the following chapter. After testing the visitor's value of experience grouping system, it was used as a framework to guide the investigation into scenography's impact on visitor's experiences. Field notes were categorically recorded (Kumar, 2005: 122) using the visitor's value of experience groupings system. The analysis of field visit notes was an on-going inductive process, which Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2011) describe as; 'a process of discovering what the data you gathered means' (*ibid*, p220).

During field visits I acted as a 'complete participant' meaning I was able to actively engage with members of the setting, but participated in a 'covert' manner by not revealing my identity as a researcher (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 207). Field visits were originally planned to also include unobtrusive, non-influenced observation of visitor's natural behaviour during museum experiences. I trialled using participant observation at two museums, but I found it to be very time consuming and unreliable in the samples that can be attained. Furthermore it did not allow for follow up conversations to clarify my interpretations of users behaviour, and it brought in to question some difficult ethical considerations. I therefore decided that during field visits I would focus on recording personal reflections and observations, and any relevant or illuminating participant observation was recorded anecdotally.

²¹ Photographs taken when permitted. Appendix 3 lists all the sites visited and shows those recorded using photographs.

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The greatest disadvantage of field visits is that they offer insight in to just one day, when the activity of a museum site may vary greatly on different days, or even at different times of day. This is of only limited relevance to this study as the aim of field visits was to review museum design, which remains mostly unchanged or unaffected regardless of the day or time. I did not return to visit the same sites on different days/times, but did plan field visits so that overall they were done on a variety of days (weekdays/ weekends; school holidays/ term time; special event days/ non-event days). A further disadvantage of field visits as a research method is that there is no control over external variables. This means that the research has limited reproducibility; the research may be repeated using the same methods and visiting the same sites but draw different conclusions (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010: 3). It was decided before starting field visits that, if it was believed external variables had significantly impacted on the review of the museum design or the behaviour of visitors that day, then the findings would be disregarded and the field visit repeated on a different day.

Field visits began in the very early stages of the research process alongside the literature review, and they continued on a regular basis throughout the study. No formal schedule was outlined for field visits and I did not predetermine the sites to be visited, or the dates on which these were to be done. Fitting with the emergent research design and the on-going process of analytical induction, I selected sites to visit based on the findings and analysis of previous visits. To ensure a balanced sample of different museums, a spreadsheet was kept listing the museum visited. This spreadsheet also records: date of the visit; the museums subject/s; estimated size (based on visitor attendance); geographical region; and if the visit was recorded using photographs (see appendix 3). This database helped to keep an overall balance in the types of museums that were included and helped in being able to fairly represent the variety of museums nationwide.

The number of museums that needed to be visited could not be estimated in advance and it was planned to continue visiting museums until a point of saturation was reached. The saturation point is recognised as when the researcher is no longer finding new information (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 209). During the study it became apparent that owing to the wide range of museums in the UK, and the continued developments in exhibition design, a point of saturation may never be reached, or not within the study's time frame. Formal field visits were ended to allow adequate time for the analysis of data and write up of findings to be completed in the agreed time frames. I did continue to visit museums after the formal data collection phase was completed. This allowed me to remain informed of the most up-date developments and trends in museum design. In addition to recorded

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field visits, I visited many other museums during the research process. Though not formally recorded in the same way as field visits, it was anticipated that observation and personal reflections from these museum visits would inevitably impact on the research findings and the conclusions. Therefore, I decided to make ‘on-the-fly’ notes (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 216) during these visits, and noted all museums visited during the study alongside the list of field visits. Whilst undertaking this research I have visited over 100 museums, including 53 planned field visits.

Towards the end of the data collection phase I conducted a field visit to Kensington Palace after hearing about a temporary exhibition which had been created in collaboration with Wildworks Theatre Company. The exhibition was titled *Enchanted Palace* and I felt it was entirely unique to the museum industry at the time, and utilised a wide range of scenographic principles and devices²². The exhibition demonstrated many of the emerging conclusions of my research, I visited three times before deciding to interview some of the team involved in its development (discussed in the next section). Findings from the multiple field visits to *Enchanted Palace*, and the interview with the staff involved were indispensable in answering many of the research questions and are discussed extensively in chapter 5 when I review the impact of scenography on visitor’s value of experience.

3.3.ii. Interviews with museum staff

A personal aim for this study was that the research and findings should be relevant and useful to personnel in the museums industry; I therefore decided to conduct interviews with persons involved in the planning and development of museum exhibitions. Continued discussion with museum staff helped make the research findings relevant, and tested suggestions by making sure they are realistic and relevant. Maintaining discussion with personnel also meant I could be responsive to their changing needs and any concerns. Consulting with museum staff also provided an alternative perspective to compare against my personal observations (from field visits), and the opinions of visitors (discussed in 3.3.iii and 3.3.iv respectfully).

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were chosen as the most appropriate to fulfil the research aims. The flexibility allowed to the interviewer in what they ask a respondent is an asset, as it can elicit extremely rich information (Kumar, 2005: 125). Semi-structured interviews would also accommodate the differences in the types of museums approached and the roles of interviewees,

²²As a result of the collaboration of the two distinct groups in its development, *Enchanted Palace* was neither a theatrical performance nor a conventional exhibition but a hybrid of the two. Further details and background to the *Enchanted Palace* are given in appendix 16.

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whilst still remaining some control and focus of the discussion. Semi-structured interviews allow a researcher control over the conversation but some freedom for the interviewee to talk about what is of interest or importance to them (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 102). A semi-structured approach to interviews also suited the process of analytical induction (see 3.i.i) by allowing the line of questioning to be adapted to suit the changing needs, and respond to on-going reflection and indicative findings. Museum staff interviewed early in the process (whilst still testing the visitor's value of experience grouping system) were invited to give their opinion and comments on the proposed value groupings. Later in the research, interviews became more focused on the types of value visitors seek from museum experiences, and identifying staffs' awareness to, or perception of, scenography in museums. Individual interviews were planned to answer just one, two or three of the research questions, but collectively, findings from interviews with museum staff are used to answer all of the research questions, as well as being used to test the appropriateness of the visitor's value of experience groupings.

The quality of data collected from interviews can be strongly reliant on the skill of the interviewer. Conducting in-depth interviews is an underestimated skill that requires the researcher to act as an active listener (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 98). Before starting the research I had very little experience in conducting interviews, but knew it is a skill that most researchers develop over the process of doing multiple interviews (Kumar, 2005: 125). As a novice interviewer I prepared an interview guide (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 105) which detailed topical areas or issues that I was interested in exploring. Interview questions were then constructed from these 'lines of enquiry' and used as a checklist at the end of interviews to make sure all topics had been covered (*ibid*, p105). The first two interviews completed were used as pilots to test my interviewing skills, and increase confidence. I later returned to re-interview the first two staff interviewed.

Interviewees were selected using a judgemental/ purposive sampling, this is where; 'the judgement of the researcher as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study. The researcher only goes to those people who in his/ her opinion are likely to have the required information and be willing to share it' (Kumar, 2005: 179). A criterion was devised to ensure persons interviewed would have relevant knowledge and valid authority to discuss the issues and objectives. These criteria specified that interviewees had to have worked within a museum setting for at least twelve months, and they must be (in any capacity) involved in the planning and development of museum exhibitions. There was no predetermined sample size for interviews: I planned to continue conducting interviews until I reached saturation point. All interviews except one were completed

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face-to-face at a location of the interviewee's choice²³. All interviewees were informed of the nature of the interview and the research, upon hearing which some interviewees suggested an additional relevant person to be interviewed. When two appropriate persons from the same organisation were recognised they were (with agreement of all parties), conducted as joint interviews. In total seventeen interviews were completed with eighteen museum staff. All interviews were audio recorded and then verbatim transcribed, the written transcripts were then used to analyse discussion and interpret findings. A list of the interviews conducted can be found in appendix 4. All interviewee's roles are given as correct at time of interview.

3.3.iii. Online questionnaire of museum visitors

A visitor questionnaire was originally planned as a way of testing the proposed 'value of museum experience grouping system'. In the process of designing and planning the questionnaire it was realised that it could also be used to help answer the research questions. By investigating visitors' reasons for going to museums, the outcomes of visiting, and what visitors feel is the role of museums, the results of the questionnaire could be used in answering research questions 1, 3 and 4 (see 1.3.ii). The data collected from the questionnaire was also used to test the value grouping system as a valid research instrument.

It was decided to host the questionnaire via the internet for several reasons. Mainly as it would allow for a geographically wider sample of participants (Kumar, 2005: 130), and it requires reduced time and cost compared to physical distribution. I had considered conducting questionnaires face-to-face with visitors at museum sites, but it was decided that this could lead to too much bias, where participant replies were reflective of the hosting site, and/or the experience that day. An online questionnaire would be less likely to have such site bias, but this cannot be guaranteed as there is no control over when or where participants complete. An unavoidable disadvantage of an online questionnaire is that it is restricted to persons with access to a computer and the internet, and persons who are literate.

Other disadvantages of questionnaires (not just online questionnaires) that need to be considered here were; self-selecting bias, opportunity to clarify issues is lacking, response to questions may be influenced by the response to other questions, and responses cannot be supplemented with further information (Kumar, 2005: 130). To overcome some of these problems I used both closed questions,

²³ Interview with Sue Hill of Wildworks was done via telephone due to length and cost of travel to appropriate location.

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and open ended questions. Open-ended questions were used to elicit insight into visitor's attitudes and perceptions towards museum visiting and provide opportunity for clarification. Closed questions would provide quantitative data that would allow for statistical analysis (Kumar, 2005: 134). It was felt that a level of statistical analysis would be more apt for testing the value grouping system, and so, two multiple choice questions were included. The two multiple choice questions investigated visitor's reasons for going to museums, and the outcomes of visiting. For these closed questions a five-point numerical Likert scale was used, to allow for positive, negative and neutral positions (Kumar, 2005: 147). Asking participants to select and rate options meant results from these two questions could be analysed in two ways. Firstly I could analyse the total number of participants that selected each option (response rate). Then by taking a mean average of all the responses given to each option, I can review how frequently each occurs (average frequency).

When designing the questionnaire, I hosted a focus group with a convenience sample of museum visitors. This was done to help select appropriate answer options for multiple choice questions. A group of twelve students who recognised themselves as being 'museum visitors' were recruited from the university. The focus group participants were asked two questions; 'why do you go to museums?' and 'how do museums make you feel?' The findings of this focus group were not intended to contribute to the overall findings and conclusions of this study, and were only used to help recognise appropriate answer options to be used in the online questionnaire. Answers given by focus group participants were coded and categorised using the proposed value of experience groupings. A summary of the focus group discussion categorised under the proposed value groupings is included in appendix 6.

The questionnaire was piloted by inviting ten participants to complete, and then discuss any issues in completing or confusion with wording. After piloting the questionnaire, and making necessary amendments, it was published online using a purposely created domain:

www.themuseumexperience.com. The questionnaire was live for a three month period, in which time a total of 120 completed questionnaires were received. This surpassed the required quota of 100, which is generally accepted as the minimal number needed for statistical analysis. An accidental sampling (Kumar, 2005: 178) process was used, with invitations to participate posted on web-sites and forums. One problem with this method of sampling is that some people contacted may not have the required information (Kumar, 2005: 178) in this case I wished to only consult existing museum visitors. To distinguish museum users and non-users within the sample, participants were asked the last time they visited a museum. It was predetermined that any participant who had visited a

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museum within the last three years would have relevant knowledge to be included in the data analysis. Only two out of 120 participants claimed to have not visited a museum in the last 3 years. These two entries were omitted from the sample, providing a total of 118. Participants' responses were inputted to Microsoft Excel, which was then used to edit and analyse the data.

To analyse data collected from the online questionnaire, I first coded responses to open-ended questions using the visitor's value of museum experience groupings as a code book. Each of the value groupings was given a numerical code number, and any 'other' responses that could not be coded were numbered '0'. From this process, I found that the categories were exhaustive, and almost every response could be placed within one of the categories (Kumar, 2005: 321). The categories of value were however not mutually exclusive (Kumar, 2005: 231) and many of participants responses could be coded under more than one category. Data that was dual-coded was separately analysed to look for trends in the ways that different types of value overlap or may be consequential of each other. The testing of the proposed value of experience groupings is further discussed further in chapter 4.2.ii.

3.3.iv. Onsite visitor surveys

Two on-site surveys were completed with visitors at museums using scenography in the design. The aim of these surveys was to identify the impact of scenography on visitor's value of experience, and to support personal reflections at field visits. The advantage to consulting visitors on-site, is that it allows insight into the immediate response to the experience. The mirror problem to this is that it does not capture any long term impacts. Structured interviews were selected as the primary data collection method in both on-site surveys. Structured visitor interviews means that the exact same questions are asked of each participant and in the same order, this allows for comparisons between respondents to be made (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2001: 102). Interview questions were planned to include both open and closed-ended questions and were sent to the hosting organisations in advance for their approval. The skill of the researcher as an interviewer can impact on the quality of the interaction, which in turn can impact the quality of data (Kumar, 2005: 131). I established quality interaction with visitors by being transparent on the purpose of the research and the use of data, and maintaining a friendly, approachable demeanour.

I decided to focus the visitor surveys to question visitors on just one aspect of a museum experience, rather than their visit overall. This was done to allow focus only on the aspects of the

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experience using scenography and allow more immediate recall. The two experiences selected were; *The Street* exhibition at Thackray Medical Museum and *Night in the Trenches* at Staffordshire Regiment Museum. *The Street* is a permanent gallery which replicates a typical street in Victorian Leeds. The exhibition uses a number of scenographic components including staging and scenery, scenic painting, costumes (on mannequins) props, theatrical lighting, and an atmospheric soundscape. It is also known for its use of a rather unpleasant artificial smell that creates a novel atmospheric support and helps demonstrate the squalid and unpleasant conditions of a Victorian slum. *The Street* uses a narrative approach with very little written interpretation within the exhibition. Before entering *The Street* visitors are invited to select one of six characters. The six characters are represented using mannequins in the exhibition and in the gallery following *The Street* visitors are able to discover more about their chosen character and their story²⁴.

Night in the Trenches was selected as an alternative type of museum experience, but one also using obvious scenographic components. *Night at the Trenches* is a special event held annually around Remembrance Day at Staffordshire Regiment Museum. In front of the museum building is a replica of a World War I trench. The trench is open to visitors all year around, but it is brought to life at this annual live event. Visitors must book in advance for one of the guided tours, where they are led by a third-person guide through the trench. As they move through the trench visitors encounter a series of short scenes of live action showing what life was like living and fighting in the trenches during the First World War. All the performers (including the guide) are in costume, and there is a number of theatrical style props used to stage the trench so it is more convincing of the actual conditions. The guide remains in third person throughout, responding to questions and offering clarification. Other performers remain in strict first person, as if the action were happening there and then. I attended *Night at the Trenches* as a visitor in 2008, before conducting the on-site survey there in 2009, and I returned again as a visitor in 2010.

Having visited *Night in the Trenches* the previous year, and having spoken with staff prior to conducting the survey, I was alert to some potential problems in doing visitor consultation. Firstly, the guided tour is held outside where due to the use of live gunfire, it is very loud. Furthermore, the tour ends close to the visitor car park, meaning many visitors leave the site immediately after the event. As the event is held in November, there is also high chance of poor weather conditions. For these reasons I decided to host the consultation inside the museum building and organised to use

²⁴ The characters represented within *The Street* are based on real people from history. Some aspects of the peoples stories have been completed by the museum staff where details are unknown, but these are based on sound historical research. No aspects of the people's stories are knowingly exaggerated or falsified.

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personal meaning mapping as a contingency plan. As some visitors do return inside the building after the tour, I planned for the structured interview questionnaire to be the primary method and use personal meaning mapping if I suffered difficulty achieving an appropriate sample of post-tour visitors. In total I completed twenty structured interviews with visitors exiting *The Street* over the course of one day.

Personal meaning mapping is a research method used mostly in a museum context to demonstrate learning or change in attitude. It involves participants being given a blank sheet of paper with a prompt word or phrase in the centre²⁵. The participant is then given verbal instructions on what to write but not how to complete it²⁶. In this case participants were asked why they were attending *Night in the Trenches*, and what were their expectations of the event? Participants are then given as much time as they need to complete the personal meaning map, they can take as long as they wish, and can write as much or as little as they feel is needed. Once the participant is happy they have noted everything they return to the researcher who verbally clarifies what the participant has written, and may ask the participant to expand on points. Notes made by the researcher are recorded on the personal meaning map using a different colour pen. This allows for participants written responses to be separated from verbally clarified points during data analysis. Personal meaning mapping is beneficial as a research method as it can gather unprompted data that is reflective of participants' true opinions. The ability of participants to communicate using drawings or limited notes which they then verbally clarify also means the method is well suited for consulting with children or persons with difficulty reading or writing. Personal meaning mapping is excellent for gathering understanding of peoples' base line knowledge, expectations and/ or motivations. If visitors are willing to return to the researcher after participating in the event, then the same method can also be used to compare expectations with actual outcomes. In practice this is difficult to administer. The researcher must wait until the participant returns to complete the follow-up consultation before moving on to the next participant; this makes the process very time consuming and allows only a small sample to be collected. The return rate can also be very low when the researcher is unable to position themselves where the event finishes (as was the case with *Night in the Trenches*). For this reason, it was decided not to ask participants to return to complete a post-tour consultation, and personal meaning mapping was only used to gather understanding of

²⁵ A blank copy of the personal meaning map used at *Night at the Trenches* can be found in appendix 14.

²⁶ Not giving instructions on how to complete the personal meaning map allows the participant in total freedom on how to complete it. Some may choose to write a list, others write down like a story, some will make a mind map, whilst others may just write key words or draw or sketch.

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motivations and expectations. At *Night in the Trenches* I completed eight prior-to-tour personal meaning maps, and six post-tour structured interviews.

Chapters 4 and 5 present the findings and analysis of the data collected through the primary research methods discussed in this chapter. Results of the online survey with visitors were mostly used when analysing value of museum experience, and so that data is mostly referenced in chapter 4 when explaining the process of developing and testing the visitors' value of experience groupings. Findings of the two on-site surveys with museum visitors were mostly used to investigate the impact of scenography on visitors' value of museum experience, which is examined in chapter 5. Personal observations and reflections from field visits, and discussion with museum staff in interviews were insightful to answering all of the research questions and are therefore discussed throughout chapters 4 and 5. In chapter 6.1 I give a final review the study overall, and as part of that review I discuss some limitations of the primary research methods that were recognised during the data collection and analysis.

Chapter 4

Values of Museum Experience

4.1 Introduction

This chapter details the process of developing and testing the visitors' values of museum experience groupings (shortened to value grouping for convenience), and outlines how they were used to identify trends in visitors value of experience. The value groupings were created to be used as a framework to guide the investigation into the impact of scenography in museum design on visitors' experiences. In 4.2.i I explain the reasons for needing to create an original framework for the purpose of this study, and I offer definitions for the five types of value that were initially identified (referred to as the proposed value groupings). Before applying the proposed value groups as a research instrument the system was tested using a number of methods. The process and results of this phase of testing are discussed in 4.2.ii. Though the initial testing indicated that the five proposed value groups were all applicable in museum experiences, and that the system was appropriate as a research tool, later in the research process it became apparent that there was a sixth type of value commonly recognised by museum visitors. I have categorised this as 'collection values', the process leading to the recognition of collection value is discussed in 4.3. As collection value was not identified until much later in the study, it was not included in the testing of the proposed value groupings, and is therefore not discussed in chapter 4.2.ii.

Whilst examining visitors' value of museum experience I recognised that values can overlap and be consequential of others. These overlaps are discussed in 4.2.ii, before reviewing trends in visitors' value of experience in 4.3. In looking for trends I sought to examine if certain types of value are more critical, fundamental, or unique to museums. To maintain boundaries on what was realistically achievable within the study, I decided to focus the investigation of the impact of scenography on just three types of value: intellectual, emotional and collection values. I explain the reasons for prioritising these three values in 4.3. In 4.3.i I give a brief synopsis of my findings on the other types of value (physical, interpersonal and community values), before reviewing the chosen three in more detail.

4.2 The Visitors Value of Museum Experience Groupings

4.2.i. Developing a value grouping system

The visitors' values of museum experience groupings were created to be used as a research tool for the purpose of this study. I required a framework or model to guide the investigation into the impact of scenography in museum design on visitors' experiences. In the research planning I had predicted I would be able to use a pre-existing system from secondary research. The review of literature into museum experiences (outlined in chapter 2.2.ii) provided a good overview of the types of outcomes that museum visitors seek and/or attain, but no one study was found which represented the full range of possible values identified across all of the studies. As no appropriate existing system could be identified I decided to develop an original framework to summarise the types of value visitors seek from their museum experiences. The visitors' value of museum experience groupings were developed based on the review of literature into visitors' experiences and supported by my personal reflection and observations during field visits to museums.

The value groupings are proposed to be the types of value that are most commonly sought or recognised by museum visitors; the grouping system does not exclude the possibility of further values that may be applicable to different museum experiences. The visitors value of experience groupings provide a way of considering different aspects of visitors experiences, they are not intended to work as a system for segmenting visitors. I initially proposed that the types of values visitors attribute to museum experiences can mostly be categorised into five types: intellectual, interpersonal, physical, emotional, and community values. I have outlined each of these five types of value of museum experience below.

Intellectual values.

Intellectual values are outcomes relating to mental thought or stimulation, education and learning. Examples of intellectual value in museum experience may include: gaining new skills or development of existing abilities, increased comprehension or understanding, new awareness of a subject, fact learning, motivation to find out more, ability to solve problems, broadening of existing knowledge or considering new perspectives. Intellectual outcomes are by far the most commonly researched area of museum experiences. It is well established that learning is not only something a museum strives to provide but is something visitors actively seek.

Emotional values.

Emotional values are responses relating to feelings, attitudes and mood. Emotional responses that can be identified in literature include: awe and wonder, nostalgia, personal relevance and being moved. Emotional values are interesting as they have only recently become widely investigated in visitors' experiences, but studies which do discuss visitors' emotional connection often stress the importance of considering these. Falk emphasises the importance of emotions in museums claiming that a visit to a museum can be as much an emotional as an intellectual experience for a visitor (Falk and Dierking 1997: 92). Some of the literature and research examined in chapter 2 distinguishes 'emotional' and 'spiritual' outcomes/connections as being two distinctive things²⁷. I personally feel these are very similar, and for the purpose of this research I have chosen to collectively group spiritual and emotional values as one.

Interpersonal values.

Interpersonal values are outcomes resulting from interactions, relationships and/ or communication with other people; 'Museums are first and foremost, social environments, especially for family groups' (Falk and Dierking, 1997: 41). The social aspect of museum visiting is very apparent in literature on visitors' experiences, but often centres on interactions with family and friends. I feel that interpersonal values can also be achieved through interactions with staff, volunteers or even other visitors. Interpersonal value here addresses the relationships between visitors and their party, but also between them and other visitors and/or museum staff. A museum may be perceived as offering interpersonal value to visitors when it allows or encourages visitors to interact as a family, or partake in family activities. Also, if it facilitates group activities or encourages interaction with staff or volunteers.

Physical values.

Under the heading of physical values I incorporated two areas of thinking on visitors' experiences. Firstly the physical encounter of the space; is it comfortable, welcoming and safe? Based on the needs of visitors for physically comfortable experiences, physical value firstly considers matters such as accessibility, temperature, climate, lighting, comfort, access, welcome and exertion. 'Visitors need fast, easy, obvious access to clean, safe, barrier-free restrooms, fountains, food, baby-changing tables, and plenty of seating. They also need full access to exhibitions' (Hood, 2004). A museum may have physical value when visitors do not experience outcomes such as physical exhaustion or fatigue, physical inaccessibility, forced routes. Furthermore, I recognised from the review of

²⁷ See Morris, Hargreaves and McIntryre's (2005) *Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement*.

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literature that the design of museum spaces has evolved to include increasing levels of interactivity and opportunities for visitors to be hands-on in the experience. Physical values may also relate to tactility, interactivity, and ‘hands-on’ engagement. Physical value may be provided through hands-on engagement with exhibitions, activities or objects, interactives or encouraging active play.

Community Values.

Community values are outcomes stimulated by a museum’s role within society (locally, regionally, nationally or even internationally). Community values may include visitors being able to identify with or better relate to their heritage, or gaining better understanding of their culture or local history. Community values may be ascribed to a museum experience if the visitor has an increased sense of civic pride. Visitors may also identify community values in a museum’s work with schools, local residents or socially excluded audiences. Community value is less evident in literature examining visitors’ experiences but was critical in literature discussing value of museums to society, ‘There is no question that museums are almost universally acknowledged as an important part of the cultural landscape. The architecture of new museums has become an important source of civil pride and tourist dollars’ (Skramstad, 2004: 123). When visiting museums I have recognised that some museums have a strong connection with their local area and are respected by visitors for being a place of local history, a beacon of civic pride or a pillar in the community. These are often local authority museums or small local history museums and will offer strong community values.

4.2.ii. Testing the proposed value groupings

To test the appropriateness and validity of the proposed value groupings as a research tool, a number of methods were employed. Firstly, the proposed value groupings were used to categorise responses to the online survey of museum visitors²⁸. Alongside this, the proposed value groupings were sent to museum staff prior to interviews. Interviewees were then invited to comment or offer criticism on the proposed value groupings during interview.

The initial phase of testing indicated that the five proposed value of museum experience groupings were all relevant. Feedback from museum staff was encouraging and affirmative. All interviewees agreed that the five proposed groupings were apt and reflective of what they believe visitors seek from museums. None of the museum staff interviewed indicated any of the value groupings as inappropriate, or not fitting to the current practices in museums. Some staff discussed how the

²⁸ Further details of online survey are included in the methodology (3.3.iii)

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proposed types of value are the types of things they would be instinctively considering when developing exhibitions, events or activities for visitors:

I think fundamentally that if you are doing your job properly you are considering all of these things all of the time (Ragan & Walker in interview, 1999).

In our exhibitions creation and development all of these would be considered and this wouldn't be needed to them in that they would consider all of them as part of creating the exhibition (Perry in interview, 2009).

Interviewees comments on the value groupings as the types of things inherently considered in museum planning are testament to their accurate reflection of current practice. Some interviewees suggested that the proposed groupings could be used as a framework or cross-departmental reference to help guide planning and development of exhibitions. It was not proposed that the value of museum experience groupings could be used in this way, but interviewee's interest in the model for this purpose further supports the appropriateness of the system and opens up new avenues for future research (opportunities for further research detailed in chapter 6.3.ii).

The proposed value groups were used to code the data collected from an online questionnaire with museum visitors. Each type of value was given a numerical code (e.g. 01 for intellectual, 02 for emotional). I analysed participants' responses and attributed the appropriate code to any feedback that clearly indicated certain value/s. After coding the data I had a clearer overview of how frequently different values were discussed, and could more easily recognise trends. Most data collected from the online survey could be categorised within one, or more, of the five proposed value groups. Some responses and comments were suggestive of more than one type of value; in this case it was coded with both/all relevant codes. All data with multiple codes were reviewed independently to identify where values overlap, I will explore some of the overlaps shortly.

Responses that were not clearly indicative of any type of value were given the numerical code 00 for other. Answers that could not be categorised within the five value groups were proportionally few, and there were no clear trends within this 'other' feedback that indicated need to amend the proposed value groupings. Participants' responses that were coded as 00-other, included motivations such as: 'day out' 'kill time' and 'status' and outcomes such as: 'determined' and 'skint' (raw data included in appendix 8). One similarity identified in some of this data relates to discussion of museums facilities and amenities. When describing the best thing about visiting a museum, four participants discussed the gift shop, and another four mentioned the café or food. A further four

participants claimed the café or food was the worst part of visiting a museum. Participants' discussion of facilities like the café and shop demonstrates the inclusive way in which these visitors assess their museum experiences. To these participants the café or shop may be as important a part of their museum experiences as the objects or exhibitions. Conceding that facilities such as cafes and gift shops have mostly been added to museums to improve competitive edge as leisure attractions, does not suppose they are not also beneficial in fulfilling core aims and objectives. Such facilities and amenities are now essential to attracting visitors, and can be beneficial in providing satisfactory experiences to a wide and diverse audience. Noting that facilities such as the café and gift shop may have impact on visitors' value of museum experience I decided to also include these spaces in my review of museum design during field visits. In chapter 5 I review some examples where scenography is used in the design of museum facilities, and consider what impact this has on visitors' value of experience.

In chapter 2.2.i I reviewed existing literature on visitors' experiences and found that they are extremely varied and highly subjective. Visitors' experiences differ greatly between museums, and visitors' assessments of museum experiences are subject to a number of inherent variables within each individual. The data here suggests that visitors are aware of the variation in the values achieved at different museums experiences, and they do expect different things from different museums. When answering the question 'can you briefly sum up how visiting a museum makes you feel?' 20% of respondents to the online survey began by stating '*it depends*' (or a similar term):

Depends what they are setting out to do; may be fascinated, may be informed, may be surprised, may be happy, may be sad (eg Holocaust museum, etc)- lots of possible answers (E031- online survey participant).

It depends on the museum - sometimes it can be quite dull and I feel quite tired for no particular reason, other times it can be inspiring (E043- online survey participant).

Depends on the museum – Generally intrigued, although a standard museum is quite boring – more recent museums are interesting (E005- online survey participant).

From the data collected there is no clear way of establishing how visitors distinguish different museums, or if there are specific types of value/s expected from museums of certain types. This is another point for consideration in further research (see 6.3.ii). The small number of participants who did offer an explanation for the difference in experiences stated variation between simple factors

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like 'new' and 'old' or 'traditional' museums. Participants also did not specify any variations of experience because of factors within themselves. One may have expected some variable such as; 'it depends how I am feeling that day', or 'it depends on who I am going with' but these were not evident in the data from visitors.

Whilst testing the proposed value groupings it became apparent that the five types of value are not entirely independent of one another. This was evident in the review of participants' replies to the online survey when some data was coded as more than one type of value. As an example of this, one participant wrote; 'Sometimes challenged, some museums put life and today's difficulties into perspective' (E066 online survey participant) this may be indicating an intellectual consideration of the differences between life today and in the past, or it may be an emotional response, or it may be both. The possible overlap in values was also recognised by museum staff in interviews: 'There is a lot of ways those five can interplay that might be sequential, they might block together and that might depend on the group' (Dennis in interview, 2009 ii). There are many ways in which they may overlap, or occasions where one value may lead to another. From the data analysis I have found that emotional, intellectual and physical values are often linked or consequential from each other. Intellectual value in particular is regularly linked with all of the other types of value. In 4.3 I shall discuss the connection between intellectual and physical values, and between intellectual and emotional values. In appendix 9 I have created a chart demonstrating ways in which values can be interlinked with other types of value.

To maintain a realistic scope and detailed focus, I decided in the planning of the study that when investigating the impact of scenography on visitors' value of experience, I would concentrate on just some of the types of value. I had originally proposed to look at the types of value which are most commonly attributed to museums by visitors, or the values which are seen as most crucial to visitors' experience. Owing to the ongoing process of analytical induction, other types of value presented themselves as being more relevant for the purpose of this study. The values most commonly and regularly attributed to museum experiences are intellectual and interpersonal values. However, whilst investigating the impact of scenography in museum design I opted to look at how it impacts intellectual and emotional values. Later in the research process, when I recognised collections values as a sixth type of value, I decided to look in more detail at scenography's' impact on this also.

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I chose to look at intellectual values for several reasons, firstly as they are both common in, and fundamental to visitors' experiences. Furthermore, the ways in which museums try to provide intellectual values has changed quite significantly in recent years, and changes in museum learning have been in line with changes in museum design. As museum designs have become increasingly focused on providing visitors more interactive, engaging and inspiring experiences, the approach to interpretation has shifted from more factual, didactic learning to more narrative approaches. In chapter 1.2.iii I reviewed the similarities between museums and theatrical performance including the use of narrative. Modern museum interpretation will often use a narrative approach, and draw on human experiences rather than just the factual elements. I also decided to look in more detail at the impact of scenography on intellectual values, as some examples of scenography in museums recognised before starting the research (see 2.4) were thought to be enhancing intellectual values by aiding understanding. I also believed it was important to investigate the impact of scenography on intellectual values in museums as theatrical performance is not typically concerned with the same levels of accuracy as museum design. Theatrical performance may be educational, and a scenographer may go to great depths to be historically accurate in design details, but it is not expected by the theatre audience in the same way it is by a museum visitor.

I opted to focus on the impact of scenography on emotional value, firstly as it aligns with growing trends in museum design, secondly as the emotional experience is so fundamental to the audiences reception of theatrical performance. Emotions are a key part of how people experience theatrical performance and it is becoming increasingly recognised as a valid part of museum experiences. Emotional value is also closely and regularly linked with intellectual values.

4.3 Trends in Value of Museum Experience

4.3.i. Interpersonal, physical and community values

In chapter 5 I examine the impact of scenography only on intellectual, emotional and collections values. However, I reflected on and considered all six types of value during the data collection and early stages of data analysis. I therefore feel it is important to provide an overview of my findings on interpersonal, physical and community values.

Along with intellectual value, interpersonal values were the most prevalent in the literature²⁹ reviewed on museum visitor experiences. Museums are widely regarded as being valuable for their ability to facilitate family time and spending time with loved ones is recognised as a common motivation for museum visiting; ‘Museums provide ideal venues for families to learn together’ (DCMS, 2006: 8). Museum staff interviewed as part of this study also discussed how being able to enjoy time as a family is important for a large proportion of visitors. Many staff felt providing visitors an experience that can be collectively enjoyed by families, is a critical part of a museum role. Maria Ragan (Exhibitions Design Manager at Horniman Museum and Gardens) said; ‘I think the interpersonal value is really important for our visitors, as a large number are family groups, the museum is very much something adults and children can enjoy together’ (Ragan & Walker in interview, 2009). Helen Bairns from Stoke Museums also comments; ‘It’s about communicating with each other and communicating together and learning through play’ (Bairns & Vine in interview, 2009). The results of the online public survey also draw similar parallels, with interpersonal values commonly discussed by visitors. Within participants’ discussion of the best thing about visiting museums, or the reasons why they go to museums, there was considerable reference to interpersonal values, often interlinked with intellectual values;

I always go with someone else and the museum is a social catalyst to interesting conversation with other people (E033- online survey participant).

Usually discussing the historical context of things with my daughter (E049- online survey participant)

...I always think of it as an experience to share with someone, or in a group. You can discuss objects etc, makes it more interesting (E050- online survey participant).

²⁹ see Falk (2009); Davies (2007); Falk and Dierking (2007); Hood (2004); Hooper-Greenhill (1991); Kotler and Kotler (2004)

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Participants described enjoyment in interacting, communicating and learning together. Most of the interpersonal values discussed by participants centred on spending time with family, spouse/partner or friends. When asked to select and rate motivations for visiting museums, 81% of participants selected going to 'spend time with friends or family', in comparison the term 'interact in a group' was selected by only 62% of participants (see table 4 on page 98). Though not strongly evident in the data from visitors, museum staff recognised interpersonal values as occurring from visitors interacting with staff or volunteers: 'Interpersonal value, I suppose it would be those people that always write to us and say how knowledgeable our staff are and they've enjoyed chatting that kind of interpersonal' (Garrett in interview, 2009). Although interpersonal values are a common (perhaps even a critical) part of visiting museums, I decided not to focus on scenography's impact on these as it is something museums are already doing very well. Also, there was little indication as to how scenography may impact upon interpersonal values. There are some recognisable ways scenography could be used to enhance interpersonal values, such as the use of costumes to invite visitors to interact with staff or volunteers, but these are limited and already well-practiced.

I reviewed physical values including both hands-on tactility, as well as the climatic and atmospheric conditions of museum experiences. On reflection, a physically comfortable experience is not a sought value or motivation for going to museums; rather it is a primitive human need that people assume will be fulfilled. Climatic conditions were not specified by participants in their reasons for visiting museums, but were commented on repeatedly as being 'the worst thing about visiting museums'. This shows the impact poor physical experience can have on visitors' museum experiences. In answering the worst thing about visiting museums, 39% of participants gave an answer relating to the physical experience or discomfort: 'Queues and lack of seating areas if you need to rest during the visit...' (E024- online survey participant). One disappointment in the physical experience that was expressed by a number of participants is museums that have forced or linear routes, ultimately removing some of the visitors' control of the experience. In response to worst thing about visiting museums:

Forced routes through a museum- free motion through the museum should be allowed (E005- online questionnaire participant)

...I also dislike very linear exhibitions (the large London ones are bad for this) where you enter at "the beginning" and there is almost a queue of visitors trailing through to the "end". Often you cannot return once you have left the area... (E032- online questionnaire participant)

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Having to walk around for so long just to find things you're interested in.
Call me lazy but sometimes I just don't want to have to walk through the
steam engines to get to the space shuttle (E116- online questionnaire participant)

Museum visitors typically prefer free-choice in the way in which they move through museum spaces, and prefer to remain in control over the experience, going at their own pace, in whatever direction they decide, choosing to experience some parts and miss out others. This is quite different to the usual experience of theatrical performance, during which the audience usually remains static, or is taken on a guided journey. This highlights a fundamental difference in the way in which people experience museum design, compared to the way in which they experience scenography in theatrical performance. This was recalled when reviewing the impact of scenography in museum design but is an area in which further research is required.

During field visits to museums I observed that visitors (of all ages and backgrounds) would regularly seize the opportunity to get hands-on, whether it be handling artefacts, or even just pulling levers, pushing buttons, turning handles or trying on bits of costume. Physical interaction is often received with a sense of joviality, and enjoyment. Allowing hands-on interaction can also help to maintain visitor's engagement and interest, a participant in the online questionnaire commented; 'I tend to lose interest quite quickly if the exhibition isn't interactive' (E050- online survey participant). Interviewees also recognised the satisfaction visitors get from being hands-on, 'people appreciate that we don't stop them trying to touch things' (Lee in interview, 2009). Mark Dennis (Curator at Library and Museum of Freemasonry) suggested that physical engagement and interaction are not just welcomed in museums, but increasingly essential: 'interactivity is increasingly vital, because if you can't match the interactive, people do better on their home computers' (Dennis in interview, 2009 ii). In competing with an ever increasing variety of leisure attractions and free time pursuits, the interactivity of museums is becoming more increasingly crucial for attracting visitors. Physical value can offer more than just enjoyment for visitors; kinaesthetic learning is widely accepted as the preferred learning style for many people, and for some visitors the realisation of intellectual values may be dependent upon the opportunity for physical values. Delia Garrett, (Museums and Communities Manager at Sandwell Museums) emphasised the importance of offering physical value to achieve intellectual value; 'It's all different types of learning and some people learn through touching and holding and feeling and that absolutely has to be part of the experience' (Garrett in interview, 2009 ii).

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Out of the five proposed value groupings, community values were least evident in the online survey with visitors. Some community values were identified in online survey data, including a number of participants' who were appreciative of museums as purveyors of heritage or history, and being able to attain a better understanding or relationship to their own heritage by visiting museums:

The history, artefacts, everything because if it wasn't for these types of places all of our history would be lost (E084- online questionnaire participant).

It gives me a sense of heritage and my own place within history (E086- online questionnaire participant)

...The museum should also encourage and welcome visitors from all sections of the community whilst being proud of displaying its own country's history and heritage. Outreach activities are also important as these can certainly help to make communities feel more involved in the museum and its activities (E028- online questionnaire participant)

The low presence of community values in the data collected from visitors through the online survey does not mean community values are not a valid or sought outcome of museum experiences.

Community values may include a museum's work with local groups and schools, or outreach work with hard to reach, or socially excluded groups. These audiences may not have been fairly represented in the online survey sample. Schools constitute a large proportion of many museums annual audience figures, and much funding is made available to outreach and community work, neither of which may have been fairly represented in these findings. Museum staff were much more receptive to the concept of community value, and some felt it was in fact their primary purpose;

We're a real community museum. People think of museums as being places they get intellectual value, I think that's how people: governing bodies or local residents perceive 'The museum to be in existence for, for its intellectual value. Where I think the role that we actually play is a lot more closely linked to social value as a community museum (Collins in interview, 2009).

...community based learning centres. Rather than focus things too far afield, look at what we got, who we represent and who locally can access that (Derbyshire in interview, 2009).

A lot of people would like to see more about their environment and their town, that has come out through visitor books (Frith in interview, 2009).

Community values are more niche than other types of value, community values are not widely recognised amongst the general population of museum visitors, but are prevalent in certain types of museums, or certain audiences. For this reason, I chose not to select community values as one to examine in further detail as part of this study.

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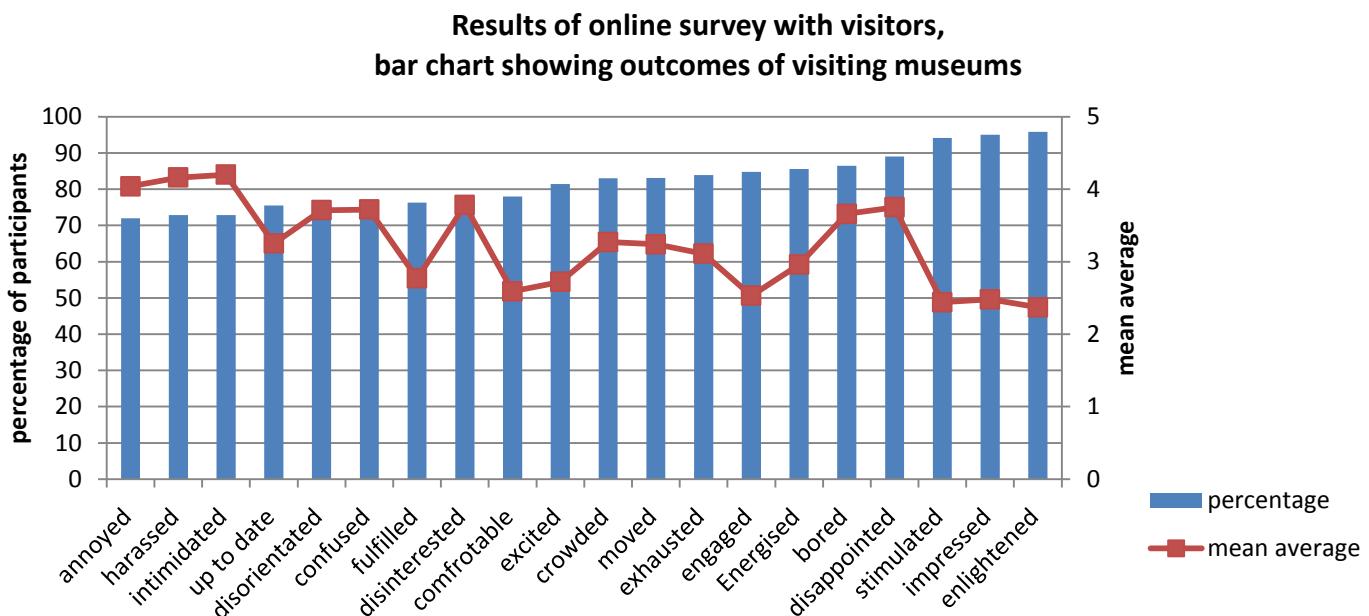


Table 4 Bar chart showing results of online survey, question 2.4: From the list select and rate all you feel applies to you when visiting a museum (1-always feel; 2- often feel; 3- sometimes feel; 4-occasionally feel; 5- rarely feel)

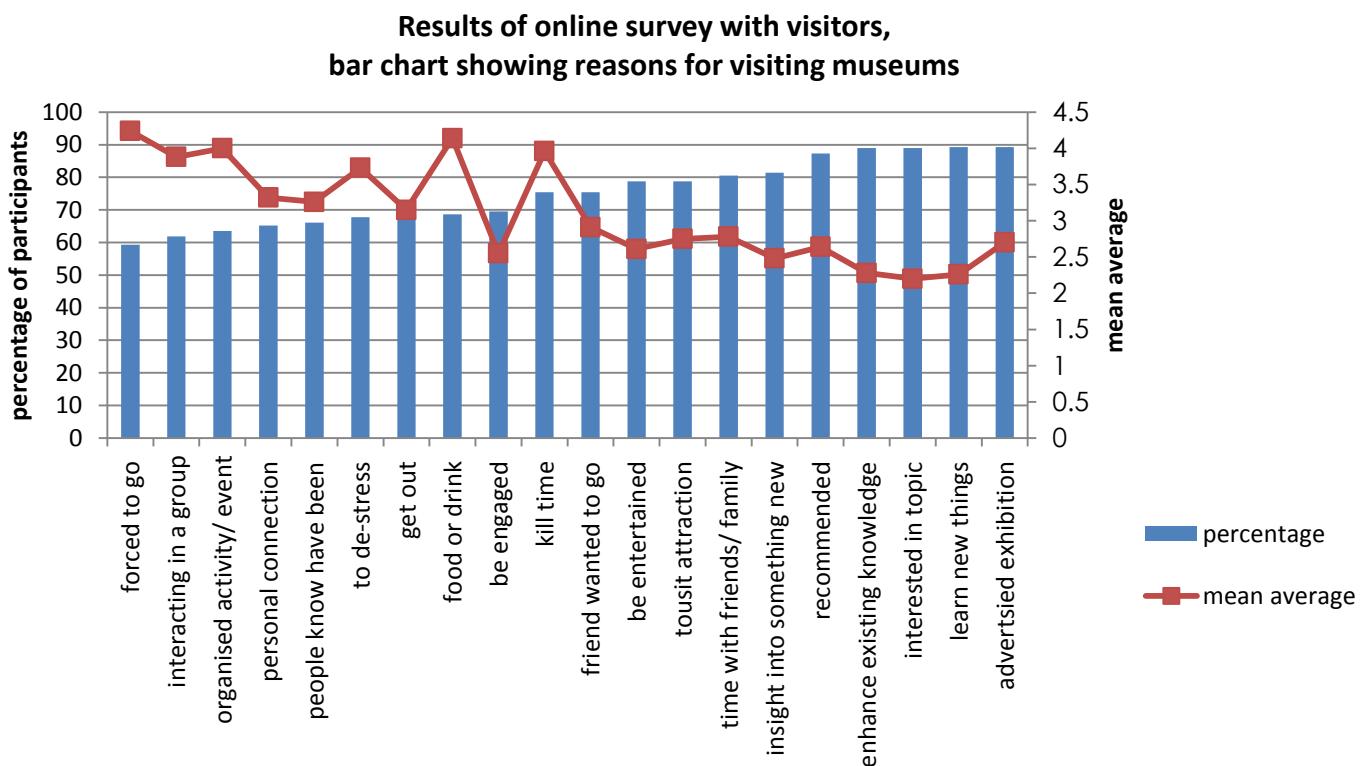


Table 5 Bar chart showing results of online survey, section 3 question 2: Why do you normally go to museums? From the list below select and number all the reasons that you visit museums. (1= always; 2= often; 3= sometimes; 4= occasionally; 5= rarely)

4.3.ii. Intellectual values

The findings of this research align with that of previous literature with learning recognised as a key part of many visitors' museum experiences. Intellectual values were predominant in both the findings of the online questionnaire and interviews with museum staff. Providing opportunities for learning is a core function of museums, and many people visit museums with intellectual objectives. Intellectual outcomes or motivations were evident in participants' responses to almost every question in the online questionnaire. The participant comment below echoes the sentiment of many other's responses, highlight the critical importance of learning in museums;

...Even if you walk away having learnt one thing that you'll remember and you've enjoyed learning it - a museum has done its job. Museums are there to educate without pressure, engage without boredom and encourage the visitor to ask questions; the museum is a tool that deserves to be used to its full potential (E028- online questionnaire participant)

Participants were asked to select and rate how often they go to museums for each of a series of reasons (see table 5). The options with highest response rate (selected by the largest percentage of participants) were: 'to learn new things'; 'to enhance existing knowledge'; and 'because I am interested in a specific subject', all of which indicate intellectual agendas, and all were selected by 89% participants. These same learning based motivations also received the lowest mean averages³⁰ indicating that these intellectually based motivations are frequently part of why people go to museums. Intellectual values can also be clearly recognised in participants' responses to 'the best thing/s about visiting museums', suggesting that learning is not only expected from museums, but is appreciated and enjoyed by visitors.

Providing visitors intellectual value is perceived by many staff as being the basic function of museums and a priority in their considerations during planning; 'intellectual value is something that we are always trying to achieve and I think that's how people primarily see us, the value they expect when they come in, they come in and expect to find out something' (Collins in interview, 2009). Intellectual value is however not the only critical value of museums, and increasing numbers of staff feel other values are as, if not more, important than intellectual values. Several interviewees suggested that the perception of museums as primarily intellectual establishments is becoming more dated, and other types of value are increasingly important. Chris Frith (Designer at Derby Museums) explained how in the past, the intellectual was counted as more important, but he would

³⁰ Participants were asked to rate each reason using the following scale: 1 –always; 2- often; 3- sometimes; 4- occasionally; 5- rarely. Therefore the lower the mean average the more frequent that motivation occurs.

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like to think this is no longer true, as more people are engaged by the emotional and interpersonal aspects (Frith in interview, 2009).

For some museums the core target audience is local residents, who may or may not be typical museum visitors, and who may even feel museums are not accessible to them. This is particularly true for local history museums or smaller museums run or funded by local authorities. These museums must first overcome barriers to visiting by finding ways to make the site appealing and accessible to everyone. In these instances intellectual values can become side-lined and viewed as an additional bonus, with the institution focused more on offering interpersonal and emotional values. Delia Garret works for Sandwell Museums, a collection of smaller museums and galleries run by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. Their primary audience is residents of Sandwell, many of whom are not regular museum goers. Garrett explained how this is problematic as many local residents feel socially excluded from museums, or have negative perceptions of them being boring, and uninviting. She describes how the aim is primarily to create welcoming invitations by highlighting the fun element and downplaying learning;

I think when people go to the British Museum they go and take on board that they are going to learn and they will take something away from that. But I think people around here just want to have a good time. If they have learnt something as well that is just additional value for us (Garrett in interview, 2009)

Even when a museum prioritises other values over intellectual values, learning and the opportunity to increase knowledge or understanding will never be entirely negated. Even if intellectual values are offered as a supplementary bonus to other outcomes, a museum will always offer some opportunity for visitors to attain intellectual values. As part of making museums more accessible to wider audiences, the sector has embraced a wider view of what constitutes learning. In 2.2 I discussed some of the different types of outcomes now considered as learning in museums, best demonstrated in the MLA's Generic Learning Outcomes (MLA, 2008).

The broadening of museum learning and interpretive approaches has been reflected in museum designs. In chapter 1.2 it was noted that the role of the exhibitions is not to attempt to teach visitors all there is to know on a topic, rather exhibitions act as a gateway to further learning by enticing the visitor and sparking their curiosity. Several museum staff I spoke with strongly affiliated to this belief, highlighting that there are now many more accessible and efficient ways of accessing information than museum exhibitions. Successful exhibitions do not overload a visitor with

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information; they entice visitors and spark their interest around a small set of themes or messages that hopefully motivate further learning:

Exhibitions are telling a story but they are presenting essentially information about a small set of themes and small set of key messages and if anyone wants to know more they will look elsewhere. Hopefully an exhibition can be a gateway for people wanting to find out more (Knight in interview, 2010).

You are trying to hook people, they are coming to a museum and they are not hoping to go away knowing everything there is to know, but hopefully it will spark their interest and spark their imagination, motivate them to go and learn more (Garrett & Hanney in interview, 2009).

From online survey participants' explanations of the best thing/s about visiting museums, we can recognise some characteristics of museum learning that visitors particularly value, and which distinguish it from other forms of learning. Participants in the online survey described learning in museums as being unique, offering a sense of discovery, being free-choice, and hands-on or interactive. The participants' comments below help to illustrate these attributes of intellectual value in museums:

I feel like I can learn whilst picking and choosing based on what aesthetically attracts me and those displays I may be specifically going to see; museums make me happy. It's a relief to learn away from books and journals and be able to browse (E028- participant in online questionnaire.)

Having the opportunity to be exposed to and learn from exhibitions that you wouldn't encounter anywhere else other than in a museum (E003- participant in online questionnaire).

Enlightened and impressed should make you leave with a feel good factor that you have learned something through participation (E100- participant in online questionnaire).

Learning new, interesting things. They are great for children to learn in different way- esp. interactive museums (E034- participant in online questionnaire).

In a well set-out museum, it's experiencing history/ science/ whatever, in a more hands-on, memorable way than in books or TV, bringing the subject to life (E013- participant in online questionnaire).

These distinctive characteristics of museum learning were considered in the examination of scenographies' impact on visitors' value of experience, discussed in chapter 5.2.

4.3.iii. Emotional values

In the review of existing literature I found that emotional outcomes were less widely discussed than intellectual or interpersonal values of museums. It was also recognised how visitors' expectations of museum experiences are not always in line with actual outcomes. This is most notable in the attainment of emotional engagement compared to the expectation of it. Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre (2005) found that the proportion of visitors expecting emotional outcomes was significantly less than those who recalled them in the outcomes of their visit³¹ (*ibid*, 2005). The data here indicates the same difference in the expectation and actual outcome of emotional values. Some interviewees discussed how the types of value visitors most enjoy and appreciate may not be in accordance with their reasons for going; 'They could well decide to come on the intellectual and when they leave what they seem to have valued is emotional and interpersonal' (Lee in interview, 2009).

Museums are widely perceived as places of learning, and so visitors may habitually discuss intellectual agendas in their reasons for going to museums, but what they often appreciate more is the interpersonal and/or emotional. Results of the online questionnaire support this. Notably fewer participants discussed emotional values in their reasons for going to museums, as can be identified in the discussed outcomes of visiting. The option 'as I have a personal connection' was one of lowest selected responses in participants' reasons for visiting museums, chosen by just 65.2% of participants (see table 5). 'To de-stress' was another option that received comparatively low response rate (67%). By comparison, 89% participants selected 'to learn new things' (intellectual value) and 81% selected 'spend time with friends/family' (interpersonal value). These intellectual and interpersonal motivations also had much lower mean averages, suggesting they are more frequently part of people's reasons. The option 'to learn new things' had a mean average of 2.25, compared to a mean average rating of 3.7 for 'to de-stress'. Evaluating the questionnaire form after analysing the data collected, I recognise that there are fewer emotional motivations given as answer options than there are intellectual or interpersonal values. This is consequence of the focus group used to help identify answer options for the questionnaire. Focus group participants discussed very few motivations that would suggest emotional values. The opportune sample used for the focus group is not sufficient to make wider generalisations on museum populations at large. There is however sufficient other data to support the hypothesis that emotional values are not widely sought from museums by visitors. Very little evidence of emotional values can be identified in participants' responses to open ended questions on their reasons for going to museums. Participants were asked

³¹ See table 3 page 46

to choose which type of attraction they visit most often out of; art galleries, historic sites, museums, parks and gardens, theme parks and fairs, other, and then asked to explain their reasons for visiting that type of attraction most often. 11% of participants chose museums as the type of attraction they visit most often, with most specifying intellectual motivations. Two participants described going to museums for ‘entertainment’ but only one clearly indicated any emotional value, and this was linked with intellectual and possibly community value:

‘mainly to satisfy a sense of boyhood nostalgia which I find inspires my own creativity and also just a basic interest in the history of the area where I grew up and the British Isles in general’ (E086- online survey participant).

Emotional values were much more obvious in participants open ended responses explaining the outcomes of visiting museums. Participants discussed feeling: ‘excited’ ‘privileged’ ‘humble’ ‘moved’ ‘happy’ ‘awe’ ‘wonder’ ‘nostalgia’ and ‘relaxed’ as being outcomes of museum experiences. The participants’ comments below demonstrate some of the emotional values occurring from museum experiences:

I sometimes feel intrigued, full of awe, and makes me feel in contact with modern and historical culture (E018- online questionnaire participant).

The museum experience needs to make people feel both excited and humble regarding the messages and meaning they are exposed to... (E040- online questionnaire participant).

Enlightened/ moved/ stimulated and engaged (E014- online questionnaire participant).

In chapter 1, I discussed the emotional experience of theatrical performance and identified that the emotions encountered in arts performances can be categorised as positive, negative, and empathetic (Konjin, 1999: 178). The types of emotions encountered in museum experiences can be categorised in a similar way, with negative, positive and empathetic emotions recognised in museum experiences. A small number of negative emotions such as feeling bored or confused can be identified in the data collected through the online survey. Positive emotions experienced in museums range between two fairly distant extremes; from calm and relaxing to exciting and invigorating. Often when expressing how museums make them feel, or discussing the best thing about visiting a museum, participants in the online survey described the experience or the atmosphere as ‘calming’, ‘relaxing’ and ‘peaceful’:

I like the quiet, being able to take my mind off the outside world. I find museums and art galleries very peaceful... (E069- online questionnaire participant)

Helps me forget the monotony of everyday life etc so it becomes a form of escapism (E014- online questionnaire participant)

...the surroundings often have a calm relaxed feel to them. It almost feels like a getaway from normality for a short while so can be refreshing (E011- online questionnaire participant)

These participant's comments suggest museums as providing a relaxing atmosphere, and offering opportunity for reverie or escapism; a space in which they can get away from their everyday lives. In an almost total contrast to this calming and relaxing nature, a similar number of participants described museums and the feelings they provoke as being enlivening, inspiring or exciting. One participant described feeling 'excited and invigorated' when visiting museums (E042- online questionnaire participant). Analysis of the data collected from the online survey reveals a relatively even number of participants who described their museum experiences as relaxing, as those who felt museums to be stimulating or energetic. No correlations were found in the demographic profiles³² of persons who discussed museums as relaxing or in those who found them to be more enlivening. This again demonstrates the unpredictability of visitors' value of experience.

Emotional responses to theatrical performance can also be classed as empathetic, such as pity, involvement and affection (Konjin, 1999: 178). From the data collected as part of this study I identified that some visitors have similar empathetic responses to museum experiences. In 1.2.iii I highlighted some similarities in museums and theatres, one being the communication of narrative through scenography in theatres likened to the narrative approaches increasingly used in museum interpretation. Exhibition developers are increasingly aware of the public's interest in social history and exploring the experience of people in history. Many exhibition developers are now using interpretive approaches that help share narratives through a perspective of human experience. Some may claim that insight into human experience is a solely intellectual affair, but I feel this type of interpretation has more emotional reasoning, with visitors wanting to relate to narratives on an empathetic level. Several participants in the online survey described how they go to museum because they are curious about the lives of people of the past, and interested in how they may have felt:

'Curious - who lived there - what did they do?' (E019- online questionnaire participant)

³² Demographic data collected and analysed included age, gender and who the participant normally visit museums with.

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...Mostly it's the insight one gains into either the past, or someone else's way of life (E066- online questionnaire participant)

Looking at exhibits that show how life would have been for people living in past generations (E094- online questionnaire participant)

From this study I have found that it is not only unique or exceptional human narratives that are communicated in museums, visitors are equally interested in the regular and everyday stories of people. Alison Lee (General Manager at Gladstone Pottery Museum) explained how the mill at Gladstone was saved and converted to a public attraction, not because it was special, but because it was so typical of the mills that were once widespread in the area. She also explained how in recent years visitors' interests have changed, and therefore the way they interpret the site has been transformed from explaining how pottery is made, to telling the stories of people who once worked there (Lee in interview, 2009). Rachel Knight (Head of Exhibitions at Imperial War Museum North) described how the central interpretation of the IWM- North is 'how war shapes lives' rather than about the equipment and tactics used. She also commented how empathy is utilised as a key strategy in effectively communicating stories in that way, as it is a method of learning that most people are familiar with:

Empathy is a big thing in telling the story of war and conflict....fundamentally we are told stories from birth as it's a way of learning. I think it's a method of learning and of pertaining information that we are all really familiar with. So it's a good way of conveying messages, increasing learning and community engagement (Knight in interview, 2010.)

I agree with Knight's opinion that empathy is an important part of how museums tell stories, and offers a way of learning that is familiar to many people. Human narratives are now a critical part of museums, and may be intellectually or emotionally driven, or a composite of the two. If using the MLA's Generic Learning Outcomes (*ibid*, 2008), then empathetic reasoning; or gaining insight in to feelings of attitudes; or even experiencing feelings, or a change in attitude; these things could all be categorised as types of learning. Within this study I examine empathy as an emotional response and in chapter 5.4 I examine how scenography is used in museum design to help stimulate empathy.

4.3.iv. Collections Value

Artefacts are widely recognised as being crucial to the role and purpose of museums; 'Museums have a unique mission, a particular place in our society, and an irreplaceable resource: collections of real, meaningful objects that support educational goals' (Mintz, 1994: 35). Despite their fundamental

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role in museums, experiencing artefacts was not initially classified as being a type of value that visitors seek, as it was hypothesised that the collection is valued by visitors for the intellectual or emotional value it provides. This was evident in the data collected from the online survey and in discussion with museum staff, with suggestions of artefacts offering both intellectual and emotional values.

Collections were discussed as something visitors can learn from, or as being beneficial to gaining a new insight into history. One participant in the online survey wrote: 'Mostly feel intelligent and interested as I like finding out about old things' (E007- online questionnaire participant). Another commented: 'Museums should be packed with objects that fascinate and stimulate the mind and imagination, with the aid of unobtrusive interpretation that can be used or not' (E099- online questionnaire participant). The above comments indicate collections as something visitors learn about or from, therefore offering intellectual value. Participants' responses to the online survey also indicate emotional values such as feeling a sense of awe and wonder when encountering artefacts. When asked to briefly sum up how visiting museums makes them feel, one participant wrote; 'The wonder of the different artefacts seen' (E022- online questionnaire participant). Another participant described the best thing about visiting museums as: 'To see countless valuable and unique stuff, such as biggest diamond in the world, Mars Stone...in short, try every effort to make visitor open their eyes larger, enlarge their mouths wider' (E111- online questionnaire participant). Blakely claimed that although some visitors to Staffordshire Regiment Museums access the collections and the archives in an intellectual capacity (to observe, measure and take photos) he believed the greater proportion of their audience desire to interact on an emotional level, through the stories objects tell, he explained: 'In today's society if we want intellectual value we will just turn on the computer and go to the internet, we will find out so much more than from ever just looking at the real objects. But the real objects provide us the emotional, that is the real unique selling point' (Blakely in interview, 2009). Like many other of the museum staff interviewed, I agree with Blakely that artefacts are a selling point for museums, and a central part of their attraction is the emotional simulation from encountering them. However, from this study I have also come to realise that there is a unique and intrinsic value in artefacts even when no intellectual or emotional values are achieved.

As the research progressed, as further site visits were made and I engaged in increasing discussion with the museum industry, it became apparent that witnessing artefacts can have innate value. The

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distinctive value in experiencing art is something well documented in literature, and understood in art galleries, with art enjoyed and appreciated just for being art:

What is the point, they will say, of knowing where and when Van Gogh was born, of knowing the ups and downs of his life and the periods of his work? When all is said and done, what counts for true art lovers is the pleasure they feel in seeing a Van Gogh painting. (Bourdieu *et al*, 2007: 431).

I believe that some museums' artefacts possess the same type of value as art, and visitors appreciate and value seeing them. The most obvious example of this would be the blockbuster exhibitions and world famous collections that people travel thousands of miles to see. In 2009 Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery saw crowds of visitors queuing to see the Staffordshire Hoard. Though many visitors would have been enthusiastic to learn more about the Anglo-Saxon metalwork and their history, or the story of their discovery, a notable proportion will have visited simply to say they have seen it. As a demonstration of the innate value in museum collections, I recall a visit to the British Museum in May 2010. I stopped to rest on a bench in front of a large statue of Ramesses II.

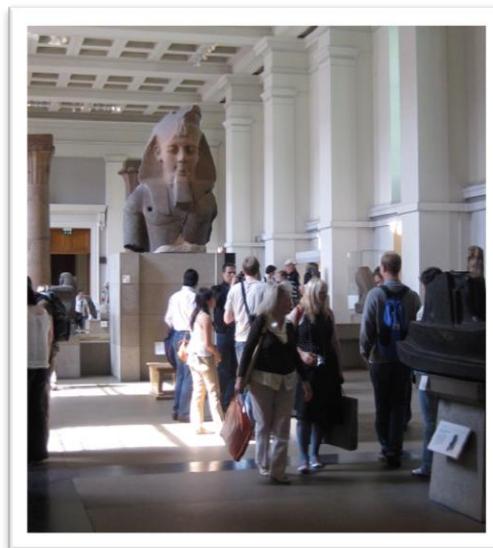


Figure 22 Visitors photographing statue of Ramesses II at British Museum

After just a few minutes I was struck by the number of visitors taking photos of the Egyptian relic. I would estimate that within the five minute period I sat there, no less than 100 visitors stopped to take a picture of the artefact. What was truly interesting is that in that same period less than ten people stopped to look at the accompanying text panel. This made me question: how can visitors be inspired to want to capture the memory of seeing this artefact without knowing why it was built, where it came from or even who it is depicting? Perhaps these visitors had an extensive knowledge of Egyptian history and so didn't need to read the label, or maybe they had an unobservable

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emotional response to the artefact causing them to want to capture its image. What is more likely, judging by the thousands of tourists taking many photos of almost every object, is that simply; the object is enough. The experience of witnessing these real artefacts is enough to want to capture the memory, and helps justify the visitors' investments in the experience. Seeing original objects may for some visitors, be in itself a worthy outcome or a primary motivation for visiting museums.

Returning to the data I had collected for further analysis, I was able to identify these inherent collection values. Discussion of artefacts was recurrent throughout the data collected from the online survey, but on the first analysis, these had been mostly attributed as intellectual or emotional values. Further analysis, revealed the intrinsic collection values. One participant in the online survey commented about artefacts: '...I didn't want to visit the RAF museum in Cosford having no interest in planes or the RAF, but after being convinced I had a really good time and found myself looking at huge planes for their aesthetic appeal rather than anything else!' (E049- online questionnaire participant). Museum artefacts can be viewed almost as works of art. There may be within this a sense of amazement or appreciation at the skill of the craftsman or maker, but this may not be something a visitor recognises or is able to verbalise.

Some museum staff had been resolute about the importance of the collection, and their responsibility in not only caring for it, but in presenting it to the public. A number of interviewees also recognised the collection as being a highly valuable resource as it serves as a unique selling point for museums. The collection is something museums have which few other leisure attractions possess, and it therefore helps in attracting audiences and maintaining a competitive edge over other attractions, many of who may have greater resources and fewer restrictions and responsibilities. Mark Dennis discussed how artefacts are key in competing with other leisure attractions; 'Real entertainment venues have got far bigger budgets, on-line can do better than any interactive we can do in a museum, you can do it all at home now. It's coming back down now in museums to the things that only museums can do, we've got the real stuff' (Dennis in interview, 2009 ii). A small number of participants in the online survey also discussed collections as being exclusive to museums, one comments; 'The best thing is that they {museums} have objects and things that you wouldn't find anywhere else' (E003- online questionnaire participant).

In the results of the online survey, mention of the collection was particularly prominent in responses to the question 'what is the best thing about visiting a museum?' Almost a third of respondents referred to the collection as one of the best things about visiting museum. Some of this was linked to

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intellectual or emotional values, some were purely collections values. Overall, artefacts were discussed as being ‘something new’, ‘unique’, ‘valuable’ and ‘real’. Based on these descriptors, it is assumed that only authentic artefacts will possess intrinsic value. Museum displays can be filled with replica items and props, and though these may have their own uses, they will not offer the same collections values that authentic artefacts have. One participant’s comment highlights the importance of museum artefacts being authentic; they describe the best thing about visiting museums as; ‘Discovery, seeing original items/ paintings rather than just copies or prints’ (E045- online questionnaire participant). Authenticity of objects is key to this collection value; ‘museum objects must, by definition, be ‘the real thing’ in order for it to have value, and thus be given respectful observance’ (Prince, 1985:245). It is only the authentic artefacts that are unique to museums, any leisure attraction could produce a series of replicas or props, and many will have much greater resources to do this to much better quality than most museums. Theatrical performance is of course made up of manufactured replicas and props, it does not have the same essential function (or perhaps fortune) of displaying a collection of authentic artefacts. Recognising this disparity, brought in to question the potential impact of scenography in museum design on authentic artefacts, and is why I chose to examine this further. I examined uses of scenography in museum design, reviewing the impact it has on collection values and visitors ability to recognise and appreciate authentic artefacts. The findings of this line of enquiry are discussed in the following chapter, in 5.3.

In this chapter I have reviewed visitors’ value of museum experiences, and found that though some types of value may be more common, or appear more fundamental to museums, there is great subjectivity and individuality, both between museums and also between museum visitors. I have been able to develop an original framework that offers an overview of visitors’ value of museum experience, but this is not an exhaustive list. There are almost certainly other types of value, or specific subgroups within that will be relevant to individual visitors or individual museums. Similarly, though I have been able to recognise industry wide trends and commonalities, the number of museums or visitors who will sit outside these trends could be vast. The only definitive conclusion that can be drawn from this area of investigation is that museum experiences are unpredictable and subjective. In the following chapter, I will draw together the review of scenography in museum design (chapter 2) with the findings of my investigation into visitors’ value of experience, to examine the impact of scenography on visitors’ value of experience. As explained in this chapter, I have opted to examine scenography’s impact on just three of the six values recognised. Chapter 5 is divided in sections looking at the impact on each of the different values chosen, but at all times in the data

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collection and analysis I have remained aware of the variety of values and the complex interplay between them.

Chapter 5

Impact of Scenography on Visitors' Value of Museum Experience

5.1 Introduction

This penultimate chapter draws together the findings to conclude on the ways in which scenography impacts on visitor's value of experience. In this chapter I reference only a handful of the museums visited, discussing just those which make prominent, conscious or repeated use of scenography in their design. I triangulate my reflections and observations from field visits, with the findings of the two on-site surveys with visitors, and interviews with museum staff. Further information on the two experiences where on-site consultation was conducted is in chapter 3. *Enchanted Palace* is referenced on several occasions and in some detail in this chapter; this is because the exhibitions extensive use of scenography was apposite to the factors being investigated³³.

This chapter is structured in three sections, each looking at scenography's impact on a different type of value. In 5.2 I review scenography's impact on intellectual values, considering the limitations in accuracy when using scenography in museums, and how successfully museums are able to operate on a symbolic level. In 5.3 I review how use of scenography in museum design affects collections values and the visitors' ability to recognise artefacts. I also look at some of the issues in presenting spaces which possess collections value, and a unique form of performance identified in these spaces. Finally in 5.4 the use of scenography to encourage emotional values is reviewed and how scenography may be used to help immerse visitors in the museum experience and offer greater empathy.

³³ Further details on Enchanted Palace can be found in appendix 16.

5.2 Impact on Intellectual Values

5.2.i. Accurate or truthful

This study has already demonstrated that intellectual value is a key part of the museum visitors experience; it is a common motivation for visiting, and is actively sought by a large proportion of visitors. In chapter 2 I highlighted some ways in which scenographic tools are used to offer context and setting in museum designs. The simple clarification of context and setting can be greatly advantageous supporting museums' learning objectives, and help provide intellectual value to a wider range of visitors. This research has also identified that there is a common perception of museums as 'accurate' and not misleading, a stark contrast with theatrical performance which can chose to be exaggerated or entirely falsified.

Speaking with visitors at two museum experiences using scenography, I noted that there is the same assumption of accuracy. Although the two experiences were distinguishable from most exhibitions and galleries because of their use of scenography, visitors still expected the presentations to be truthful. At *Night in the Trenches* I found that visitors had a supposition that it would be accurate, despite knowing it was a performance based experience. Many of the participants spoken with before going on the *Night in the Trenches* tour discussed how they believed it would be more accurate than other representations of World War I (such as depicted in film or TV). One participant commented: 'Hear that many variations on TV etc, but this is first hand, it's more accurate and you get to take part' (participant at *Night in the Trenches*). In the visitor survey done at the exit to *The Street* exhibition at Thackray Medical Museum, visitors were asked if they believed the exhibition was accurate. Sixteen out of twenty participants agreed that *The Street* was an accurate representation of a Victorian slum. The other four participants neither agreed nor disagreed and said they did not have enough knowledge or understanding of the subject to comment if the exhibition was accurate or not. In both surveys there was a sensed perception of the presentation being accurate as it is within a museum context. It is this entrustment in museums as accurate, combined with a lack of prior knowledge and awareness of actual conditions which could make inaccurate replications misleading.

There are obvious and unavoidable limitations to the level of exactness that can be achieved using scenography in museum designs. There is firstly the need to consider visitors' safety and adhere to health and safety regulations, which can restrict full or accurate replication of what may have been unsafe or unsanitary conditions. Even if health and safety regulations could somehow be relaxed to accurately replicate settings, it would be debatable if visitors would desire to be exposed to such conditions. Erik

5. Impact of Scenography on Visitors' Value of Museum Experience

Blakely claimed even if they could make *Night in the Trenches* truly representative of a WWI trench, they wouldn't, as they would not want to traumatised people (Blakely in interview, 2009). As well as visitors' safety, exhibition developers must consider visitors comfort and enjoyment; people will not truly want to experience the actual conditions. In chapter 2 I referenced the *Power Within Gallery* at the Natural History Museum, which replicates an earthquake happening in a Japanese supermarket. Some critics may question how authentic an insight this is into the actual experience of an earthquake, but then how close can it be before it traumatises visitors. If the actual conditions were replicated; with falling debris, breaking glass and intense noise and smoke, even if the visitor were able to remain aware of the context and that there is no threat of danger- it could still be a traumatising experience. That may have appeal for some visitors, but to the families and tourists seeking an enjoyable day-out (who make up a greater proportion of audiences overall) that type of insight is unwanted regardless of its accuracy.

The problem is not that there are limitations in using scenography to replicate settings, certain limitations are unavoidable, but we should question; when do limitations become inaccuracies, and how can exhibition developers highlight these to visitors, so not to mislead or misinform? At *Night in the Trenches*, rather than ignore the inaccuracies of the replication, the team decided to explain them to visitors at the start of each tour. The guide explained to visitors the limitations in the replica trench that they were about to encounter; how the trench was far more sanitary than a real trench, and how better lighting and footboards had been added for healthy and safety reasons. He then proceeded to describe how a real trench would have been; damp, dark, knee-deep in mud, infested with rats and rife with infection and disease. Clarification of the replicas limitations and inaccuracies not only helped prevent the experience from being misleading; it also gave a more accurate insight into the real conditions of a World War I trench.

Blakely claimed that the challenge when using performance in museums is creating something that is either accurate enough to not be misleading, or clearly framed and signalled as a falsity; 'one of the real dangers is when museums fall between the two stools of either getting such a degree of accuracy that it will not mislead, or laying on such a caricature and pantomime that is clear it is a show' (Blakely, 2009). Blakely's comments suggests that museum exhibitions (or components of) can be designed in a way that signal to visitors that they are not intending to be accurate replications, but then exhibition developers should consider how exaggerated, theatrical or abstracted designs can be, before it is apparent it is not attempting to be an accurate replication.

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It is only very rare occasions that I have identified museum design that is purposefully abstracted or theatricalised, rather than natural replication or suggestion. One occasion where I did encounter a more theatrical approach was during a Christmas event at Blists Hill Victorian Town. In addition to the usual costumed interpreters in their Victorian outfits, there was an abundance of characterful persons roaming around the site (see fig 23 and 24). The base of their outfits was Victorian in style, but with exaggerated and theatrical details, makeup and props. One character adorned a large, menacing scar across his face created using stage makeup, another had his face painted a highly unnatural grey and carried a prop which looked like a large metal chain. On stopping and questioning the man with the scarred face (fig 24) he explained that they were not employed by Blists Hill but were a group of 'Victorian enthusiasts' who regularly meet at such sites in their home-made costumes. To a more trained eye it was clear that their costumes were more theatrical, exaggerated, and less historically accurate than those adorned by interpreters employed by the site. However, not all visitors may be able to make such a differentiation. As museums are often perceived as places of authenticity, these theatrically stylised costumes may be mistaken by some visitors as accurate of the Victorian period.



Figure 24 Visitors with Victorian enthusiasts in costume, at Blists Hill Victorian Town.



Figure 23 Victorian enthusiast in costume and stage makeup, at Blists Hill Victorian Town.

Scenography was found used in museums to create spaces that are suggestive of a time or place, rather than an accurate or realistic copy. The design of these galleries typically adheres to a theme that conveys an era

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or place, without literal replication of one setting. I shall refer to these as 'themed galleries'. Common scenographic devices used to achieve themed gallery spaces include scenic painting of surfaces, scenery created to look like architectural or landscape features and focused theatrical lighting. One such themed gallery is the *Roman Gallery* at the Museum of London (fig 25) where surfaces have been decorated to depict a style suggestive of Roman architecture, including false archways and columns.



Figure 25 Roman Gallery at Museum of London

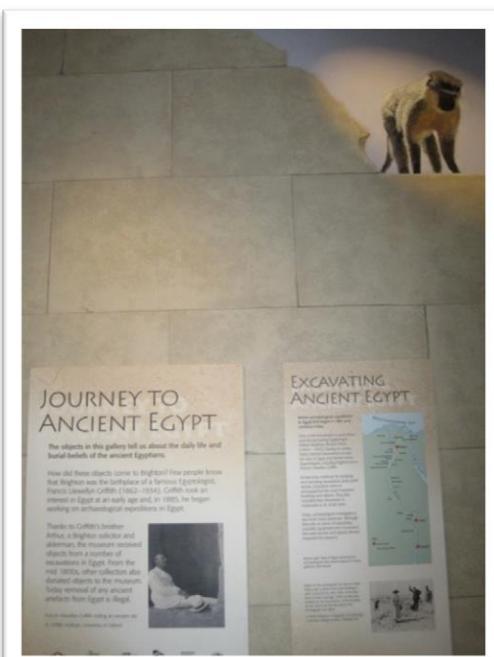


Figure 26 Egyptian Gallery at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery

A close inspection of these features demonstrated that they are constructed of simple wood flats, painted in a style very similar to that used by scenic painters in theatre. These scenographic features give the *Roman Gallery* a style that is aesthetically Romanesque without depicting or replicating a specific Roman place or setting. Similar techniques have been used in the *Egyptian Gallery* at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery (fig 26), which appears to resemble, but not replicate, the inside of an Egyptian temple or pyramid. Themed galleries can be very visually appealing, but the contribution to the visitors understanding of the subject or the artefacts, and the consequent impact on the intellectual value of experience, requires further investigation. It is a reasonable assumption that a truthful replication of a space, era or event will provide an insight and further level of understanding to the viewer, but the ability of a themed space to contribute to the interpretation in this way is less apparent. It may not be the intention of themed galleries to contribute to intellectual values in this way. In themed galleries the design is supplementary but subordinate to the

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primary interpretive devices. Focus remains on the collection and interpretive materials (text panels, labels, interactives so on) and the themed design is an accessory.

Use of scenographic principles in themed design was also identified elsewhere in museums, beyond the galleries and exhibitions, extending into cafes, gift shops and transition spaces. In the review of visitors' experiences (chapter 4.2) I recognised how such facilities can contribute to visitors' judgement on the value of museum experience. A number of museum eateries were found that are themed to fit an aspect of the site's interpretation, even when themed design was not used in the galleries or elsewhere on the site. The *Switchroom Café* at Churchill Museum and War and the *Checkpoint Charlie Café* at RAF Museum Cosford (fig 28) are prime examples of themed museum eateries. This may to some seem a gimmicky method that adds little value to the visitors' experience, but some examples were identified which may be argued as contributing to intellectual values. At the London Transport Museum, a rest area is staged to look like a domestic lounge from the 1950s (fig 29). The design does not go into great levels of detail to accurately depict a 1950s lounge, and the lack of interpretive material, and irregular scale of furnishings helps to clarify that they are not historical artefacts. The rest area makes use of a TV to screen muted videos of social events from the era, but besides this there is no didactic interpretation. In the chronological ordering of the galleries, the staged rest area may give visitors an insight into the wider social context to the trains and carriages in the adjacent galleries. Unlike many dreary and unused seating points in museums, this area provides a fun space that offers visitors some wider social context to the collection.



Figure 27 Themed design of Checkpoint Charlie Café at RAF Museum Cosford



Figure 28 Themed rest area at London Transport Museum

There is a possible hazard with themed design approaches which museum developers may be cautious of. Some designers may feel that themed design offers a certain sense of artistic license. When trying to replicate a specific place or setting, exhibition designers will typically go to great lengths to try be as accurate to the original as possible. With themed design there may be a sensed opportunity to be lax on standards of accuracy. This may not be a problem, unless it is found to be misleading or confusing visitors. As a possible demonstration of this I refer to an example at the West Midlands Safari Park. Though a popular leisure attraction, there is a clear attempt to educate visitors on the animals in care with interpretative boards alongside most enclosures. Many of the enclosures are attractively styled, possibly for the comfort of the animals or perhaps to show species in their natural context. However, some enclosures depict unknown or unclear landscapes, and seem more 'Disneyfied' or romanticised than a natural habitat would be. It may be argued that the design of these animal habitats are focused on visual appeal and attempting to create a pleasant and enjoyable experience for visitors. Once the appropriate environmental conditions are established then the aesthetics of an animals' enclosure does not impact the welfare of the creature. Arguably West midlands Safari Park is leaning more towards a visitor attraction than an educational institution, and so is not an immediate comparison to most museums. However, as past museum developments have shown, owing to competition for the publics' free time and money, trends in the leisure industry can have impact on the styles and design of museum spaces.

The ability of knowingly inaccurate replications to offer intellectual value remains unclear. An accurate replication can work as an interpretive device; staging and scenic painting can demonstrate a place or time; costumes can be used to show fashion and cultural trends, but what is the advantage of these scenographic tools if not accurate? Well, the Victorian enthusiasts at Blists Hill were certainly very popular with visitors, and their costumes seemed to act as an invitation to discussion. Inviting and encouraging visitors to converse with staff may certainly offer interpersonal values and (depending on the quality of interaction and the visitors learning preference) may increase intellectual values. The colourful costumes of the Victorian enthusiasts also added a sense of joviality and light hearted fun. At the London Transport Museum a costumed interpreter was witnessed guiding a group of school children through the galleries. His costume was not obviously representational of any historical era or figure (see fig 30). His costume did distinguish him as being different from other staff, and so allowed him to behave in a different way. The costumed guide was able to adopt a more exaggerated, energetic behaviour, and create an experience that was highly engaging and exciting to his young audience (and a few distantly observing adults). Despite potentially lacking in historical accuracy or authenticity, the guide's costume served a useful benefit in helping to

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attract, and maintain attention, and deliver a highly enjoyable, and probably a very memorable tour. This may have indirectly provided intellectual values, mixed with emotional values.



Figure 29 Themed sea lion enclosure at West Midlands Safari Park

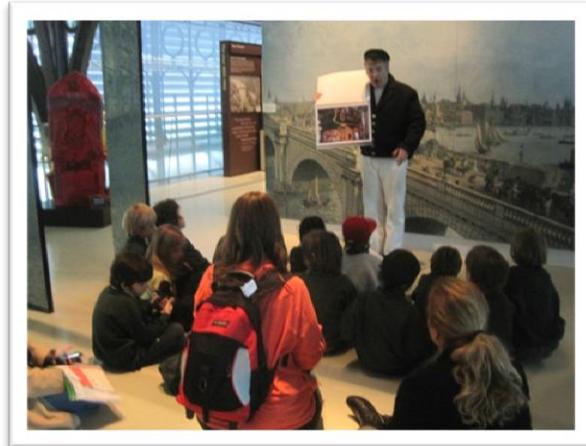


Figure 30 Costumed guide with school group at London Transport Museum

Scenography can be used to offer context and setting to museum artefacts or the wider subject. This can be effective in offering an insight into another time or place, and increasing understanding. However, designers must be aware of how they frame and present limitations or knowing inaccuracies, particularly with designs that are attempting to replicate a real place, time or event. When using scenography to replicate or suggest places in museums it will never be exact or authentic, but this should not be mistaken for an artistic license where designs can be knowingly inaccurate. Based on the findings of this research I would suggest that where designs are limited, knowingly exaggerated, or falsified, then this should be highlighted to visitors so as not to misinform. Exhibitions should either aim to be accurate or truthful.

5.2.ii. Personal meaning making in museums

In chapter 1 I reviewed how scenography operates on multiple levels by looking at the four levels of operation of the stage picture (Aston & Savona, 2003). It was also recognised how what is presented within the 'theatrical frame' is assumed to have meaning, and when the audience recognise the stage picture is operating on the symbolic level they instinctively engage in personal meaning making. I have found from this research that there are examples where this principle of scenography is attempted in museum design, but it is unclear if visitors routinely partake in personal meaning making in museums. During field visits I observed

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several exhibitions where the design appeared to be operating on a symbolic level, but could not be certain if other visitors recognised this level of operation. Theatrical audiences anticipate the possible need to partake in the process of personal meaning making upon the recognition of the theatrical frame. In chapter 2.3 I reviewed performance in museums and found it offers the same type of framing as theatrical performance, and helps the viewer distinguish between what is part of the performance and the wider museum experience. Visitors encountering performance in museums can then apply the appropriate behaviours and cognitive processes to witnessing the performance. When looking at scenography in museum design, the framing is not always obvious, and it is therefore unclear if visitors are able, or willing to engage in the same cognitive processes that theatrical audiences do.

An example of museum design operating on a symbolic level was found at Museum of London, in an exhibit discussing the London Blitz. Visitors enter a small darkened room containing three mirrored walls and one wall showing a projected oral history video (fig 31). A bomb hangs menacingly in the centre of the room, highlighted with a solitary spotlight and positioned nose down as if falling to earth, suspended just feet from the ground, as if seconds away from detonation. The bomb works as a didactic object; demonstrating to visitors the size and appearance of such weapons, but the bombs unusual positioning suggests it can also be read on a symbolic level. I interpreted the position of this artefact as a symbol, positioned there to make us reflect on how it may have felt with the constant threat of danger during the London Blitz. I was humbled by the message, and I stopped for a long time in that space, moved as I tried to consider the event from the perspective of the people who experienced that time in history. Other visitors stopped briefly, some stopped and took a seat, whilst others moved quickly through on to the next gallery. Some of those who stopped may have recognised the symbol, or they may have been emotionally impacted by the oral history videos projected on to the walls. Without stopping to question these visitors it is impossible to know if they have recognised the symbolic operation, or what they may have interpreted it to mean. Another example of museum design operating on symbolic level was found at RAF Museum Cosford, in the *Global Conflicts* exhibit. Through the middle of the space is a set of large dominoes that appear frozen mid collapsing. To me this was symbolising the chain effect of toppling nations in the outbreak of war. Being a regular theatre goer, and having studied scenography academically, my own ability to engage in personal meaning making is astute, though I recognised these hidden messages, other visitors may have remained oblivious. A visitor may recognise the symbolic operation but make entirely different meaning from these two exhibits³⁴. Unlike

³⁴ The interpretations of the two exhibits are based solely on my own reflection and understanding. I have not sought to clarify if this was the designer's intention.

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in theatrical performance there is not the assumption that museum design will operate on a symbolic level, and so visitors may not be expectant of having to partake in personal meaning making, or recognise when exhibitions are attempting to operate on a symbolic level. The purpose of scenography in these museum designs is to try and create a theatrical frame which will then encourage visitors to instinctively engage in personal meaning making, as they would upon recognition of theatrical frame with performance. However, the effectiveness of this is unclear. Can scenography create a theatrical frame without performance, and does this encourage the same processes?

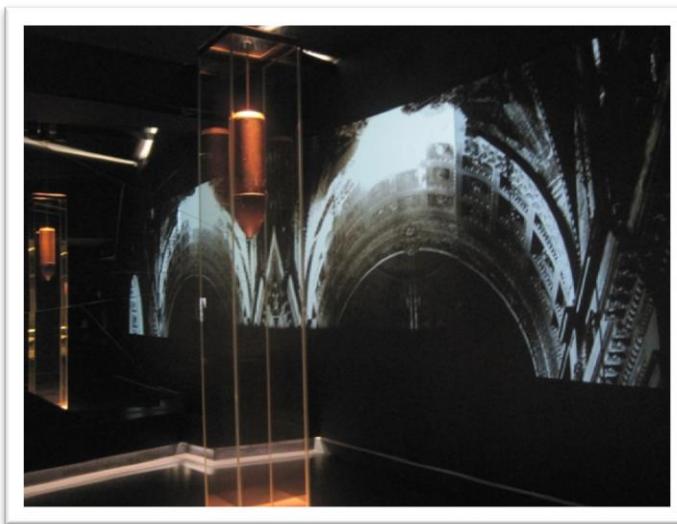


Figure 31 Museum design operating on symbolic level at Museum of London

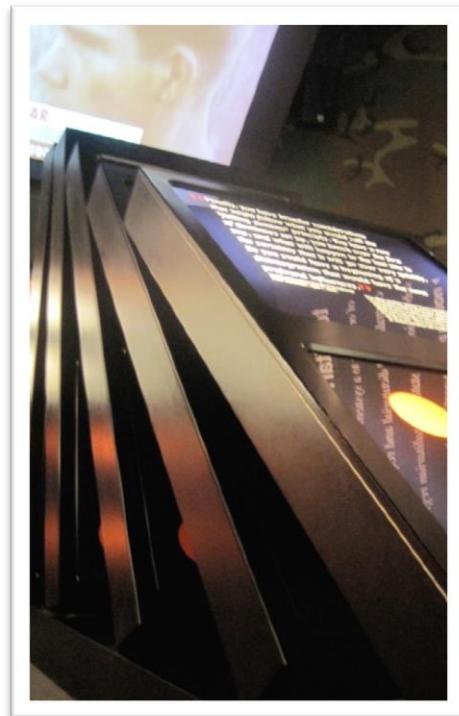


Figure 32 Museum design operating on symbolic level at RAF Museum Cosford

Confusion over having to (or unwillingness to) partake in personal meaning making, was evident in visitors' response to *Enchanted Palace* at Kensington Palace. *Enchanted Palace* was almost entirely devoid of most familiar interpretive strategies such as exhibition panels, text panels, an audio guide, guided tour, an exhibition catalogue, listening posts or screen based interactives. To identify the stories of the Royal Princesses visitors were required to partake in a personal meaning making process by reading the theatrically staged tableaux. Much of the diversity in visitors' opinions of *Enchanted Palace* can be attributed to their willingness or ability to read the spaces on this symbolic level. Alexandra Kim (Curator at Kensington Palace) was involved in the development of *Enchanted Palace*, and in the audience evaluation following its opening. Speaking about visitors' responses to *Enchanted Palace* Kim said; 'you can't stereotype the kind of

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people who will dislike this, it is very much about attitude and somebody who is willing to look at it in a different way' (Kim in interview, 2010). On online blog 'about.com'³⁵ discussing London attractions, travel guide Laura Porter described *Enchanted Palace* as 'confusing' and 'unsure what to make of it' and invited readers who had visited to comment³⁶. From users comments we can see the two types of polarised responses to the exhibition. Two users who were favourable of *Enchanted Palace* wrote;

I absolutely loved the *Enchanted Palace* exhibition. It actually credited visitors with a little imagination and turned what is probably your usual stuffy museum-type place (where people come to hover over the memories of Princess Di) into a fairy tale world that was unexpected, inspired and wonderfully artistic (Deadly Knightshade posted 20/06/2010).

It was weirdly beautiful, haunting and at times nightmarish. Not all of these princesses had a happy time in this palace. It is not the same beauty and elegance we experienced the first time, but we won't forget it! Go with the flow and not only see, but feel this exhibition! (Kimberly posted 29/07/2010).

From the comments praising *Enchanted Palace* it appears those visitors bought into the experience, recognising the need to use their imagination, to 'feel' the exhibition, and look for meaning in what was presented to them. In comparison, comments from readers who had not enjoyed their experience of *Enchanted Palace* demonstrate confusion, not understanding what was required, or opposition to such an approach, and therefore unwillingness to take part:

Lame and just plain stupid. Think Tim Burton and Disney's haunted mansion- only not as good...Weird. Eccentric. Not at all art. Not Kensington Palace (Trisha posted 23/04/2010).

The Enchanted Palace was a dismal experience, never to be repeated. It was dark, disturbing, obscure – I haven't a clue what it was all about (Barbara posted 20/06/2010).

Both Kim and Sue Hill (Creative Director at Wildworks) assigned some of the negative feedback to a difference in visitors' expectations of Kensington Palace, and the experience of *Enchanted Palace*; 'people have a certain view of a historical palace, this is not it. It's something between exhibition, theatre, and its introduced contemporary fashion into the palace. That is not what most people come to a royal palace for or expect' (Kim in interview, 2010). In the first few months of *Enchanted Palace* opening many people arrived at Kensington expecting a classic heritage site (as the palace had previously been). It is difficult to manage

³⁵

(<http://golondon.about.com/od/thingstodo/london/ss/Kensington-Palace.htm>, last viewed 18/11/11).

³⁶Up to September 2010 there were fifteen comments in response to this blog post; nine negative, four positive and one response from the staff at Kensington.

peoples' expectations prior to visiting and Hill claimed the Historic Royal Palaces marketing department did not accurately represent *Enchanted Palace* in the lead up to the exhibitions opening. The publicity and promotion surrounding the *Enchanted Palace* did not mention the participatory nature of the experience. Hill describes how this resulted in many visitors being surprised and unsure how to respond (Hill in interview, 2010). I recall my first visit to *Enchanted Palace* (within the first months of it opening), and I remember my confusion when after paying my entry fee, I was handed a map and sent on my way with little instruction. I can understand why some visitors were surprised or unsure how to respond.

As the *Enchanted Palace* exhibition developed and it became more widely understood what the exhibition involved, then the general response from visitors became proportionally more positive; 'I think it's kind of getting better now that people's expectations are much more in line with what actually happens' (Hill in interview, 2010). About four months after my first visit to *Enchanted Palace* I returned to Kensington Royal Palace. On this second visit I was greeted by a member of staff who asked if I had visited before and explained what the exhibition involved before paying. Perhaps some of visitors' negative response to *Enchanted Palace* may have been overcome if the exhibition had been more clearly framed through the marketing, indicating in advance the need to participate and engage in personal meaning making and setting proper expectations.

Enchanted Palace may also have benefited from more familiar interpretation strategies to help provide intellectual values for those unable, or unwilling, to participate in personal meaning making. This would also have aided visitors' who had read the symbolic level of the tableaux but wished to seek further insight or clarification. *The Room of a Sleeping Princess* (fig 33) was one of the rooms in *Enchanted Palace*, it depicted the story of Princess Victoria (later the long ruling Queen Victoria). A nursery chair with extended legs looked like a wardens watch tower, guarding over an ornate bed piled high with several mattresses. The dim blue lights created an atmosphere of quiet and solemn. I interpreted this room as portraying the entrapment and isolation Princess Victoria may have felt as a young girl in a big palace. This interpretation was based on both my experience in reading design spaces, and my existing historical knowledge. Other visitors may have come to different conclusions on the intentions of the design and on the life of Princess Victoria. The only way to affirm or clarify understanding was to seek out an 'Explainer'³⁷. Owing to the limited written interpretation in

³⁷ 'Explainers' was a name given to the wardens and guides at *Enchanted Palace*. As these staff were already employed by Kensington Palace prior to *Enchanted Palace*, they had extensive knowledge of the site and its history. These staff underwent training with Wildworks to learn story telling techniques that would help to share the exhibition narratives in more theatrical and engaging ways but were not in character.

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Enchanted Palace, the Explainers were one of few opportunities to gain specific historical information or facts. For visitors seeking this type of intellectual value, Explainers were pivotal to their understanding or enjoyment of the exhibition, but on my first visit I was not instructed to seek Explainers for clarification or further historical information (I assume other visitors were also not informed of this). It was only by chance and my unsuppressable curiosity, that I approached what I thought to be a security guard but who turned out to be a well-informed Explainer. The Explainer not only affirmed my interpretation of the design but he expanded my understanding by telling me how Princess Victoria's feeling of isolation was stemming from her overprotective mother. If it were not for that co-incidental and fortunate interaction with an Explainer then I may not have felt so confident in my interpretation and the intellectual value attained from the experience. Visitors who have felt confused or frustrated by *Enchanted Palace* may simply have wanted to have their personal interpretations confirmed as accurate. There is opportunity for museums to operate on the symbolic level, but problems may arise if these are used as the primary or only interpretation strategy as it may restrict some visitors' intellectual value of the experience.



Figure 33 Room of a Sleeping Princess in Enchanted Palace at Kensington Palace

A visitor's ability to participate in personal meaning making may also be dependent upon the quality of the design and how effectively and easily recognisable the signs are communicated. At Florence Nightingale Museum in London I felt that the design was attempting to operate on a symbolic level but was unsure as to some of the meanings. Many of the exhibit cases at Florence Nightingale Museum are designed in unusual

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finishes, some of the cases have quite obvious and literal meanings, whilst others are more ambiguous. At the section discussing Nightingale's love life and romantic interests, the case appears to be flowering with pink roses (fig 34), and the cases discussing her work in the Crimean War are wrapped in oversize bandages (fig 35). In these instances the connection between interpretation and design finish seemed obvious. Other material selections were less clear, including cases finished in false grass (discussing Nightingale's life growing up and the condition of nursing at the time, (fig 36) and ornate ceramic tile (explaining Nightingale's work in the Crimean War, and information on nursing in the armed forces today). Though there may be justifiable or curatorial reason for the selection of these unusual cabinet finishes, it was not obvious to me as a visitor. The strange finishes may help to differentiate the various themes of the overall interpretation, but there appears to be no obvious meaning that can be derived from some of the material choices. It is perfectly viable that there is no intended meaning in the material selection of these exhibition cases and they are simply devised as aesthetically appealing or unusual alternatives. Yet it seems a tremendous amount of effort and cost to produce the cases in such atypical styles simply for aesthetics, and peculiar that some should seem to have such obvious meanings if others do not.

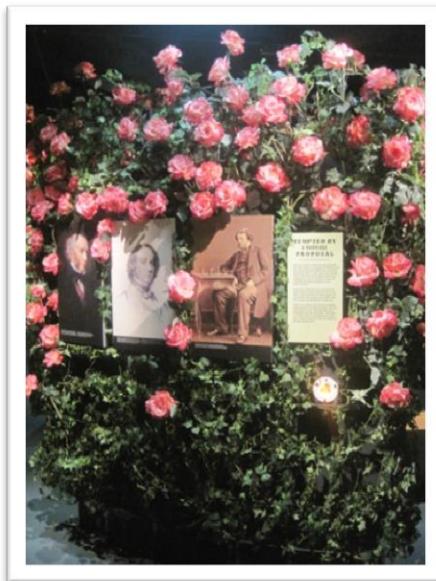


Figure 34 Exhibition case covered in pink roses at Florence Nightingale Museum



Figure 35 Exhibition cases wrapped in bandages at Florence Nightingale Museum.



Figure 36 Exhibition case covered in artificial grass at Florence Nightingale Museum

From this research I can identify that there are many examples of museum design that encourage or require the visitor to partake in personal meaning making, but it is unclear the extent to which visitors are able or willing to do this. I have discussed the 'theatrical frame' and how it sets expectations of meaning making,

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and recognised that the theatrical frame can be projected into museums when there is an element of performance taking place. With the absence of performance, it is much more difficult, if not impossible to establish a theatrical frame, even if principles and components of scenography are extensively used in the design. Perhaps what we should be considering is not how to create a theatrical frame, but what is expected within the museum frame, and can we adjust this to suit. Traditionally the museum frame sets expectations of learning, and assumptions that what is presented will be accurate, truthful and not misleading. Much of this seems to remain, but then we find exhibitions that are attempting to change the museum frame, and the ways visitors behave and make meaning from the space and the design. Perhaps these could be viewed as sub-frames within the frame of museum experiences. There is still some way to go before these principles become widely understood both by visitors and by exhibition developers, much further research is required to understand the ways in which visitors make meaning from museum design, and the general perception and attitude towards this. As yet, the museum frame does not appear to imply the same need to partake in meaning making as the theatrical frame, but perhaps with continued use this will become better understood, more accepted, and then more widely used.

The research has demonstrated that the intellectual values of museum experience are still critical in visitors' experiences, and some visitors may require more traditional and familiar interpretive strategies to attain these intellectual values. It is advised that personal meaning making is not used as a replacement to more familiar interpretive devices to ensure all visitors are able to attain required intellectual values.

5.3 Impact on Collection Values

5.3.i. Recognising authentic artefacts

A museum's collection offers a unique selling point and is a valued resource for attracting visitors. This was demonstrated in chapter 4 when it was decided to include 'collection values' as one type of value of museum experience. One of the fundamental aspects of collection value is that they are real, authentic objects. From this research I have noted that the application of scenography in museums can blur the boundaries between what is authentic and what is replication. Confusion between authentic and replicas was noted in chapter 2 when looking at performance in museums. Then during field visits to museums I identified other examples where scenographic components could be mistaken for authentic artefacts, or where they disguise artefacts, or bring in to question the authenticity of objects. Large scenographic components such as scenery are usually quite obvious as replications, and frame themselves as theatrical, but others, such as props and costumes can be easily mistaken.

It is perhaps a subjective and individual judgement if there is any ethical, moral or other such dilemma in visitors not being able to differentiate between what is authentic and what is replica, but it may be to the museums detriment that such a misassumption is made. Designers and exhibition developers may assume that visitors are able to distinguish between authentic artefacts and replicas, but this cannot be taken as definite. Children or people not familiar with museums may lack the prior knowledge to differentiate, or may be more susceptible to suggestion. During field visits to museums I have encountered many convincing replica props: instances where the levels of detail were so impressive they appeared believable and may have passed as genuine artefacts. If a visitor was to mistake these replicas as authentic artefacts, then it could greatly impede the innate value of the real collection. A case of genuine Roman pottery fragments stored behind glass, may seem less impressive compared to (what is believed to be) a pristine Roman sword and helmet- that can be handled.

If visitors mistakenly confuse real artefacts for replicas then they may not attain desired collection values. Lack of collection values by not encountering authentic artefacts can lead to a sense of disappointment, or even frustration in visitors. Such lack of collections values was identified in some of the disapproving visitor responses to *Enchanted Palace*. Some of the critical visitor feedback to *Enchanted Palace* was regarding the 'removal of history' through (what visitors thought to be) the abstraction of artefacts, but was more often

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the inability to recognise the original features of the palace. Kim described two distinct responses visitors had to the way the palace and the collection were displayed in *Enchanted Palace*:

It's either; what an amazing way to display a historical building, this has made me engage with history in a way I never have done before... Or it is; how can you have done this to a historic building, this is not what history should be about, we couldn't see where the historic objects were, and there is no in between (Kim in interview, 2010).

For some visitors, the lack of clarification between what was authentic and what was part of the theatrical dressing was irritating or even frustrating. In an online travel forum inviting reader's opinion of *Enchanted Palace*, one user wrote; 'Too dark to see the beauty of the place – never sure which way to go – didn't understand what we were supposed to be looking at – information sparse/ or illegible – printed guide poor quality – felt conned' (user blog comment³⁸ - last viewed 18/11/11). There were in fact many artefacts incorporated in the theatrical tableaux created in *Enchanted Palace*, and many of the original features of the palace were still visible. During the development of *Enchanted Palace*, the team were confident that any additional props or scenery could be distinguished as such. Kim explains;

It wouldn't have worked if we had stripped out all of the historic objects and tried to put replicas objects in and at no point did we try to put in replicas. For example with a knitted throne, that is very obvious it is not the throne that is meant to be there. So if it has been added it's not meant to be exactly as it was (Kim in interview, 2010).

Neither the staff at Kensington nor the team from Wildworks had anticipated visitors would have such difficulty in distinguishing what was authentic, and what was part of the theatrical dressing of the exhibition. Kim recalled an instance where one Explainer had spoken to a visitor who thought Wildworks had painted the intricate frescos on the walls and ceilings (which are in fact a valuable feature of the original building). This difficulty in distinguishing between authentic and scenographic in *Enchanted Palace* was not a problem restricted to the foolish, or novice museum visitors. I visited *Enchanted Palace* twice before speaking with the exhibition developers, and despite having a fairly acute knowledge of both museums and theatrical performance, I can relate to the feeling of disappointment in not encountering real artefacts, and confusion over what were authentic artefacts and what was part of the scenographic layering.

³⁸<http://golondon.about.com/od/thingstodoindondon/ss/Kensington-Palace.htm>

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Inside the *Enchanted Palace* exhibition there were barriers in almost all of the rooms, preventing visitors from touching most of the furniture on display. As a visitor I thought these barriers suggested value in the artefacts, but the theatrical dressing of furniture and of the barriers themselves prompted me to question this. Were these barriers keeping the artefacts out of touch, or were they just part of the mise-en-scene, or a way of directing visitors through the spaces and better controlling their focus and attention? For me it seemed unusual and improbable that real artefacts were presented in the theatrical dressing. I struggled to believe that unique, potentially priceless artefacts were used as part of dramatic tableaux, and it prompted me to call in to question their authenticity. It was not until in interview with curator Alexandra Kim that I came to realise that '*The Room of a Sleeping Princess*' was in fact the actual former bedroom of Princess Victoria, and the bed displayed is the one she slept in. I could not help but look back and feel I had somehow missed something special in my experience, and with this fresh knowledge I immediately wanted to go back and look again at that room and the bed. Though I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to the *Enchanted Palace*, and attained many types of value from the experience, I must admit, at the time I felt a sense of disappointment in not witnessing real objects; a lack of collection values. I now see it was my inability to recognise the real artefacts, but this had the same effect as if there were none present. It may be that the methods used in *Enchanted Palace* were so unique and original to the museums industry at the time, that they were alien to some visitors, myself included. Perhaps if approaches like those used in *Enchanted Palace*, continue to be used in museum design, then they will become part of the expected museum frame and visitors will become more accustomed to seeing artefacts displayed in this way and confident in distinguishing authentic artefacts within theatrical dressing, or perhaps *Enchanted Palace* would have just benefited from a few labels, or a few more Explainers.

For the team involved in creating *Enchanted Palace*, the aim of dressing artefacts using scenography was to encourage visitors to view the objects with a fresh perspective: 'Some might argue that by reducing the lighting on something or surrounding it by brambly barriers you have taken away its beauty or its mystery. But for us that was partly to show it in a different light' (Kim in interview, 2010). I can understand the teams' logic in this, and agree that there is opportunity to use scenography in museum design in this way. During field visits to museums I recognised other examples where scenography has been used to draw attention to the collection, or try to change visitors' perception of artefacts. *Minibeasts* was a temporary exhibition at Potteries Museum and Art Gallery that used the design of the gallery to draw attention to artefacts. The *Minibeasts* exhibition aimed to immerse young visitors in the world of creepy crawlies, by creating a setting in which they could imagine being the scale of an insect (fig 37). The space was filled with oversized grass,

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flowers and scale models of insects, all aiding the desired perspective of being shrunk down. Helen Bairns (Design Services Officer) and Ian Vines (Programmes and Exhibitions Officer), were involved in the design of *Minibeasts* and explained how the design of the exhibition was pivotal to giving the subject and the artefacts more impact and 'wow factor'. Without capturing the viewer's interest and imagination through the design of the exhibition, then the insects can appear just like dull brown dots in frames (Bairns & Vine in interview, 2009). The design of *Minibeasts* not only aimed to draw attention to the collection but to make the artefacts more interesting to visitors.



Figure 37 Minibeasts exhibition at Potteries Museum and Art Gallery

Through the history of museums the role of the collection, and the way it is used, have changed quite significantly. Artefacts are now less often put out of reach of visitors, or presented in a way that requests awe and admiration. Collections are now recognised as a useful tool, all-be-it still valuable to the point of priceless, but they are not the entire focus of museum display. This does not undermine the importance of artefacts, not only in providing a unique selling point for attracting visitors, museum collections are filled with irreplaceable artefacts that preserve heritage for future generations. Artefacts can hold hidden stories, sometimes very personal, powerful, harrowing, amazing stories of loss, love or achievement. Museum collections are more than financially valuable and because of this, some museum professionals feel they should be presented in a way that is respectful of their value.

Collection value is not something scenographers must consider in theatrical performance, but this does not mean the components and principles of scenography are not transferable to museums, rather exhibition developers should be respectful and mindful of the intrinsic value of artefacts.

5.3.ii. Presenting authentic spaces and places

Collection values are not only attained in encountering authentic artefacts. During this research I have come to realise that the spaces and buildings within which heritage attractions are set can also hold unique and intrinsic value. In today's museum market we find a range of sites based within restored buildings, such as: homes/birthplaces of historical figures, stately homes, former mills, factories and jails. The original building may have significant local or national heritage importance, and is usually a key feature or indeed the very driving force of the attraction. Interpreting these spaces can present a design dilemma; should the space be left raw and empty so that visitors can see the building as it is, or restored to their former glory and replicated to look as they would during their original occupation? Each approach has its merits and its drawbacks and remains an issue regularly contested within the sector.

A more stripped back approach permits visitors to see more of the building and its features and avoids some of the possible pitfalls in accuracy (as discussed in 5.2.i). It may however be problematic for some visitors as it provides little prompt to envision the space as it was in the past. Part of helping visitors to attain collections value may require aiding visitors in recognising the importance or significance of what is being presented. It can be difficult to recognise the value of something as it was, when looking at it, as it is now. Helping visitors to visualise or at least understand a place, how it may have looked and how it was used, may be a critical part of some visitors being able to appreciate the place and identify the intrinsic collection value. The most obvious way scenography can be used to help visitors visualise a space in the past, would be using scenographic components such as scenery, scenic painting, props and costume to recreate that space. Examples of scenography used for context and setting were given in chapter 2, and the limitations of replications were discussed in 5.2.i. But replication is not the only way scenography can be used to help visitors understand a space and help recognise the special value in encountering a place.

Hidden in the basement of The Guildhall Art Gallery in London are the remains of a Roman amphitheatre. Very little of the original structure is still visible, just a few knee high walls and some foundations. A visitor would require a very active imagination and an acute knowledge of Roman history to make sense of the remains, let alone envision how the original amphitheatre may have looked. Being in the basement of the art gallery, the amphitheatre is also devoid of natural lighting. The lack of natural lighting provides optimal preservation conditions, but presents a design dilemma when trying to open the space to the public. The exhibition developers have successfully manipulated these conditions to an advantage, and used theatrical lighting techniques to help visitors comprehend how the remains they see today relate to the original

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amphitheatre, and the significance of the site. Green strip lighting is used to create an outline view of the amphitheatre seating, as if looking out from the centre of the arena. The green strip lighting obviously does not give an accurate replication, but by putting visitors in the perspective of a Roman entering the arena they can begin to appreciate the spectacle of the place.



Figure 38 Roman amphitheatre at Guildhall Museum & Art Gallery

During field visits I recognised a unique style of site-specific performance used within these real spaces. Site specific performance is well practiced in theatre, where pieces are devised considering the unique properties, characteristics, or stories of the place in which it is to be performed. Any type of performance in museums that communicates the narratives of the place in which it is performed, could be classed as site-specific. Living history can be site-specific, and costume interpretation is often used to communicate the specific narratives of the site. The examples I wish to discuss here are unique in both their design approach, and the use of performance not as an added extra, but a main component of the visitor's experience. NCCL Galleries of Justice in Nottingham (previously a courthouse and jail), Oxford Castle- Unlocked in Oxford (formerly a castle and later a jail), and Benjamin Franklin's House in London were three sites visited using this unique type of site specific performance, which I shall call 'performance led real places'. Like site specific theatrical performance, the narrative of these performance led real spaces has been inspired by the space in which it is performed.

These performance led real spaces should not be mistaken with living history, as despite similarities in the two, the design and approach are typically very different. Living history may be a reproduction of spaces or buildings which may or may not be in-situ, and the narratives communicated at living history sites may be (though historically viable) fictitious. Performance led real spaces are the actual place that have remained in-

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situ, and the narratives are drawn from the history of the site (though these may have been exaggerated, or altered somewhat). The design of living history is also very different to performance in real space. As discussed in chapter 2.3, design of living history is led predominantly by historical accuracy and seeks to fully replicate the look of the place as it was first built (or a fixed time in history). Visitors to living history are persuaded to suspend their disbelief and enjoy the knowing falsity of being in a by-gone era. Performance led real spaces favour a very different scenographic approach. Using the four levels of operation of the stage picture (Aston & Savona, 2003: 146) we see that rather than operate on a sociometric level, and attempt to fully replicate the original space using lots of artefact and props, performance led real spaces operate on a more atmospheric level, using only token furniture or props. Not accurately or fully replicating one specific era offers the advantage of a more flexible space in which narratives from many different eras can be conveyed. Some historic sites have many years of history; decades if not centuries of interesting and culturally relevant stories that the organisation may want to share with visitors. Not replicating one era allows the site to present many stories spanning through the history of the place. Operating on a more atmospheric level, performance led real spaces make use of soundscapes, theatrical lighting, audio-visual projections, scenic painting, props, and costume to create an environment or mood that fits the performed narrative or overall interpretive messages. The most conspicuous example of atmospheric enhancement of a real space was at Benjamin Franklin's House in London.

Benjamin Franklin's House promotes itself to visitors as offering 'a historical experience' that uses 'his [Benjamin Franklin's] historic rooms as staging for a drama which seamlessly integrates live performance, and cutting-edge lighting and projection technology'³⁹. The building has been structurally restored and the walls and ceiling finished appropriately for the period, but the space is furnished with minimal props or scenery and does not attempt to demonstrate how the rooms may have looked when Dr Franklin lived there. Instead, each room presents one or two token items that relate to the interpretive message being communicated in the performance. For example, a single kite furnishes the room in which the guide speaks of Dr Franklins most famous scientific experiments on conducting electricity (fig 39).

³⁹(http://www.benjaminfranklinhouse.org/site/sections/about_house/default.htm last accessed 10/01/2012)



Figure 40 Token props relating to narrative of performance at Benjamin Franklin's House

Figure 39 Token prop relating to narrative of performance, at Benjamin Franklin's House.

Visitors must book in advance onto one of the scheduled guided tours that are led by an actor playing Polly Hewson- daughter of the buildings landlord. During the tour at Benjamin Franklin's House, each room is dimly lit; lighting is focused only on the performer and any token items. This is very effective in focusing the visitor's attention. With controlled focus on the performance element and the regimented way in which visitors are guided through the building, a visit to Benjamin Franklin's House feels more like a theatrical performance than a usual museum experience. Much like a theatrical performance, the experience of Benjamin Franklin's House is also very immersive and the atmospheric design gives the spaces a haunting, dramatic and sometimes emotionally stirring atmosphere that has an impact on visitors on an affective level. This could be for some visitors overpowering, and not allow the visitor time and opportunity to reflect on what is being presented to them in a more intellectual capacity. It also limits the visibility of the building and its structural or architectural design features which may be for some visitors the main attraction or motivation for visiting. Owing to the strategically timed nature of the tour, all visitors' questions and discussion is reserved until the end when the house lights are brought up allowing visitors to better see the rooms and features. Rather than question the actor playing Polly, visitors are met by a non-costumed guide who is able to answer questions on the life of Benjamin Franklin, and the building. Without this opportunity to better see the building and to question knowledgeable staff, the potential for recognising collections and intellectual values may be limited.

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At these performance led real spaces, I also noted that confusion in recognising and questioning of authenticity can extend beyond objects. The way in which buildings must be modified to operate as 21st century publicly accessible spaces can lead to the site being misrepresented or misleading in its display. During a guided tour to NCCL Galleries of Justice one visitor innocently questioned if the doctor's office would have been located so close to the female inmates cells, as it was presented. The guide was unable to honestly answer this in his strict first person narration. He was forced to come out of character to explain that, no, the doctors' office would have been elsewhere in the building, but was in an area that is no longer accessible to the public. The space presented to visitors as the doctors' office had never been used for that purpose but had been dressed that way to fit the performance and the narrative the site wanted to tell. This may be perceived as misrepresenting the space, and knowingly misguided visitors. In the previous section I looked at how not highlighting falsities in replications may misinform visitors, in this case not highlighting the limitation may be seen as a misrepresentation of a real space, and the real history of the site, this could bring in to question some serious ethical issues. In this case it may seem a minor misdemeanour, the building did once have a doctors' office, just not in the place it is presented today, but at what level is the line drawn? Does adjusting real spaces impact on more than just intellectual value, could it compromise the collections value? Let us suppose that all of the rooms in NCCL Galleries of Justice were dressed in a way not relating to their original use, would this still be the real space? If visitors knew the rooms were presented in a way not fitting to their original use, would it possess the same collections value? I return to the example of *The Room of a Sleeping Princess* at *Enchanted Palace*, upon realising it was the actual bedroom of Princess Victoria, I immediately wanted to return to the space. Suppose the staff at Kensington Palace had decided to dress another room to look like Princess Victoria's bedroom, and I had assumed it was her actual bedroom. On discovery of the truth, would I have been quick to return, or would I have been disappointed in the error and wished to see her actual bedroom?

5.4 Impact on Emotional Values

5.4.i. Encouraging emotional outcomes

When reviewing visitors' values of museum experience (in chapter 4) I noted how there is a wide range of emotional outcomes that occur in museums, but these were not commonly expressed in visitors' reasons for going to museums. This was also found during the onsite visitor studies, where, although many visitors discussed emotional values in their recollection of the experience, they were not commonly given as part of their reasons for attending. Visitors' motivations were more centred on learning and spending time with friends and family.

From visiting many museums during this research I have witnessed, and experienced some strong emotional responses from exhibitions using scenographic components or principles. After spending a considerable time watching visitors exiting *The Street* exhibition I can confirm it was clearly an unpleasant experience, one which some visitors were glad to be ending. I witnessed several children leaving the exhibition visibly and profoundly upset. Irene McNulty informed that it is not only children who have been effected by *The Street* in this way, 'we have been told by someone that they were really distressed by The Street; you can get dramatic emotions happening with all those different things' (McNulty in interview, 2009). The *Big Picture Show* at Imperial War Museum North is another museum experience causing some very strong emotional responses. The show happens at set times during the day, which are advertised to visitors. Each show lasts about ten minutes, during which the entire gallery is filled with an emotive audio-visual show that surrounds visitors in powerful and hitting images, video, and sound. Rachel Knight (Head of Exhibitions at Imperial War Museum North), explained how the reaction to the *Big Picture Show* can be monumental and profound for some people, and specialist staff have had to be trained to help those visitors deal with those types of response (Knight in interview, 2010). Knight also discussed how *Big Picture Show* is mentioned in many visitors' recollection of their visit to Imperial War Museum North, as the strong emotional experience makes the experience more memorable, both in the short and long term. It is however difficult to attribute how much of visitors strong emotional response is from the content of the show, and how much it is caused by the method of presentation.

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Knight described the *Big Picture Show* and visitors' response, discussing both the interpretation and the presentation:

The scale of the images that we project, and again the personal voice, in most people it can't fail to have an affect or an impact. Particularly the one about children and war, it just makes you cry but for a good reason. And I think that has such an impact and it sticks in your memory and you are going to take something away from it because of that experience, because of that emotional impact it's had on you, good or bad you take something away (Knight in interview, 2010)

In chapter 1, I discussed how emotion is a key part of the experience of theatrical performance, but it is difficult to ascertain how much of a person's emotional response stems from the content, and how much scenography contributes. From this research it appears that this is reflected in museum design. Emotion is an important part of how visitors' experience museum exhibitions, but it is problematic recognising how much scenography can influence this and how much is stemming from the inherent nature of the subjects explored. When addressing sensitive topics such as death, loss, war or destruction it can be reasonably anticipated that many visitors will have some form of emotional response, be it sympathy, empathy, shock, remembrance, pride, grief, or even mild distress. Regardless of the method of presentation these topics are likely to induce some form of emotional response inherent to the nature of the subject. However, from looking at exhibitions such as the *Big Picture Show* and *The Street* it seems evident that scenography in the design of the exhibition can amplify or exaggerate a person's reaction. I less frequently witnessed visitors having as profound a response to reading a label or looking at artefacts as was seen in response to exhibitions like *The Street* and *The Big Picture Show*.



Figure 41 Big Picture Show in progress at Imperial War Museum North.
Image kindly provided by Imperial War Museum

Looking at museum designs using scenography I see it can contribute to an enhanced emotional response, but from this research I have also identified that some visitors do not like feeling their reaction has been prompted or provoked. The *Big Picture Show* is unavoidable for anyone present in the main gallery at the time, and some visitors feel this impedes their museum experience, 'visitors who are happy and confident plotting their own journey around the museum can feel annoyed frankly, that their experience has been jilted' (Knight in interview, 2010). When analysing visitors' value of experience (see 4.2.ii) I noted that some visitors are averse to linear routes and prefer control over their museum experiences. For some visitors approaches like *Big Picture Show* are too forceful and dominating and remove the sense of control or choice which they prefer.

Some museum staff also expressed a dislike of exhibitions that create a dominant and unavoidable atmosphere or mood, claiming it does not allow visitors opportunity for personal reflection, and that visitors should be free to arrive at their own feelings and conclusions without such obvious or enforcing encouragement. Mark Dennis (Curator at Library and Museum of Freemasonry) had some strong opinions on what can happen when a museum tries to influence visitor's emotional response using design. He discussed how it can 'overlay people's reactions to artefacts' and drown out other possible aspects of that object, furthermore there is a danger in people recognising this manipulation and reacting against it: 'If somebody feels they have only been told part of the story and not activated into having a reaction but manipulated into having a certain reaction then the danger is they may react against it' (Dennis in interview, 2009). Garrett had a similar dislike of forced emotional responses, explaining how she struggles with such approaches, and explained that as a museum visitor herself, she prefers when an emotional reaction is unexpected (Garrett & Hanney in interview, 2009). Garrett described a personal experience at Ann Frank's House and Museum in Amsterdam, where at one point the house was completely stripped back. She felt this was an opportunity to reflect on Anne Frank's experience of that place, without feeling forced to do so; 'it was just the pure house and that was the bit where you are able to, you know, put yourself in that persons place without necessarily being forced to put yourself there, but I don't know if everybody could do that or not' (Garrett in interview, 2009). Garrett recognised that although she personally preferred a more stripped backed approach, as this allowed her time to reflect, she realised that other people would require more prompting. Whilst some visitors are able to reflect on material presented and arrive at their own emotional response, others may prefer some emotional enhancement or stimulation, such as is achieved using scenography. A participant at *Night in the Trenches* claimed they had not found the event moving, but believed some atmospheric enhancements may have made it so; 'maybe if you played some music. If you watch a film and

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music is playing you get emotional, but like with the gunfire here people just laughed. If you watch a film without music it's flat' (IN306- participant at NitT). The use of music could help the overall design to operate on an atmospheric level, which may lead to more affective responses in visitors. It is however a delicate balance, as other visitors may feel it is distasteful or even disrespectful and prefer for the narratives to speak for themselves. Throughout this study I have continually identified diversity and subjectivity in visitors' value of experiences, and the mixed attitude on encouraging emotional responses again demonstrates the subjectivity, not only in the types of value sought, but also in the way these values are achieved.

To further investigate the industry opinion on using design to encourage emotional response, I hosted a workshop⁴⁰ at *Materiality and Intangibility; contested zones*, a symposium held at Leicester University in December 2009. The symposium brought together professionals and academics from across the heritage industry. At that time, I hypothesised that some of the professional aversion to encouraging emotional responses may be owing to possible interference with a visitor's intellectual engagement with objects or subjects. It was this theory I decided to test through fostering group discussion in my workshop. I gave a short presentation explaining the concept of value of experience, and some examples of how design is used in exhibitions to exaggerate or encourage an emotional response. I then asked delegates to break out in to small discussion groups, and I provided some questions to guide conversations. Delegates were also given individual feedback forms to complete and return. The overall consensus from group discussion and written feedback was that emotion and learning are often connected. Delegates also raised the point that a visitor's first point of engagement may be emotional, but this doesn't always distract from learning, and may even encourage it. Below are some of the written notes from participants feedback sheets, that demonstrate connection between learning and emotion:

We learn through our emotions as well as through our intellect, our senses etc (delegate written feedback).

Experiencing emotions is a way of learning as well (delegate written feedback).

Addressing an emotional side of the visitors may challenge their perception/ understanding. Intellectual values are not always created on a rational side, the emotional experience can provide intellectual value (delegate written feedback).

⁴⁰ Paper titled *The Affect of Encouraging Emotional Values in the Interpretation of Real Objects*. See appendix 2 for abstract.

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Some interviews also recognised emotional values as a catalyst to other outcomes, particularly learning. Dennis discussed; 'If you are wandering around getting no emotional input from the display then the chances are things won't catalyze' (Dennis in interview, 2009 ii). An emotional experience, whether prompted through design or stemming from the subject, can prompt or inspire a visitor to go on and seek further intellectual value which they may have not have done otherwise. Janine Derbyshire (Principal Keeper at Pickford House) described a personal experience when she and her husband were emotionally impacted by a small immersive exhibition on the London Blitz, at Newark House in Leicester. She described how because of the emotional response, she and her husband were inspired to go on and find out more about the subject and look again at the collection:

He {Derbyshire's partner} came away from that and he felt that he had never understood what those people were subjected to, but it really got him. He said he felt quite emotional as the noise, and as it was dark, and the whole thing stayed with him. Something like that he was really engaged with, then he went on to look more at the displays, so he had been grabbed by that emotional experience rather than the objects, but that then led him on to look at them (Derbyshire in interview, 2009).

The connection between learning and emotion is well documented in literature, both in museums and wider academia. Emotion can not only lead to learning in museums, it is more widely accepted as a form of learning. The Generic Learning Outcomes lists 'attitudes and feelings' as one of five learning outcomes. Under this bracket of learning MLA includes feelings, perceptions and empathy (MLA, 2008).

It is beyond reasonable doubt that emotion is a valid part of visitor's experiences, but it is the way in which museums use design to encourage or prompt emotions that must be reviewed and considered in more detail. Delegates involved in my workshop at *Materiality and Intangibility* discussed how museums should be careful in how they encourage emotional responses using design. Group discussion centred a lot on why museums should feel the need to use such design approaches, and should museums not just let collections and narratives speak for themselves? Whilst some visitors felt that using design to prompt an emotional response was an effective way of reaching visitors, others were passionate that museums should question their reasons for using such approaches, and carefully consider the ways in which this was achieved.

The written feedback received from delegates corresponded well with the opinions of interviewees. There was some concern about design being used in dominant and manipulative ways, with suggestions that there

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should always be opportunity for visitors to reflect on what is presented to them. Delegates also noted the subjectivity in visitors' experiences, highlighting what would work for one might not work for others. Below are some of the key points raised in delegate's feedback:

Giving over-directed experience will work for some and not for others, so a range of values/ focus/ lack of value should be offered- e.g. different learning styles (delegate written feedback).

I think it can sort of make emotions a novelty- museums need to make sure they are transparent about shaping opinion and allow avenues for people to think deeply about what they are feeling and why (delegate written feedback).

Depends on the degree of manipulation and intention (delegate written feedback).

I think it can prevent a deeper engagement with an object- leading to a singular point of view about it. I think it can hinder their ability to spark dialogue- sort of like touching for the novelty of it- but not really thinking about the emotions and why they are happening (delegate written feedback).

One way to overcome the feeling of forced emotional responses could be to frame moments, and separate from the rest of the museum experience, giving visitors the choice to participate or not. Several such sub-spaces were found at Museum of London, covering challenging and thought provoking topics including: the plague, the fire of London and the Blitz. Some of these exhibits were discussed in the previous section on meaning making. As well as operating on a symbolic level, these spaces work on an atmospheric level which effects visitors in a more subliminal and subconscious way. The atmosphere of these controlled subspaces can impact upon visitors without them having consciously considered or read the design. Separating a space from the remainder of the gallery gives the designer a space in which the atmosphere can be better controlled. These enclosed spaces also limit the number of distractions and offer better ability to focus the visitors' attention; the result can be a highly evocative atmosphere, but one in which the visitor has chosen to immerse themselves.

5.4.ii. Empathy and human experience

In chapter 1 I summarised some of the noticeable similarities between theatrical performance and museum experiences, including the communication of narratives grounded in human experientiality and told from personal perspectives. Whilst museums were once, more focused on didactic, factual interpretation, they are now widely using narrative approaches. From the unique and exceptional, to the everyday, stories are

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told in museums through the exploration of human experience. From the findings of the online survey (see chapter 4) it was realised that desire for 'insight into human experience' and wanting to 'see how it would have felt' are not only valued outcomes, but are a key part of some peoples motivations for visiting museums. Similar desire for insight in to human experience was also noted in the onsite surveys and interviews with museum staff.

Visitors interviewed before taking part in the *Night in the Trenches* event were asked to complete a personal meaning map detailing their reasons for attending. Eight prior-to-tour meaning maps were completed, seven of these eight people discussed attending the event to find out what it was like for the soldiers. One visitor said 'it's an experience to see what they went through' (P404- participant at NitT) whilst another commented how they wanted 'to see what it's really like for the soldiers in time of war' (P402- participant at NitT). What I have found from this research is that though these narrative interpretations may for some visitors be an entirely intellectual interest, for many it is the emotional connection that is most valued.

Looking at the feedback from visitors exiting *The Street* we can see that more visitors agreed to empathetic or emotional outcomes than specific intellectual outcomes. Table 6 shows participants' level of agreement with statements on the outcomes of having visited *The Street*. All twenty visitors questioned either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that it had made them feel sorry for the people who lived there, and nineteen out of twenty 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that it had made them think what it would have been like to live in a Victorian slum. In comparison fourteen out of the twenty people asked 'agreed' it had taught them more about disease. One person 'disagreed' that *The Street* had taught them more about the disease, and that it had taught them more about life in the Victorian era, but did specify they had a very high knowledge of these subjects prior to visiting, and thought the exhibition would be educational for other people.

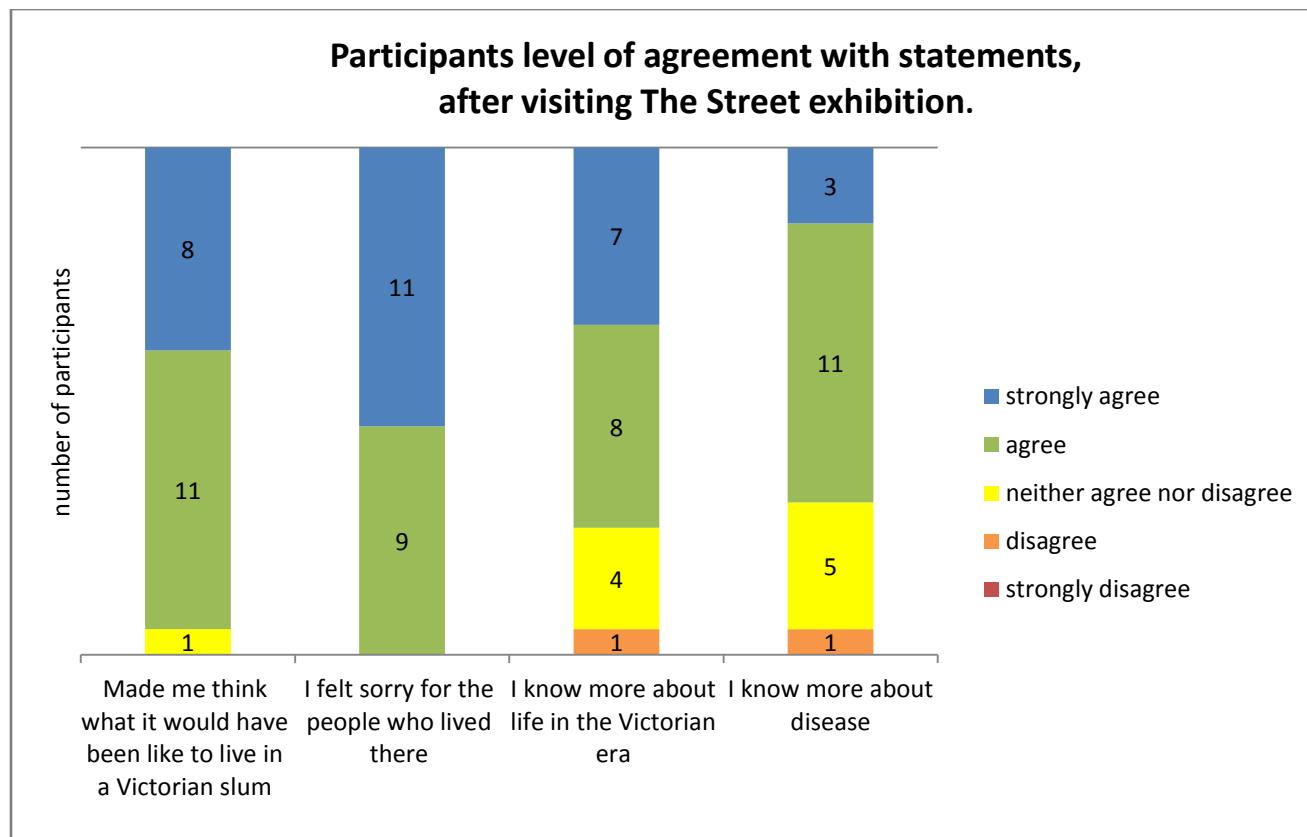


Table 6 Stacked bar chart showing participants level of agreement with statements, after visiting The Street (n=20).

Exhibition developers are increasingly aware of the emotional capacity of human narratives, and are planning empathetic relations as part of exhibition objectives. Narrative approaches have become popular as museums recognise the benefits in being able to create universal themes that appeal to wider audiences, and improve intellectual accessibility. When creating *Enchanted Palace*, the team were very aware that the exhibition would provide less opportunity for didactic learning on dates or facts, but felt that it was just as valid an experience for visitors to be thinking about the lives of the princesses:

Some people might say if I haven't learnt 10 facts about Kensington Palace then why did I bother coming here? Or I want to learn about the history. But what we are trying to find out is: is it just as valid having found out how excited Victoria felt on the day she found out she was Queen, or Mary's terrible sadness about not having any children, or the national tragedy of Princess Charlotte's death in childbirth at the age of 21. Of course emotion is much more a slippery idea than a fact that says; so and so was born in 1819 but even with historical facts people can misremember them. So I think trying to get that sense over this is a valid experience (Kim in interview, 2010).

The collaborative team involved in creating *Enchanted Palace* not only wanted visitors to discover the hidden narratives of the princesses (rather than seek out factual information about the palace) they hoped visitors would do this in an empathetic way, relating the stories of the princesses to their own lives. Hill described how they wanted *Enchanted Palace* to work in the 'affective rather than the didactic domain' and to create 'transformative experiences' that would remain in a person's memory for many years (Hill in interview, 2010). They believed that by looking at the history of the palace through a lens of humanity, and drawing on visitor's empathy, would help make the experience accessible to new audiences who would not previously have visited Kensington Royal Palace. *Night in the Trenches* was also planned to encourage visitors to relate to the experience in an empathetic way. Eric Blakely explained how though there is opportunity for visitors to learn about the tactics and the kit used in WWI trenches, the real aim of *Night in the Trenches* was to provoke people to think about how it felt, 'If they go away thinking that was jolly for me, but it must have been terrible for them (soldiers in the trenches), then I have succeeded' (Blakely in interview, 2009). Blakely went on to say how when creating *Night in the Trenches* the team hoped if visitors thought about how it felt for the soldiers fighting in the trenches, then this would encourage them to go and learn more themselves.

During this study I have visited an extensive number of museums, and encountered a wide variety of different types of museum experiences. Reflecting back on this array of museum experiences, I feel that it is those experiences where I have felt empathy with a character and related to my own life, that I am now best able to recall. In August 2008 whilst at *The Science Museum* in London, I was fortunate to catch a museum theatre piece titled *Pieces of the Sun; the life story of Marie Curie*. Knowing little more about Marie Curie than that she discovered radium, I supposed it would be a good opportunity to learn more about her work and achievements. There were only a few, well considered scenographic components used to support the performance: costumes for the actors; some simple props where necessary; images projected on the back wall; and a few coloured and focused lights, and music to heighten mood in parts. From that performance I learned that Marie Curie was born in Poland; she studied in France; that she married her research partner; that it was in 1898 she discovered radium; and she went on to win a Nobel Prize for her contribution to physics. All this was new knowledge for me. I was interested in learning about her story, and grateful for this intellectual value. But what had the most lasting impression was discovering how Madame Curie had struggled to be accepted as a woman studying physics, her strife and plight working many hours in her dedication to her research, and her great loss and sorrow following the death of her husband. Oppression, struggle, passion, dedication and loss; these are themes I can personally relate to and which helped me understand Marie as a real person. I could relate in some way the happenings of her life to my own experiences, and in doing so believed I understood how she felt. It was this emotional insight that had the

greatest impact on me that day, and a memory that has stayed with me since. Just weeks after the performance I could no longer recall the date in which she discovered radium, but I did remember her story, I recalled her as a human being, the feelings and struggles she encountered during her life. What was hard to reflect on, even with my level of design knowledge, was how much my empathetic response was caused by the story itself, and how much it had been prompted or heightened by the way that narrative was presented using scenography. Perhaps if I had stayed at home and read about the life of Marie Curie from a book, I would have had the same response?

In the previous section I discussed how it is difficult to identify to what extent a visitor's emotional response is prompted by scenography and how much is inherent to the topic, and the same is true when using narrative design approaches. It is difficult to distinguish if scenography is contributing to the empathetic relationship with these museum experiences and the emotional values it can provide. From the participants responses to the two onsite surveys, there is some indication that the use of scenographic components to create a more 'immersive experience' can contribute in some way to empathy, as it offers an insight into how it would have 'felt'. All of the participants interviewed after taking part in *Night in the Trenches* agreed that 'it had made them think what it would have been like to fight in the trenches'. Furthermore, five out of six visitors agreed it had given them more insight into how the soldiers would have felt; 'It gives insight into what it was like. I didn't really want to come but when was there I thought it was amazing' (IN306-participant at NitT). When asked why they thought the experience had given them insight in to how it would have felt for the soldiers, many participants discussed the physicality of the experience and some of the scenographic components;

In books it doesn't have bangs- just tells you, it doesn't feel like that (P407- participant at NitT).

Being in a trench, atmosphere, noises, gunfire's, bands, the re-enactments, costumes, equipment in the trenches, artillery, the pigeons and rats (IN302- participant at NitT).

The 'sounds' and 'the atmosphere' were particularly noted as contributing to the feeling of being in a trench and giving insight into how it felt. The use of live performers at *Night in the Trenches* may also have been an advantage in helping visitors to understand the soldier's living conditions because people are much better able to empathise with a real human (Blakely in interview, 2009). Similar discussion of the scenographic components can be noted in participants' discussion of *The Street* and why it made them feel they were in the Victorian era. Participants who agreed they had felt they were in the Victorian era discussed 'the smells',

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and 'the atmosphere created', which was described as being; 'grim', 'gloomy' and 'depressing': 'look of the buildings, costumes, smells, made me grateful to think what it was like then' (IS207- participant at *The Street*). Though the atmospheric components are recognised by visitors, I believe that the impact of scenography is more holistic. Individual components may be used to effect, but the overall impact of scenography is worth more than the sum of its parts.

In chapter 1 I noted how the unique framing nature of theatrical performance helps visitors to suspend their disbelief, or engage in concept blending, to overlook the limitations or obvious falsities. From this research it appears that some people are able to, and do engage in this type of suspension of disbelief in museums, whilst others struggle to forget the museum context. Some visitors are willing to ignore limitations in the design, as they value these exhibitions as offering the closest possible experience to the real conditions, and most honest insight into how it may have felt, without having to experience those feelings;

You realise what they went through, this is nothing like it but it gives some sort of an idea (IN302- participant at NitT).

As near enough the real conditions. It's always best to see things first hand than on TV, you get more of a feeling for it (P406- participant at NitT).

For other visitors the museum frame does not permit such suspension of disbelief. A number of participants in the onsite surveys said they had not felt they were in that place, and maintained awareness to the museum context, one participant at *The Street* commented; 'it was a museum place, I wasn't part of it, aware things weren't real' (IS209- participant at *The Street*) and a participant at *Night in the Trenches* said; 'It's difficult to put yourself in what it would have been like. This is not a realistic environment as you know you are only a mile from home, 'It's hard to really understand what they went through' (In301- participant at NitT). In chapter 1 I explained how museums are often perceived as places of learning, and throughout the study I have continually highlighted the importance of intellectual values for many visitors. Whilst the theatrical frame encourages suspension of disbelief, the museum frame sets expectations of learning, and entrusted accuracy which limits some visitor's ability or willingness to overlook limitations and falsities.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

6.1. Summary of findings

6.1.i. Scenography in museums

Below I have summarised the findings of the research. Rather than systematically answer each of the research questions I have outlined the findings under subheadings which better suit the structure of this report, and which includes additional nuances and unexpected findings.

Before starting this study I was aware of the use of scenography in museum design, but was unaware of the extent to which it is used, the reasons why, or its impact on visitors. In chapter 2, using the four levels of operation of the stage picture (Aston & Savona 2003: 146) I described and reviewed some of the ways which I had noted scenography used in museums. The uses of scenography I had recognised before starting this research were mostly operating on a sociometric level, such as the use of props, costumes, scenery and scenic painting to offer wider context to the subject, or create settings for artefacts. I had also recognised a growing trend of museum exhibition designs operating on an atmospheric level, where scenographic components have been used to create an atmosphere or mood that complements the narrative. At that stage I felt that the use of scenography in museums was almost entirely naturalistic and focused on creating believable settings that attempt to replicate the original.

I also assessed scenography for performance in museums and examined how it is integrated into museum spaces. Literature discussing the design of performance in museums mostly focuses on functional and practical matters and less often is it reviewed from a theoretical stance. Some researchers and museum developers still feel accuracy is key to ethically good practice, and the examples of performance in museums that I encountered reflected this. From my previous experiences of performance in museums, and the examples identified in early field visits I felt there was a prevalence of naturalistic design and focus on believability, accuracy and realism. I later changed this opinion, when I began to look more widely at museum designs, and following extensive field visits, I recognised more variety in approaches, both to performance in museum and wider museum design. After reviewing performance in museums as part of the research context, I had prepared to analyse only wider museum design and to not further examine

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performance in museums. In reality, this was more difficult to separate, as performance has become so ingrained in many museum experiences, such as the examples of performance in real space reviewed in 5.3, and the *Enchanted Palace* exhibition. Design for performance in museums is therefore considered here as one element within the review of ‘museum design’. Naturalistic, accurate representations are still by far more favoured in museum design, but as the research developed I was able to note an increasing variety of other approaches. I was also able to distinguish many benefits that even simple scenographic components can have in supporting a museum’s aims and objectives.

Scenographic devices including costumes, scenic painting, and theatrical lighting are now quite common in museums of all types and sizes. Larger museums with more generous budgets and professionalised design systems are leading the way in using these, with brave design approaches. At larger organisations such as Museum of London and the Imperial War Museum North, I found more complex and considered use of scenography, including strong use of atmospheric design approaches. At these museums I also found some smaller isolated exhibitions where the design is operating on a symbolic level. Smaller museums make effective use of simple scenographic tools, mostly operating on a sociometric level by demonstrating use or context of artefacts or places. Even the smallest museum, operating on shoe-string budgets and with minimal staff (who may have no design experience) can make effective use of props and scenic painting. This was shown in the use of scenic painting at Newport Roman Villa discussed in chapter 2.4.i. which helps visitors to imagine how the site may have looked, increasing their understanding and possibly their appreciation of what they are seeing. Scenographic devices when used in this sociometric way are easily transferred to museum design, and are quite fitting with the most basic of museums goals of education and display of the collection. The ability of these scenographic components to so aptly support core museum goals explains the reason why they are now so extensively used.

Reviewing the range of museums I have visited during this study, I can see that atmospheric design methods are often favoured by tourist focused leisure attractions, and can be entirely superfluous to the core objectives of museums. It may be because of this that some museum professionals feel atmospheric design approaches are not suitable to museums, and why smaller museums may not be able to justify the cost of design which is perceived as mostly for aesthetics. However, the impact of museum design operating on an atmospheric level can lead to more than just aesthetically pleasing spaces, or simple entertainment. The impact of these atmospheric spaces on a visitor’s emotional state can be profound. In turn this emotional response can be substantive in achieving other values, particularly intellectual values or collections values.

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At the outset of this research I believed that the symbolic level of museum design had not been explored by museum developers, however as the research has developed I have realised this is not so. During field visits I have identified a number of examples of museum design that appear to be operating on a symbolic level. These are however infrequent and executed with mixed success. The examples of museum design operating on a symbolic design which I have identified are localised to just a handful of museums, but those museums then use the approach repeatedly. Museum of London and RAF Museum Cosford are two such museums where I recognised multiple occasions of design operating on a symbolic level. In chapter 5.4 I reviewed these two exhibits based on my personal response to first encountering them. What I was not able to establish from reflecting on my personal experience or by observing other visitors, was the extent to which visitors recognise these hidden messages, and therefore how this impacts (if at all) on visitors' value of experience.

Symbolic design is often used very subtly in museums, or only in small segmented areas. It is almost always supplementary to other devices, and though offering another level of interpretation, it is not detrimental to a visitor's understanding. The most conscious and extensive use of museum design operating on symbolic level which I have encountered was *Enchanted Palace*. The design of *Enchanted Palace* operated almost entirely on the symbolic level. By speaking to some of the creators of *Enchanted Palace* I was able to establish their justification for such an approach. They wanted visitors to engage with the narratives in a more emotional way, to empathise with the princesses, and to look at what is presented in a different light or from a different point of view. Visitors were strongly encouraged to engage in personal meaning making, as there were few forms of traditional interpretation available. The way in which the design of *Enchanted Palace* operated on an almost entirely symbolic level was praised by some visitors for being imaginative and unique, and it helped Kensington Palace attract a new audience who were previous non-users. It did however have its critics, and these were not far and few between but a considerable proportion of visitors. The requirement to engage in personal meaning making to understand the narratives came as a surprise to some visitors, it was unexpected or unwanted and these visitors quickly became frustrated, confused or angered at their inability to recognise collections or intellectual values. The diversity and strength of passion in feedback to *Enchanted Palace* demonstrates the subjectivity of visitors' experiences.

From this research I have established that some visitors recognise when museum design is operating on a symbolic level, and are willing to partake in personal meaning making, however, other visitors appear to be opposed to such approaches, or do not recognise the need to do so. Whilst the theatrical frame sets expectations of engaging in personal meaning making, the museum frame does not, as standard convention,

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serve the same function. Museum experiences that aim to encourage visitors to read the design on a symbolic level must somehow appropriately frame that part of the experience as something different to the rest of the visit. I have recognised mixed responses to museum design that operates on a symbolic level, but within the boundaries of this study I have not been able to further investigate the variables that may impact on whether a person is willing or able to partake in personal meaning making in museums. From reflecting on my personal experiences and conversations with museum staff, I have been able to distinguish some factors that may influence whether or not a visitor partakes in personal meaning making, but without further visitor consultation I cannot confirm these hypotheses. Factors which may impact if a visitor is willing or able to partake in personal meaning making in a museum include: how obvious and apparent the symbolic messages are communicated through the design, how design is framed and presented to visitors, setting correct expectations of the experience, and offering other interpretive choices. Further research may seek to examine if there are characteristics in the types of people willing or able to participate in personal meaning making in museums. It may also be dependent upon an individual's previous experiences of theatrical performance, or their level of prior museum experience.

6.1.ii. Visitors' value of experience

From the review of literature I found there is a multitude of research into museum visitors and their experiences. Past research has examined matters such as: who museums visitors are; why do they go; how do people use museums; what do they learn; what do they do, and what do they perceive museums as good for. Yet amongst this mass of research I was not able to find specific discussion of museum visitors' value of experience. Users' value of experience is reviewed in detail for other industries but museums are underrepresented in service industry research. Upon reviewing museological literature on visitors experience I realised that there is great consistency in researchers conclusions on peoples motivations for going to museums, and the outcomes of visiting, and so by summarising this research I was able to categorise the most common types of value of museum experiences. I recognised six key types of value that visitors most commonly associate with museum experiences; intellectual, emotional, collections, physical, interpersonal and community values and have termed this grouping system the visitors' value of museum experience groupings. Professional feedback on the grouping system, gained through discussion with museum staff in interviews, was positive and encouraging. I have also taken opportunity to discuss the grouping system at industry conferences and gatherings, and received the same affirmation. The response to

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the visitors' value of experience groupings indicates that the framework has further potential beyond just a research instrument for the purpose of this study.

In the process of testing the visitors' value of museum experience groupings I realised that they are not mutually exclusive. Visitors' responses can be an interwoven mix of different values simultaneously. I have developed a chart demonstrating some of the ways in which different values can be connected, this can be found in appendix 9. Furthermore, from analysis of the online questionnaire data, and discussions with museum staff, I recognised that values can be sequential, with one value leading to another. Intellectual values are particularly connected with other types of value. Emotional or physical encounters often prompt further learning and improved intellectual value.

This research has also established that visitors' values of experience are both greatly varied and highly subjective. Visitors' values of museum experience differ depending on what could be innumerable factors. Visitors' value of experience firstly changes depending on the museum in question. From analysis of the online questionnaire I found that visitors do recognise different museums as offering different types of value. Mostly participants did not distinguish the differentiations, but from discussions with museum staff I have noted there are some trends and standardised expectations. For example, staff at smaller local authority museums more emphasised community values and interpersonal values than intellectual values. Meanwhile subject specialist museums, whose visitors may have high levels of pre-existing knowledge and a keen interest in furthering this, will often have intellectual values at the forefront of their efforts. Though we may be able to guestimate the general types of values that may be sought or expected from different types of museums, the variables that impact the values sought or recognised by each individual visitor make it almost impossible to predict or control.

The values sought or obtained by each visitor are unique to that individual; no two visitors will have the same value of experience, even if they encounter the exact same stimulus in the exact same order. Furthermore, each time a person visits a museum the value of experience may change depending upon the constructs of that visit. A visitors' attitude to museums, their underlying beliefs, or level of knowledge may not vary greatly from one visit to the next, but the values sought when spending an afternoon alone will be very different to those required when looking for a family day out. The visiting group, the individual's mood that day, the prompts leading to a visit, time available for that visit, all of these factors plus many more will alter the values a visitor seeks or appreciates on the day. I attempted to look for trends in the types of visitor seeking or achieving certain values. Using data collected from the online questionnaire, I looked at the

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demographic profiles of visitors who recognised emotional value from museums as being stimulating and those who found them to be relaxing, yet found no commonalities in either.

Furthermore, from this research I have found that visitors' expectations, or even their intentions, may not match the outcomes of the experience. Visitors may attend seeking one thing, but leave having valued something else. Emotional values are a case in point here. Museums are still commonly perceived as places of learning; from all areas of the investigation I can see that intellectual values are a frequent part of most visitors' motivations, whilst emotional values are much less apparent. Yet in the outcomes and recollection of visits, it is often the emotional engagement that visitors appear to have valued most. The subjectivity and mass of variables impacting visitor's value of experience, means it is not only difficult to predict but almost impossible to control.

6.1.iii. Impact on intellectual values

Intellectual values are a key part of museum experiences. From this research I have demonstrated how scenographic devices are regularly used to aid visitors' understanding, and inspire further learning. Scenography's greatest advantage in enhancing intellectual values is its ability to create context or setting. Scenery, scenic painting, props and costumes are all widely used in museum designs to put artefacts in settings, provide visual context to subjects or narratives and help envision places in previous times. I have identified many ways in which scenographic tools can be applied to create context and setting, including; props used to dress spaces, scenery used as backdrops to artefacts or costumes demonstrating the fashions or trends of a time. When used in museum design these scenographic components are often naturalistic replications of an actual place or person, or an accurate and believable representation of them. Applied in this way scenography is working like other interpretation devices; helping visitors to understand the artefact or the subject. There are however limitations to how accurate these replications can be. Scenography can never be entirely accurate, and even if it were able to be, there is question as to whether visitors would want it to. It is perhaps favourable that there will be limitations in replicas made using scenography as visitors would not want to be exposed to distressing, gruesome or unpleasant conditions. Yet museums have a grounded reputation as places of accuracy and authenticity, and this brings into question whether it is appropriate for museums to knowingly be inaccurate, even if this is done for the visitors comfort. From speaking with visitors at *Night in the Trenches* and *The Street* I recognised that visitors may be aware of some of the restrictions in a museums replication, but may not have appropriate knowledge to identify all the

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limitations. To ensure visitors are not being misled or misinformed museums should make efforts to highlight limitations and inaccuracies. As seen at *Night in the Trenches*, highlighting falsities in the design may even enhance intellectual values, as it provides the visitor clearer insight to the actual conditions of the original.

Another way scenography is used in museums to create setting is themed spaces, where components are used to create a setting that is aesthetically fitting to the era or place suggested, but does not replicate. In themed exhibitions and galleries the design is often supplementary to the artefacts and exhibits; it is not presented as a part of the interpretation. Therefore, the ability of these themed spaces to contribute to intellectual values is unclear; do these approaches aid visitors understanding, or are they simply aesthetically pleasing? Even if not offering intellectual values directly, these themed spaces can be enjoyable and can grab a visitor's attention, which in turn may inspire an interest for further learning and provide intellectual values, as was seen in the staged rest area in London Transport Museum. Though themed design may not be attempting to replicate, designers must consider how they clarify this to visitors. Whilst museums maintain a reputation as places of accuracy and authenticity then they should maintain a level of responsibility in their interpretation, though this admittedly becomes more problematic as the role of museum as leisure attraction grows.

I earlier discussed the difficulties with museum design operating on a symbolic level, and how some visitors recognise the need to partake in personal meaning making, whilst other are not able or willing to do this. The issue with some visitors not being willing or able to engage in personal meaning making are realised when symbolic design approaches are used as the main or sole way of understanding an exhibition or narrative. When symbolic design approaches are used as supplementary to other interpretive devices then there is no harm in the visitor not understanding, not wanting, or not realising the need to engage in personal meaning making; the visitor may have missed out on something special, but there are other ways in which they can achieve their own desired type of intellectual values. For instance the exhibit at Museum of London on the London Blitz; I was moved by the symbolic representation of the constant threat of danger, whilst other visitors were oblivious and moved swiftly on. My recognition of that message added to my value of that experience, but not realising this did not subtract from others. Other visitors were able to understand the interpretation from the videos of people discussing their personal experience of the London Blitz, the hanging bomb was just a complementary addition. However, if symbolic design approaches are used as the sole or primary way of understanding an exhibition, this can limit the extent to which some visitors are able to achieve intellectual values. Scenography for theatrical performance may operate entirely on a symbolic level, and though a viewer may not understand it, they may enjoy it and will accept it as part of the theatrical

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experience. This does not translate to museums, intellectual values are such a prominent and critical part of so many visitors' experiences, and not achieving these can be frustrating for visitors. This was seen in response to *Enchanted Palace*. The findings of this analysis of *Enchanted Palace* can serve as an inspiration or a word of warning to any museum staff considering using scenography in the design of their next exhibition or gallery. Whilst scenography can be hugely beneficial in supporting some museum aims, it can have negative impact on others. The response to *Enchanted Palace* demonstrates how if scenography is used in a way that is detrimental to fundamental values of experience, visitors can be less than understanding.

Using design to encourage visitors to engage in personal meaning making may be effective in appealing to some visitors, and offer them a unique and valued experience. For visitors who are unable to understand, not willing, or do not recognise the need to engage in personal meaning making, then other strategies need to be included. Further research needs to be done on visitors' personal meaning making in museums. In the meantime museums should not be put off the idea of experimenting with such methods, but should be careful to offer other ways of communicating the same information.

6.1.iv. Impact on collection values

I did not recognise collections values until later in the research process, as it was initially thought that artefacts and places are only valued by visitors for the other values they provide; mostly intellectual or emotional. Once I recognised the intrinsic value of encountering artefacts, I soon after realised how vital collections are to museums. Collecting, preserving and displaying artefacts is not only a fundamental role of museums, it is also a unique selling point. Visitors realise this and hold museums in high esteem as the only place where they can encounter authentic artefacts and spaces. Being a unique value of museums, visitors often seek collections values in their museum experiences, and can become disappointed and frustrated when they feel this has not been achieved. Some of the examples I found of scenography in museums confuse what is real and what is replication, making it difficult for visitors to distinguish authentic artefacts. *Enchanted Palace* was again an example of this, with artefacts hidden amongst the scenographic devices. Museums must be careful in this matter and not underestimate the intrinsic value of their collection or that visitors want to encounter it.

In these final stages of drawing conclusions I have also come to realise that real and authentic stories can be part of collections values. Narrative and empathy are a strategic part of museum's interpretation, but this often holds even greater value when they are known to be real stories. Between 2010 and 2011 I was

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employed as Audience Development Officer at Fishbourne Roman Palace and Gardens in Sussex. As part of my role at Fishbourne I conducted extensive research and consultation with audiences. The site displays the remains of what is believed to be once the largest Roman Villa in Great Britain. The pristine in-situ mosaics found there hold unique collections values, and enthusiasts travel for many miles to simply admire them. For many visitors seeing the beautifully detailed mosaics is a reason for visiting, and encountering them often brings a sense of awe, wonder or admiration for the craftsman's skill. Visitors to Fishbourne Roman Palace and Gardens are also often seeking intellectual values, they want to learn about the general day-to-day life of a typical Roman; what did the Romans wear, what did they eat, where did they go to the toilet? Communicating these universal themes helps visitors relate in a personal way and aids their understanding, but for many visitors what was far more fascinating was the specific story of Tiberius Claudius Cogidubnus who is believed to have lived there. Visitors wished to know what was he like, was he a Roman, how did he buy this big house? They also wanted to know the narrative of the place, not the general history of British Roman History, they questioned staff on when the house was built, how did it burn down, who else lived there, was there ever a battle there? There was a sense of mystery and intrigue, and it was the unique history and personal narratives of the site which were of most interest and value to many visitors. This possessed both intellectual, emotional and collections value in being able to enjoy real narratives in the places they happened. Visitors are often drawn to visit historical places, but often what visually remains is rather uninspiring, the value lies in discovering the real story of what happened there, and scenography can support this. Scenography can help communicate narrative and can help visitors recognise the value in the places where these stories happened by making them come alive again. If I return to some of the examples of scenography used for context and setting, I had attributed these as beneficial in offering intellectual values, but perhaps they are also helping in recognising collections values. The scenic painting used to show how a room may have looked, does more than just show that place, it helps us to envision and imagine the narratives of that place.

6.1.v. Impact on emotional values

The role of emotions in museum experiences is interesting as emotional values are often discussed by visitors in their recollection of visiting museums, but are far less frequently given as reasons for going to museums. This is evident in both existing research and the data collected here, yet I have not been able to find any clear reason for such an incongruity. Perhaps visitors simply don't expect emotional values from museum experiences. The museum frame sets expectations of learning and encountering artefacts, and so

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emotional engagement may not be anticipated. It may be that visitors genuinely do not require emotional values, they may be perfectly content with just interpersonal or physical values, and attainment of emotional values is a delightful bonus, rather than a critical component. Evaluating the findings of this research I would suggest that visitors are simply unable to verbalise their desire for emotional values as they seek them subconsciously and unknowingly. When a person goes to watch a theatrical performance they anticipate a level of emotional engagement, they may even seek out performances that will stimulate their emotions. Emotions are understood to be a large part of the consumption of performance; it is established as part of the theatrical frame. This is established in museums, visitors may enjoy experiences that engage them emotionally, but emotional values are like the secret ingredient in museum visiting. Obtaining emotional values from a museum visit can make the experience more memorable, more engaging or for some people simply more palatable, but many visitors remain unaware of their contribution amongst the array of values achieved.

Reviewing the data collected as part of this study, it is difficult to establish the extent to which scenography impacts on emotional outcomes. It is evident that the use of scenography in museum design can exaggerate a person's emotional response, as seen in exhibitions like the *Big Picture Show* at Imperial War Museum North. Some visitors have had very strong emotional responses to Big Picture Show, but it is not possible to distinguish how much that is caused by the content of the show, and how much it is enhanced by the method of presentation. For a brief time in the early stages of data collection, I felt that museum staff had some aversion to encouraging emotional values, as if they were somehow not appropriate to museums, or impinged on other values. What I have realised is that staff are not opposed to encouraging emotional responses, but can be cautious of the ways in which emotional values are encouraged, and the reasons why they are emphasised. The aforementioned *Big Picture Show* has received its share of criticism from those who feel it is too dominating or forceful, and does not allow space for personal reflection. Whether it is appropriate to use scenography to enhance emotional values in museums is perhaps a personal judgement, and there is no definitive right or wrong answer. The appropriateness of enhancing emotional values depends on the way in which it is done and the person encountering it.

Scenography can create some dominating atmospheric designs which can be overpowering for some visitors, they need opportunity and space to reflect on what is presented and arrive at an emotional state without feeling that has been manipulated or controlled. Meanwhile some visitors may prefer a more direct, scripted approach that prompts an emotional response. The appropriateness of encouraging emotional response using design may also be dependent on the subject or artefacts being presented. The collections and stories

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a museum presents can have in themselves strong emotional as well as collections values, and these should be respected in how they are exhibited. Every object, space or event interpreted may be laden with multiple narratives, and museums have a duty to be unbiased and unprejudiced in their interpretations. Strong atmospheric design can overlay this variety of narratives, highlighting just one, and allowing little opportunity to reflect on others. Take for example an exhibition on WWII concentration camps; a designer may choose to convey the sorrow, and plight of the unimaginable conditions by creating a sombre and oppressing atmosphere. Yet for others this may be a narrative grounded in hope and determination, something which will not shine through if the atmosphere is overpowering or coercive.

Exploring human experience is now an established part of museum interpretations, visitors seek out experiences where they can get a feeling of how something was, and gain insight into how another person may have felt. Interest in the human side of narratives may be a solely intellectual desire. Looking at the consultations with visitors here, it is strongly suggested that visitors want to empathise with others, making it more a part of emotional value, though still strongly linked with intellectual. Empathy and seeking insight to human experience is one of the few emotional values that were recognised in visitor's motivations. Interest in human experience was a common motivation for visiting museums discussed in the online survey with participants at *Night in the Trenches*. Other media such as books, film, TV and theatrical performance, all attempt to offer similar insight into human experience, meaning that this interest in human experience is not a trait unique to the museum visitor, and is not a unique selling point for museums. Autobiographies, films based on real events, even reality TV, they all offer the user an insight into the experiences and feelings of another person. What does set museums apart in this area is the way in which museums can offer this insight, and scenography can play a significant part of that. Unlike film or books, museums can create spaces and experiences that impacts all of the senses, and allows a physical as well as mental immersion.

At the two onsite surveys undertaken at museum experiences using scenography in their design, I recognised how by becoming immersed in the atmosphere, participants felt they had encountered something much more akin to the original than can be achieved through other methods. However, remaining awareness to the museum frame can limit the impact a person's ability to become immersed. The theatrical frame sets the expectations of having to suspend disbelief, to overlook the limitations and buy in to the experience. The museum frame appears to restrict this for some visitors who remain aware of the museum context, and are unable or unwilling to immerse themselves, suspend their disbelief and overlook the limitations.

6.2 Review

6.2.i. Reviewing the research aims

This study set out to examine the use of scenography in museum design and consider its impact on visitors' value of experience. The research was planned in mind of the four research aims, outlined in chapter 1.3. Overall the study has been successful in fulfilling all of the research aims. The way in which I planned to address the research aims changed; there has been increased use of personal reflection, less field testing with museum visitors and more focus on value of experience, but by remaining mindful of the overall objectives I have accomplished the research aims.

The first research aim was to examine the current uses of scenography in museum design. To do this I looked both for scenographic components and scenographic principles. I started by reviewing literature on museum design to look for any discussion of scenography and identify current understanding of the practice. From the review of literature I recognised some awareness of 'theatrical' approaches and use of simple stage tricks in museums, but found no reference to any museums making a considered use of scenography. I had hoped to discuss the use of scenography in museum design with museum staff, but this proved to be problematic. Many of the staff I interviewed had not previously heard of the term scenography. Any attempts to try and define and explain the concept would often revert to discussing the use of performance in museums (knowledge of which was also limited). I was able to gain insight into the reasons why some museums have chosen to incorporate components of scenography during the interviews with Erik Blakely (involved in the development of *Night in the Trenches*), and with Alexandra Kim and Sue Hill (who were involved in the development of *Enchanted Palace*). Most significant in reviewing the current use of scenography in museum design has been investigation of current practice at over fifty field visits to museums nationally, and the additional non-recorded visits to museums. By visiting a range of museums I have been able to recognise a number of uses of scenography in museum design, and by experiencing them first hand I was able to reflect on the impact these approaches have on visitors.

The second aim of the research was to critically evaluate visitors' value of experience. Understanding visitors' experiences has become important to museums as they are recognised as having a more service based role, and are thrust into competition with an ever growing variety of leisure attractions. Museums are increasingly pressured to be more financially sustainable, and able to demonstrate not only what they do, but the outcomes and impacts of their work. I chose to review visitors experience through the theory of

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value as it is a system widely used elsewhere in the service industry. The investigation into visitors' value of experience led to the development of the visitors' value of museum experience groupings. This original framework was created as a way of reviewing the impact of scenography in museum design, but before being used as a research instrument the system was tested using a number of methods. Because of having to develop and then test a new framework, this area of the investigation became a larger part of the study than intended, but it has also made an unexpected and original contribution to knowledge.

The third aim of this study was to consider the impact of scenography in museum design on visitors' experiences. Having reviewed the use of scenography in museum design and summarised visitors' value of experience, I was able to look at the relationship between them. As I found there to be a limited knowledge of scenography in museums in literature, examining its impact was heavily dependent upon my personal reflection at field visits. I supported my own thoughts and observations by triangulating data from other sources, including museum staff and visitors. I consulted a small sample of visitors, at two museum experiences identified as using scenography in the design. I questioned visitors on their motivations for attending and the outcomes of the experience. From this consultation I aimed to identify their expectations of the experience and the outcomes of an experience using scenography in its design. I was able to gain further insight into visitors' responses to scenography in museums by reviewing feedback and public response to *Enchanted Palace*, which made extensive use of scenographic principles and components in its design. Owing to time restrictions I was unable to consult directly with visitors at *Enchanted Palace*. I was however able to discuss visitors responses to the exhibition with Kim and Hill, who were involved in the development of *Enchanted Palace*. I was also able to gauge the public's response to *Enchanted Palace* by looking at reviews and discussion published on the internet and in press. To ensure the study could be completed within required timeframes, I chose to focus the review of scenography's impact on just three of the six types of visitors' value of museum experience that had been recognised. The three values which were further explored in detail were: intellectual, collections and emotional values. I explained the reasons for choosing these three values in chapter 4. Despite choosing to focus on just three, I remained aware and conscious of the other values and considered visitors experience as a whole throughout.

The final aim of this research was to identify similarities and difference in users' experience of theatrical performance, and visitors' experience of museums. This has been an on-going consideration underlying every area of the study. The differences and the similarities of the two practices naturally presented themselves at various points of the study, starting in the very early stages of scoping out the research area. In chapter 1 I outlined some of the similarities between theatrical performance and performance in a

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museum that I had been able to recognise (based on my knowledge of scenography and my prior experiences as a museum visitor). My initial suggestions were further clarified and supported through the data collection. Establishing the differences in the two experiences helped to inform and focus the direction of further investigations. The three values chosen to prioritise were partially selected based on the similarities and/or differences between the experience of theatrical performance and museums.

6.2.ii. Answering the research questions

The research design and selection of methods was mindful of answering the four research questions, as well as suiting my strengths and preferences as a researcher. At the start of this study I was conscious of my limited knowledge of the heritage industry, but passionate that the findings of the research should be useful to persons working in museums. I wanted the research findings to support museums in their efforts to fulfil a more user-focused, service based operation. To achieve this I aimed to be reflective of most current practice and responsive to the opinions of people involved in museum design and development. I adopted a naturalistic style of inquiry which would allow me to be embedded in the museum setting and remain up-to-date of any changes, trends and developments in museum design. As part of the naturalistic inquiry I used myself as a primary research instrument, reflecting on my personal experiences and observations in museums. There is an unavoidable level of bias in this type of methodology. To improve validity of findings and relevance to industry, I triangulated data from several sources and compared my own reflections with stakeholders. Museum staff proved to be very mindful to what their audiences want, but to further reduce bias I consulted museum visitors as well. I was then able to triangulate findings from three different perspectives; staff working in museum, museum visitors, and myself; initially as a visitor but later as a museum professional.

In the following section I will discuss some of the limitations encountered with chosen research methods, but first I will review their success in answering the research questions. Each method used was selected and planned to answer one or more of these questions:

- Question 1. How is scenography used in theatrical performance, and is this congruent to the role of museums?
- Question 2. How and why are components or principles of scenography used in museum design?
- Question 3. Are there values of experience that are unique to museums or critical to visitors' experiences, and how does scenography impact on these?

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- Question 4. What is the industry response to the uses of scenography in museum designs and the impact these have on visitors' experiences?

The literature review provided the foregrounding to begin answering all of the research questions. From existing literature I was able to examine the use of scenography in theatrical performance and the role of museums, and from this I could reflect if the two were compatible. This helped in answering question 1 before starting data collection. To support my initial conclusions on the role of museums and if this is congruent to the use of scenography in museums, I further examined the role of museums in interviews with staff and consultation with visitors in the on-line survey. Each interview was planned to investigate just one or two of the research questions (depending on the person being interviewed) but collectively, the collated findings of interviews are used to answer all of the research questions. This same principle applies to field visits, where each individual visit was insightful for just one or two areas of investigation, but overall the findings of field visits are used in answering all of the research questions.

The examination of museum design during field visits provided the most enlightening data when answering question 2. Understanding of why scenographic principles are used in museum design was established as I reviewed its application in museum design and recognised the beneficial outcomes. Some of the interviews with museum staff were also supportive in this area of investigation. Interviews and informal discussions with people working in museums have been most beneficial in answering research question 3. In investigating unique or critical values of experience I have also drawn on data collected from the online questionnaire and on-site surveys with visitors, as well as some personal reflection during field visits. In answering the final research question I sought to identify both visitors' response to scenography in museums, and the opinions and attitude of museum staff. Interviews with museum staff provided a good impression of the overall feelings of professionals, and the on-site consultation at two experiences using scenography, provided understanding of visitors' responses.

6.2.iii. Limitations

From this study I have by varying degrees managed to achieve each of the research aims and answer all of the research questions. There are however certain limitations that impact the extent to which findings can be generalised to the entire of the museum sector and the full diversity of the population of museum audiences.

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In answering some of the questions, the research draws extensively on my personal observation and experiences during field visits to museums. As a person who chooses to visit museums in my free time, I can fairly classify myself as a museum visitor; sharing the same expectations, and requiring similar outcomes as other visitors. I have been able to verify and support many of my personal observations by triangulating data collected from other sources. However, owing to my prior knowledge and experience as a scenographer I cannot class myself as a fair representative of the museum visitor population when considering the impact of scenography. Whilst I am easily able to recognise museum design operating on a symbolic level, and I will willingly partake in the necessary process of personal meaning making, I cannot assume the same abilities or behaviours of other visitors. Ideally, had time permitted I would have consulted more museum visitors, including an on-site survey at a museum where design is operating on a symbolic level. I had initially planned to do more audience consultation and on-site testing than has been achieved in this study. The unexpected need to develop and test the visitors' value of experience groupings consumed more time than planned and therefore limited opportunity for further visitor research in other areas of the investigation.

I have consulted quite extensively with museum staff, who have proven to be very knowledgeable of users' needs, and able to speak authoritatively and fairly on behalf of their visitors. Discussions with museum staff on what visitors' value in their museum experiences and how this is currently attained, ally with visitors' comments in the online questionnaire and onsite surveys. However, the samples of visitors consulted through these methods are only small if considered as a percentage of the number of people who visit museums. There was also some bias in the sample of visitors consulted, and it is not an exact representation of the general profile of museum users. For example, school groups and educational visits can make up a large proportion of a museums total visitor numbers, but I did not make a concerted effort to target these users in any of the visitor research. The online survey was self-selecting, and by chance a number of participants were of school age, but I cannot assume the museum experiences they reference were in the context of a school visit.

An unexpected challenge in the research process was the on-going developments and changes in museum design. In attempting to review museum design I have been working with a moving target. Museums are constantly evolving, and consequently so are the design of exhibitions and galleries. Museum design is largely influenced by trends in the leisure industry, and developments in technology both of which see constant growth and changes. Fortunately (for this research), the pace of change in museum design is slow compared to other areas of design, but even in the duration of this study there have been notable changes in design approaches and industry trends. I have attempted to remain aware of on-going changes and

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development by continuing to visit museums, even after the end of data collection. For the last four years I have been employed in the heritage industry, working for several agencies doing audience development works, visitor research, and evaluation. This has been prodigiously valuable in keeping me informed in all areas of industry development. The continual evolution of museum design has not only added additional demands to the research process, but presents a limitation in the longevity of the findings validity. My review of the *current* use of scenography in museums will soon be dated, exhibitions will evolve and my overview no longer applicable, but by having also created a new system for reviewing visitors experiences, and reflecting on scenography's impact on these values, I hope these findings will have helped inspire new thinking and helped shape some of those future developments in museum design.

6.3 Significance

6.3.i. Implications and recommendations for practice and policy

In-house museum designers are rare. Design development in museums tends to be either a collaborative effort of a mix of personnel from different departments, or design work is contracted out to external professional agencies. Neither of these scenarios is ideal, for the collective efforts of an in-house team may include no design expertise, skills or experience. Meanwhile, external agencies may have extensive skills and be capable of producing beautiful designs, but may have little or no awareness to the unique demands and considerations of working in a heritage setting. This research can be used to support both situations. The research findings will be immediately relevant to museum staff involved in the design or development of exhibitions and galleries, or performance in museums. It may also be interesting for staff involved in developing other visitor focused aspects of museum experiences such as events.

The research has summarised the types of value that visitors most commonly seek, and provided a new system for reviewing this in the form of the visitors' value of experience grouping system. In testing the validity and appropriateness of the value grouping system I received much encouraging and enthusiastic feedback from museum staff, suggesting the value groupings have greater potential beyond this study, and may even offer a unique contribution to knowledge in visitors' experiences. The value of visitors' museum experience groupings may be insightful to anyone working in museums who are interested in knowing what value about museums. This may incorporate a wide range of personnel, from staff on the front desk, guides and wardens, educational assistants, curators, marketing, managers, volunteers, even friends groups and

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trustees. The value groupings and the examination of visitor's experience will also be relevant to the non-heritage based designers involved in all areas of museum design. These may include architects and interior designers as well as graphic designers and interactive developers. These agencies and personnel may have no direct contact or experience with museum visitors, and so the value groupings may serve as an introduction and overview of visitors' experiences.

What I must reiterate in regards to the visitors' value of experience groupings is that it is intended as a guide for reviewing visitor's experiences, it should not, and cannot be used as a system for segmenting visitors. The value groupings cannot be used to segment visitors for several reasons; firstly as the value groupings are not always independent of each other. Visitors can (and often will) attain several or all of the recognised types of value during a museum experience, and different values are often connected or a subsequence of another. Furthermore visitors cannot be categorised based on the types of value that they seek or attain, as value judgements may be entirely subconscious, and the outcomes valued may not match expectations of the visit. What the visitors' value of experience groupings does offer is a possible framework that can be referenced in planning and development. By keeping in mind the different types of value that visitors seek, and the different ways in which people may wish to achieve these, museum staff or external designers can create more rounded visitor experiences that offer a variety of values to all users. It may also be insightful to help create shared aims and objectives, and clearer communication between museum staff, and between museum staff and external designers when working collaboratively.

As a first priority in using the value groups I would suggest that museum personnel take a moment to reflect on the types of value that visitors seek from their site. I would anticipate that every museum does, to some extent, offer all of the recognised values, but the prevalence or priority of values will change between sites. . In 6.1.ii I discussed some trends I have recognised in the relationships between types of value and type of museum. For example, a family discovery centre will typically have greater emphasis on physical and interpersonal values, and there will be strong links between physical and intellectual values. In comparison, museums which house unique, rare, or well-known collections will often emphasise these in promotions, and therefore many visitors will seek collections values. I have also recognised how certain subjects will likely have strong emotional values, including some of those most common to museums such as war. Another common trend is for local history museums (particularly those run by local authorities) to have strong community values, and perhaps emotional values in nostalgia and civic-pride. Museum staff should also remember that the visitors' value of experience groupings are a summary of only those values most

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commonly sought at museums overall; any individual museum may have entirely unique values of experience, or original ways of offering visitors value of experience.

Investigating visitors' motivations and the outcomes of museum experiences may help museums to make more informed planning decisions, but it must be accepted that the range and diversity of museum visitors and the subjectivity of their experiences, means such research cannot be relied on as definitive. At best, museum designers and exhibition developers can make themselves aware, and prepare for, the variety of expectations and responses visitors may have. Museums should then remain flexible, willing to experiment and be mindful of the changing needs of their many audiences.

The review of scenography in museum design and its impact on visitors experience can also help guide museum developers in designing museum experiences. This research should inspire new ways of thinking about design, and ways of using scenography to enhance visitors' value of experience. I have given examples of how different values can be achieved using scenography in museum design, and demonstrated examples of best practice, as well as some less successful efforts. Through the research I have recognised many benefits scenography can bring when effectively used in museum design, and highlighted some of the matters to consider if attempting these. Exhibition developers may be inspired to explore the ways in which scenographic components could be used to offer context and setting, but as this research has shown, they must be sure visitors will not confuse between replica and real, and should consider if and how to highlight any inaccuracies or limitations. Museum designers may be enthused to consider how scenography could be applied to make museum experience more atmospheric, and encourage emotional values. But again, the research has highlighted the matters to consider in doing this, with developers strongly encouraged to question their motivations for and methods of achieving this.

From this research I have also highlighted the possible impacts when essential or unique values are not achieved, stressing the importance that museums do not lose sight of what they are for and what makes them unique. Museums are in increasing competition with an ever expanding array of leisure attractions. Many of these competing attractions have greater wealth of resources, and fewer restrictions, standards and policies to adhere to. I predict that leisure attractions will always remain ahead of museums in their use of new technologies and speed of response to new trends. Without the restrictions of caring for and displaying a collection, or the social responsibility to be educational, accurate and unbiased, visitor attractions are granted a greater freedom and more artistic licence to offer highly entertaining experiences. But many of these visitor attractions offer little other values than simple jovial entertainment, the ability to spend time with loved ones, and perhaps some physical interactivity. Museums reputation as places of learning,

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purveyors of heritage, and carers of collections are both the restrictions that limit them, and their greatest resource. These unique responsibilities not only justify the funding museums receive; they help museums retain a competitive edge. Mark Dennis, (curator at The Library and Museum of Freemasonry) shared this view, in interview he said:

If we remove the learning from museums, they can still have an ace café, they can still make people feel happy like that are in a shopping centre, they can still make them go gee-whizz like they would in a theme park. Museums can do all of those things, but it doesn't justify the existence of a museum (Dennis in interview, 2009 ii).

Today museums are evolving and developing at a quicker pace than ever in their history. New technologies and increasing competition are persuading museums to push boundaries and take risks. In this phase of constant development it may be easy to lose sight of what is at the core of museums: people, artefacts and the relationship between them. It is these things that justify the investment in museums, both the financial investment from funders, and the sacrifices made by people visiting.

During this research I have identified that the use of scenography in museums can be hugely beneficial to museums, but it can also have detrimental impact on visitors' value of experience, if not used in careful consideration of the most unique and fundamental values of museums. Though there are many similarities in the aims of theatrical performance and museums, there are also underlying differences in their operation and their purpose. Whilst the physical components of scenography can be integrated in to museum designs, some of the theoretical principles of scenography simply cannot be transferred to museums. In chapter 1 I discussed the theatrical frame, and how this sets certain expectations for the audience. The theatrical frame creates a separate reality in which visitors suspend their disbelief, overlook limitations, and buy in to what may be a knowingly false, mythical, exaggerated setting. The symbolic reading of scenography in theatre is standard practice, what is presented within the theatrical frame is presumed to have meaning, and visitors will naturally engage in a process of personal meaning making. From this research I have recognised that museums also have a frame, and like the theatrical frame, the museum frame sets certain expectations, but the two are very different.

The museum frame sets expectations of learning, accuracy, artefacts and authenticity. Museum visitors may be willing, but not expectant of having to suspend their disbelief or engage in personal meaning making and the variables which may influence a visitor's decision or ability to partake in these cognitive processes is unclear. What is needed is a new definition of scenography for museums, one that is respectful to the unique characteristics and considerations of museums. Summarising the findings of this research I have

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begun to review some of the principles of scenography and how they could be adjusted to suit museum scenography, these are outlined in the table below.

Scenography of theatrical performance	Scenography of museums
The consideration of space during time of theatrical performance, including the changes and transitions of the space.	The consideration of museum spaces, the artefacts and people that occupy these spaces and the relationships between them.
Aims to help communicate the narrative of the theatrical performance.	Aims to complement and support the overall interpretative messages, which may be communicated through multiple narratives as well as didactic/ factual information.
Is created with the understanding that what is presented within the theatrical frame will be read to create meaning.	Is created with the recognition that visitors may choose to engage in personal meaning making, but this is not standard practice.
By its nature scenography may be untrue, deceptive, exaggerated, illusionary, or mythical. Most audience members will suspend their disbelief to overlook limitations and become immersed.	Should not knowingly confuse, mislead or overtly exaggerate. Limitations and inaccuracies should be highlighted. Visitors may suspend their disbelief, whilst others will remain aware of the museum context and choose not become immersed.

6.3.ii. Recommendations for further research

Through this study I have successfully addressed the research aims and answered the research questions, but the process of investigation has also opened up new areas of enquiry. At times the investigation has brought about more questions, and identified areas where there are gaps in knowledge, both of which highlight potential for further research.

There is a notable lack of research into visitors' value of experience, and so the visitors' value of museum experience groupings provide a possible launch pad for further investigations. The value groupings have been tested through this study, and findings suggest they are a fair and accurate representation of the types of value that visitors seek from their museum experience, but as this system was not intended to be applicable beyond this study, the generalizability may be improved with further testing. During the research I have examined only visitors to museum sites, and not looked at the types of values that may be sought by non-users. The visitors' value of museum experience groupings may be a useful tool for consultation with

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non-users, and help in identifying ways of attracting more or new audiences. This would first require identifying and consulting non-users to recognise barriers to engagement, and their perception and expectations of museums. Do non-users have different expectations of museum experiences? Will they require the same types of value to justify the investment in visiting? During the study I remained respectful to the variety of visitors' value of experience, and considered all six recognised values during the process of data collection and analysis. However as the detailed examination into scenography's impact was on just three of these values (intellectual, collections and emotional), there is scope for further research in to the impact on the physical, interpersonal and community value.

During the process of data analysis I recognised differences in the types of values sought or realised at different museums, but to maintain realistic scope, I chose not to review difference between museums, instead choosing to review museums as a collective industry. In the summary of findings in 6.1, I suggested some trends or commonalities in the types of values attained at different types of museums. It would be of great interest and benefit to the museum industry if further research could be conducted into the types of value most commonly sought or attained at different types of museums. Another self-imposed boundary was my choice to look at visitors collectively and not sub-categorise them. In the process of analysing the data from the online survey I did attempt to look for any obvious demographic trends, but the limited sample size means I cannot generalise to the wider population. I hypothesise that visitors' value of experience is far too subjective and variable to predict or determine based on simple demographics such as age, gender, ethnicity, or even factors such as the make-up of the visiting group. It may be difficult to plot values of experience based on even the most advanced visitor segmentations, but this would provide an interesting line of enquiry for future research.

In reviewing the use of scenography in museums, I have recognised that the museum frame sets very different expectations to the theatrical frame, and so some principles of scenography cannot be easily transferred to museum designs. Further research could be done to investigate the future potential of these approaches to become incorporated into museums by examining and predicting future trends.

This research has raised many questions on the extent to which museum designs can, and should be allowed to be inaccurate or misleading. Visitors may accept that there is chance of inaccuracies in museum replications, but without solid prior knowledge of the subject they may not recognise what those limitations are. Are knowingly inaccurate or exaggerated representations misinforming visitors? Does this indeed matter? Is it better to have a slightly falsified space which engages and inspires a visitor to go on to independent learning, rather than limit the design in the endeavour for complete accuracy?

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The final questions arising from this study which would make enlightening further research, relate to the role of personal meaning making in museums, and the ability of museum designs to operate on a symbolic level. I have clearly identified that this does occur in museums, designers have already begun to experiment with more symbolic approaches, but the impact of these is unclear. Do visitors currently recognise when museums are attempting to operate on a symbolic level? And if so, are they willing to partake in the necessary process of personal meaning making? At present the symbolic operation of museum design is rare, and so, unexpected by visitors. But what if this is just the start of a trend, what if designers were to continue to pursue this and design operating on a symbolic level was to become a more regular occurrence in museums? Increased use will inevitably make visitors more aware and familiar with recognising design operating on a symbolic level, but is this something visitors want from their museum experiences? Currently visitors can opt to overlook symbolic approaches as they are far and few between, so even those opposed to the approach can tolerate the occasional usage. But will increased use lead to increased tolerance? Some visitors greet design operating on a symbolic level with enthusiasm, as it provides something new and original. Will that originality wear off, and when it does, and if museum designs were to regularly operate on a symbolic level, will the wider population of visitors accept it as part of their museum experiences? And most importantly; what value would this bring to the visitors experience?

6.3.iii. Final summary

I was motivated to conduct this study when I recognised an increasing use of scenography in museums, but was unsure as to why. I set out on this research to examine the ways in which scenography is used in museum design, and investigate the reasons for this growing trend. I quickly realised that museum design has evolved to be increasingly focused on the needs of visitors, and the use of scenography was in line with this. Museum galleries and exhibitions are now developed with the visitor's experience as the central consideration. This type of user-focused operation is critical to museums remaining relevant and competitive as leisure attractions. It requires an adept understanding of not only who museum's visitors are, but what they seek. This research aimed to assist museums in being able to fulfil a more user-focused operation by contributing to knowledge on visitors' experiences and offering new ways of thinking about museum design. As a basis for investigating the impact of scenography I aimed to summarise the way in which visitors' value museum experiences. This has been accomplished through the development of the visitors' value of experience groupings. This new grouping system provides a valuable contribution to the understanding of

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visitors' experiences, and with further testing and examination, it may be a useful tool for museum developers.

Using the visitors' value of experience groupings as a guide I examined the impact of scenography on visitors' museum experiences. I have recognised many ways in which scenography can be simply and effectively incorporated into museum designs, resulting in a range of beneficial outcomes. There are few scenographic components that remain unused in museums. Beyond the devices recognised here, I have seen many other tricks, methods and tools originating in theatre transferred into museums. Though the components and the devices of scenography are easily incorporated into museum designs, when it comes to the theoretical underpinnings, it is not always a simple process of transference. The theatrical frame and the museum frame set very different expectations, and museums have a number of critical responsibilities bestowed upon them which theatrical performance does not.

If we view a museum experience as a performance then we can better see some of these similarities and differences, and why problems arise in trying to apply some principles of theatre scenography to museum experiences. In theatrical performance there are definite and understood roles of 'performer' and 'audience', and with these roles come certain expectations, habitual behaviours and presumed activities. In museums these roles are less definitive. Visitors are both 'viewer' and 'performer', sometimes switching between the roles, and sometimes playing both roles simultaneously. Then there is the consideration of artefacts. Museum objects can too become 'performers', or they may serve as 'props'. Then there are the other people involved, in theatrical performance the 'crew' remain unseen backstage. They are a critical component to the effective running of the show, and the audience will be aware of their presence, but once the theatrical frame is set, the crew remain unseen. A museum also has a backstage 'crew' with a number of unseen personnel making sure the museum runs smoothly day-to-day. In addition to these are the visitor facing staff: gallery assistants, front of house, guides, volunteers, performers, costumed interpreters, they make for a whole cast of 'performers' all of whom can play a critical part in a visitor's museum experience. The blurring of roles makes the staging of a museum experience more problematic. No longer can there be defined and marked areas for performer and audience. Staff, artefacts and visitors merge and interact in one shared space, switching and changing in their roles of audience, performers and props. In theatrical performance there is a clear signalling to the start and end of the 'performance'. This helps establish the theatrical frame and distinguishes it from everyday experience, and creates a unique space in which different rules apply. A museum visit is an everyday experience. It is made up several smaller, interconnected

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moments of ‘performance’ each of which must then be framed so that the visitor can respond accordingly, whilst remaining respectful of the museum frame that encapsulates them all.

It is critical that museums do not forget the unique components that visitor’s value, and that museum experiences continue to offer a broad variety of values for the multiplicity of different visitors. Museums must particularly consider visitors’ expectations of intellectual and collections values, and though these bring about additional considerations and impose certain restrictions, they also offer museums something unique, and a valuable resource in attracting visitors. Museums can take influence and inspiration from theatrical performance, but must remain aware to how themselves are valued.

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Appendix 1- Training and conferences attended

December 2012. Invited to participate in '*Evaluating Evaluation*'. Professional colloquium organised by Kings College London & Heritage Lottery Trust.

May 2012. Attended *Museums Heritage Show*, London. Trade conference and seminar programme

March 2012. Delivered workshop 'Sticky Dots and Play-dough; evaluations with families' at *Happy Families Showcase*, Nottingham. Organised by Kate Measures Consulting

May 2011. Attended *Museums Heritage Show*, London. Trade conference and seminar programme

April 2011. Attended 'Family Learning- Guidance on engaging families in our work'. Training event organised by Creating Capacity.

March 2011. Attended 'How to write Audience Development Plans' Training event organised by MLA Renaissance South East.

March 2011. Attended 'Creating an Effective Brand'. Training event organised by Hopkins Van Mill.

February 2011. Attended 'Family Fortunes – How museums, galleries and visitor attractions can better welcome families' Workshop organised by Kids in Museums & Family and Parenting Institute.

January 2011. Attended' 'Using Evidence for Future Planning', part of *Understanding Audiences 2010*. Training event organised by MLA and Renaissance London.

December 2010. Attended 'Engaging with Adult Audiences'. Training event organised by MLA Renaissance South East, Oxford.

November 2010. Attended 'Qualitative Data Analysis' workshop organised by MLA and Renaissance London.

November 2010. Delivered training to staff at Sussex Archaeological Society on 'What Visitors Seek from Museums'

October 2010. March 2011. Completed '20 Ways to Improve Your Business'. Course organised by Bournemouth Business School.

October 2010. Completed '*Project Planning*' module as part of Knowledge Transfer Partnership scheme.

September 2010. Scheduled to deliver paper at Visitor Studies Group annual conference, but event cancelled.

May 2010. Completed 'The Art of Building Windmills'. Training programme organised by Birmingham City University Centre of Enhancement and Learning in Teaching (CELT).

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May 2010. Attended 'Understanding Local Authority Priorities and Commissioning'. Training event organised by Renaissance London & London Cultural Improvement Group.

Jan- May 2010. Completed 'Supervising Masters Research'. SEDA accredited course, organised by Birmingham City University

April 2010. Attended and delivered paper at 'Narrative Space' conference organised by University of Leicester.

November 2009. Attended 'Assessing Reflection'. Training event organised by Birmingham City University CELT.

November 2009- Attended 'Choosing Data Collection Tools: setting intended learning outcomes, asking the right questions and getting the right sample'. Training event organised by MLA.

October 2009. Attended *Audience Development Network Yorkshire* biannual meeting.

July 2009. Attended 'How to be an Effective Networker'. Training event organised by London Museums Group.

June 2009. Participated in Museums Libraries and Archives consultation on the new accreditation standard for museums.

June 2009. Attended 'Writing for publication'. Training event organised by Birmingham City University CELT.

May 2009. Attended *Audience Development Network Yorkshire* biannual meeting.

April 2009 .Attended 'Embedding Audience Development in your Organisation' Training event organised by Renaissance West Midlands.

April 2009. Attended 'Networking Success'. Training event organised by Birmingham City University CELT.

March 2009. Attended 'How to Conduct and Analyse Data from Personal Meaning Mapping'. Training event organised by MLA.

January 2009. Attended 'Approaches to Observing Visitors'. Training event organised by MLA.

November 2008. Paper entitled '*Enhancing the Edutainment Value of the Visitor Experience*' accepted to be given at *Museums, Tourism and the Visitor Experience* organised by INTERCOM. Unable to attend.

October 2008. Attended 'Introduction to Understanding Audiences'. Training event organised by MLA.

Appendix 2- Papers published from research

Gadsby, J (2009). The Affect of Encouraging Emotional Values in the Interpretation of Real Objects' *Materiality and Intangibility: Contested Zones* at University of Leicester, December 2009.

Abstract

"Value" refers to the outcome of an individual's assessment of worth which is influenced by preference, need, expectation, experience and memory. It is proposed that in museums these values can be categorised into one of five groupings: social, physical, interpersonal, emotional and intellectual values.

Though primarily visual, stimulus that are heard, smelt, felt even tasted can also be assessed to create value. The acts of both encountering and assessing of a stimulus may be either conscious (such as actively looking at an exhibition) or subconscious (such as a subtle change in lighting). Understanding value is important as it will affect the interpretation of an object. If a visitor values the museum experience overall as "intellectual" they may struggle to attain an "emotional" value from an object – such as a narrative or the attempt at empathy.

This session will investigate how do museum designs that encourage emotional values affect the interpretation of real objects? And how can we use design to alter the visitor's values and therefore the interpretation of objects.

Gadsby, J. (2010) 'The Effect of Encouraging Emotional Values in Museum Experiences'. **Museological Review** 15. 2011. University of Leicester

Abstract

Museum visitors seek many outcomes from their experiences to justify their investment of time, money and effort. It is proposed that the primary outcomes which visitors seek from museums can be categorised as; physical, intellectual, interpersonal, social, collection or emotional values. In devising this 'value grouping' system a number of interviews were conducted with museum staff from across the United Kingdom. During these conversations the last proposed group: emotional values, was received with mixed enthusiasm. Though mostly in agreement that audiences want to be moved, shocked or excited and to feel empathy, nostalgia, awe and wonder, some staff were sceptical of the role this plays in museums and the effect of visitors having affective responses.

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To further investigate this topic the Materiality and Intangibility conference was utilised as an opportunity to collate further opinions and insights from a wider range of industry professionals and academics. This paper is a summary of the discussion and feedback in that session. What is concluded from this process of investigation is that there are identifiable benefits to encouraging affective experiences within visitors but there should be thorough consideration of why and how museums achieve this.

Gadsby, J. (2010) 'Forgiving to Not Forget: The potential of suspending disbelief in museums spaces for immersive narrative journeys'.. Narrative Space, University of Leicester. April 2010.

Abstract

This paper aims to explore the role of suspending disbelief in creating immersive narrative journeys for museum visitors. To do this we shall evaluate the successful uses and outcomes of existing examples of immersive narrative journeys, particularly the use of re-created environments. We shall also discuss the limitations and considerations which museums must address when encouraging visitors to suspend their disbelief, specifically the educational objectives of museums. Finally using results from visitor surveys conducted at two immersive narrative journeys, we shall attempt to identify the outcomes for visitors in suspending their disbelief. The most problematic issue in discussing both suspension of disbelief and immersive experiences in this kind of research is a lack of method to measure or monitor if and how these have been achieved by visitors. The theory of this paper stems from the authors research in investigating the application of scenographic principles within museum spaces, as part of her PhD study.

Appendix 3- Table of field visits and other museums visited visits

Entries highlighted in bold were scheduled field visits

museum	date	location	region	photos	size	subject
Thackray Medical Museum	November 2007	Leeds	Yorkshire	no	medium	museum
Tate Modern	December 2007	London	London	no	large	art
Museum of Brands	December 2007	London	London	no	small	museum
Britain at War Experience	December 2007	London	London	no	medium	tourist attraction
Shakespeare Birthplace Trust	January 2008	Stratford on Avon	West Midlands	no	large	heritage site
Leeds City Museum	January 2008	Leeds	Yorkshire	no	medium	local history
Falstaff Experience	January 2008	Stratford on Avon	West Midlands	some	small	tourist attraction
National Media Museum	February 2008	Bradford	Yorkshire	Some	large	science
Sarehole Mill	March 2008	Birmingham	West Midlands	no	small	local history
Dudley Zoo	April 2008	Dudley	West Midlands	no	large	wildlife
West Midlands Safari Park	May 2008	Kidderminster	West Midlands	Yes	large	wildlife
NCCL Galleries of Justice	June 2008	Nottingham	East Midlands	Yes	medium	heritage site
Lunt Roman Fort	July 2008	Coventry	West Midlands	yes	small	history
Cadburys World	July 2008	Birmingham	West Midlands	some	large	tourist attraction
Victoria & Albert Museum	August 2008	London	London	yes	large	art
Birmingham Botanical Gardens	August 2008	Birmingham	West Midlands	No	medium	wildlife
Black Country Living Museum	September 2008	Dudley	West Midlands	yes	medium	living history
Manchester Museum	September 2008	Manchester	North West	some	medium	museum & art gallery
Foundling Museum	October 2008	London	London	yes	small	history
Staffordshire Regiment Museum	November 2008	Staffordshire	East Midlands	yes	small	war
Museum of Science and Industry	November 2008	Manchester	North West	yes	large	science

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Bristol Zoo	November 2008	Bristol	Gloucestershire	No	large	wildlife
Natural History Museum	December 2008	London	London	Yes	large	science
Science Museum	December 2008	London	London	Yes	large	science
Old Operating Theatre and Herb Garrett	March 2009	London	London	Some	small	heritage site
Design Museum	March 2009	London	London	no	medium	museum & art gallery
ZSL London Zoo	March 2009	London	London	No	large	wildlife
At Bristol	April 2009	Bristol	Gloucestershire	yes	large	childrens
Royal Armouries Leeds	April 2009	Leeds	Yorkshire	some	large	war
Library and Museum of Freemasonry	May 2009	London	London	some	small	museum
The Public	May 2009	West Bromwich	West Midlands	some	medium	museum & art gallery
Imperial War Museum North	May 2009	Salford	North West	yes	large	war
Silk Mill Museum	June 2009	Derby	East Midlands	Some	small	local history
Barbican Art Gallery	July 2009	London	London	no	large	art
Pickford House	July 2009	Derby	East Midlands	some	small	historic property
British Museum	July 2009	London	London	yes	large	museum & art gallery
Harrow Museum	August 2009	Harrow	Greater London	yes	small	local history
Library and Museum of Freemasonry	August 2009	London	London	no	small	museum
Gladstone Working Pottery Museum	September 2009	Stoke-on-Trent	East Midlands	yes	small	local history
Thackray Medical Museum	September 2009	Leeds	Yorkshire	Yes	medium	museum
Horniman Museum and Gardens	September 2009	London	London	yes	medium	museum & art gallery
Potteries Museum and Art Gallery	September 2009	Stoke-on-Trent	East Midlands	yes	medium	museum & art gallery
The Herbert Museum and Art Gallery	September 2009	Coventry	West Midlands	Yes	medium	museum & art gallery

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Peoples History Museum	November 2009	Manchester	North West	no	medium	local history
Staffordshire Regiment Museum	November 2009	Staffordshire	East Midlands	yes	small	war
Nottingham Museum and Art Gallery	December 2009	Nottingham	East Midlands	No	medium	museum & art gallery
Imperial War Museum North	February 2010	Salford	North West	no	large	war
Kensington Palace (Historic Royal Palaces)	March 2010	London	London	no	large	historic property
Birmingham Back to Backs (National Trust)	March 2010	Birmingham	West Midlands	No	medium	historic property
Museum of the Jewellery Quarter	March 2010	Birmingham	West Midlands	no	small	local history
Eureka	April 2010	Halifax	Yorkshire	no	medium	childrens
Oxford Castle	June 2010	Oxford	Oxfordshire	some	medium	heritage site
Kensington Palace (Historic Royal Palaces)	June 2010	London	London	no	large	historic property
Goodrich Castle (English Heritage)	July 2010	Goodrich	Herefordshire	some	medium	historic property
Imperial War Museum	July 2010	London	London	Yes	large	war
South Lakes Wild Animal Park	July 2010	Dalton in Furness	Cumbria	No	medium	wildlife
HM London Tower (Historic Royal Palaces)	August 2010	London	London	Some	large	historic property
Churchill War Rooms	August 2010	London	London	yes	large	historic property
Kensington Palace (Historic Royal Palaces)	August 2010	London	London	no	large	historic property
Benjamin Franklin House	August 2010	London	London	yes	small	historic property
Aston Manor Hall	August 2010	Birmingham	West Midlands	Yes	small	historic property
London Transport Museum	August 2010	London	London	Yes	large	local history
Florence Nightingale Museum	August 2010	London	London	yes	small	museum
Aston Manor Transport	August 2010	Birmingham	West Midlands	Yes	small	museum

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Museum						
National Museum of Scotland	August 2010	Edinburgh	Scotland	No	large	museum & art gallery
RAF Museum Cosford	September 2010	Cosford	Shropshire	Yes	medium	war
Bignor Roman Villa	November 2010	Bignor	Sussex	yes	small	heritage site
Brighton Pavilion	January 2011	Brighton	Sussex	no	large	historic property
Museum of London	January 2011	London	London	no	large	local history
Portsmouth City Museum	January 2011	Portsmouth	Hampshire	yes	small	local history
Brighton Museum and Art Gallery	January 2011	Brighton	Sussex	yes	medium	museum & art gallery
D-Day Museum	January 2011	Portsmouth	Hampshire	yes	small	war
Verulamium Museum	February 2011	St Albans	Hertfordshire	yes	small	history
Weald and Downland Open Air Museum	February 2011	Chichester	Hampshire	yes	medium	living history
Guildhall Art Gallery and Roman Ampitheatre	February 2011	London	London	some	medium	museum & art gallery
Chedworth Roman Villa	March 2011	Cheltenham	Gloucestershire	yes	small	heritage site
Brading Roman Villa	March 2011	Brading	Isle of Wight	yes	small	heritage site
Newport Roman Villa	March 2011	Newport	Isle of Wight	yes	small	heritage site
Corinium Museum	March 2011	Cirencester	Gloucestershire	yes	small	local history
Pitt Rivers Museum	March 2011	Oxford	Oxfordshire	no	large	museum
The Jewish Museum	March 2011	London	London	Some	small	museum
Fort Nelson (Royal Armouries)	March 2011	Portsmouth	Hampshire		medium	war
Porthcurno Telegraph Museum	April 2011	Cornwall	South West	some	small	heritage site
Roman Baths	April 2011	Bath	Bath	yes	large	heritage site
Portsmouth Historic Dockyard	April 2011	Portsmouth	Hampshire	no	medium	museum
Michellam Priory	May 2011	Lewes	Sussex		small	local history
Eden Project	May 2011	Cornwall	South West	yes	large	wildlife
Poole Museum and History Centre	June 2011	Poole	Dorset	No	small	local history
Welcomme Collection	July 2011	London	London	yes	medium	museum & art gallery

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Fishbourne Roman Palace	August 2011	Chichester	Sussex	yes	small	heritage site
Imperial War Museum North	August 2011	Salford	North West	yes	large	war
Museum of London Docklands	September 2011	London	London	No	large	museum
Royal Armouries Leeds	September 2011	Leeds	Yorkshire	Yes	large	war
Abbey House Museum	October 2011	Leeds	Yorkshire	Yes	small	local history
DIG York	November 2011	York	Yorkshire	yes	medium	childrens
Jorvik Viking Centre	November 2011	York	Yorkshire	yes	medium	history
Yorkshire Museum and Gardens	November 2011	York	Yorkshire	yes	medium	museum
Magna Science Centre	November 2011	Sheffield	Yorkshire	Yes	medium	science
Blists Hill Victorian Town	December 2011	Telford	West Midlands	yes	medium	living history
London Transport Museum	December 2011	London	London	yes	large	museum
Pollocks Toy Museum London	December 2011	London	London	Yes	small	museum
Clumber Park (National Trust)	December 2011	Worksop	Yorkshire	yes	small	wildlife
Hampton Court Palace	January 2012	Surrey	Surrey	yes	large	historic property
National Space Centre	February 2012	Leicester	East Midlands	yes	medium	museum
Graves Gallery	February 2012	Sheffield	Yorkshire	No	medium	museum & art gallery
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery	February 2012	Birmingham	West Midlands	no	medium	museum & art gallery
Wollaton Hall and Deer Park	March 2012	Nottingham	East Midlands	no	medium	historic property
Whitby Abbey (English Heritage)	April 2012	Whitby	Yorkshire	No	medium	historic property
Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills	May 2012	Leeds	Yorkshire	No	small	local history
Eureka	July 2012	Halifax	Yorkshire	Some	medium	childrens
Stratford Story Centre	July 2012	Stratford	Greater London	No	small	childrens
Calke Abbey (National Trust)	August 2012	Derby	East midlands	some	small	historic property
WWT London Wetlands Centre	August 2012	Barnes	Greater London	No	medium	wildlife
National Media Museum	December 2012	Bradford	Yorkshire	no	large	museum

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St Mungos Museum of Religious Life and Art	December 2012	Glasgow	Scotland	No	small	museum & art gallery
WWT Washington Wetland Centre	February 2013	Washington	Tyne and Wear	No	medium	wildlife
WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre	February 2013	Burscough	Lancashire	No	medium	wildlife
Bankfield Museum	March 2013	Halifax	Yorkshire	No	small	museum & art gallery
North Yorks Moors Visitor Centre	March 2013	Sutton Bank	Yorkshire	Yes	small	wildlife
Yorkshire Wildlife Park	April 2013	Doncaster	Yorkshire	No	medium	wildlife
Dudley Zoo	May 2013	Dudley	West Midlands	no	medium	wildlife

Appendix 4 – Interview details

Martin, Vicky. Community Outreach Officer at Gladstone Pottery Museum. Interview held at Gladstone Pottery Museum on 21st October 2008. *interview not transcribed as sound recording failed*

McNulty, Irene, Marketing and Audience Development Officer, Thackray Medical Museum, Leeds. Interview held at Thackray Medical Museum on 6th May 2009.

Dennis, Mark. Curator at Freemasonry Library and Museum, London. Interview held at Freemasonry Library and Museum on 19th May 2009.

Garratt, Delia & **Hanney**, Jane. Museums and Communities Manager and Exhibitions Officer for Sandwell Museums. Interview held at Oak House on 26th May 2009.

Frith, Chris. Designer for Derby Museums. Interview held at Silk Mill on 4th June 2009.

Garratt, Delia. Museums and Communities Manager Sandwell Museums. Interview held at Oak House on 3rd July 2009.

Derbyshire, Janine. Principal Keeper for Pickford House Museum, part of Derby Museums. Interview held at Pickford House Museum on 26th July 2009

Vines, Ian & **Bairns**, Helen. Programmes and Exhibitions Officer and Design Services Officer at Stoke Museums. Interview held at Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke on 3rd August 2009

Lee, Alison. General Manager at Gladstone Pottery Museum, part of Stoke Museums. Interview held at Gladstone Pottery Museum on 3rd August 2009.

Collins, Lottie. General Manger at Harrow Museum and Heritage Centre, Harrow. Interview completed at Harrow Museum and Heritage Centre on 27th August 2009.

Dennis, Mark. Curator at Freemasonry Library and Museum, London. Interview held at Freemasonry Library and Museum on 28th August 2009.

Perry, Jamie. Head of Marketing and Communications for Coventry Heritage and Arts Trust. Interview held at The Herbert Museum and Art Gallery on 11th September 2009.

Walker, Kirsten & **Ragan**, Maria. Head of Collections Management and Exhibitions Design Manager at the Horniman Museum, London. Interview held at the Horniman Museum, London on 23rd September 2009.

Blakely, Eric. Curator at Staffordshire Regiment Museum. Interview held at Staffordshire Regiment Museum on 15th October 2009. *Interview not transcribed as audio recording lost*

Knight, Rachel. Head of Exhibitions at Imperial War Museum North. Interview held at Imperial War Museum North on 19th February 2010.

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Kim, Alexander. Collections Curator at Kensington Royal Palace, part of Historic Royal Palaces. Interview held at Kensington Royal Palace on 24th April 2010.

Hill, Sue. Project Leader for Enchanted Palace at Wildworks Theatre Company. Interview conducted via telephone on 5th August 2010.

Appendix 5- Transcripts of interviews

Interview with Irene McNulty

Marketing and Audience Development Officer at Thackray Medical Museum

Wednesday 6th May 2009

JG. First would like to discuss how you think visitors value the Thackray Medical Museum?

IM. We do our visitor research through Audience Yorkshire Surveys, they're much more in depth, they talk to people about are you a family, are you a single visitor, are you a couple, who was visiting and what they actually felt about it. There's lots of boxes to tick, but there's also bits at the end for them to write their own. As we have on going visitor satisfaction cards but they can just have something on like it was very smelly or it was really horrible great time or good. So it's very sort of- you've got a little tick but you don't know what it means. Also looks at where they are coming from and what they are expecting... we have a professional researcher do it, we had front of house do it but can change what visitor says, they want to please but we want the buts and if onlys.

JG. What is the Yorkshire Attraction Group?

IM. Everyone shares information on visitors how things are going, every month everyone feeds back figures. Thackray Medical Museum was a founding member.

JG. What kind of things are you finding out?

IM. Use it to formulate attraction packages (go to one get in cheap to another). We also share information on events we have run, and if it was successful. Events are often good for getting different and new audiences in.

JG. Thinking about the responses you get back from surveys you have done with feedback on how people feel about the museums- what kind of reactions/ feedback are you getting?

IM. We strip the galleries down and as many people love The Street as hate The Street, because of the smells and the darkness and it being scary, so it doesn't really tell us anything. It just points out that we have got 2 distinct bunches of people...some people love having the baby section as gives them chance to talk to their children, about their experience or families so you get different sets of people engaging with the different galleries

JG. Do you ever gather qualitative information like I found this moving?

IM. very rarely but we are looking at in the audience development plan. Some of our surveys do dig deeper but again need to work out time of year to do it etc, you don't just want to copy what other people are doing

JG. Looking at the value groupings, can you identify one you think is most important to the Thackray Medical Museum, or you like to be perceived as?

IM. I think its all equal- they are all important to us

IM {explains an exercise with staff where all staff had to engage with the building through role playing. Some given role of; conference visitor, others an educational group then had to navigate and engage with the space}

The social one we struggle with, a lot of NHS staff come for their lunch but when they're off from work they don't want to come back here.... When we have a family day there's a real buzz of people just facilitating having family time ...so we are addressing them all, were not doing them all, but we are

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addressing them. We also did an event where could bring a teddy-bear and get tin for free- appealing to LS9 local community.

JG. Considering from visitors point of view, what do you think they are taking away from visiting the TMM?

IM. It's really hard to say – Thackray Medical Museum do a Saturday morning lecture and 150 people come, not all medical experts, you don't have to have a specialist medical backgrounds, were trying to find out why these people come.

JG- What about emotional values- is there anything Thackray Medical Museum actively tries to do to promote this?

IM. In each gallery and exhibitions they defiantly do. One exhibition we had at the end of last year was all about heart disease and how that affects the families and extended people, it was all art works produced by artists who had been talked to by heart specialist. But lots of panels explaining about heart disease: what it is and how to prevent it and there was a lot of people who said 'my granddad or my mum'. They knew all about it, but this was somewhere they could talk about it. It's nice when that happens, but it's how you can measure that. You don't want to intrude, especially when you're talking about medical things. Again there is one about hip replacements and you get a lot of people saying 'oh that's what happened when I had mine' or people come in who are having a hip replacement so thought they would come have a look.

JG. So lots of personal connections?

IM. Definitely

JG. Thinking about the street, why have they done it that way?

IM. Well if you were cynical you'd say it's novelty. But I think there something that as it's dark and it is a tiny street and because of what you're looking at, and the smell just sort of reinforces it. Although there's some people who think it's (the smell) strong, I think it does immerse them in the whole sort of idea. Obviously they've come in a car, they've walked in threw the door, they've paid their money- they don't really believe they're in Victorian Leeds but it's getting them that step nearer to it.

JG. And why do you think that is important?

IM. Well when you go to theatre to see a play and your looking down you know it's all make believe and there is nothing behind it but it enables you to engage, the same as walking through the street. You could just race through and say 'oh that's interesting clever they got dummies and smells' but if they really immerse themselves in the feeling they can learn something about the past and public health, all those things that are relevant today and that people.

(18.53)

JG. Do you think putting someone in that frame of mind helps instigate better learning or more learning or more chance of learning?

IM. More chance, will maybe reach more people who wouldn't have learnt without that. I mean books are marvellous, seeing the pictures and reading the facts but it's not the same as being there is it? For Easter had we people enacting the families of dummies in The Street. Obviously as we have the dummies there we can't have two Hannah's, so we has the sisters, the brothers the friends and they spoke about what they (the dummies) had got

JG. Did they speak in 1st person or 3rd person?

1st person, they are who they are, dressed in costume they engaged with each other and visitors, so they said things like; oh that is strange you are wearing trousers, you do know that only boys wear trousers. They're then reeling them (visitors) in a bit then talking about what actually looking at.

{At that moment in time a group of school children pass us, chanting in costumes}

IM. they're (the children) are going to the war effort now

JG. So are they in costume as part of that activity?

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The Victorians they meet in The Street, and they have different characters, the problem with The Street is that it is so narrow once you got a school in there other visitors can't get through. So we have physical problems with that space but overall it works quite good.

JG. What do you think are the benefits of putting the children in costume?

IM. Again it's to help them be there, you're not you now you are someone else.

JG. Considering the other galleries and exhibitions in the museum, what do you think visitors take from them?

IM. We have far more collections than on display, as all museums do. So it is having the cream of your collection on display and explaining to people why you are collecting and the history behind it and how it fits in to the timeline of the history that is there. So interpreting them in a way that means something.

JG. Can you think of points in the museum where trying to encourage more than just intellectual value?

IM. The 'Having a Baby' gallery has got empathy values so people can try on the weight of full term pregnancy. Get a lot of laughs but I've also seen teenage girls say 'my god, I'm not doing this, no way. The Hannah exhibition is about surgical procedure before anaesthesia, you don't actually see the operation just the build up to it. It's done in lecture style with a tableau set and modern audio visual, you sit down and watch a surgeon explain to students what's going to happen, how and state of patient. She is one of the characters in the street, then it's later on that you go upstairs and find out what happened to her. Lots of characters in The Street are based on people buried in the cemetery, so again sometimes people are interested in the way you choose the characters, sometimes they are just made them up- others are happy to accept they're made up, depends what sort of level they are interested, some people are really interested in genealogy. It is coming up to 150 years of this building and we are starting to think about how do we celebrate the work house and how far do we go, as people do want to know about that but there is a lot of mystery around work houses and what it was actually like. There is not a lot of records for this here

JG. Back to the Hannah film, obviously it's about teaching people about surgery before anaesthesia but what else do you think it gives. What values do you think visitors attain from that?

IM. Well that's the room where most teenage boys faint. There's a sign saying if you're not into it go this way, but people are used to watching a film so it's easy and accessible to them, they engage with what's going on. Throughout the rest of the galleries the instruments and the techniques in video are explained so it's a starter to the gallery. Without the film you're just looking at shiny pointy things in cases. So it's a bit of an explanation of what you are about to see.

JG. Who is involved in the planning of these galleries?

IM. When the museum was set up 11 years ago, the galleries were set up looking at curriculum at the time. Right from beginning was meant to be an educational thing.

JG. So it's all original from them?

IM. Apart from the temporary gallery and the revamp of 'Life Zone' which is the button pressing and jumping up and down bit. There's been no re-fit, we'd like to, but I think we'd still to the same thing of being able to operate on few levels, so you can teach in there, do lessons, self-learning, We don't have a guide book, we had one in the past which was to get you through the galleries but the one we are doing at the moment you don't use in the galleries, it is that further information for later.

JG. So as a general summary overall, if you asked visitors what they took from TMM, how they valued, what would you expect them to say?

IM. Overall it's positive and can't say that 'all families like the life Zone, there is normally one or two that they point out but that doesn't mean that they didn't enjoy the rest. People do often say the kids like the Life Zone as kids have enjoyed just bouncing off the walls.

JG. What kind of thing do you hope they are taking away?

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IM. Well we're hoping that they are thinking about their own health. We're telling the story of medical history but it's also trying to do some stuff on the cutting edge that people are going through now

JG. Do you think museum visitors expect it to be pre-determined for them?

IM. No, we get people who come back time and time again and say they find something new every time. I don't think it is laid too much on the line for them, there is too much to see for them to do that. You have to leave lots of choices; it has to be that they have to take part. I don't think can just walk through and expect it to fall on you. They have to take part; they can't just walk through and expect it to fall on you. There is objects to see, there's smells to see, there are panels to read, I don't think 2 people have the same journey going through

{JG shows IM possible areas of possible impact such as how long they spend on site, the objects they look at, how they will behave, what they will learn, how they will relate emotionally}

JG. Are there any of these TMM is keen to ensure they can control?

IM. Again it is looking at each group as they walk through the door and thinking what they want. So a family they want somewhere to leave prams, know where the loos are. Each visitor is experienced enough to know what they're needs will be, if they are elderly let them know there is plenty of seating. It's just anticipating what they need whilst here, we say 2-3 hours to get through the whole thing. But there may be galleries you want to linger in or more to look at. If we have got families with younger children then we may say to the adults that they might want to pop into The Street and see if it is suitable. You can get a 5 year old who is really in to it, but then you can get an 8 year old who isn't. We have been told by someone that they were really distressed by The Street; you can get dramatic emotions happening with all those different things, it is a tough job for front of house to sum someone up. Our building dictates the layout and we let visitors know don't have to do it that way, but the building itself does sort of dictate that a bit...If someone comes back (to reception) quickly may advise: did you go upstairs and see this and that, helping them to get the best from it.

JG. So do you think it's important to let the visitor control?

IM. Absolutely, although the building may dictate how get around, it's about making sure it's comfortable for them Do this by advising people what may be of interest to them and facilities offer.

JG. When you introduce new techniques like gallery characters what do you think is the intention of that?

IM. Just add a bit more to it. They (visitors) enjoy it, feedback says it changes the mood of people and they start thinking its different and their behaviour changes.

JG. How does behaviour change?

IM. I think they relax a bit more. The characters know who want to play and who doesn't.

JG. How do you plan what goes in temporary exhibitions?

IM. Been reactive in the past, but that's going to change. Going to think what messages we want to get across and which celebrations we want to be involved in... its hard as with changes in staff you inherent somebody else's idea

JG. Who is involved?

IM. Curator- education – myself and the chief executive. ...

We had our first exhibitions meeting yesterday on temporary gallery and exhibition development. Want to refurbish hearing aid exhibition, currently just case full of hearing aids. Want to make it more interesting, will start with temporary exhibition then move it to permanent will use it as research.

JG. When you are thinking about planning a new gallery or exhibition, such as the hearing aid exhibition, what do you start with?

IM. the objects- but how telling the story of how things come about. Explained the time line.

JG. Have you started thinking at all about the meaning or message that you want to put with that gallery?

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IM. Yeah, that's why education officer involved. Will give a positive view of people with hearing impairments- that sort of story. For future exhibitions look at what got and what we're not making good use of.

JG. At what stage will you start to consider the design or look of the exhibition?

IM. that's chicken and egg. You got to look at your collection, look at what's out there in other museums, but that's mainly the work of the curator. He brings someone in, I'm not sure how but think they put a call out and see who replies. ...

We have different ones; some are high tech, some like The Street so it's very different skills in presenting them. Always tweaking things based on feedback. Like couldn't read that or it was too dark.

JG. Do, and if so how do you implement findings from visitors' feedback into planning?

IM. Haven't done, but they are going to... need formal ways of channelling that through. For curator this interest is what people think of the collections but for me and Ellie (Educations officer) we tend to just hear what people want. Snot and poo that's what gets people's attention and get them through the door

JG. Why do you think visitors want 'snot and poo'?

IM. I think people are interested in the how we work and what happens when we don't, and how things happened in the past...It's the gross stuff, but not everyone into that.

**Interview with Mark Dennis
Curator at the Freemasonry Library and Museum
19th May 2009.**

Due to the length of this interview and irrelevance of some points only highlighted segments are included.

Notes from discussion prior to recording

Visit Figures= 20,000 annually (50% masons) substantial number of International tourists- coming on tours and using museum as by-product.

Library and Museum of Freemasonry is independent charity, but mainly funded by United Grand Lodge England. Also make individual applications to MLA for individual exhibitions. Shop also funds.

Museum is based within a few rooms inside Masonic House (a very vast imposing building) Visitors must sign into the house and then navigate to the museum. Tours are available for the rest of the building with a guide. In addition to the main museum galleries there is a small temporary gallery, used for one main show in the summer but has other functions throughout the year. The temporary gallery is converted from an old dress room.

JG. Could you explain the procedures for planning a new gallery or exhibition- such as the temporary summer exhibition you showed me?

MD. Planning can start anything up to 2 years in advance, but the final planning is usually pretty short....In terms of design we've done fairly substantial visitor surveys, both in the building and outside, looking at people's perception of Freemasonry and ways in which we can engage with them and that feeds in. We also monitor the design of exhibitions using ILFA- (Inspiring Learning for All) and GLO's (generic learning outcomes) as a measuring tool.

JG. So how do you start the development procedure?

MD. Initially it's myself and the director then the two section heads, the librarian and the archivist, we kick ideas around. We always try and do exhibitions that have a Masonic and a non-Masonic component; plenty of people don't come to us, not because they don't like Masons but because they don't know what would be in a Masonic museum. ...Some exhibitions are imposed upon us because of certain anniversaries...

(4.10)

...Design wise our spaces are traditional and relatively inflexible. We do 3 temporary exhibitions a year, 2 are in the library space where the cabinets are fixed, and the design is just how we lay out the text and how we lay out the cases. The summer show there is a more flexible space on the ground floor where we have vertical partitions that can be shifted and screwed into, unlike the walls as it's a grade 2 listed building. We can alter the lighting but there again there is a limit to what we can do as the room is fixed and on a cash basis anything we build has got to be re-useable as something.

(4.58)

JG. So when you plan a new exhibition and the theme for that do you start with the collection or with an idea?

MD. We start with an idea and the collection will usually support it, then there's the issue of what external loans are required. ... We will only go to an external loan if it is critical to the story

(5.50)

JG. You previously mentioned you are limited by the listing of the building, but could you tell me how you think design is used and implemented at the Freemasonry Museums?

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MD. What we tend to do is try and maintain the general atmosphere by using things that are compatible. Bronze coloured cabinets as there's a tradition of using bronze in the building. Filling in window apertures but not actually changing their shape. Again we are looking at the main space and the cabinets and when they have to go, as there underspecified now, what can we then be committed to do? And that will be between listing the building itself which has needs as this is a threw flow space on great lodge day and the Grand masters and the Grand-officers move through here to get to dine and dressed before ceremony. So it's not just visitor flows this has a dual function.

(7.15)

JG. So who is responsible for the design and who manages it?

MD. Essentially it's me as curator. If there are practical considerations regarding floor loadings or anything else then I bring in specialists, but the basic concept is almost always me. That includes for temporary exhibitions a swell.

JG. Have you considered, or have you in the past contracted in external designers or advisors?

MD. We had Adonkshift and Flannery in. Who are essentially architects, but they only designed to a very limited sense. It was a very limited design exhibition, but there was an architectural bridge that we now use for our temporary exhibitions, to focus the room and provide a frame, but the rest of it was very very basic. We would and we might if we get the room downstairs we are hoping to get, use an external designer.

JG. Would that be to convert the existing space into a museum space?

MD. Yes- as there you've got multiple issues in terms of conservation, in terms of lighting, in terms of the listing and health and safety. There are too many variables and with a complete room set out you need somebody who is technical. Where the balance goes between having someone who is purely technical and does as they're told, or more or less just say 'that wouldn't work', or whether we go for someone who is a true creative and subcontracts the technical people that's the debate.

(8.51)

JG. How has that become a debate?

MD. Well do we want an excellent designer who will consider how the space should look as well as the practicalities of creating it, or do we as in-house subject specialists want to decide how that space will exists and want somebody who will confirm that it's actually do-able.

(9.24)

JG. When you last commissioned in external architects what was that to do? Was it to create a temporary space or to convert the space you already had?

MD. It was a temporary exhibition but with the understanding that if the building would let us keep that space it may be the beginning of a room conversion that we could work on in subsequent years.

(9.53)

JG. And how did you work with the architects?

MD. A basic design brief, we gave the architect a spec of what we wanted to put into the room and the conservation conditions. We also have external guest curators where it's a specialist subject, in this case a chap called David Bellman who is a photography specialist and so he worked with the architect and in that case he was more leading the role in design in terms of colours and surfaces and I was the third leg of the triangle, telling the architect 'no-no you cannot do that, it won't work' and 'we are not going to have Hessian on all these surfaces as I need to paint them next year'! So you had that tension between the structural, the design and the practical and that sort of triangle seems to work even when we've not got an external person. I will come up with the concepts- the director will give them an old fashioned look and try to tone it down a bit and then we have the buildings services saying this is practical and this isn't. Then the intellectual bit of it, the words and what will be put where comes in at a later stage. So we see the room and how it's going to function as a space.

(11.15)

JG. Do you think that should be before or alongside the collection?

MD. Yes very much so, obviously the working and the intellectual content but what will be the experience in that space as they walk in the door. Having gone down a long corridor will they actually want to go in the room, how do we draw them in? Will they get it in the broadest sense; the storyline, what it's about and how it's structured.

(11.40)

JG. When you say storyline do you mean on a narrative basis or chronological?

it can be either or it can be thematic?

(13.10)

...We try to make our exhibitions visually comprehensible before you actually get down to the words

(13.40)

JG. Could you explain briefly any audience analysis and development work that you do and how you implement this into the planning of new exhibitions?

MD. There are 2 elements to this. One is that we run a target specialist network for Freemasonry and Fraternity. As a result of that, we have been able to do funded visitor surveys both inside and outside the site, looking at perception of fraternity and that feeds directly into how we do renewal of displays in the main museum. Because it lets us see the barriers to communication, any misapprehensions and ways that we can get the subject across and accepted as a subject that is worthy of looking at. The other side is to get feedback on what already exists on site; we have used comment cards and we're currently looking at the potential of a guided interview- we've had a modest grant from MLA to help in doing that. A lot of our information is anecdotal and is produced by the guides because most people who visit go on the building tour. There is also the case as curator I have a gallery on one level and if you stand on the gallery for a few minutes you start to get an impression of how people are flowing, you can even hear conversations through the office door.

(15.17)

JG. Do you have any formal methods or procedures for implementing feedback back in?

We report to trustees any feedback and all the management team get a review of it and we feedback to the guides, it's a very small team

JG. How many work here?

12, most of which are guides

(16.22)

JG. Something interesting that you said in previous correspondence via email:

I am also a little dubious about it, at one conference I heard a designer of a holocaust exhibition explain how he lowered the ceiling and the temperature as you got into the section on the camps. Are we really that afraid people won't get the message?

And should we be enforcing the approved message that rigidly?

just putting aside for one second the designers intentions and the methods they were using there, I was wondering if you could tell me a little about what you meant by 'the approved message' and what you think the approved message is here at the Freemasonry museum.

MD. People who come to museums there is a tendency to allow them to make their own meaning

JG. Do you think that's something applicable to the whole field?

MD. Its general, something that you're supposed now to do, multiple meanings and meanings that people make for themselves or the group they came with- they go away with something. I don't think that always necessarily works, I'm with somebody that I met at a conference recently that said if the objects are talking to you, take your medication! The visitor does need a bit of help to start getting to the subject matter. Where it can be an issue is where there is a very strong storyline. Holocausts museums are a case in point; Nazis bad- victims good, it's nasty. Now good holocaust museums are a lot more complicated than that but in essence it doesn't stir from that basic timeline. Here we have very

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strong opinions when people visit, people can be very for freemasonry or very against freemasonry so I need to guide them to the extent that they start to know what it is, but do it in a way that allows them to challenge that or disagree with it. This is not meant to be a PR exercise for freemasonry or a recruitment drive. Either of those might happen, once you start explaining what freemasonry is. If you start doing that to someone who doesn't like freemasonry it will look like you're pro-Masonic... In terms of design in the gallery, people need to have a basic narrative of; where freemasonry came from, how it evolved, who can become a mason and why on earth would they do it, where do they do it. There are certain basic subjects that until you have got that on board none of it is going to make any sense, you're just going to wonder round open-mouthed at lots of gold and silver and wonderful things. And all the way through there isn't one answer to any of that story. This organisation would say 'freemasons are men of good character that believe in the Supreme Being and who become better men threw the principles of brotherly love, belief and truth

(20.43)

JG. Do you think there should be, or to what extent there should be an approved message that museums overall put out?

MD. I rather doubt there is now. It depends what generation the museum is from and very much is driven by who the director is in terms of where they are in terms of museum theory and museum design...Two extremes: the totally interactive environment, with mannequins, with sound affects with smells, with the objects embedded. Or the architect model where the artefacts have to be put in a room the architects' visions, or is it a neutral space where the artefacts are in fact the story. And I have got its own genuine living historical space with its own function into which a museum is placed. Now that's four completely different things and you could find other examples but they will drive to a certain extent of the collection functions and what impact it has. And again what do you actually want? I could bung a load of interactive out there, or do we let the artefacts and the captions speak? Do we rely on the literacy and visual acuity of the person to actually go from case to case and pick up something or do I give them a pod cast and get them to walk round the way I would like them to go. Or pick one or more trails to give the illusion of freedom but actually they are still following one or more of my trails

(22.28)

JG. So these trails are pre-selected routes around the museum?

MD. It could be, at the moment we have one very simple one which is 'treasures with a tale', which is some key objects that we think have some interesting messages, and you have to go around and find the objects. So it's freedom to a certain extent but we have pre-selected what those things are and the stories that we think the objects tell and potentially will be a way of interacting with the subject matter. So you've already pre-selected to a certain extent what you want people to look at, then if you put things next to them, you can to some extent subtly manipulate the way people operate in the space. But they then have the option to look at the captions and decide: boring or no I don't agree with that.

(23.23)

JG. Why do you think it's important to be able to have this type of control of visitors and the way they use the space and look at the artefacts?

MD. We are a specialist museum and you need to get people to a certain point before they can kick free-independent. Even a mason probably doesn't know a lot about the history of freemasonry.

JG. So it depends on subject knowledge?

MD. Well I think so, I mean if you take Beamish Open Air Museum, everyone thinks they know what a grocers shop is, but even there there's misapprehensions and the in-jokes. At Beamish everyone walks into the hardware shop and does the two Ronnie's fork-handles sketch. Do they actually learn anything,- question mark. A parallel would be an online exhibition, where if you search, you search to some extent within your existing knowledge. Does any of it then allow you to go outside what you already know or your existing preconceptions? For example if I say to you: what would you most like to see in a Masonic

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Museum? Umm! - Well what have you got in a Masonic museum? So you need to get people to a certain point where they start forming their own opinions and start saying 'what if'? And have enough little pointers out in the gallery. Freemasons take snuff, so have a couple of snuffboxes out, say there are more- make them interesting ones. If someone happens to be a snuffbox fanatic they might ask. Have something from a prisoner of war camp, something that they will hopefully interact and say, well is there more than this? At which point you're getting to the other point of museum service which is curators speaking to visitors and answering questions. Fortunately being a small museum were in a position to do that, a larger museum it's difficult, they can't really service that.

(25.31)

JG. So the control that you are influencing there is just intellectual. Just ensuring visitors get a certain amount of factual information?

MD. Pretty much. We're not in the game of attitude changing and that is a conscious decision. We quit like people to go out understanding but if people decide to hate masons, they may have a valid point. If people are misunderstanding or uneasy about masons we want them to be informed but what we're not trying to do is change their minds. Their minds may change but that a by-product rather than product of conscious thought. You do get a lot of people who only know about the subject from other media.

JG. So what you are doing is addressing people's attitudes but with factual information?

MD. Pretty much, yeah

(27.00)

JG. Back to what you mentioned previously with the gentleman at the conference who designed the holocaust exhibition, do you remember the designer or what exhibition it was?

I can't exactly remember, but it was very very noticeable that it was a linear exhibition. So lots of bad things happened, anything Nazi is icky- but then we show the death camps and we drop the temperature and we drop the ceiling. Would it not be better to show both sides of the argument? We did have a debate in that actually because is it Holocaust or is purely Jewish? Which is the way it's traditionally been, whereas now there is a strong movement for gay people being a specific category, freemasons, political prisoners. You don't see Freemasons in holocaust exhibitions even though some of the Grand-masters died. Gypsies, the mentally unwell, even habitual criminals, so the story is very complicated. So you have a very complicated story that ends in horror. Now do you simply say: good people, bad people, horror and they don't feel they can deviate from that story line? I would hope some people go out there and in that gallery stand up and say' your all criminals, your all Satanists and your all stupid' - woo! Get that kind of engagement and you can go somewhere. I would hate to think that anyone out there felt unable to go against what they were being told.

(29.12)

JG. Do you think to some degree museums are sometimes a little afraid to be offensive or to encourage anything that may cause offence?

MD. If they're totally government funded I think that's absolutely right....I worked for one of the London boroughs that were concerned about violence in the family, we did a puppet show and we weren't allowed to show Mr Punch. We fought against it and we were allowed to show Mr Punch, provided social services literally had a caption next to it that said; if violence affects you in the home ring this number. Here we are slightly freer, we get some government funding but again there are some things that the masons themselves are concerned about. So we have freedom but they in the end can say, that's not right you know. It hasn't happened yet, whether were too timid or they're getting bolder I don't know. But there are always external pressures and curators live within it. And again with the public, with what they give back, do you press on or do you stop and re-think.

(31.02)

JG. Thinking again about this argument of enforcing the approved messages and the approved stories, what would you say to an argument that perhaps visitors expect these messages to be very clear and

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the stories to be made for them? Whether it's so they can remain entirely passive or as it just requires less effort on their behalf or perhaps it provides more entertainment value or it provides something they can buy-into.

MD. I could see how you could create an exhibition for that, we call them theme parks. If people realise what you're doing too overtly, hooray on one level. But you are trying to get them to interact with essentially static objects in a museum, now do they actually notice what they're seeing, do they enjoy what they are seeing? I'm looking at a bottle of Buxton mineral water, it's not terribly interactive unless you let someone take a swig out of it. I could put panels around it and make it linear, but you got to get people to have a reaction to that. The purely entertainment, linear story to some extent - that's our tours. If you want chronological and just a presentation you go on the tour and the guide will tell you things, but even there you got the chance of asking questions. My own answer is that interactivity is increasingly vital. Because if you can't match the interactive, people do better on their home computers. You can provide the real, but people are increasingly not sure what the real is and what you do with it. So if you provide the interactivity in the end people can be passive. If you go to some stately homes with costumed re-enactors, you can see people blissfully walking past, looking at the tapestries imagining none of its going on and choosing to ignore the whole thing. Visitors are very very good at getting what they want from the whole thing.

(33.22)

JG. To what extent do you think it is important for museum visitors to get entirely what they want from the experience?

MD. That's interesting as it's coming back to more what the MLA or some more philosophical bodies on the topic might say about it. A museum visit is a partnership, between the museum and the visitor, and whoever the visitor is with. They've got to get something out of it. Whether it's what they expected, who knows. But they go to feel they've had value that they've engaged with something, feeling that they saw something worthwhile or they experienced something worthwhile. It doesn't necessarily have to be what they came into find. Again there is a strong movement in the field at the moment as museums as a social space, a chance for generations to interact or maybe just ambling around having a pleasant time, going out again and maybe coming back next Thursday. There is some validity to that, if you don't take any messages, if you just use the museum as a nice space to be with pretty things in it - that is still valid. It's a whole other way of using museums, with the learning just detached.

(35.07)

JG. That is interesting as I may have mentioned my research is looking at values. (JG explained what value is using the process model) and demonstrated the value groupings

(37.31)

JG. Looking at these groups I wonder if you can identify and one that you feel the Freemasonry museum tries to aim at visitors, or which in general you think are most pertinent and obvious to the experience?

MD. Where I am trying to go is from one to another, I'm trying to get an emotional response leading to an intellectual one. Because I am trying to engage them with some of the stories, like the 'prisoners of war camps' and 'freemasons in the holocaust' to provoke enough of a response in terms of feelings to want to gain more intellectual knowledge. People come in out of curiosity and that's our basic commodity rather than purely coming in to find out more about the Masons. In that respect were possibly different to some museums. So I would say we're about creating an emotional response leading to an intellectual one, it would be nice to create an interpersonal response but that then feeds back into the emotional. As when they have a good interpersonal response it makes them feel all fluffy, cuddly and happy people who are more likely to do more of the intellectual stuff, maybe?

(38.50)

JG. So when you talk about trying to use emotional values to create intellectual ones, how do you try to encourage this initial emotional value? What methods do you use to try encouraging people into having an emotional response?

MD. Again we try to be fairly traditional, it's about creating storylines and individual personal stories...People bring their own emotions to things. So by juxtaposing Islam, Judaism and Christianity, if the person has any connection to religion it is going to provoke a reaction. The other side is conversation with the guides, as they will often use personal experience and stories that they know (many of our guides are masons).

(41.02)

JG. It's interesting that you discuss using emotional values to create intellectual as one of the things I had considered was a hierarchy of these values, so you work from social upwards and without addressing the lower levels it's difficult to attain the higher value responses.

MD. Well it depends how you define the intellectual, if you include the modest level of having gained some information then your model works. But I think if you give them the basic intellectual and instigate the emotional that will then cause them to dig back down the lower two (intellectual and interpersonal). The real depth of intellect will only come through the interest. Plus I think there's a danger if you wait for them to get engaged on the intellectual first. Take me to a football museum and watch my intellect dis-engage, get me keen about it, and then I'll start reading...One thing I would love to do in this museum, is in the analysis of prejudice. You came in here believing this- OK let's dissect it quick- why do you think so? Now is that intellectual or is that emotional?...

(44.02)

And if you get to that emotional level at whatever point you're producing affects that you've got to be confident to actually deal with.

(44.51)

JG. So if museums are actively encouraging emotional values, such as we discussed at the Holocaust exhibition, how do you think this can affect upon the interpretation of real objects?

MD. It will overlay their reactions to them certainly. It may also drown out other possible aspects of that object- a toothbrush in the holocaust camp may not be anything about teeth, it comes with a personal link to that person, that camp and everything else. The danger is you impose upon that object a particular focus that can drown out all the other wavelengths. I also think there is another risk, that if you do all of that and encourage the intellectual, and the intellectual at some point contradicts that you've just evoked then the danger is that the entire experience will fall over. If somebody feels they have only been told part of the story or not activated into having a reaction but manipulated into having a certain reaction then the danger is they may react against it

(46.57)

JG. Do you think there needs to be a level of manipulation but they should not be aware that they are?

MD. I think they become aware. There will be a point where they think, you're trying to teach me this and I do agree with this, I don't agree with this, my own emotions about this come in and that's when the real engagement has started, when they finally sit up and say; great- but I think this as well. And they are doing it hopefully from a point where they have got enough background knowledge to have an intellectual conversation with you about it.

(48.28)

JG. What areas/ aspects of the museum visit do you think it is important for museums to be able to have some level of control over, whether that be for your benefit, for individual visitors or for the good of the wider visitor audience? (MD given a list of areas/ aspects to consider)

MD. I'm not bothered about overall time at the site, they may just nip in and out but there could be other factors. Similarly time they spend at individual objects or galleries is not important. Behaviour-

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yes, behaviour and engagement, as I like to hear visitors starting to talk about the exhibits with each other or with museum staff. Learning- there is an underlying mission that we want them to go out with more information about freemasonry than they came in with. As we've discovered from elsewhere that the base level of knowledge is very nearly nil, so it's important to get that level up and that's critical to us.

JG. So to increase the level of learning but you're not particularly bothered about what specifically?

MD. Yes, they should know more. How they relate emotionally, I'm again not bothered about controlling that I just want to feel that it is happening. How they feel physically- we put out chairs and we want them to feel comfortable, it's imposing space so physical comfort is something we want to do. How they learn or remember information- again I'm not bothered how they remember it, just to get the feeling they've engaged in whatever way, whether it be an attitude shift, there's been an increase in factual information. How they remember the visit overall is critical, it was friendly will do, it was a good experience, as that reflects not only on the building which is imposing, the collections- which people have strong resonance for and against but it is also an investment in other museums elsewhere. Somebody who has managed to into Freemasons hall, up the stairs, deal with quite a difficult subject, go home and think that wasn't too bad, I had a god time, is then possibly empowered to go to another museum.

(52.53)

JG. And you feel you have a social responsibility to do that?

MD. Defiantly as one of our target audience is the local population

JG. Are you aware of who your users and non-users are?

Fairly, a relatively low number of local people visit. It's partly because there's an awful lot else to do in Covent Garden, there's a lot of competitive things. Tourists very strongly, freemasons very strongly. We're working very hard on further education, so we're looking for people who have a specialist interest in one or more of the collections we have got. It would be nice to get some anti-masons in.

Notes from discussion after recording

MD was interested to know if the groupings were universal or specific to museums (explained that although creation of value is universal the groupings specifically were devised for museums)

MD would be interested in seeing how this developed and looking at the final framework. MD mentioned that they are always looking at new ways of engaging visitors and of evaluating. How they have to set things to the financial, what brings in the money so can do other things want to do.

END OF DISCUSSION

**Interview with Delia Garrett, later joined by Jane Hanney
Museums and Communities Manager and Exhibitions Officer Sandwell
Museums
Tuesday 26th May 2009 held at Oak House.**

JG. So Sandwell Museums is a collection of museums run by the local authority?

DG. Yes, there are 5 main sites in the Sandwell museum group; Oak House; Hayden Hill House in Rowley Regis; Haden Old Hall; Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery; and Galton Valley Canal Heritage Centre. Plus Tipton Heritage Centre which is in the Library, and Bishop Asbury's Cottage in Great Barr. A lot are historic houses, not traditional museums in sense. Due to National Indicator monitoring- currently going through re-branding so that everybody realises they have been to a museum. Did a non-user survey and looked at what people do with free time etc. We found that 85% of Sandwell do not use museums- so really tuff environment for us. Spent years re-branding as 'heritage centres' and 'historic houses', now returning to this word that has archaic associations. When we asked people where they were most happy with their museum they said Wednesbury (museum and art gallery) but because that has museum in the title and they understand that, yet that is one of our least performing sites.

JG. What sort of visitor numbers do the sites attract, or overall across the sites?

DG. Not sure off hand but visitor figures have rocketed: almost doubled in 2-3 year period (2005-2008) due to re-interoperating the houses and main events programme. Do 2 or 3 large events at each site a year, big family friendly events where people come in their droves. One such event was Merlin's world at Oak House, it has everything from circus performers and workshops to bouncy castles. It's not dumbing down, it's breaking down barriers, particularly in environments like this. We need to get our local people to start using us. So visitor figures rocketed but threw the interest of these events but the casual visitor figures dropped off a little bit- because they waited until the event. Can have figures of up to 4000-5000 at events at Haden.

JG. So do people come to these events and then back to the museum at a later time?

DG. Some people do, do that. But what we tend to find they wait to see what's on next and they just come back for that. We get more cross over from schools; so children bringing adults. But what you do get is, when you're on the gate and you look at the people coming to these events is people who wouldn't come to the museum if there wasn't the fun and activities and I feel they will really help to break down barriers, so we do have the local markets in on those days.

(12.05)

JG. Looking at the value groups is there anything you feel Sandwell museums wants to be known as?

DG. I think if you had asked us that a couple of years ago we would have gone with the intellectual but we didn't have the visitor figures to. Now we are 100% sure that we need to get engaged with our local community so it has to be about interpersonal; families and relationships and making sure people have fun and that's very much our focus, rather than standing on our intellectual morals. We try our very best to make sure everything is correct, but if you go round the house here, you see that instead of very dry history we have got all the things people really want to see when they come to a house like this. We haven't tried to enforce that wider historical, Tudor story. It's making history accessible...

I do worry that the messages are not very clear and one of the things we need to do now is come up with an audience development plan and be sure why we are doing these things. What are the learning outcomes? If they are not learning what are the outcomes and what are the messages? And I think at the moment there has been this whole process and everyone is patting themselves on the back that we are doing what we are doing and it's very much what we should be doing. But are we doing it for the right reasons? So the next step is to not change anything but to see if what we are doing is the right thing and if there are other sessions we could add that clarify messages. For us the most important thing

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is to engage with our local communities and at the moment this seems to be working with the events programme but I'm not sure what messages they are taking away from that, and for me that's the next piece of work.

(14.50)

JG. When you say messages what do you mean?

DG. Well do people understand they have come to a museum, do people understand that they have come to a Tudor property? Now some people will come, and were only allowed 80 people into the house, so everything is outside. Now if they don't come into the house they don't necessarily understand that's where they have come. They've engaged with everything outside, all the fun sort of stuff. Now I'm not sure that is a problem, but I want them to feel they can come and can engage with us, they can come through the door, but I'm not sure they do take that away, although they should.

(15.50)

JG. How much do you think museums should script what people do there and what values will be attained from visiting?

DG. I think it really depends who you are and where you are. People expect that scenario from the British Museum and maybe Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery but they don't expect that when they come here. There is no point us trying to get people from Birmingham or Solihull, people who already go to museums, to come and see us. We need to engage with the community we are in and that's why we need to do a lot more to get those people in through the door and to use us. We need to be clear about what we are here for and what we are doing and what the messages are but as I keep saying if we don't get our local audience in, and they are only going to if they feel they are able to come in and contribute and take away from it what they want. I get the feeling that people don't respond to that prescriptive learning: you will learn this, you will learn that. We are doing work to see if they will respond to coming in and contributing to us, we have lots of little projects on the go that I would like to use the opportunity to do more community consultation and looking at if people think they can help shape the stories that we tell.

(18.30)

JG. It's interesting that you feel if you were to exploit and be prescriptive it may be threatening to your local community.

DG. Yeah I think when people go to the British Museum they go and take on board that they are going to learn and they will take something away from that. But I think people around here just want to have a good time and if they have learnt something as well that is just additional value for us. It would be interesting to come back in another year and see where we are with that.

(19.30)

JG. How much of an actual collection of artefacts do you hold?

DG. The main collection is based in Wednesbury but there is a big chunk of stuff over at Hayden as well. As part of the HLF project one thing was to dress the buildings more effectively in order to clarify the stories that we are telling out of the buildings. They've all had multiple occupancies over the years and there is more handling stuff that has come in. So you got more stuff that can be touched and interacted with. There are artefacts on display as well and here we have a lot of stuff on long term loan from the V&A.

(20.40)

JG. I assume the stuff that people are allowed to touch are not original artefacts?

DG. No they're not and as you go around the house there are far too many 'please do not touch signs', there are lots of historic pieces here and people are told not to touch and I think that is a mixed message. Particularly at Hayden where there are rooms where you can wonder in and touch stuff then there are rooms that are cordoned off...I think people do cope with that but it's how you communicate that message

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(22.26)

JG. What do you think are the benefits of dressing the space and not just using the artefacts and collections?

DG. I think it's the opportunity to get your hands on some stuff. I mean I'm the same, I think that's vital....It's all different types of learning and some people learn through touching and holding and feeling and that absolutely has to be part of the experience. So we put a lot in the sites, even in the rooms where you can't touch things we put history boxes where you can dress up.

JG. What about the little detailing things that you have like plastic vegetables and stuffed rabbits, which are effectively just props?

DG. I think you would be best talking to Jane about that. But I think it's all those questions that people want to know, you know about going to the toilet and things like that. It's about being able to relate it to their own personal experiences to make it relevant. If it's just an old dark table in an old dark traditional room, well it's really hard to imagine what it was like to live in it. We do a lot of living history sessions with schools and a lot of the rooms have been dressed to deliver the living history.

(24.10)

JG. Do you have actors in to do that?

DG. We have a living history team and they tend to do it in, though they don't have to stick to first person.

JG. Do you get many requests for this?

DG. We are packed with schools. Here and at Haden, we have Victorians up at Haden and Tudors here. We also do Second World War up at Haden.

JG. Who is responsible for the design of these sessions?

DG. Jane our exhibitions officer.

JG. When it comes to the dressing of spaces and generally any aspect of design overall who is responsible for that?

DG. Jane at the moment has to tinker with that. As if you have a set house, regular visitors find it difficult to come back and find anything new from it, which is where the events programme comes in. Especially here we don't have the opportunity for exhibitions we try and offer something new by tweaking the settings just a little bit so people say 'oh that looks different somehow'. Jane was brought in as part of the HLF project so she was very much involved in bringing the sites alive.

(26.13)

DG. I will go and get Jane for you, she is just next door

(DG exits and Jane Haney (JH) - enters

(27.00)

JG. Hi Jane, so how long have you been with Sandwell Museums?

JH. Five years

JG. And do you work across all five sites?

JH. Yes, the whole management team, and the specialist work across the whole service.

JG. I was interested in something that Delia mentioned about the re-dressing of the sites to 'bring them to life' was that something you had organised?

JH. It was certainly something I wanted to do as some of the museums were quiet dead, especially Hayden Hill. It had previously been a conference centre and it was furnished to be a conference centre, so it's quite functional and didn't really feel like a home. So we spent a lot of time trying to make them more like the period homes that they were. It's not perfect as we have not had the money to do that, but hopefully we will here (Oak House) and get it more with linen hangings and the right coloured furniture and making it look like a Tudor house, not a Victorian version. That's what we wanted to do so at Hayden Hill we have put in lots of photographs, plants, knick-knacks, clothes, food on the dinner table so it looked like people had just gone out, it looked more like a home.

(28.48)

JG. And what is the benefit of doing that?

JH. Well it depends what you're trying to do. We very much wanted to move away from that old fashioned way, particularly with historic houses. The National Trust still do this where you go in and it's; this clock was made in blah blah blah and this table was made in blah blah blah. We tried to get away from that. We wanted the houses for the stories that have been there. So it is about people, it's much more about how they were used, how rooms were used, how people's lives went on in those buildings, rather than this clock, that table. Because particularly you got to think of your audience, we're in the Black Country and they're not high levels of educational attainment, they're not necessarily people who are interested in antique clocks or antique furniture. You got to pick themes that are universal themes, so that from whatever economical, cultural, social or religious background you're from. Everyone has clothes, everyone had childhood, everyone washes their face and cleans their teeth, washes their clothes. So it's more about all those things, about everyday life in the past that we have tried to bring to life.

(30.19)

JG. So you are not trying to tell one specific story of the 'Whatever' family?

JH. Not here, because we don't know the stories of the families. More so at Haden Hill because there was only ever one family that lived there, so there is a background of that but its more about how they lived in those kinds of houses, so the servants, rich people, how their lives were different. But we also have a thread through of the family that lived there, but we don't know much about them, it is a thread. As I say, we take that thing, that people are interested in lives, they can relate to that, it's not just about gawping at the toffs over the red rope

(31.08)

JG. And is there an intellectual aspect to that, do you think it can perhaps increase learning, or are you just trying to get to your key markets and intellect and learning are more a bonus?

JH. Well it is learning. You are trying to hook people, they are coming to a museum and they are not going to go away knowing everything there is to know, but hopefully it will spark their interest and spark their imagination, motivate them to go and learn more. Because if you give them an exhibition on the Egyptians or the Romans they're not going to know everything about the Romans from that one exhibition, because you don't want to write all that in there. So the idea is to get them interested, spark that interest and broaden peoples horizons, maybe get them to think more about their local area, maybe think more about people, human stories and just get them involved really, so that hopefully they will think that is interesting and they will come back to do something different. We provide all manors of events and activities to try and get people hooked in and interested

DG. And I think that the formal learning that you do, that has a clear outcome and an intellectual basis and we deliver that to the schools.

JH. Yeah, it is about learning defiantly but what we try and do is because we haven't got in this area what you might call a traditional museum crowd. If you were delivering a museum service in rural Oxfordshire you got have people who will probably think about taking their children to a museum on bank holiday Monday or at weekends. We haven't got that luxury, people think that museums are boring, generally, I know that's a bit of a sweeping statement but it is a general thing. So we got to persuade them that museums aren't boring, as they've probably never even been to the museum. So what we try and do is give them fun and give them education without them even realising it. For example we might do an event about pirates, which we have done, but when they get here they learn about the Caribbean or they might try some Caribbean food or listen to some Caribbean music. They might learn about pirates and the reality of that, so you have given them this fun, the hook but when they get here we slip in some learning without them knowing. This year we are doing Camelot, so there

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is a bouncy castle, a magician, someone who is going to dress up as Merlin but we have also got historical education stuff.

(34.21)

JG. So there is still the opportunity there and you want people to learn?

JH. Absolutely we're not Alton Towers and we're not trying to be, we're not just trying to offer fun, we got to try and offer them a learning experience. I think a few years ago there was the word edutainment going around, which sounds cheesy but that is it. You are trying to get people interested and that is not an easy thing to do. But if you say; right we got bouncy castles and blah blah blah they will come. If you say; come and enjoy medieval something they are not going to come. It's about packaging sometimes and hopefully they will see that it's not boring and they might hopefully take part in a bit more

DG. That's the part now that we need to do. Part of the project was to set up these events but how much are the messages that you and the team have been working on, how much of that did they take away? How much did they learn about the Caribbean? How much did they take away those learning messages and that can sometimes be difficult to find out how much they did take away.

JH. It's always so much more difficult to measure impact of informal learning. If you are looking at formal learning you can say well they achieved their key curriculum objectives and we know they did that. But informal learning is not always 'you will learn about the Tudors' it could be you learn how to do something as a family, as sometimes are visitors are not...how do you put it? Sometimes you go to the National Trust and you hear 'oh Julian look at this' and they are engaged with each other but here that doesn't always happen. To even get families to come out and do things together, that is a learning outcome in itself really. You are dealing differently with what areas you work in, you have to think about what audiences you got in your area and who you are attracting and what the learning outcomes are for that audience.

DG. And when we look at the audience development plan we are going to start looking at those and saying , it's absolutely fine that a family comes and learns together and that is the main outcome and if that is all we want to deliver then great.

JH. That they engage with each other, that they learn to talk to each other

DG. Yes

JH. And that might be the outcome, and that might be enough

DG. But that is really hard to monitor

JH. It is really hard to measure, as they might not realise that they have learnt something they might not realise that they have done something together and that is important

(38.42)

JH. It's hard sometimes as that academic language doesn't translate to an experience when you try and get that out of them

JG. I've found myself how difficult it is to measure experience, you can measure weight in grams or length in metres but what do you measure an experience in...

JH. It is a major problem in museums and it has been for years on how you measure it. And things have changed; it's not just about quantity it's about quality of what you are giving as well. And it is a debate, how can you measure it, what does it mean to your impact. Does it matter if you have only impacted on 10 people and they had a quality time or they went on to get a job from the project that you did with that group, or does it need to be 30,000 people. It's difficult and we still haven't got any answers on how it is best to do that.

DG. No and when we were talking earlier about do we set ourselves up to be intellectual, well I would say on the whole no. I don't want us to be set up like a library I would rather that informality of learning.

JH. Again it depends on what kind of museum you are, if you are the British Museum and you got people who are experts on Byzantine coins from 475- 500 then that's totally different to the jobs that we do which are very broad. We are very much aimed at our local communities and trying to raise aspirations

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in the local community and impact on there. So what we would do would be very different to say, my rural Oxfordshire example, where you have traditional National Trust going families. So the way we do things might be very different, because of where we are rather than anything else.

(40.56)

JG. One of the things my research set out to do was find how can you measure the experience and what has come from that is a sort of system for categorising experiences, referred to as the value grouping system. (JG briefly defines and explains the value groups).

DG. That helps, as a service we are forever trying to justify how we deliver things, and particularly in Sandwell where things are part of the council and how we quantify to them what impact we have made
JH. There are low aspirations and low education in Sandwell and we say can help to raise those things, give this sense of pride, belonging and ownership through the things that we do. But how do you measure that, someone is not going to come out and say 'well now I feel a sense of pride'. They might do but it's not something that they are going to say. But then next time someone says to them, oh its crap in West Bromwich they might actually turn and say 'well actually...

(44.50)

JG. It's very interesting to speak to you guys as often with museum sites they have definite intellectual goals, and even with some small museums intellectual is the primary thing. They feel they must teach people this certain thing because that is what our subject is. So it's interesting here where its perhaps not intellectual first, if you can get them to learn something that's a bonus to what else you do.

DG. I think a few years ago that is where we were coming from.

JH. yes, the previous person who did the temporary exhibitions before me his theory was; if we don't give it to them they won't, people should be able to go see exhibitions about Picasso or whatever and if we don't give it to them they can't access it, so we will bring those things to Sandwell. They weren't high profile, they were the ones you get in from the Hayward gallery, the lesser works. But of course there was absolutely no visitors. So it was there but you were not enabling people to feel it was accessible

DG. And that is for them

JH. Yes, and you just purely putting it there. So what we have done is put on accessible exhibitions, we have listened to what people have said and to what they wanted. What they wanted was more accessible exhibitions, things the kids can do and more local history. So that is what we have done and over the last 5 years we have done: dinosaurs, sharks, snakes, Romans, Egyptians, all those things that people are a bit more drawn to as well as more local history things. There is always this nostalgia that people enjoy so we have done that and visitors have gone up. Maybe in the future if we do put on Picasso, people will come because they felt comfortable in the museum with a big dinosaur they might think; oh I can go and see that. I'm not saying they would, but it's trying to make them feel more comfortable in the buildings and maybe they will come to those things.

DG. And I think that is what would be really interesting, to try it. And I think how you would deliver that exhibition would be very different, so it would have Picasso in there, but we'd still be looking at ways to facilitate things outside or elsewhere

JH. Like art workshops for the kids where you can create your own Picasso. So it's the way you do things as well. And it's hard to remember because it's not in your own mind, but people are intimidated by museums because it's not in their cultural background. They've probably never been taken to museums when they were younger and I don't just mean ethnically cultural background, I mean social and economic backgrounds. So it's that thing of saying, if we offer them a bouncy castle they understand that and they will come in for that and get something else as well. We are saying we are not big and scary, it's not deadlines. It's breaking down what they perceive museums to be. We try to give them something more accessible and relevant.

DG. And I think we are at an interesting point now. As we have done all of this and visitors numbers have what doubled?

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JH. Yeah doubled

DG. But now we are this point how do we focus our activities. We are in an interesting period of how do we continue this, do we try and deliver some Picasso, how do we move forward?

JH. We got to make that decision of; is it quantity or quality. It has been about quantity in many senses, raising visitor figures, but we could do that by putting on a right load of naff really, but what's the point of us being a museum then? We could be anything. So do we start to consider say more arts summer schools or whatever it is we decide to do and focus on the quality that we deliver

DG. But for all the people we have reached there are still more who don't visit

JH. We have realised that 85% of Sandwell people don't use the museums. And we still get loads of people saying 'oh I didn't realise this was here'. Yet when we do something like our summer event, we leaflet every single school child in the district of Sandwell, that's 32,000 leaflets because if you just put them in libraries, you're still not reaching the people who don't go in libraries. So we put it in their hands and they take it home, we're in the paper and radio every day and we still get people who don't know we are here. So how do we reach these people?

DG. The thing is a lot of people want this kind of thing, they want a big free family event as they can't afford to do other things.

JH. Exactly but you got to consider that balance, and that you're not Alton Towers... and we don't want to be....and we are all so thinly spread, we have lots of ideas but no time to see them through.

DG. It's how we can continue this success with thinner resources and continue to build on this

JH. And coming back to what you're doing, it's about how we keep justifying our worth. Why should be keep spending money on museums and we really got to promote ourselves. There are people in the council who see museums as just what they were 25 years ago but that is not what we are about now. We do work with teenagers and disabled people and schools and we got to show that to the council and how we contribute to the local community.

(55.16)

JG. Coming back to the living history programme, was that something you were involved in developing?

JH. They have done some form of living history for over 20 years and it has kind of evolved over time and it is now quite formalised and a lot of it is tied in with the curriculum. When they started it they didn't have an educational officer in and so it's more formalised now. It's very hands on, we try to avoid worksheets, as the whole point of museums is to provide this very different learning environment where it's not about work sheets it's about experience and they come to do Victorians at Haywood and Tudors here. They dress up as Tudors and they become Tudors for the morning, they are treated like Tudors, they are told off if they are not naughty like Tudors. So it's done through costume and character and they learn so much in a couple of hours from doing it and being it. The sites, the sounds the smells it's very evocative and we do as little as we can of things they could do in a classroom and it's really popular

(57.11)

JG. What do you think are the benefits of the costume and the character aspects of it?

JH. Well they can immerse themselves in it they can really be part of it rather than just looking at it. They're stepping into it and that provides a, well in schools now a lot is about holistic learning, they do history topics like Tudors, but then they do like a day in the Tudor servants and they'll write stories or poems about it, they'll do art around it, geography, it's done in topic form and this is very good as a launch pad for further work. They can really step into, learn it by being it and not just questions and answers and it's that big experience, they will never forget it.

JG. Are the actors in first person?

JH. Yes they don't step out of character. There's a moment where they all step back in time, they are told about what they are going to be doing and then there's a moment where they step back in time and from then on its very rarely they will step out of character.

(58.48)

JG. What is the moment that they step back in time?

JH. They are given the background and told what they are going to be doing, they are introduced to the characters. Then it is like eyes closed and imagine you can hear nothing but cows and the people going about their business, and you can see heath lands, its setting the scene and then they open their eyes.

JG. As part of my research I am at how you can apply theatre design principles to communicate the museums value, so living history is always interesting to me as it's such a good example of a theatre method used in museums...

JH. Yes, it is different though, its live and its set within a story so there are key things they need to get out but it's not scripted because things happen that you have to react to. So although you got the basic storyline they are really knowledgeable and it is improvised as well. Its' sort of an improvised play

JG. Do you see it as a form of theatre?

JH. Pause Erm, you could see it like that, I have never seen it like that but I suppose you could see it like that

DG. Some places do though don't they call it TIE

JH. Museums do it differently, sometimes they will have people who are in character and the children aren't, so they do whatever they do at the children. But obviously our kids step into it as well and they stay in role, I think it is the best way of learning in this context. It really sparks the imagination; it just helps them to understand it so much more.

(1h.01.50)

(JH. Leaves)

(DG. Takes seat again.)

DG. I've brought a copy of our visitor survey, this isn't how I would have done it. It's far too long and far too broad in a way and we deliver it on an ad-hoc basis. So this is what we have inherited. But the idea is to find out why they have come, how they rate the displays and then another thing for us in regards to visitor experience is choice. Charter-mark is very hot on choice and offering visitor's choice so we ask them to rate, between 1-10 how much they want to see some of these things, for example costume guides. The very last question is to enable us to assist with National Indicator 5, which is about satisfaction with the local area. We have asked if you are a Sandwell resident does this museum contribute to improving your satisfaction with the local area? We just modify them for each site.

(1h. 04. 15)

JG. In regards the audience development plans, what stage are you at with that?

DG. I am right at the beginning, I need to put some time aside. But I need to be here and understand what we are doing, I've still got a lot to learn with that.

JG. What kind of timeframe are you looking at with that?

DG. Well the business plan says that I deliver it by the end of the year.

JG. Was it something requested of you, the audience development plan or was it something you decided to do?

DG. It's something that we have decided to do because of that whole scenario of being at a crossroads really in ways of not being able to sustain what we are doing indefinitely and questioning if it is the best way to be doing things and to be reaching the audiences we want to reach

JG. So what you are assessing is if what you are currently doing is the best way to be doing it?

DG. Basically, it's also in the context of marking the museum against national indicator 10, that is a driver for us.

JG. I ask as one thing I have very recently started working on is the consideration of using the value grouping system as an objective setting tool for things like audience development plans. Would you be interested in trying to work with this and seeing how it works?

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DG. Certainly. If it is something my boss would agree to though, as it needs to be delivered against the business plan. But certainly some of the ideas of how you group them and the terminology you are using and that is a good way of explaining to people who don't necessarily understand museum audiences. I would defiantly be interested in hearing more.

(1h. 06. 52)

JG. Well the basic starting point is that instead of just setting quantitative goals and then we will do it this, this and this way. It is to consider for each of the groupings 4 questions: what is our key value for this group? How are we currently doing this? How would we like it to be and then how do we achieve this? So rather than just setting out audience development thinking broadly- what do we need to do? You can use this system of four questions for each of the five groups, so it's just a set of twenty questions.

DG. It's defiantly an interesting concept. I am literally just at the very beginning and I'm not sure how it relates to other peoples experiences of doing it I'm certainly interested, though whether that would be my entire method, if I would be confident in doing it just that way, but it would be a good corner stone to deal with it.

(1h 09.04)

DG. The other issue for us is that we do have this quantitative pressure, the thing with councils is they increase targets and they don't really accept reduced targets or if they do they have to be extremely well justified. So we are in that really difficult position where targets have gone up this year and yet resources haven't gone up.

JG. Absolutely and I have come across this before and people say I can't negate the learning outcomes or the quantitative figures, but it's how we make these a part of the bigger value frame and not the primary focus. So it's been able to say, we need to reach X-thousand visitors, but then asking will this increase our social value- will they be from our local community?

DG. I think my only real issue is timetables and letting you down.

END OF DISCUSSION

**Follow up Interview with Mark Dennis
Curator at Library and Museum of Freemasonry
28th August 2009.**

JG. First of all there is just a few things that I wanted to follow up on from last time, and I might refer back to a few things we discussed previously before moving on to the stuff that I sent you. First of all, you were acquiring for a further space downstairs, have you got that space?

MD. No,

JG. Is that a no, you're not getting it or no you have not heard yet?

MD. They haven't worked it out yet. When you see the summer exhibition you will see how we are starting to use spaces that are more flexible. That has the partitions in it and it is more like a gallery.

JG. You said the summer exhibition is going down very well this year.

MD. Yes

JG. Have you any idea as to what accredits the success of that?

MD. We have done a visitor survey, its seems that the bulk of people are coming in of the street. There is some penetration particularly in French tourism magazines, leaflet doesn't seem to have done much. Most of it is passing trade, people feeling empowered to come in by that sign. Not that we don't have a sign out there three hundred and sixty-odd days a year, but something has worked on this one.

JG. So it is the marketing that appeals?

MD. Looks like it

JG. Have you had any feedback on the exhibition itself?

MD. Yes almost all universally positive. Which is nice but not necessarily terribly valid. We've got the comments book downstairs which is giving us a certain amount of qualitative and also we have done a visitor survey with qualitative amounts.

JG. And what kind of feedback have you been looking for?

MD. Design feedback primarily. Is it communicating effectively? Is it giving the visitor a good experience? Is it encouraging them to return?

JG. And what kind of responses have you been getting from that?

MD. General positive. I can probably produce you one or two sound bites out of the visitor survey. Again we are going to do a second round of it. We did one at height of tourist season, we'll do one the week before it ends and see if there is any shift as also now we are getting to the Masonic season. High season its tourists/ visitors, there aren't many masons around. At the end I will be curious to see if they are also interested in going to see it and if their experience is any different.

JG. When you say sound-bites have you done some audio recordings with visitors?

MD. Purely off the written. There are issues about recording people and that's something I don't think we want to go down the way off.

(02.52)

JG. One thing that I need to check from last time was the name of the architects that you worked with?

MD. Adonkshit and Flannery. They were the guys that did the original design and they were the ones that did that feature bridge and the idea of covering up those coat hangers. Subsequently its all been done in house, the way that everything else has been done, padding it over the last 6-7 years we have concocted ourselves...I've never been able to figure how to knock down that bridge!

JG. So you are kind of stuck with it?

MD. Yes to some extent but it's there and alters the shape of the room which is nice but we don't mess with it as we're not sure how he built it. We did stop him from using hessian. The original idea was that the walls were going to be covered in Hessian.

JG. Was that something specific to the exhibition going in at the time?

MD. Yeah, to give it a texture. But we had to go- no.

JG. Yeah it's not the best material to work with is Hessian.

MD. Impossible, we couldn't have got it back off again and practicality you got to be flexible and you got to be able to make good and get the room back to normal.

(04.35)

JG. Before we go down and have a look at the exhibition I wonder if you could tell me a little more about the process. I think the last time I spoke to you, you had just got the theme.

MD. We had got the theme but we hadn't got as far as analysing how we were going to do it. The underlying theme was to look at it from the English Masonic perspective, so there is actually more about England down there than France in a way. It's the affect that the revolution had on Freemasonry. The exhibition is in two halves, there is an element to it in the library but essentially we had to contextualize society at the time of the French Revolution contrast British fraternity with French. Then look at the unlawful society act, which then categorizes all the conspiracy theories that the Masons have to deal with now. They all started then, basically that's when they get blamed for starting the revolution. They say it wasn't us, it was the illuminati and then there is the second conspiracy and it rockets off. That is the underlying theme of the exhibition. When we redisplay it after it shuts it's that about the conspiracy theory that will go on permanent display. The second side to it was catalysed by the grand masters thrones being restored, so that was the second side looking at Grand Lodge and doing essentially a decorative arts approach, having portraits of the royal brothers with the thrones. But that also was to create mood, you go in and it's got a very very rich, gilded bright blue walls and there's this feeling, hopefully, that we are creating of opulence. Then within that we are looking at the other side of things which is the impact of the revolution and war so you got items relating to Freemasons in the services and prisoner of war camps, the flip side of the revolution.

(06.47)

JG. So you have a few different atmospheres at the same time?

MD. (agrees)

JG. And you say you have created this mood or feeling of opulence, how have you emphasized that other than just the thrones themselves?

MD. Wall colour, we got a very very bright electric blue wall, which works very well with the gilding we were slightly strung as we were going to do an installation on the back wall. Unfortunately the room behind it has been hired out we have simply had to put fire retardant flags up, couldn't do what we wanted to do.

JG. What was the plan with the installation?

MD. It was going to be Kappa Made with the French and British flags but also then contextualized with other images of the revolution but that would have blocked the back wall, so unfortunately couldn't do that. They joys of working in a building who's main reason isn't museums. In terms of the actual design, Di (the director) and I did most of the words, relatively straight forward six bays each of which has an interpretation panel, which is relatively short and contextualizes the bay content. Then within that it essentially runs on captions, there is still too many words, if we are going by modern museum theory that's something of an in-house style, somewhat led by the director. I keep gradually pairing the words back to the point it would look like the standard way of doing it.

JG. So in regards to having this one atmosphere of opulence and the bright blue walls and thrones then you talk about the flip side with the prisoners of war.

MD. I've tried to make it coherent, we haven't altered the wall colours. Some of the objects are very glittery and others are very personal and I'm hoping that is something people will pick up. Certainly with things like the scrimshaw decorated stuff from the counts. People do seem to be picking them up and be getting very interested in it.

JG. Do you not think the atmosphere could overemphasize the objects from the flipside from the war.

MD. Could do, on the other hand the options continued. Fact, there wasn't any deprivation in this country relating to the war, George the IV kept going and it didn't have a vast impact, other than people stopped drinking French wine. Again it's the other consideration, the period of the French revolution that late 18th century period is the high point of Masonic material culture, if you are going for the classical high quality stuff. Go into the 19th century and there's a lot made but the quality diminishes, so if you want to show the high point its pivots around that.

(10.15)

JG. One thing that you spoke about last time was that you like to make your exhibitions visually comprehensible before you get down to the words. Is this something you tried to reflect in this exhibition?

MD. Yes and again I think you go in, you see the thrones and the flags and you start to realise what it's about, we've used one object catalysed- the Doyle cup, it's an ornamental tankard. It's the first thing you see and Doyle spans the whole period so if you look as it spins there's a crocodile for the campaign on the Nile, you've got a battle in the American revolution on it, you've got the Prince of Wales feathers, the Masonic imagery and those are all elements that pull out what else is in the exhibition. Doyle served as a soldier throughout the war and he was a senior Mason throughout the war and some respects whatever happens in this exhibition he is around it somewhere. So that's what we have used to contextualize it.

JG. And are there any other methods you have used to make the whole of the exhibition visually comprehensible?

MD. No, we tried to create an atmosphere.

JG. And this time you felt the atmosphere should be opulence...

MD. Yes its glitter, it's bright. Again there is always the consideration with the summer shows that people have to go right to the back of the building. So if they get to the door and look in and don't feel they want to come in then we got an issue. Some years we have made it dark and we have got the atmosphere right but you see people stopping at the door, thinking is this it-yes? You got to say come in. Using the thrones in the middle, they don't go straight to the first panel, they go straight to the throne then they are meted-and-greeted and given their guide and if you want to you can go round chronologically but if you would rather you can just wonder, help yourself.

(12.05)

JG. So the ordering for it is chronological?

MD. Pretty much. There is a narrative thread but each bay stands on its own, if you do it in completely the wrong order it doesn't completely break down. Because you got one bay service, one bay prisoners, one bay conspiracy, one bay unlawful societies act, French freemasonry and English fraternity. So if you simply cannoned around it you would pick it up.

JG. So what is the narrative underlying?

MD. Its narrative of the war and of English freemasonry in the war...

JG. So does it work as a narrative storyline or just a chronological ordering of the story?

MD. You can't just put them together and read them as a continuing narrative. But each bay gives you an aspect of it and the story is moving forward, so its pre-revolution, the revolution begins and affects French freemasonry, the reaction at home, freemasons at war, the reality of freemasons being captured, the legacy. So if you read them in sequence you do see the progression but as always we make sure the bays stand alone as people don't necessarily go around in the order you want them to. Although there is an argument that they should and I went to a conference about getting design students particularly, involved in museums and there was a very strong view of that; that you do need to provide a potential route. People can decide they are not going to use it but you need to guide and say this is how we think you might do it and how it was designed to do it but you don't have to.

(14.52)

JG. Was this a recent discussion?

MD. It seems to be pretty much coming through. At this conference it came up from a number of different speakers and it is based on research, I'll have to see if I can get the citation for this, the old argument in museums: do you allow people to make their own minds up and be completely free? And that has had currency for quite some time, and it doesn't work. If you are a sort of post-modernist, that all views are valid and people make up their own meanings, whoop doo, but they don't.

JG. So you think perhaps some people need directing?

MD. I think all people need directing without exception, how they react to that direction will depend. Some people will say I know what you want me to do, I'm not going to do it. But if you don't provide structure in a collection where people have no key points... (pause) For the sake of argument we're in this room, where are you going to look first? Where is the significance even if I caption it all up. Whereas I might say, well we will go to Washington First (painting on the wall) he is wearing regalia, he is a free mason, everybody else is also a freemason but they are not wearing regalia.

(16.10)

JG. So to what extent do you think people need directing? Do you think they just need directing to receive the right information?

MD. They need a structure, because if they don't have a structure they have nothing to react to.

JG. And when you say structure how do you mean that?

MD. Ideally as you walk through a gallery space the curatorial intention ought to be at least visible, that there is some obvious way, that if I go into a room where do I go first. Is there a meaning to any of this? Is this cumulative? Or am I allowed to just hang around with lots of interesting things and I might just pick up on something or other.

JG. So it's about ordering and structuring, direction of how they take in the objects in the space?

MD. Yes, again this is something that the Imperial War Museum is about to redisplay the World War 1 exhibits, I know one of the people involved. The point is people no longer understand that war. 20-25 years ago they were a given, they knew where it came from people had relatives in it. Now they have to start from basics, it's become history and if you just put people in they won't have a clue.

JG. So you think the direction people require is just to get the correct information and an order to get that information in?

MD. To get them to a point where they can start to make value judgments. When they start to think, consciously or subconsciously, then you've won. That's my success criteria, when you start getting back something from the audience.

(18.09)

JG. Do you think that knowledge and understanding is key to making value judgments in museums?

MD. Some comprehension yes, a lot of these other things the emotional values can cause somebody to have a good museum experience. But that puts museums on the same plane as all other forms of entertainment and day to day experience. Which on one level would mean all it needs to justify museums is that people are happy, and they go in and say it's pretty and go out again and that's valid to one point. But it doesn't really justify museums as such. Museums can and should catalyse thought and discussion, which can again go into your values, get the conversation going between generations, between members of a party, get people thinking. If they don't react then it is debatable if the museum is succeeding or if the museum is necessary.

JG. So you think for a successful museum experience, a successful museum visit there must be that first level of understanding before they can make real value judgments of the rest of the experience?

MD. yes.

(19.12)

JG. Do you think that is something visitors feel as well, that they feel they should have that level of understanding that they should have learnt something? Or had some kind of intellectual value before they can have other values?

MD. In any museum of the sort that we have got I think the answer is yes. If they come in saying huh and they go out feeling the same way, then there is the feeling that they weren't communicated with, that they have been slightly short changed. That it has been oh that was nice, but I don't know any more about freemasonry than when I came in.

JG. And when you say the sort we have, what sort do you mean?

MD. Specialist subject. Or I think it could extend to art museums, anything where it doesn't key into immediate guaranteed day to day life: eating, washing, wearing clothes at its basic level. A social history museum then still has that problem, that if you are doing the Victorian kitchen, which everybody does, the experience of the audience is getting further and further away from any form of comprehension of that. They don't understand the technology they have never seen it, they don't understand the structure particularly getting to younger children now, they've never seen a tea leaf, they think tea comes as granules. There is no connection and this is where I think direction becomes ever more important because you cannot presuppose that they are capable of making meaning for themselves at all. They will see things and they will see it in light of their modern experience and go off on whacky tangents or just not really get it.

(20.52)

JG. Do you think it is about the integrity of museums? That yes a child may visit a Victorian kitchen and they may just have emotional value and they have a good time and there is interpersonal value as they got to spend time with their mum and dad and so that child will value that as worthy of their effort of visiting. But it is at the integrity of the museum that they should learn something?

MD. We have all got an experience we remember from childhood that causes us to want to go to that sort of institution again and that I think applies to museum visitors of any age. That if you enjoyed going there and you felt about it you will go back. For some children there is possibly no more than that, some children will inevitably no more than that. Some children will want more and they will go looking for it, some children just won't. But if they do go out knowing a little bit more than when they came in then one of the critical things of museums has been missed. You should be aiming always that the person coming out has more than when they went in. Then it's a question of how you measure it and then you question other things, if they have had social interaction with the family that is valuable but it's not unique to museums. That is my underlying point, there are all sorts of things museums can do that other venues can do, and museums should. Very often they go the other way and don't do that. But if they don't do the thing that only museums can do, then... Say museums over themed attractions, themed attractions are very directional. There is an absolute product and it is totally standardized, museums by their nature of having things that can be interacted with are actually more flexible than that. At the same time they fight the notion that if there is a stimulus, one of the negative comments we have 'there was no audio-visual'. Absolutely true, but there is an awful lot of things. Is audio-visual always a good idea? Does it add, not necessarily.

(23.15)

JG. So you think for visitors, from their point of view, they may see that there is enough worth in just emotional or social or interpersonal value, but it is the museums aim that there must be intellectual value?

MD. It depends how you define intellectual.

JG. Intellectual being any level of comprehension.

MD. Yes, if we are talking all levels of comprehension then yes. After they come out some light bulb should have gone on in their head somewhere, consciously or unconsciously, if the museum has succeeded It might be that they walk down the street and they just happen to glance up and think

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'that's a bit like what I just saw in that building' because if they wonder down here, say they look at the freemasons arms and they say 'oh, the masons use that' and that's a bit of a town-scape contextualized. So it's about that sort of level, it's not formal learning. You're not expecting someone to come out and be able to write an essay on it, but cumulatively it should add to their ability to contextualize what they see around them and to some extent in the modern world, we are getting an audience that has had only the national curriculum. There are massive gaps in that.

JG. Would you say it is fair to say that essentially, that if they have learnt something they have succeeded....

MD. No if they have learnt something we have succeeded. Their success criteria might be very different. Have we managed with the majority of our visitors to achieve what a museum can and should achieve, that is distinct for museums and I think particularly in the current climate that is critical.

(25.04)

JG. And what do you think it is that museums can and should achieve?

MD. Filling in the gaps that education leaves.

JG. Do you mean national curriculum education?

MD. Yes. Not just my museum, people are very short on scientific education, the national curriculum cherry picks history and doesn't build linkages into it. The whole of the 1700s is missing, the birth of empire, the wars of empire, the enlightenment, the birth of science, gone, it doesn't exist. Victorian education, Victorian cooking that side of things, people say it's in the curriculum so why is it when we do our visitor surveys we discover that nobody and I mean nobody understands the reality of Victorian life. The lack of support services, the lack of sick pay, destitution and the work house, it's gone. Victorians is in the curriculum but it's not been communicated. So in the social interaction in the visit there is the possibility of starting waking people up and filling in the gaps that hopefully they will reach critical mass and start to understand the way the world is now and the way there life is now is not the way it always was and always will be, which also has potential impact in terms of cross-cultural understanding.

(26.55)

JG. All of what you have discussed there of what visitors can and should achieve is all intellectual and it's about learning. Do you think there is anything else that museums can and should achieve?

MD. I think you are splitting two things. We are looking at what museums can do that other institutions can't and I think you are drawing out one element to the detriment of my argument. If we remove learning from museums, they can still have an ace cafe, they can still make people feel happy like they are in a shopping centre they can still make them say gee-whizz like they would in a theme park. Museums can do all of these things, it doesn't justify the existence of museums.

JG. That is interesting that you say it doesn't justify the existence.

MD. No things can be done other ways. You could half the national debt if you sold all the paintings in the national gallery, why do we bother keeping them, why don't we just see them on screen? Where is the added value of being to stand in front of actual paintings. Millions of pounds spent on paintings, divide that between every museum in the country. £5000 to a small museum, that's a lot of money, so where's the added value for the real things being there? People physically having to come into a building to see them, that's the crux of it, the thing that you can only do by walking through that door.

JG. So you think that it doesn't negate that they can't achieve the other values

MD. No far from it

JG. And not that they shouldn't be achieving other values?

MD. No the question is should they be pushed into achieving them before the other thing. There is a lot of work been done about what museums can do, if I have a concern, it's a slight niggling thought that is this work been done as the perception is that the unique things that museums do is insufficient? Because all of this yes, it adds value to what we do, it means there are different outcomes for the visitor all of which are valid and all of which are potentially beneficial. And generally happy fluffy world

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wouldn't it be fantastic, yes, shouldn't we do all these things and be all things to all people and give everybody this wide float of what they might get from the museum. But there are other people who might be able to do those better. Because that is what they actually want to do and I think that's trying to create a broad response to a visit, regardless to where you are visiting is turning all things into the same things.

JG. All other attractions you mean, into the same thing?

MD. Its certain with some theme parks, there's slight pressing that you will know more than when you went in, which is our patch. It's not just a circus actually you will find out a bit more. Looking at the Imperial War Museums, the posters for its World War I experience: 'there's a stench in the trench' it says with a cartoon rat.

JG. Similar perhaps with the London dungeons?

MD. Yes, with the London Dungeon you are not just coming to see blood and severed limbs, you do want to find things out.

JG. Well originally the Dungeons attractions were museums, there were no guides...

MD. Nope and very often there is a top dressing; there is a castle out in Carinthia that I visited. It's got a torture museum, of course it has, and it's endorsed by UNESCO and it's got a little couple of posters saying how horrible modern torture is but it's an entertainment. I think you can blur that line.

JG. The line between education and entertainment?

MD. Education, edutainment! I hate that word. I think it is the reason why things like Wigan Pier are now falling over, they are too plastic and they can't compete. Real entertainment venues have got far bigger budgets, on-line can do better than any interactive can do in a museum, you can do it all at home now. It's coming back down now in museums to the things that only museums can do, we've got the real stuff. You can walk around it, it is actually there and in an increasing virtual world the reality of what you can't buy in the local shops, you can't see in the theme park that might actually teach you something. You could put that in a theme park (points at ornate chairs we are sitting on). If you actually start looking at that, you think somebody actually took a lump of wood and did that and did it again and did it again and sat there consistently producing the same pattern, with slight variations.

(31.52)

JG. So to answer your own question, you said should they, should museums be pushed into achieving other values? And you think perhaps that it's not they shouldn't be but they should first address that primary value of intellectual before they start to achieve the other values.

MD. That's at the core of it.

JG. That should be at the core of what all museums do?

MD. Yes in the same way as behind the scenes we should be researching. It is very telling, were doing the accreditation form at the moment.

JG. The MLA accreditation?

MD. Yes, and we got to the bit about doing research and doing conferences and doing the intellectual stuff and it said only national museums need complete this section. There is now a presumption from MLA that if you are a borough museum, a local authority museum you will carry out no research on your collections, you are just a delivery agent. Whereas here we are very firm on it, all of the permanent staff are expected to research, it's meant to then generate an exhibition or an event or add value to what we do, we are expected to continually learn and understand our collections. Without that you do end up with what borough museums have, cracking education programmes, nice displays, but the collections keep coming in and they are not understood. The underpinning is becoming more and more hollow which is lethal as sooner or later there will only be the theme park and a big room full of stuff at the back. Which is potentially very dangerous, it will take years to work back on that. And people do have an expectation that if they talk to a museum person that what the museum person knows is terrifying. Someone came up to me, just after I got this job and said 'Mark now that you are museum person can

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you tell me what the buttons on the 95th riffles were?' That's not my museum, but you got the curator tag, your expected to know and increasingly curators don't know.

(33.55)

JG. To what extent do you think visitors feel there should be this intellectual primary, first and that's what they seek from museums?

MD. They are expecting it to be here.

JG. Do you think that is all visitors expect to be here?

MD. They think that is what museums are for, which is again interesting as there are all these other potential values, why do people visit museums? That's a big question, the research is ongoing. Should people visit museums purely for entertainment, purely for a social space? That's where the crux.

(34.39)

JG. What about in regards to the argument of non-visitors and people who don't visit because they feel it is just about learning and intellectual and they would need these other kinds of value.

MD. There is an obsession with non-visitors. It's an unhealthy obsession with non-visitors. People fail to go to football matches, people fail to go to classical concerts, people fail to do all sorts of things, and there is in every sphere of public life an obsession with making all people do all things. As opposed to making things, all things available to all people. And I go back to my basic argument that if you make the thing friendly and happy and they go in for something other than intellectual, fine you've got them in. If they go out without the intellectual there was no point in having them in. It is failure because I've never encountered anybody in a non-visitor situation who is incapable of interacting on an intellectual level. I've got experience of volunteer work in a fortress down in Kent, people with severe learning difficulties and personality difficulties who grow when they are exposed to things that are, quote 'intellectual'. And people who would never used a library before, you know if they are doing primary research, they wouldn't consider that to be intellectual but they are using the library and going on the web, that's the value of doing it. If they just entertain themselves fine, but it's when they start producing material for themselves rather than just saying, OK do that, they start to become empowered.

JG. Do you think there could be a risk if museums make themselves too accessible, that if they remove that intellectual at the expense of just attracting people on entertainment or just the ability to have interpersonal time, then they could lose their purpose?

MD. Defiantly. They might survive, they might provide a very important social function, but the memory of civilization will get Alzheimer's. Because that's the thing, we keep collecting but there is no point in collecting if you don't use what you have collected and build on it and start to understand the world we live in. It's science, scientist are always trying to work out what makes things tick and to some extent museums, far more than academics who are out there, but we are finding and buying the things that people make and use and have around them and people say things very quietly with their objects that they never say. You interview somebody and they are never going to open up, go to their house and sit in their sitting room and you will know the person far more than what they tell you.

(38.20)

JG. Do you think that this demand for visitor numbers are from external pressures, particularly in government funded museums?

MD. Yes put simply. Numbers and demographic, funding depends on meeting governmental objectives and they always will. So we attend to the current government objectives, might be a new government soon, wonder what happens next. But by only responding to external pressure and funding pressure you link yourself to the current agenda and like the civil service you have to spin on a penny when that changes. By having internally driven, within the organization an internally driven set of objectives. It's got to be sustainable if you want to get external cash you have to do that but you need to decide what you are actually for and stick to that. There is a real risk that if your only reason for doing things is to

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survive you will do anything that anybody wants if they will give you cash and at the end of that there is nothing left.

JG. Do you feel that small borough museums are forced into that position now?

MD. Completely. They have to do what they have to do and not all boroughs have any interest in history, that's the real crunch. I mean I come from Medway there are major challenges in the things happening in Medway, the museum is fixed there is no museum as Gillingham council sold its museum. The boroughs need to see output and output is primarily through the national curriculum, through the inclusivity agenda.

(40.26)

JG. Very interesting.

MD. This is why I like working in this museum, I think I would probably implode if I went in to a borough museum.

JG. You have quite a lot of luxury here in that you have funding from non-government sources.

MD. Oh yes and if that ever falls over so does the museum in seconds flat. But it gives us a freedom to look from a different perspective. We are able to indulge some of this and not be totally driven by the agenda. We do it, any standards that MLA set up we will meet. Any opportunities we have out there we will use as a lot of what is coming in is good. But we are able to keep the intellectual side of it running in parallel and exploring the subject matter. Because if we don't understand it the public's got no chance and if they don't understand it- what's the value?

(41.23)

JG. When I was reading back over the last interview notes, one of the things you said was 'they go to feel they have had value to feel they have engaged with something and that they have experienced something worthwhile that doesn't necessarily have to be what they came into find'. Which is brilliant for me as it is such a nice summary of what I am trying to explain with the value groupings and the framework.

MD. Yes so through the door but then something happens.

JG. Yes for people to warrant their input, they must have had some kind of value from it. So if we move onto the groupings and framework that I sent to you is there any initial responses or feedback that you had?

MD. I think it's clear and I think it works. You have got your diagram of visitor - stimulus - response. Now the next question is, is there a hierarchy of response, does one response lead on to another response? As a museum person I think that is where I would start to get more interested in this. Yes there are these values, does physical comfort perhaps lead you then to feel more comfortable to be able to engage emotionally? And does that then cause social interaction? There is a lot of ways those 5 can interplay that might be sequential, they might block together and that might depend on the group. Again you are saying 'it is accepted that certain categories of visitors or collective groups will have shared values, for example family groups are more likely to seek interpersonal value'. Which is substantially true but not always. In this museum you will see the mason bringing his family to show them his space, now that doesn't always follow that's interaction. Very often you see the glazed faces on the children.

JG. Yes absolutely. But it says generally you get families...

MD. Yeah families go in and start talking to each other; that is the established view of research. Seeing family groups it doesn't always work that way, very often you see children do what they do. That presumes that the family group is a unit, your assuming the nuclear family to some extent, that there is some communication going on anyway and that is not always so. With some families, they are in here, OK kids go do what you do and mum sits down it's a comfortable space and the kids are relatively safe. So I think that is family group is a family as we probably understand it. I accept that with school groups it is completely targeted, inevitably there might be some sort of collateral interest if they see something

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they like it is all focused on what the teachers brought them out to. Encountering and assessing subconsciously you are absolutely right and one of the big issues in this is to what extent are any of these values expressed consciously or unconsciously. Then how you measure them, that are when it gets really interesting.

(44.53)

JG. One thing I have come across with my research is that's what people want to know, they are interested, they say that's great, but how would I measure if I am attaining or not these values?

MD. Its proof and that is again the great obsession of the government of the last decade is measurable proof. Anecdotal evidence up to a point but funders really want to know in a much more concrete way and it's interesting to see the way you're starting to work towards that with this. Because it is inherently very difficult to measure a lot of these elements and even something like intellectual value depends where you are starting. Somebody who is not that intellectual and has nil knowledge but comes out with something that might count as 5000% but a professor comes in and internalized your entire caption set that might me fairly insignificant in terms of progression. So again it's the old problem of where is the person on all these levels before they come in and I think you've identified that, they are reacting depending on external stimulus from society and their own experience and that's a pretty complex base to do any sort of assessment from.

(46.29)

MD. (reading framework)

JG. Let you have second to review.

MD. I mean to some extent we are using what you are suggesting. Can people identify values, we do use a lot of feedback. As we are lucky we do get to interact with the public a bit, we are a small team, if somebody has a question, chances are somebody pokes there nose around my door and I get to interact with the visitors which is a luxury. Again we have the guided tours and they feed back any comments that are made and over the course of a tour people loosen up, they start to have conversation. Very often guides bring them back into the museum and talk them around a couple of cases. So by that stage it's a true conversation and you're starting to get more balanced feedback, that people are no longer desperate to please and they are starting to admit what they don't know.

(47.37)

MD. I mean your sequence works. At that level: do they see it, why are aren't we, do we actually want it and what do we do next. But there isn't yet that next sort of toolkit element, your posing the questions but where do we go to the next point and say let's pick one of our values and track it through a research project with our visitors. Now how do we do that and come out with something that is useful? And what is useful? Because from my point of view, the basic information I don't need to necessarily prove it, I feel we got something here that I can use to tweak my displays to alter things but that's a different level of proof to going to a funder and saying based on what we found out, here it is. We are back in qualitative which is always more tricky to.

JG. In regards to the five value groupings: emotional, interpersonal, intellectual, social and physical, do you think they fairly summarise what visitors seek from museum experiences and what museums aim to put across?

MD. I think as a basic set of fairly clear values they work. I think that division works well.

(49.15)

JG. Is there any that you feel, other than perhaps intellectual, which are more or less dominant, perhaps less important to visitors?

MD. Intellectual is important, emotional is important because emotion is a precursor to other things. If you are wondering around getting no emotional input from the display then the chances are things won't catalyse.

JG. What kind of emotional value is important do you think?

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MD. You need to connect with what you are saying and it can be any sort of connection: 'crumbs that reminds me of my dead farther' say we had one of those and that catalysis an emotional reaction relating to a previous relationship. It might just be 'crumbs people can make that and isn't it beautiful' which then catalyses and increase in actual observation. It is very possible to walk past and hell I do it every morning, I've got thirty thousand objects it's easy to wonder pass the blur of glass and silver. But if you just stop and focus on something, then even I look at three of four more things in that case that morning because you have focused on it. So I think emotional value absolutely critical it is possible to go in totally academically and just say I want to see the apron that my grandfather wore, I've seen it thank you. But I think for me emotion is the critical thing, as emotion will then drive the others.

(51.00)

JG. Do you think museums should encourage that emotional value or do you think it is something that will inherently happen depending on the objects?

MD. It can happen depending on the objects, if you start trying to drive it then you have a symmetrical risk which is you really are manipulating people. Which for a theme park that is not a problem, you deliberately manipulate people if you have got a product to push. The other problem with emotional value is that you then have to be able to deal with the emotions and if you push somebody to the point where somebody breaks out in the group. It's the old cliché of the baby clothes in the handling box and the woman who has had a miscarriages and hasn't had a child and suddenly its, whaaa. Where do you go from there? So that's where the danger of the power of emotion is. Have you got the support? Interpersonal again, I think it's critical but difficult, here we can do it, we have guided tours you can interact with the people of the museum as well as with each other and that is powerful as we say if you got a question just ask us, don't bother writing in, just ask. That adds immense amount of value to the visitor experience. Although previous research way back, somebody did a research project and they criticized as the guides seemed to have a certain amount of pride: you're lucky to be in here this is an amazing place. Now interesting, I can see what they meant and yet that could also be seen as the equivalent as being invited into a home. Now your neighbour that you've never spoken to says come in and have a cup of tea and starts to open up that's the way to build a relationship, it almost make the place not an institution but a series of people who work. Hopefully I bounce out of this place looking like I enjoy working here it's a different way of reacting. A lot of museums don't have that luxury they are too big, they are too busy it just isn't physically that way as the curators are out back somewhere. Physical value, my feeling is that physical value is very often very subconscious. Very occasionally people bump there leg on a piece of furniture and think that's damn stupid or I really couldn't find the lavatories but a lot of the time it's just do you feel uneasy. Human beings are animals, if physically you are feeling uneasy it will communicate and you won't quite really know why. Somebody drilling in the basement and a bit of ultrasound comes up you're going to freak, it's too cold, it's too hot, that's. I'm not sure how it affects the displays themselves, its physical accessibility but that's a function of the basic design.

(54.10)

JG. It is and the value groupings were of the entire experience. My research which is focusing on design, has kind of had to accept that physical value is the one that it almost an expected thing, that visitors are comfortable and you can find your way around and it's not really something I can emphasise or encourage using design it's just something visitors expect to be there.

MD. Although again the placing of chairs, you can manipulate people with that, where you put the chairs. Granny sits down there and kids are talking to granny and actually granny is looking right at the objects you want her to see. So there are games you can play with that. Social value it is critical, you do want to maximize the range of people that come in you want to maximize your numbers. In a funding sense you want to show that you are providing a benefit otherwise bang goes your budget. If you can't

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show that there is some point to you and explaining that history has a value is tricky as an awful lot of people consciously don't get it.

JG. For some museums, local history museums and borough museums the social value is the key value.

MD. That is what they are there for and they are supporting other things they are pushing, like with the Calvin Grove the anti-knife initiative. The danger is that is difficult, I mean Kelvin Grove particularly there is some bits of the displays that it is quite clear that information is only there to be a public information film, it has no other separate reason for its existence and it possibly contradicts the historical background of the artefacts themselves. That's separate issue, but in design you couldn't now probably do a social history on children's play in the 1970s showing everybody wearing tin hats and going bang bang your dead with cap guns, you would get armed response teams now. Social value very important, very potential dangerous if driven by that you end up distorting.

(56.36)

JG. Which of these values do you feel; as I know you are responsible for the design. Which of these do you think you would be able to communicate or emphasise using design?

MD. I think if I were going to do one I would probably link emotional and interpersonal. Because the underlying existence of this organization with the story we are telling, it's a sociable organization, so I would want to bring that out. Bring out the multi-ethnic membership, bringing out the charitable, tying that together to provoke a reaction about the organization hopefully both ways because then if you feed in the two reactions, some of the reactions are very negative and get the two to go crunch and then from that people are able to interact with the staff and the events and programmes and say OK now we got a debate going.

JG. So these are the ones you might like to actually emphasise?

MD. Yes

JG. Do you feel you could emphasise them using the design of your space.

MD. Given a flexible space yes, the difficulty with our museum as you see upstairs it is very very inflexible, the cases are listed and I'm stuck with glass jewel boxes. A lot of things that I do in terms of having objects out to be touched and terms of having some audio-visual out as the static object can't. I would like to have a series of Masons that you can actually get a short conversation of masons talking about their freemasonry would be very powerful. Difficult to do in there, sensitive within the organization. Potentially but with design you could and you could juxtapose that with particular artefacts.

(59.17)

JG. What do you think the power of juxtaposition is?

MD. Your using different, multiple stimuli. In a case ideally you mix the written with the visual with the three-dimensional and if you can then put the person back in there as well, on whatever level, be it the maker of the object, the user of the object ten that gives something for the person to interact even if it's just a quote.

JG. So do you think a personal narrative or story is more powerful than having a generic interpretation?

MD. Yes, the feeling of a conversation, the feeling of the family the feeling of a low level interaction then look at the bigger picture.

(1.00.14)

JG. Do you think these personal narratives lead to stronger emotional value?

MD. They can tend to. Getting to an emotional reaction to an object is erratic, some people can look at something and be totally unmoved others will, if you are bringing the personal back into it. It is also on a design base, building up knowledge of that collection as you are getting non-curatorial voices speaking, Which is essential as I'm not a freemason, I don't use these objects, I curate them. So you need those

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voices in the museum, I can get just so far, is my voice valid? To an extent yes it is, but it isn't the voice of the user and it's a living organization. This is where sometimes it struggles, its looks like this organization packed up and died in 1914, it didn't, and it's very much alive it just looks traditional. It's like trying to curate the pharaohs. But we have them around us, so design wise that is something I would like to bring in and it is something we are starting to try to bring in but it does rely on individual members being capable of being approached, able to tell their story.

(1.01.30)

JG. So you think design can be used to enhance the intellectual as well then?

MD. Yes, if you are getting to that stage of the personal story and getting some emotional value. If you get the person standing in front of that case and saying now what, what next, where did it go what happened? Then you have got the curiosity that will cause them to learn. And not learn in the national curriculum sense of dates or empathies, but just; 'I didn't know that when I came in'. On that purest level of 'I've come out knowing something I didn't when I went in' and that could be anything, even just empathy with the person. With the Changi prisons, I didn't know the Japanese interned people, a lot of that the collateral stuff I didn't know that you didn't get sick pay, its extra stuff. Which then hopefully will feed into other places that they go.

JG. Just looking at some of the methods that have been used to emphasise certain values. I'm wondering if you have used any of these or have any experience/ opinion of them. So first of all; museum theatre?

MD. It's not something we have really used here, but I think it works because if its good quality it works, as by their nature performers are there to engage and to catalyse reaction. Again because it is so structured, say distinct to an interpreter who will use their knowledge base to react individually, it's programmed it's as structured as a display case and it will have its intended outputs. So it should work it should be very powerful but it will only do what it has been told to do and that would be my only concern about it. It won't react to the visitor reaction; it will alter and push its own.

(1.03.48)

JG. What's about with less structured methods then such as costume address or third person.

MD. Third person; that I have got a fair amount of experience of. I think in terms of interpretation strategies for live interpretations it still remains probably the better one.

JG. Better than first person you think?

MD. Rigid first person is horrid as it can't cope with a great number of visitors. Flexible first person where if a group of visitors is willing to get into the game of interacting in first person they do it but the person is permitted to stand to one side and provide actual information. First person, particularly if the interpreter has got some mistakes in there, that's factually in accurate and if they can't come out of character they are stuck. If they are not actually allowed to say, 200 years ago I didn't have a flash toilette but it's over there, it's that flexibility all the way down that is my concern in some of these other techniques. If they are applied rigidly they can turn off as many people as they engage. Theatre has the advantage that people in a sense buy in, there is a museum theatre experience about to happen, they make a conscious choice to go and see it, unlike having to go around Dover castle and having to avoid Richard II or whoever is there and who will bound in front of you without the option. Again with museum theatre there's also the question of the skill set of the people who are doing it. If you are working with a company that is not only good at doing acting, good at doing the delivery but has some comprehension of what you are about, and a lot of companies now do, then it's fantastic they can interact with the curator and feedback and say this doesn't seem to be working.

(1.05.55)

JG. So museum theatre must have the same shared aims as the museum itself and must understand the aims.

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MD. Yes unless of course it's using the museum space for another purpose and there is no reason you couldn't have a theatre company come in for a totally different purpose and use the museum space, but that's slightly different. It's got to be online with what the museum wants to achieve because the company is there to serve the audience and serve the museum, it gets its pay-cheque at the end of the day but it's not there to push what it wants to do. Other than of course, as with designers if you are too prescriptive about what you are going to get at the end there is no point in having professionals. I want this output, and you might get something like Cirque du Soleil, your eyes go like saucers but they know what they are doing, let's see if it works. The same with design, you don't tell a designer how to do it they are a designer, you tell them the outputs, sit on your hands and then try it and see if it works with a certain amount of mild cynicism in the background.

(1.07.03)

JG. So you think it is important to be sharing outputs and aims with designers?

MD. Yes, they have to realise what you actually want and you can't just let them cut loose as they will have their own house style and they will have certain things they will do to every client which maybe they didn't work the last four times but this will be 5th and lucky. Good old Richard Danes, loved interactives; they break on day two but you always let him get one in.

JG. So in the way that museum theatre must share the same aims, the design of the museum must share the aims and objectives of the museum itself?

MD. Yes

JG. And it should just be communicating those aims and objectives?

MD. Yes, the designer is the communicator and one would hope that the policies and the priorities have been preselected and if the designer sees an opportunity you would hope that designer says 'if we do it this way...' you picked up that one isn't vital to you but I can probably do it as well and make it work better. In which case fine go ahead.

JG. Do you think you can use these values groupings to communicate with designers?

MD. I think you could, because say you want to evoke emotional value the designer is going to work with you to find the objects that might provoke that response and ensure that they are easily seen within the designer context. Because you can put a Changi jewel and it's a powerful object, but with 50 other things you won't see it. If you're looking at interpersonal the designer isn't going to constrict the space to have people close to cases, he is going to produce areas where interaction can occur and hopefully there are catalysts to interaction. So yes I think if you were to actually say to a designer yes we wanted to do that, that and that in that priority order, than I would hope designers would have the empathy to work with it and if they don't then there is the whole issue of the personality of a designer. It is not as simple as saying the bottom line.

JG. But you think these could be an effective tool for communicating with designers?

MD. Yes

JG. And for getting shared aims and objectives across?

MD. I think so yes

JG That's good as that was one of the intentions of it.

MD. It works, we wanted to do this and we are doing it with this collection in this space, now can you do it? It would be interesting if this model is used because designers have their own house styles, it's like film composers, you go around saying oh X did this one I can tell. And if you were using this and altering these underpinnings, you're putting the designer on their metal as it won't be the same product every time. The actual relationships between what it's got to do will be different. We had the conversation last time, physical value do you put a chill up peoples spines when you want them to have a reaction to it? Even that comes in, do you manipulate, don't you? Or do you do the reverse thing and make them feel more comfortable so they can look harder at the nasties. So yes all of this would be a very interesting way to discuss at first brief stage with a designer.

JG. That's very good to hear.

(1.10.34)

JG. How about working with other departments, say with marketing or audience development do you think it could be a good communication tool for sharing goals and aims of the museum across departments?

MD. Potentially so. But again it depends, communications department I would hope this sort of idea even if they've not seen it in this form they would latch onto quite fast. Finance department, it's all going to be a bit woolly. I think this is one of the points, once you are outside the communication field, the designer, the interpreter, the tour guide.

JG. Sorry yes, what we are primarily discussing here is visitor focused. So collections is something I look at less as though it's part of the museums service, and an aspect is visitor focused, also research as that is not a visitor priority or a visitor focused activity.

MD. Is it not? You had best tell the genealogist that as a substantial number of people come here specifically to research even if it is not written research but there is a very specific objective which is I want to genealogy. OK so not academic research but I think it is an interesting assumption, I think it is an assumption that is made by some museums with general collections: that the public don't research. Wrong, they do and I think if you come in and say oh it's a family group they will come in and do the family thing, no they are potential researchers if enabled they might do it.

JG. Yes, it's more about putting brackets on the research I am able to do in three years.

MD. Oh yes. It's about the visitor having more potential than some people give them credit for and having a more intellectual objective, even if unspoken than we give them credit for, there is always potential within that visitor a potential learner, a potential researcher, a potential user of reserve collections. Now sometimes they are not, they just want to eat an ice cream and go, but you start with that presumption that; that is the level we will engage with them and we will serve this individual. If we they don't want that they have carved one element that we have given them which is unique and the rest is totally valid but you got to go in with the start point that person is going to engage at the top level. And if you don't make that assumption you are going to belittle the people very fast. Back to the question- you could do this; I think again it depends on the personalities of the people you are dealing with. If this is put across wrongly it sounds woolly and fluffy, which it isn't, it is actually quite incisive, but put its all in the delivery of how you put it across. Say for example my tour guides, they actually do some of this anyway when they engage with the public but if you actually said we are wanting the families to interact socially and we want you to evoke emotional responses, the tour guides I have met, I don't know if that way of addressing it would necessarily help. Perhaps if you had specific examples then I think if you were using this in that context you would want four or five bullet point examples that you could key in and perhaps tie in with your own institutions. We would know that was happening if, were back to competencies, if anybody uses those anymore that you actually have specific examples to allow people to identify their own examples, if they are doing it and what the impacts would be. I think for the non-communicators to be doing that side of things continually you would need to add one more level of detail on to this, then you probably could engage most people with it.

(1.14.36)

JG. It's very interesting for me as I was aiming this at policy makers and communicators.

MD. I think one of things that would concern me is that anything of this nature doesn't affect a particular level. If you are going to do this it has got to be comprehensible to everybody to the security guard on the door, even if they think its bunk up to the chief exec, otherwise at each level something will fall over, just hmmmm woolly whatever I'm not doing that. Up to chief exec saying; what and I'm spending money on this! Again the chief exec level that is powerful as they have got a very clear view hopefully, if not this would be a very interesting way of pulling this out, what are we here for, what are we doing and how do we know? This also has the advantage as it's an underpinning it's not actually

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restricting you in the strategies you use to achieve it, so in that sense it works, it's a generic. Which is exactly what you want but then you need some case studies using the generic to enable people at different levels of the organization to see how it would affect. And I think you would need one for creative's in the middle, one for the front of house and one for the governing body. What does this actually look like to me, when I am making decisions and putting results around. And I think of the three it's probably critical for it at the use of board level if your using this sort of concept with a trustee board that may have come from a very different world, inevitable some of them will be financiers, some will be legal that is why they are there some of the will be dignitaries, and it doesn't follow that they will get this instantly because they have not come from those worlds. So actually getting these to work. In the middle they would go straight in, the designer the curator, that level would get this instantly and work with it immediately above and below I think something else would have to be added by way of guidance if you were going to use this.

(1.17.18)

JG. Thank you that is some very interesting feedback.

MD. I like it.

JG. Thank you again, they have been well tested now. This was the core of my research, originally devising and testing these groups and this is meant to be one example of how you can use value, the next step of my research is how you can use your design to better communicate these value groupings. They are meant to be a generic flexible tool to be working with.

MD. Again they work if they are embedded. If you split them off and use them just for the design or just or the visitor survey you've really got to embed these within the organization, a bit like the GLAs and all the stuff that we have lived with. If you don't get the buying in, if you don't get a buy in to the whole thing. Your design might well be based on this but if the tour guides and the educators aren't on side with what the design intended to achieve, the design will do a certain amount on its own if it's any good, but then if you add the people in the museum they can add a lot to that. If they know the design will help them.

JG. I have tried to make it clear that this should be shared throughout and the museum makes it aims and objectives based on these.

MD. It has the advantage that it is entirely focused on people and that does help as a lot of design you get very close to these three-dimensional things and the lighting levels right and everything else but that is critical to always keep the people at the fore front of your mind. If it does what you want and the people aren't getting anything from it; then why are we here? Actually you could argue if there were no people we should still be here but that's a separate argument. There is the other side of the museum as social memory. Though again if you use your model, particularly on social, interpersonal, emotional that could influence a collecting policy, if you know you want to do this you are going to get the things that will let you. So this could outcrop in collection management potentially. To some extent I've already been doing this, if it's rare I have five. If it's ordinary: 'why would you want that I wear it every day?'.... I don't think it's entirely about front of house and design, I know that is what you are doing but collections are becoming a focus again. As there is some argument that museums are getting good at the public thing but selling their soul. Which isn't a disaster yet but could be.

END OF DISCUSSION

**Meeting with Erik Blakely
Curator at the Staffordshire Regimental museum
15th October 2009**

Due to a technical error on arrival, this interview was not audio recorded. Detailed written notes were taken during the discussion, which were then sent to Dr Blakely for his approval and confirmation. Exact quotations have been marked with "speech marks".

The trench was built 9 years ago (EB has worked at the site for 4 years). He is not entirely sure of the intention of the trench but believes it was focused on the educational programme. Advises JG speak to Wily Turner who is the education officer and was at the museum when the trench was built.

Night at the Trenches is an annual event on the Saturday closest to Remembrance Day (this year (2009) coincidentally falling on Bonfire night weekend). Event has been running for 4 years. The first year it was advertised with no expectation and 300 people turned up. Taking into account some concerns of people being 'put-off' by having to buy a ticket or pay in advance the museum decided best for visitors to book in advance onto pre-guided tours but pay on arrival. This has since proved a successful method.

The night (from 4.30-9pm) sees visitors taken in small groups on a guided tour of the trench. The tour is led by EB who is in costume but not as an actor or character (3rd person).

"There are bays along the trench which can be easily set up with little individual scenes" (EB). Each of the scenes sees a small vignette or piece of action which although not scripted precisely in lines it is in action. These costumed interpreters do not interact or engage/ acknowledge the public. The overall experience is enhanced with pyrotechnics and sound effects. Every year so far, they have also managed to get a real machine gun set up with blanks. The actors also all carry rifles loaded with blanks and there is shooting from the parapets.

EB believes that they get a good response from the event and visitors get the atmosphere of what it was like in the trenches. However accepts it is not a realistic replication as: *"it is too sanitised and it is not knee deep in mud"* (EB). This is made explicitly clear to the audience that it is not intended to be a realistic replication of the trenches but an event to instigate thought on what it would have been like. At the start of each tour EB will give a 'spiel' on how what visitors are about to experience is 'trying to give feeling to prompt thinking of what it would have been like'.

EB is a keen enthusiast of costume interpretation and has been doing it as a hobby for over 25 years. He feels that the big difference amongst those involved in living history and costume address is the desire to do 1st or 3rd person narrative. EB prefers 3rd person narrative, partially as feels he is not a professional actor but also as it invites people to ask more questions. EB feels that in 1st person address, actors can often struggle if an audience member asks a question they do not know the answer to (but which the character obviously would).

EB feels that the suspension of disbelief at the trench is partial and fleeting. *"Visitors are sophisticated enough to soon tell the difference between the 3rd person guide and the 1st person costume interpreters"*. (EB)

EB gives example of reality TV and how this has re-engaged people with suspension of disbelief. What is billed to be "reality TV" is often obviously faked and staged- consider a scene of someone pulling up outside an unknowing persons house- but the camera crew are already in place outside this person's house at the right angle to capture the car pulling up and later the 'unknowing' person's surprised look. This has caused some recent outcry as viewers feel conned when this is pointed out to them- they had allowed themselves to believe it was real and are "shocked" when told otherwise. Yet isn't the point of these TV shows to entertain- this manipulation of the real event: which relies on the visitors suspension of disbelief (or perhaps just ignorance to the production of TV) is done to enhance their enjoyment,

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their emotional reaction with the action. This example of reality TV may have crept back into the conscious of today's 'public' and they are more willing to suspend their disbelief for emotional value in entertainment.

Discussed how Imperial War Museum-North is pinnacle example of how emotional value is encouraged at museum sites. EB expressed how this method of interpretation is a simple son et lumière.

EB "*one of the real dangers is when museum fall between two stools of either getting such a degree of accuracy that it will not mislead or laying on such caricature and pantomime that it is clear it is a show*"

Discussed how many fail and end up in the middle ground, where it is not made clear that it is not meant to be real but not authentic enough to avoid being misleading (and this may only be a question of editorial balance not absolute fact). EB mentioned how The Royal Armouries in Leeds are very successful with their realistic replications as they hire professional actors and put on only short scripted shows. Also that they work carefully with curators to ensure that the device is accurate. The problem with the middle ground is if it looks like an authentic representation but it is misleading or biased.

It is a difficult balance to achieve: "*we don't want to be perpetrating a 'Blackadder Goes Forth' view of WWI but were not able to give a degree level accurate seminar to an audience of everyone aged 5-90*". EB states that what they are trying to do is to provoke people to think and as an audience they are much better able to empathise with a real human than with a dummy. This has both its strengths and its weaknesses.

EB is happy to admit that The Night in the Trenches event is in the business of entertaining people but also of motivating them to think. "*The balance between the two depends on the audience and you have to be prepared to shift that balance to suit the needs of the audience*".

It doesn't need/ want to be realistic. "*Even if could make something truly representative I wouldn't as I don't want to traumatisise people*" (EB) this stems back to the business motive of needing to attract visitors to return.

EB. "*If they go away thinking that was jolly for me but it must have been terrible for them (soldiers in the trenches), then I have succeeded*"

When asked of responses to the trench day to day. EB replied that don't get negative comments, which had surprised him since moving to the site. He had concern that in today's society people would be disappointed with the trench and its level of reality/ interactivity/ engagement.

EB also discussed how many visitors feedback saying 'it made me think?' Also that they were surprised at the feelings it can give, at how enclosed and disorientating the trench can feel.

EB and JG discussed JGs incidence at Auschwitz where she had felt obliged to add her own narrative to an object to provide it with the emotional value she felt she should be attaining from the space. EB discussed how he felt it is important for museums to remain stringent to their USP which is real objects. But the value of having these real objects is the emotional value gained from seeing them. Later he showed examples in the museum collection itself. One of a military coat worn in battle, it is stained and dirty but it is not until reading the supporting panel that we are able to identify the stains as the blood of the soldier who fought (he survived) in it. Now this teaches nothing more, we know that soldiers bleed and die but the emotional reaction that creates is invaluable. "*In today's society if we want intellectual value we will just turn on the computer and go to the internet, we will find out so much more than from ever just looking at the real objects. But the real objects provide us the emotional that is the real unique selling point*". (EB)

EB also discussed a programme he had heard on the radio of a social scientist that had conducted some work. The scientist had asked people to put on an old tatty cardigan and asked them how they felt. Other than a little stupid nothing was notable. The scientist then asked, what if I told you it was Fred West's cardigan. The people then said it felt weird, that somehow it was different. Yet it is an inanimate object, it's almost illogical that would make us feel any different because of its past use. EB mentioned that although some people (\neq) access the collections and the archives to look at the objects in an

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intellectual capacity, to observe, measure and take photos: 99% of audience desire to interact on an emotional level. EB also demonstrated the point that a replica of a real object could in fact provide better intellectual access (?) than the original, it could be more detailed or clearer etc., yet people still want the original.

Whilst exploring the trench itself outside, EB discussed how the trench was named after L/Cpl W. Coltman V.C whom many try to romanticise the character of. This lead to a discussion on the disneyfication or romanticisation of 'heroes' and 'villains' from history and how this can be a hindrance as it loses the sense of reality. Is it not scarier to think of Hitler not as a monster but as a real man and consider, could that happen again, could I have ended up a concentration camp guard if I had lived in Germany at that time?

**Interview with Rachel Knight
Head of Exhibitions at Imperial War Museum North
19th February 2010**

JG. Can I just ask what is your role?

RK. Head of exhibitions, I have been here since the museum opened in July 2002.

JG. What were you doing previously?

RK. I was working at an old heritage sight in Ireland that was a Jail, very different. As it was run to make money. It was more of a tourist attraction but they did a lot for schools and I did everything from school guiding, from the shops to corporate events to working in the stores.

JG. So what are your responsibilities here?

RK. I manage, develop and install the exhibitions programme, the specials exhibitions programme and that includes continuous development of the main space, so that is the main displays here. So that could be reinterpretation projects or digitalising of the 'Big Picture Show' and in addition we have (the exhibitions team) responsibility of care of the collections on site here, as we are part of Imperial War Museum but the curators and the collections management staff are all based in London and Duxford. We work closely with them but essentially on site that is our role.

JG. And how many are there in the Exhibitions Team?

RK. There are 4 of us here, myself and 2 exhibition managers and their roles are divided between the spaces. So one does predominantly the main exhibition space and has more collections management responsibility. The other manager works on our specials exhibition programme. For which we have two spaces: the Waterways Gallery and we programme 2 or 3 exhibitions in there a year. Usually smaller displays, normally 2D based as essentially it's a corridor space- all be it a Liebskind space. And we generally programme around anniversaries, the work of community projects that kind of thing. Then we have the larger gallery; the Specials Exhibition Gallery where we programme between 1 and 2 a year. We are just moving away from a cycle of 2 a year where we would programme one more art based in the spring and then a more object rich, thematic, family friendly, family focused exhibition for the rest of the year. We are moving away from that model towards exhibitions running for a span of 7 months at a time, so 3 over 2 years. The reasons behind that are partly because the art shows were not up very long and were very popular, so they wanted to be up longer and we wanted to maximise the work that went into them. Also to open the opportunity of more people to visit. Also partly budgetary and partly in terms of work flow and planning, in terms of what we can deliver in the time.

JG. Do you have different target audiences for the different shows?

RK. Well yes and no, it's probably more useful to look at our programme going forward really in that this branch has, ever since it opened done an awful lot of visitor research, both quantitative and qualitative, everything from expectations prior to visit, to levels of engagement on site and non-visitors and repeat visitors. Loads of focus groups and lots of information and that really informs how we programme. We programme a changing offer, across the whole board, so we take a holistic view to programming so it's not just special exhibitions its everything from what happens in the main space in terms of our main displays to our formal learning visitor programme, big events and daily activities. We tend to look at groups, we have a couple of ways of breaking up our audiences. One is the more traditional' 'adult groups' and 'family groups' 'children' 'tots-11' but then we have another layer beyond that which looks at motivation to visit as a way of categorising visitors.

(6.29).

JG. Is that the one done by Morris, Hargreaves and McIntyre?

RK. Yeah, exactly. But that's things like sight seers, self-developers, days out, I'm sure you are aware of those. It depends on the exhibitions we have on but a good chunk of our visitors are: learning families

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and kids first. They are a really important growth area for us. But we do find we get a lot of adult visitors and repeat visitors, which, compromise about a third of our visitors, a good chunk. Still lots of first timers and in terms of our programming we look at what's marketable and the anniversaries and package things up to different audiences at different times of the year, whether it's an anniversary or a school holiday or a quieter spell, or peak school times. So for example with the Don McCullin exhibition that has just opened, which is a photographic exhibition. He is a war photographer, worked for the Sunday times in 70s and 80s and early 90s and he travelled the world photographing conflict close up and the work is really the truth and the consequences of war and conflict. And in our marketing campaign we have tried to get over that it is not a kids' exhibition, it is work of a serious nature but it's not excluding families either. So we have prepared support for school groups. We are aware that older school kids and HE students are likely to be interested. But to counter that to ensure we have a good family offer still we are programming a really strong activities programme, which are promoting as a discreet package via a press agency with lots of performances in the main exhibition space and lots of craft activities and gallery packs around the large iconic objects in the main space. Then for Easter we've got a similar package of events around the new Waterway exhibition which is around the theme of camouflage. Which is really a very accessible subject manor and very visual and graphic and touchy feely, with things to do for families. That is how we like to comprise a delicate balance with a portfolio of products aimed and marketed at different people at different times. Getting the balance right is the really tricky thing. We are always learning through everything we do.

(09.53)

JG. I wonder if you can take me threw the development process? So from the idea to the development, who is involved and the general process?

RK. For example, the easiest thing to look at is a new big specials exhibition. In terms of programming I consult widely with my colleagues in collections, research and information who do a lot of the research for exhibitions and the historians there too. Also my colleagues here, the learning team are really useful as they are interacting with the public on a daily basis, our marketing team and I encourage ideas from them and having them myself on possible goers for an exhibition. So that is how the idea is born at which point we flesh out an approach and think about audiences and that is done with my fellow heads of department here and particular the head of learning and marketing and PR and our director. That is to get the principles right: where does this fit with our profile, which audiences do we need to target with this, what benefits can come in terms of partnership building and so on. So looking at the wider implications as well as have we got the collections to support it. Then it is essentially a case of putting together a short proposal that goes to the senior public programming group at the Imperial War museum for approval, once that is sought it is a case of assembling a team and we plan out the key messages, the learning outcomes and the collections needed.

{some audio lost due to technical failure and need to change devise}

It's then a case of regular development meetings of how we might approach such as a narrative, thematic or personal story. It's done collaboratively; it's a case of bringing the right people in. Then we put together a design brief, which is done externally, both the design and build. We work closely with the designers along with marketing. So we try and work closely with marketing what actually happens in the exhibition is evidence in how it is communicated. To help manage expectations.

JG. So how do you work with external designers?

RK. Essentially they are tasked with coming up with the visual approach to the exhibition, so leading on colour, working with us on layout, they do all the graphics and design and build of interactives, with our support. So it's a very collaborative approach but essentially they visualise the look and feel. They have to communicate in a graphic way and a 3D way what we are trying to get over. And I see that very much

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as an integral part of the exhibition so rather than just painting the wall pink and bunging up some panels. It's so important for the design to communicate the key messages of the exhibition and aids visitor orientation and navigation of the exhibition. As well as all of those things of providing change of space, quiet spaces, more lively and demanding spaces and getting that balance right and that all comes through the design.

JG. So when you say key messages, what kind of messages are you trying to communicate?

RK. It totally depends; it's linked in to our museums missions and our brand, which is currently being reviewed in light of a new director. It's not radically changing, just shifting. Essentially we are a museum of social history, a community museum on a large scale that tells the story of how people have been affected and how communities have been affected by war and conflict. So it's less the military side, although that is an important part of the story. We are quite different to say the Royal Armoires; it's not about the kit and the tactics. It's more about how war has affected and shaped our lives. So the key messages, the exhibition is chosen to support that premise and the key messages then would look at bringing out personal stories related to that subject matter, stories that illustrate the point. For example our next big exhibition is on the sea during war time so we would look at the experiences of sailors and how living and fighting on a ship, how that affected their lives both at the time and perhaps longer term, legacies to themselves and their families, once they get home, if they get home. So that is always one key message, we also try and get over that it's important to embed relevance and marketing hooks in to our key messages so it's important to link with anniversary or like 100 years since the battle of whatever. So in the next couple of years we will be marking 100 years since the start of First World War for the whole of the Imperial War Museum, or it might be the first time something big has been on display. So they are top level key messages. Beyond that there are also the top level messages we want to get over, so for example for the sea exhibition: 'All on Board', things like why do we fight at sea? Why do we have a navy? Why do we still have a Navy today? The importance to the navy to you today? Quite direct stuff. Also when I say about people's stories; about how war has shaped and affected their lives I think we often use stories to explore strengths and weaknesses in the human character or human behaviour. So last year we had an exhibition on about prisoners of war in Second World War and we looked at stories of bravery, how important relationships were to help survive and those kinds of things too. But not always the good but the bad that war and conflict can bring out, that obviously has to be dealt with in a sensitive way.

(06.04)

JG. Can you specify any examples of ways that you have communicated these personal narratives and personal stories?

RK. Within the actual exhibition?

JG. Yes

RK. A whole range of ways, it might be a specific display case that focuses on one person's experience, with more semi-traditional way with a text panel and quotes from the person and a range of material that is relevant to the telling of their story. If you look in our main exhibition space we have big red exhibition cases dotted around, and each of them focuses on an individual's story, which could be communicated by 1 item or 10-20 items. One example is again of a prisoner of war who was held in Singapore and he kept a secret diary of his experiences hidden in his suitcase. Fantastic story as he also from Southport and we do try to include as much Northern material as we can to tell the national story. So that is all about strength of character and adversity and I think one of the most powerful items in that case is his belt that he wore when he went to war and then the belt that he wore when he came home and the physical, you can see how small he had become. And that is really powerful without having to read any text, you get very simply the hardship that he endured. Rather than bunging stuff in a case it has to tell the story. Other ways might be as part of a case that is exploring more general theme and

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there might be 2, 3 personal objects in there to illustrate that or we might include different peoples voices within the big picture show.

JG. So an audio quote.

RK. Yes exactly. But it's about getting that balance between using the individuals own voice and their own words, we would never describe their experience in the first person. It's always that kind of that museum authoritative, or semi-authoritative voice, rather than putting words into their mouth. We are looking at how we use language and looking at speaking in the first person.

JG. So letting them speak in the first person? Do you not currently do that?

RK. I'd be hesitant about putting words in their mouth, it's great to use quotes and to use sound recording to hear that persons memories and how it affected them. I'm a little more hesitant about me describing their story and using the first person to do so, as there's a point of authority there about whose story it is to tell, that's my own personal view.

(09.55)

JG. So you do currently use people talking in the first person- I did this, this is what happened to me?

RK. Only if it's a direct quote, the museums text is in the third person.

JG. And are there any other ways that you can think of how you have supported the person's story through the use of design or display?

RK. At the moment we don't, well we use graphics to help illustrate that persons experience, so that might include photos or help embed it in the exhibition. I suppose that we like to keep it simple rather than trying to over complicate things and to try and make that persons voice speak for itself.

(11.16)

JG. How do you mean by over complicate?

RK. I think if you add too much design to something you can over design it. And I often think that simplicity helps to create a coherent message as at the end of the day, well I can't think of an example of where I have seen it, but a visitor is bombarded with so much information when they come through the door, visually and physically. Especially in a building like this which is designed purposefully to make you feel a little uncomfortable and disorientated as you would in war time.

JG. So just to clarify when you say too much information you don't just mean literal factual information but too much visual information?

RK. Yes too much stimulation. Especially if they are going somewhere for the first time, there are the basics of where am I and how do I get out if I want to and those basic things. So communicating complex stories and issues has to be done in a thoughtful but coherent way.

JG. So that's when communicating stories?

RK. Yes and narratives and themes and issues.

(12.43)

JG. So what do you think the danger is, or the outcome is when it is overdesigned or there is too much stimulation?

RK. I think it can just straight away turn people off, it's just too much and they are not engaged with it. Or they find it hard to find ways to get into that information.

JG. So it prevents barriers to that learning?

RK. And engagement yes. It depends on the individual of course though. Some people might be intimidated by it and if they have difficulty in accessing something they might just think; this means nothing to me or it's confusing, or I'm not coming back here. So it is finding those ways in for people.

(13.46)

JG. So what you are saying is that you need some stimulation into the material?

RK. Yeah you need something that is going to grab people attention, whether that is an unusual object or an interesting quote or an eye catching piece of graphic design. You need something to grab their

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attention but then a good enough story to maintain interests. But you got to be clear about not having too many points to grab people attention as it can get a bit busy.

(14.42)

JG. What do you think are the benefits to using a narrative rather than just providing the factual information of it?

RK. Fundamentally we are told stories from birth as it's a way of learning. I think it's a method of learning and of pertaining information that we are all really familiar with. So it's a good way of conveying messages, increasing learning and community engagement. Think there is a place for just listing facts and 'did you know's' as a way of breaking up the pace and conveying very specific information, technical information for example. But I think again it needs to be done in an engaging way. So for example again with the sea exhibition we want to explain about the different types and sizes of ships and if we just did a bit of blurb on the wall it would be pretty dry and dull so one way we might do it is graphically with silhouetted ships compared to the say the size of this building. Its basic but it gets over those more dry facts in an engaging way, And people do like did you know's and interesting facts, it's about how you present that information in a more relevant way.

(16.08)

JG. How about the emotional reaction to narratives? How do you think that influences?

RK. Again I think in terms of emotional reaction it is often brought about by a personal connection with the subject or the theme. Or empathy and being able to understand and put yourself in their shoes. So again I think narrative can help do that as you are exploring somebody's experiences first hand and it does build that emotional reaction to the subject matter. One example is the Big Picture show it does achieve an emotional response in people because it is literally all around you, it is projected onto all the walls, it's very immersive, it takes over the whole space and you can't miss it, it's very imposing. The scale of the images that we project, and again the personal voice in most people it can't fail to have an affect or an impact. Particularly the one about children and war, it just makes you cry but for a good reason. And I think that has such an impact and it sticks in your memory and you are going to take something away from it because of that experience, because of that emotional impact it's had on you, good or bad you take something away.

(17.57)

JG. And what do you think that adds to the museum experience?

RK. It's our USP, that and the big picture show and that response it can have in not everyone, but a lot of people, I think it can be difficult for museums to find ways of achieving that and I think because of its scale and the immersive direct approach it really does that. What was the question again? What it adds? I think it helps to create more of a learning experience for a bigger range of people, obviously we know people engage with things in different ways depending on their learning styles and preferences and so I think that helps to target a group of people of whom perhaps wouldn't be as engaged with more traditional displays. And I think it helps to create a more memorable and impactful visit.

(19.17)

JG. Do you ever have any negative reactions to it?

RK. Yeah some people don't like the fact that the whole gallery is taken over and visitors who are happy and confident plotting their own journey around the museum can feel; annoyed frankly that their experience has been jilted. Although we have found ways to combat that slightly in that we leave the showcase lights on so people can continue to look at displays and read the text that is balanced with not losing quality with the big picture show as the lights are dimmed for that. So some people find it a bit intrusive as when you are going around a museum you are in your own little world, even if you are in a group. So I think that is the biggest turn off really. I think most people are so used to seeing things in that format, in that we are so used to the television and the cinemas and so on. So the format although it's unusual that it is in a museum and all around you, people are familiar with the whole concept of

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watching something on a screen essentially. Perhaps 15 years ago that would have been different but now people are so used it it's not a barrier. I think one interesting this is that it was designed so that people would wonder around the space and look at all the screens and become part of the show in that way. What we have found is that no-one wants to do that, everyone wants to sit down and look at a screen, some people stand up but the vast majority sit down and I think it's that 'show time' got to grab a seat, like the cinema kind of thing. And that is really interesting behaviour. What we did with one of the screens was add subtitles for people, to enhance accessibility. But that has pros and cons as people's eyes are always drawn to text and it highlights certain seats to sit in and I think more people sit and read than they did before.

(22.19)

JG. So the original intention was for people to walk about and become a part of what was going on?

RK. Yes

JG. And whose concept was it?

RK. The concept was an agency called Event. They do loads of big displays and exhibitions.

JG. And what was the original intention of it?

RK. There was going to be nothing else in the gallery just the Big Picture Show. No collections or anything, just a really unique, and it is unique, a truly immersive audio, visual experience really.

JG. So they were planning the whole space to have no collection or to have a separate space for this?

RK. No the whole of the gallery would just have the Big Picture Show in it with no other interpretations or collections.

JG. So would the big picture show then have run continuously?

RK. I'm not sure they thought that far, as they quickly realised that they needed something else, and there needed to be collection and they needed to explore other things. From that came the timeline which runs around the edge of the space and then behind the walls, the structures to project on to we created 6 silos or smaller thematic sections. So it's interesting that the space develops. There wasn't a blank and they said; right we got to cover that and we got to cover that, it was much more organic and there are pros and cons with that. I think perhaps with a blank canvas and an empty space you could have done something with the displays that was perhaps a little less disorientating.

JG. By displays do you mean the actual exhibitions?

RK. Yeah the displays and the actual collections.

JG. Do some people report that the collection is disorientating to follow?

RK. Yes because of the nature of the space, because of the structures that are in there and the nature of the building; it is designed to be disorientating and that is one thing that we are always trying to find ways to do; make accessible a disorientating space, it's a challenge.

(24.25)

JG. Just coming back to when you were talking about the audience development work that you do. Is that done in-house or freelanced out?

RK. We have a marketing and PR team who traditionally have organised research which has been conducted out of house. The subject matter for that research is decided between heads of departments on what is needed, quite often in terms of; is the product right? Are people engaging with it? Also the potential of non-visitors, the family offer a whole host of things. What we have corporately across IWM is quantitative research that happens quarterly and that includes all the normal questions, it's quite extensive actually. That includes top-level feedback on what did you come to see today, did you see X, Y, Z and how do you rate the Big Picture Show or similar aspects? So we get feedback that way, also we ask a question, what was the best part of your visit? And often the Big Picture Show is the highest response. But as our budgets shrink our capacity to commission qualitative research is reducing. Luckily we got a host of things we can use and there is the argument of having too much research as the point of research is using it. You got to allow yourself time to actually read it, digest it.

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(26.52)

JG. And how do you interpret your research into your development?

RK. A couple of ways, our marketing and PR team do about once a year, audience sessions with everyone across the whole branch, so from security to staff in the café, to the learning team. That looks at the feedback from latest evaluation, who are visitors' are and why they are coming. And we often use those as brainstorming sessions to think of new products, ways to cater for where the gaps are. Besides that as heads of department we encourage staff to read evaluations and give them time to do that and encourage them to embed it in their development. So there is a personal responsibility to use it. There is only so much telling people the statistics and that this is what people are doing but at the end of the day you got to look at that yourself and digest it.

(28.24)

JG. Is there a preference for qualitative or quantitative data in being able to interpret it?

RK. I think it's a mixture and there has to be a mixture. Taking all research is indicative not authorative and you need to bear that in mind and walk around the gallery and take in the anecdotal as well and take advise from colleagues. It's about looking at a whole range of ways of getting feedback. We have a comments card system where they can write comments or complaints and we write back to that. Also in the specials exhibition area we have a reflections area where we pose 2 or 3 questions that relate to the learning outcomes of the exhibition. We don't have the capacity to record all the responses but we sample some to gain anecdotal evidence of what they enjoyed and what they found frustrating and so on.

(29.42)

JG. I did find on line the museums plan and corporate strategies and one thing that caught my eye in the 2009-2012 plan was: (it is) framed around the notion that the museum will be audience focused and will respond effectively to the demands of our stakeholders and target audiences What do you think is meant by audience focused?

RK. I think it's about modernising the museum and that quote is very much the key message of our new director that every single function of the museum has to be audience focused and has to have some relevance to our audience or stakeholders. For example; all museums in days gone by, possibly now as well, there might be curator shoved away on a corner working on their personal pet project and it might have no relevance to the museum or to the potential or existing visitors either physically, digitally or users of the collections. It's about making sure that how a business is customer driven and customer focused, no one would develop a product that nobody was going to buy or offer a service that no one is going to use; it's about making the museum audience focused in all its activities.

(31.29)

JG. And so how do you feel that the exhibitions department is contributing to that mission? Obviously exhibitions may seem obvious as it is audience focused but how do you think you are strengthening that message?

RK. I think that you are right that the point of exhibitions is that, and we have been doing that for a long time. It's about making sure that your subject matter is going to have relevance both to the brand and the mission of The Imperial War Museum but also to the visitors so that there is a point of putting on an exhibition because you want someone to come and to learn something. So it has to be interesting enough to get them here and have a rewarding visit so that goes back to good programming and bearing those principals in mind as you develop the exhibition, that it needs to be relevant to your audience and how you do that. Whether it is looking at more contemporary events. Empathy is a big thing in telling the story of war and conflict. And a lot of people come to the museum with a personal connection with the subject matter, either their grandparents or they, have served in conflict or they have personal interest in a subject matter. Not necessarily academics, family history for example.

(33.30)

JG. Do you keep in mind specific target audiences for exhibitions so you can keep it relevant?

RK. Absolutely it is the top level priority: remembering who you are doing it for because that then dictates what collections you show, how you interpret it in terms of the text you might use, the graphics you might use, the kind of experience that you want to create. For example the current exhibition the Don McCullin, I wanted to create a serious, sophisticated, profound affect with the exhibition that was clearly, simply communicated and I hope that the design has done that and helped achieve that.

(34.31)

JG. And how do you think the design had achieved that?

RK. By bring the best out of the pictures, that actual content. It's an unusual space and the potential is for a designer to be intimidated by the space and the collection, to get lost. The colours that they have chosen, the lighting, the colour palette, the pace, the change, they key moments of intimacy and then looking- well it's easier to explain once you've seen it but some vista moments sort of that are powerful and that we tried to create impact through.

(35.29)

JG. And what do you think can be the danger or the problem in this kind of encouragement of empathy or emotion in a museum?

RK. I think it has to be done sensitively, particularly with the subject matter here and people often have a personal connection. For some people it can bring out a lot of emotions or memories that were perhaps unexpected or had been buried for a long time. So in terms to the reaction of visitors we need to be sensitive in how we do that in an exhibition. For example it's about placing things such as; warning that in this exhibition you are going to see X, Y and Z and that might impact on who you take for example. It is also about building moments and spaces to sit down and reflect, quieter moments within an exhibition but beyond that the rest of the museum too. And not only if the person has a connection with the matter. There is an incredibly powerful image of an emaciated woman who is clearly starving to death and trying to breast feed a baby. And a couple of member of staff have come up, who have children, who have been utterly affect by that as parents but who have no experience of war and conflict directly or indirectly. So it can affect people in different ways depending on circumstances and sometime unexpected affects.

(37.35)

JG. So do you believe that emotional stimulations, empathy and narratives can support the intellectual, the learning outcomes?

RK. Yes I do absolutely. It's the preferred style of learning for some people and I think it can help create memory and be able to hold information, for it to stick.

JG. So even for remembering specific information, factual information?

RK. Yes absolutely. Equally it can be in extreme cases that it can be so upsetting that it's a turn off and brings back too many memories, but in principal yeah I do. Generally I think it helps engagement with the subject and retention of information.

(38.43)

JG. What would you say to discussion that it can detract from the learning experience?

RK. I think it depends on what your definition of a learning experience is and what you are trying to achieve and what learning means to individuals, whether it is just cognitive processing and being able to recall facts and information or if it is a shift in attitude or behaviour or values. I think that goes back to the generic learning outcomes.

(39.41)

JG. Do you think for those people who prefer cognitive processing it is a hindrance?

RK. I don't think it's a hindrance no. I think it's one way that you can get information; it might not be the only information. If someone wants to know lots about the subject they won't come to an exhibition, they will get a book or research the collection or they will use an interactive that has more levels of

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information. Exhibitions are telling a story but they are presenting essentially information about a small set of themes and small set of key messages and if anyone wants to know more they will look elsewhere. Hopefully an exhibition can be a gateway for people wanting to find out more.

(41.16)

...are you particularly interested in that discussion of narrative?

JG. Yes. Originally I trained in theatre design then interior design and I was really interested in the different design methods for theatre and interiors and I thought it would be interesting to explore the potential of applying theatre design principles to an interior space and it was selected as museums.

RK. That is really interesting as a museum or an exhibition really is like a piece of theatre. You have got an expectation that you got to create a show, whether that is literally a big picture show or a spectacular moment that people enjoy and going to get things from. Also that whole thing of scene changes are really important within an exhibition and change of pace and beginning and ends of chapters, there are a lot of parallels I think.

JG. One thing I identified is theatre is very emotive and so the obvious parameters to applying it to museums would be to that outcome of enhancing the emotional value and creating more of an experience. Which to museums like your self is very encouraging but to others it can be alienating and they can be hesitant to increasing that emotional response and feel it affects the intellectual intentions.

RK. I would be really interested to read your thesis, if you are happy to share it?

JG. Of course

JG. Did you get the value groupings that I sent? These were what I recognised to be the core value of the museum experience.

RK. I think what we try and do here is that we try to communicate to visitors what they will get, what value they will get from the experience. So not just the learning but that it is a free day-out, something to do with your kids, that's one value people are looking for. That you are going to learn something and be challenged, to have a different kind of experience that is one thing we try and convey in our programming and our marketing. You can come and have lunch and couple it with a day out at the Keyes, we try to integrate those values is you like.

(46.27)

JG. What would you say about the intellectual value of the Imperial War Museum? Would you say it's more important, or as, important than the empathetic, emotional value?

RK. I think it's as important. We have a national collection on war and conflict so it has a real intellectual worth and I don't think it's healthy to see the two separated as I think they closely relate. It comes down to who is visiting and why they are visiting. So a school group for example, crudely speaking is clearly coming for a learning experience but how they learn might be in a quite emotional, empathetic way, as well as more cognitive learning that goes along with that.

(47.55)

JG. Another thing I am looking at is the changing needs and external variables that are affecting on what forms that visitor agenda of what they are seeking.

RK. That is really interesting.

JG. I noticed in one of the corporate plans that it says it needs to meet increasingly high expectations of audiences. What do you think are these increasingly higher expectations?

RK. Crudely speaking we are in competition with a day out at the Trafford Centre for a good chunk of people. People looking for something to do where people are bombarded with things to do and the ability to have a good day out that will include lots of things for the kids to do, great shop, great café, great welcome all of those things. A chunk of people looking for something new and exciting that they can be challenged with, that there is some sort of wow factor. A museums wow factor can sort of be

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that dinosaur or that harrier jump jet or can we go back and see that performance again, just something that gives that wow factor, that X-factor kind of experience.

(49.16)

JG. So basically you are fighting more in leisure attractions?

RK. Yeah I think that's the general market for a good chunk of people, so for our kids-first, days-outs and sightseers, market.

JG. And what about the other audiences, the people who just come to the museums as they like museums, do you think there expectations are changing?

RK. Yes certainly, there is a big move towards making a venue very family friendly. Making it worth their while so people are going to get something from it and certainly if they are paying they expect value for money. But if you are not paying for something you are still expecting a return on your investment of time and effort to get there. So you have to reward the visitor in a fulfilling experiences and that goes across the whole sight.

(50.37)

JG. And what reward do you think the Imperial War Museum North provides?

RK. It provides a good day out, you can entertain your family for free, bring a picnic so you don't have to spend money. But if you do want to spend money there is a great shop, there is a great café that goes alongside that. Also there is learning experience so you can engage with the subject in a range of matters, so whether that's through an exhibition or through the Big Picture Show or a learning activity or going up the viewing tower.

(51.37)

JG. What kind of experience do you think visitors are seeking from you? Do you think the offer matches what visitors are seeking?

RK. I think so by and large. Not to say that we are complacent and the big thing for us to increase footfall. As we are out of the city centre, they have to have a reason for coming here. And I think that we have a large number of repeat visitors is a good sign. I think that evaluation shows our communication messages and therefore shaping of expectations pretty much matches. There are some exceptions, so people who see the name and expect us to be like Imperial War Museum in London, but we are quite different in terms of building, displays and content. The displays in London are quite old, we are very different, we don't have loads of kit the minute you walk in the door and the building here we describe it as the marmite affect. Some people love it, especially when they get the concept of the architecture, they think this is great but for some it can be a massive turn off as they don't get it or they prefer a more conventional set up.

(54.01)

JG. Do you use any theatre principals or programmes currently?

RK. What do you mean by theatre principals?

JG. Anything, however you interpret that.

RK. Well we use actual performance to interpret the collections and displays within the specials exhibitions and the main displays. We have a series on today around the larger objects, which, can be difficult to interpret. I haven't seen them yet but they are supposed to be good.

JG. And who puts them on and schedules these then?

RK. Our learning team, they schedule them but we work with a script writer and then the actual performers are free lancers. Usually, one or two members do them. I think we use character performance in our schools kit as well. So that is more straight performance. We do work with production companies time to time and have hosted shows within the space, usually in the evenings. So used the physical space for different ways at different times. Within the exhibition the design, for example I am writing the design brief for the sea exhibition, and as it's focused at children and families with children, there are certain areas that I want to have a theatrical set design sort of approach. Not in

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a traditional museum way where it's a recreated sight with ugly dummies standing around. But using an area of the gallery to be evocative of a submarine, so not a literal submarine but evocative of. So it's got interactive embedded in it, for example you might be able to get in a bunk and see how big it was to give a sense of the space and the scale. Again helps to add a bit of drama into the whole exhibition.

JG. Would you be willing to share that design brief?

RK. Yeah, I'd be grateful that it's not broadly circulated but for your research.

END OF DISCUSSION

**Interview with Alexandra Kim
Collections curator at Kensington Palace
24th April 2010**

JG. So you are curator of collections is that correct?

AK. Well we have four collections curators here, generally the curators are divided into curators who deal with the building and curators who deal with the collections. And particularly as we have the Royal Ceremonial dress collection here we have 4 collections curators. Who all have a dress background and we all take it in turns at curating collections. So for this I was working with Joanna Marshall who is senior curator at Kensington in terms of working with the designers and the theatre creators.

JG. How would you describe the Enchanted Palace to somebody?

AK. That is one of our biggest challenges; how to accurately reflect the experience for people so their expectations match the experience they receive. In many ways what we are trying to do is use the word 'experience' because that begins to suggest something in between an exhibition and a theatrical performance and for us we want it to be somewhere in the middle. And it will differ in who comes round but it's not about being a static presentation of history, and it's not normal theatre performance, it tried to combine both things.

JG. So how did the fashion come into it as well?

AK. Well in one way that was there at the very beginning, before the theatre. This has had a long gestation period and the way it has transformed as a project over time so considerably and we began by thinking about an exhibition which was; how contemporary dress has been influenced by royal dress and tradition. We had been thinking about putting that in the state apartments. So you would have the grand estate rooms as a backdrop to contemporary fashion. But then we began to think that we needed to come up with an idea about what would happen with the building project. And the big redevelopment project began really when the Queen gave us Princess Margaret's apartments after her death and asked Historical Royal Palaces to make them accessible to the public. That gave us the impetus to think about how we represented and presented Kensington to our visitors and became the project that we are just about to embark upon. We knew it would take about two years and we had the decision to take; did we just lose the palace? But as well as being a very negative message to put out as an external message, also what did we do with our front of house team? So we really didn't want to do that and wanted to avoid it. We could have opened the palace in its building state and we knew that meant some rooms would be closed and we would have to remove particularly vulnerable objects, and that you would hear the building works, and we thought that would be very unsatisfactory for visitors. Or, we could try and do something really special and take it as an opportunity to experiment and take it as a virtue that the palace isn't as it usually is and we decided that we wanted to try the latter. So one of the things that we felt was that to help visitors over the 'oh they are open in the middle of a building site' was that performance might help that. So the contact and interactivity of talking to people and watching something live would be... wonderful. At the beginning we wasn't sure how that would pan out and we had also begun thinking about the idea of fairy tales and the way that fairy tales are about transformations, and kings and queens and nice dresses, and that we began to think, that could tie everything together, this idea of contemporary fashion and things changing at the palace. But it wasn't until we met with Wildworks that the ingenious idea of Enchanted Palace began to develop. My colleague Joanna had heard about them as one of the thoughtful and unusual companies that don't do the usual three hour show with an interval in between. But does site-specific promenade theatre. And they said come down and see what we are doing in Cornwall and they have worked in an extraordinary collection of places. We went down to the naval dockyard in Plymouth and watched their play- A Beautiful Journey and straight away we were so impressed. The way in which their place reflected the

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place that they were in and the stories and the histories of the communities they had worked with created the stories that we were seeing. And it was when we sat down and talked to them the next day, there were two things that I thought, yes we should be working with them. The first was their idea of fairy tales, they said why look at other fairy tales, we have been looking at the stories of the palace and they are more amazing than any fairy-tale could ever be, you could never write this, just tell your tales as fairy tales. The other point which was just fantastic was when they suggested the way in which we could use the building work, so instead of trying to mask it and pretend it wasn't happen, which we knew we wouldn't be able to do. We didn't want something where people were turned away because of it, so Wildworks concept for Enchanted Palace made the building works the reason behind the story, they brought it in a way that I think really brings it in and the concept of the builders arriving, transforming the building, turning it upside down and shaking the stories out of the building with the building work. So they are shaking the sorties' out of the palace walls. And it is such a neat, compelling concept, really easy to explain, but gets across that idea of change. So with those two elements, we decided we wanted to work with Wildworks, perhaps in a more expansive capacity than we had originally imagined. We had been thinking about approaching them to provide the performance but it became clear it needed to be a greater artistic relationship. They spent the summer soaking up the history of the palace and using that to create their narrative for the Enchanted Palace which involves this series of rooms exploring some of the themes of the palaces history. But then we knew we needed this other element that draws it all together; the narrative framework of the quest to find the seven princesses.

JG. What other approaches had you considered before coming to performance?

AK. I think it had been there from an early point and in a way we had these different building blocks. We had this idea of an exhibition of contemporary fashion inspired by royal dress and that was over here, and then the building project, and then we had some other things that we knew we needed to do and I suppose the performance came out of that. We knew there were other spaces and other things that people expect to see at Kensington that we would need to provide, and at first it was a way to animate those, that we began looking at performance. But then quickly the idea of performance for the whole of whatever the exhibition was, came in, then when we began working with Wildworks, everything began to fit together beautifully and one of the things that we always knew we needed to do was, and I don't know if noticed this when you were walking round was; even now 12 years after the event, is the closeness that people have as Kensington as the place of Princess Diana. And that is what is overwhelmingly what our visitors come to Kensington because of. We have a real difficulty as Diana's apartments are over their [points out of the window] on the royal site. So we can't show people where Diana lived, we don't have any of the artefacts that she would have had and we don't really have many of her dresses. We have a small group but most of them are on loan. So to try and represent Diana as a princess, when people's expectations of Diana and Kensington and what they will see is really tricky. We began thinking about, could performance help to fulfil a role like that, or help people understand other parts of the palace? Whether that is Princess Margaret's apartments or representing Princess Margaret elsewhere in the palace. And at one point we thought about, should the performance that happens only be on high days and holidays or special events, but then we began to see the challenges around that, are you charging extra when that happens and how does that play out?

JG. When you say using performance to help people understand parts, what had led you to believe that performance could do that?

AK. Because I think that with performance, I don't know if you know the other places that HRP looks after, but the tower and Hampton Court palace both use performance in an extensive programme of performance. Costumed interpretations is the term they use and they really help to, in a distinctive way to bring the palaces to life for visitors, to imagine what it might have been like, to have been there at that time, to convey a sense of history to the visitors and to tell some of the historic stories. So that was

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a model that we already had within HRP but Kensington in a sense is a slightly different palace. It has never had that reputation of costumed interpretation in the same way, and in many ways because of the dress collection, has tended to do things that are a little more arty and though not necessarily unhistorical but hasn't felt the need to be bound by the history in perhaps the same way that other palaces have. Other curators may disagree with me. So we just felt that there might be something that theatre can offer as a different experience and one of the things we were really adamants about was that we needed to make this special to make the visitor feel that they weren't getting a lesser experience because of the building site. And the way that performance might have been able to achieve this for us was at a very early stage when we met with Wildworks, but as I say the meeting with them was key to realising or to transforming our vision of what performance might do.

(14.22)

JG. So what do you think the experience is that Enchanted Palace offers to visitors?

AK. I hope that it gives them a really different and unusual way, unique way, not only this palaces history, but any historic building in that we are asking them to engage with the history and the stories of the palace in a very emotive way. It's a way that is not about the written word or the factual word in the same way as you go to a Natural Trust house or anywhere where they have labels or text panels or audio guides. All these were things that we wanted to move away as far as possible from and to make this an interactive experience that was based on the individuals at Kensington. So the building and the historic objects that are in them are really important and really inspired Wildworks but the reason that those are so exciting for them and for our visitors is not only because it is a beautiful piece of art but because of its capacity to unlock stories. And the way in which I think we have done that is by working with our two teams of people; one of the detectors and the explainers. That is where we get this cut of exhibition and theatrical performance. So the visitors get two types of performance. The detectors are very much performers and they do their piece of sort of slightly flitting through the place, theatre based around the idea of caring for the palace in the changes and looking after the palace during those changes. So measuring a room to make sure it hasn't shrunk, checking the ambient emotion of a room whether a tear they have is tear of sorrow or of joy. Relating to the princess but in a very abstract way, to get the history of the palace our visitors need to speak to the explainers. Its part performance but we wanted to reassure our explainers, who began life as typical front of house staff you find in a historical building, they are there to guard the building and the objects rather than to attract visitors. So we didn't want them to feel that we were trying to turn them into actors overnight but we did want to unlock their potential as we knew they were great story tellers, and I suppose we wanted to enhance the role they had before and transform it to really engage with the visitor. So they trained with Wildworks, they had a number of training sessions to become these tellers of the palace history whether that through telling the story of a princess or talking through an object with a visitor. And so what I think that they get now is more personal than previous tours when they walked through with an audio guide clamped to their ear and getting exactly the same history that everyone else had. In enchanted palace every ones experience should be a little difference an in many ways depends how far they are willing to interact with the explainers and the detectors. So if you are happy to take a rose petal from a detector, not knowing exactly what they are going to ask you to do with it but then if you take it you will be asked to drop it over the balcony in the room of flight, in an act of mini theatre raining down on Princess Charlotte. You will presumably have had a more engaging experience than those who go oh no I don't want to take those petals. For us it has been really intriguing to think, what historical message are we giving our visitors. I don't know if you looked the comments book that we have. What we have found is that this is an exhibition that divides people in their opinion, either they love it or they hate it, a definite Marmite effect going on.

(20.01)

JG That was actually my next question, asking what has the visitor response been?

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AK. The first point about the response is that it has been enormous, regardless to what they think, people have felt the need to tell us what they think and I can't think of an exhibition that I have been involved in that has had this much response. For example we did three preview days which was an idea suggested by Wildworks based on the idea of dress rehearsals, so just checking everything was running OK before we had our press day and our opening. On the first day we got about 80 comments cards, which for a day in a museum is good going. By the next day it was about 200, by the third day it was 600 comment cards which is a phenomenal amount. And it wasn't people just ticking saying yes I liked it, people were writing telling us, this bit was good, we didn't like this, just so much comment. The visitors' book, we are going through one about every month with people writing and telling us things. Then the amount of publicity and even now I will go on twitter on a daily basis, and usually there is a couple or three or five comments of people discussing their responses, their experiences of Enchanted Palace. So it's provoked an immense amount of comment and as I say that tends to divide into two camps, there isn't a middle oh yeah I went to Enchanted Palace and it was OK. It's either what an amazing way to display a historical building, this has made me engage with history in a way I never have done before, or I loved seeing the Vivienne Westwood dress, what a wonderful experience. Or it is; how can you have done this to a historic building, this is not what history should be about, we couldn't see where the historic objects were and there is no in between.

(22.16)

JG. So the people who are negative about it, what the general feed from them?

AK. It tends to divide up onto a couple of things that particularly annoys them. Perhaps the first and there are a number we are trying to alleviate this, but the one we know there isn't a real problem with the experience, but people's expectations of what they are coming to see. Trying to manage people's expectations before they arrive and explain what it is they are coming to and that is far more difficult than I ever thought it would be. And I think it is because people have a certain view of a historical palace, this is not it, it's not something between exhibitions, theatre and introduced contemporary fashion into the palace, that is not what most people come to a royal palace for or expect. So if you haven't managed to reach them before they get here and they have come to the exhibition not realising that then they are bound to be disappointed at the other end if that is what they want.

(23.52)

JG. So it is people who are expecting a more traditional view of a historic royal palace that are then disappointed when it is not?

AK. Yes, what is all this modern rubbish inside, why have you put it in here, I couldn't see the palace because of all these things. And you have probably noticed the lobby we have people approaching visitors and welcoming them and saying have you heard about the Enchanted Palace, it is not a usual experience. But you can get people who have gone through that but are still surprised at the other end. They have walked through the black tree roots and seen the mould on the wall and just thought; that is not a place and just walked past it and they think this is not a palace, this is not what I come to see. So that is one problem that we have; this is not what I came to see! The other one is that where has the history gone? You have removed all the history? Now as I mentioned, in part we have had to remove some of the objects but on the other hand we have left a lot of the history there. The rooms themselves, all the beautiful ceilings are still there, the state bed in Marys bedroom, the busks of the philosophers, the paintings on the wall, Victoria's bed, the wedding painting. There is lots of history there. What I don't think people realise, and they therefore associate to Enchanted Palace, is that in the king's estate rooms you have rooms that never would have been filled with furniture. That is not what they were designed for, they were designed as social reception spaces in which you would hold events, like the kings drawing room, in the drawing room only the King and Queen would have sat down, so there was no need for fussy furniture, so they would have been on the ground very empty spaces but very grand, all around big beautiful ceilings to look at. So the combination of a palace which traditional has had

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these empty rooms then the project on top, people can't understand what is down to Enchanted Palace and what is Kensington as it always would have been.

(26.22)

JG. So they are struggling to see what is the real Kensington and what is the theatrical layer?

AK. Absolutely to the extent that our explainers have told us that one visitor thought Wildworks theatre company had painted the ceilings and the walls! I certainly would never imagined that people would have that level of difficulty in differentiating between the two elements, so it has been a really intriguing piece of learning for us; that it is that hard for people to separate and perhaps that is about peoples historical knowledge and familiarity with different types of decoration than anything else.

(27.09)

JG. Do you think that is because it attracting a new type of visitor that wouldn't traditionally have come to Kensington.

AK. Well that it definitely is. But what I don't know and I don't think we have the statistics to show, is who are unable to distinguish between the two. So I'm not absolutely sure if it's the new or the traditional audiences. Kensington's audiences have tended to be a lot of foreign visitors, demographically a little bit older, the proportion of woman is high, largely attracted by Diana and the dress collection. So whether it's the traditional, and you could imagine the foreign visitors. As you would think if you have visited historical sites before you could distinguish, or whether it is the new audience who are not used to going to historic sites.

(28.16)

JG. Who do you think this new audience compromises of?

AK. The number of families that we see going round has gone up immeasurably, young children in Kensington never used to be part of our audience and that has increased fantastically. Students, fashion students, art students and one way of gaging that without even looking at the evidence, is looking at how it is represented on line. Looking at these blogs and twitter, seeing that it has increased and is totally different. And an audience that we had tried to capture is the type of person that goes to the 'V&A Late' and I know that sort of includes students, but young professionals who perhaps didn't come to Kensington in the past as that is the kind of thing my mum would do on a day trip. And again, there was one very nice piece written on a website, I think it's called 'the Woman's Room' and they are a website for woman over 35: things they might do or be interested in. So certainly all of those audiences. What in HRP we might categorise as families audiences are called 'cultural families' and the other two groups are cool rejecters, so people who would have given Kensington a wide birth as it's not for us.

JG. Its good name for it, you get all kinds of groupings, the National Trust has their own groups.

AK. Yeah. The other interesting thing has been though, that you can't stereotype the kind of people who will dislike this. So we might have thought oh it will be all the older people who will think this is not for them. But there have been plenty of occasions where older people have been more delighted by it than their younger counterparts. We had entries in the visitor's book saying, I visited Enchanted Palace for my 80th birthday and I loved it. One of my colleagues had a theory that there is a group in the middle about 45-60 who hate it but on either side they think it's wonderful, perhaps that's too simple a view but it is very much about attitude and somebody who is willing to look at it in a different way. And perhaps our biggest barrier is this view that people have of what a palace is, or is about and some people are happy and enjoy having their view challenged and changed and others just don't want to do that.

(31.42)

JG. So what about the people who are enjoying it, the positives?

AK. I think the looking at history in a different way and lots of museums have really taken this on board in the last 15 years or so. So we have begun to look at different learning styles and I know the V&A were like a case study in; we are not going to make this about reading text and we are going to cater for

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different learning styles, and I think the same is true of historic buildings. There has been one set way of trying to represent them to people and we tried very hard to remove some of the traditional modes of interpretation and use other methods of doing that. That has ranged from, in a sense the contemporary exhibitions are like levels of interpretation so the William Tempest dress, visitors begin to look at that and they begin to get a sense of Victoria's story and it is difficult to judge how much they get that and I know that they don't always necessarily get all of the story. But by putting a modern intervention into a historic space we are getting visitors to think; well why is that there, what is that trying to tell us about Victoria. And I suppose overwhelmingly what people have found really positive is the personal, and that has been the emphasis on the personal stories of the people who lived here and engaging with the lives of individuals. Whether that be; the sadness, or the happiness, the strangeness of these stories, the princess and the people who lived at Kensington. But also the interaction with the explainers and the detectors. Time and time again we see how much they have enjoyed talking to the explainers and hearing about the stories. Visitors reaction to the detectors is perhaps a little more mixed and again, some love it as a piece of theatre and the fact they are a little ambiguous and that their role is a little undefined. Other people find that a little bit frustrating and they can't work out what they are doing and it is not adding to their historical experience. I suppose again, the reason that people responses are more mixed to the detectors is because they are not what people would expect to find here. As I say the explainers role is a sort of enhanced version of what they would be doing anywhere, people expect there to be people in the palace telling them about the history. They don't necessarily expect to find strange people in grey walking around doing little bits of theatre and for some people that is wonderful, for other people what is going on here?

(35.37)

JG. What has been the industries response to this, what is their feedback?

AK. It depends what industry you are talking about here because we are joining museums and theatre and perhaps I am better placed to talk about the museum industry. We have had an increasing number of peer groups coming round wanting to see Enchanted as a what are you doing here and could we apply this to anything we are doing in our places of work. So Manchester Art Gallery, Museum of London, V&A, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, have all been to see Enchanted Palace. And I think are looking at it as a case study of, is there anything useful we can take away from this experience. Apparently, the Museums Journal is going to review it in next month's journal. I hope that will be good. There was a nice blog pieces, I will try and send you the link, from the Museum Insider which was someone that writes on museums issues and he wrote about it and was very upbeat which was great. Anyone else, and actually yes, one of my colleagues is running a day here about theatrical interpretation or I suppose, theatre in historic buildings and it's a sort of a conference, if I send you his email, you might want to get in contact with him. So we are going to talk about Enchanted Palace in that. I think that as I say, people have been really fascinated by it as a project and thinking about could we use anything. We are not planning, as some papers have decided to write, rebranding Kensington palace as the Enchanted Palace and we are not intending to have birch trees and toy soldiers all the time. But we do think there are some really interesting things that we could take forward and use in the future, things that we have done differently with Enchanted and we could take forward to how we tell history in the future. So as I say, they might not be the theatrical props if you like but the method of conveying using the explainers in this new role, seeing if there is ways in which performance can be worked into things in a regular basis. But the big problem with performance is the cost of people. The use of film has been really successful in Enchanted Palace, so the silhouettes of the dancing princesses and other places where it is used to create affect. Just how can you interpret these palaces different, do you need to rely on the traditional text panels, and labels and audio guides?

(40.28)

JG You have answered another one of my questions before I even ask it, which is there any of this you would take forward?

AK. At the beginning of next month we are having the first look at the legacy of Enchanted Palace for Historical Royal Palaces, what do we do from here?

JG. When you were developing this, were you aware of any criticism or problems that you may have?

AK. We knew it wasn't going to be something that everybody would enjoy. We tried very hard to make sure there was provision for our foreign visitors, so the quest leaflet is in 7 languages, as are the stories of the princesses. What we perhaps weren't prepared for was, we didn't realise the dichotomy of opinion and the strength of opinion people would feel, that really did take us by surprise and particularly the aggression in the negative comments. So people that it very personally, as if you have done this just to offend them or to insult them with some of the people who don't like. There are some people who really feel this is just not the way it should be done. Which in part is very frustrating and disappointing and our front of house teams have very nobly coped with this criticism on the front line. But on a more positive note to provoke feeling like that does suggest that you are doing something very new and different and that it really is changing the way people are thinking about interpreting a historic building. Coupled with the other, super positive responses we have had from people, we know then that it's not all terrible and bad and that this is really helping people to engage with history. There just is some people who this isn't how they want to engage with history. So you see children go round and the delight they take from finding the names of these princesses, actually hinting them out. Then interacting with a detector who might hand them an oak leaf and tell them to look after it. It's like the piped piper of hamlet sometimes, seeing them following them around. That is really exciting and then you get questioning what is a valid experience to take away? Some people might say if I haven't learnt 10 facts about Kensington Palace then why did I bother coming here. Or I want to learn about the history. But what we are trying to find out is: is it just as valid having found out how excited Victoria felt on the day she found out she was queen, or Marys terrible sadness about not having any children or the national tragedy of Princess Charlottes death in childbirth at the age of 21. Of course emotion is much more a slippery idea than a fact that says; so and so was born in 1819 but even with historical facts people can misremember them. So I think trying to get that sense over this is a valid experience.

(44.47)

JG. So you think that emotional response is a valid experience?

AK. Yes. I think people are fascinated by people. People love reading biographies and what fascinates them about royalty and celebrities is the dichotomy; they love the fact that they are different but they love things they can connect to. And I think human emotion is a really good way of connecting because everyone can empathise with feeling sad or happy or jealous or lonely. And these people felt all of that but they also lived in this really strange world that if you tried to make it up you couldn't. I mean Queen Victoria's mother, perfect wicked step mother character, almost like a figure from Snow White, making Victoria share a bedroom with her until she is 18 years old, making her walk down the stairs holding someone hand. It's fantastic stuff and that is both really different from most people's experience of childhood but you can really sympathise with what a young girl must have felt like to constantly be watched and protected and grow up in this environment.

(46.42)

JG. It is really interesting as the way I am considering applying scenographic principles is looking at the values which visitors take and one of those, the one I see as the key with applying theatre is emotional value.

AK. I think that is very much what we are trying to do with all of this.

JG. Something I started to ask earlier and sad we would come back to: was there any inspirations for this project, any guidance or precedents?

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AK. As I say trying to come up with something that in a sense gets even close to it we haven't really thought of anything. In a sense it has been some elements from theatrical stuff and some from museum historic houses. So these are in no particular order, but things we have been inspired by are: Mask of the Red death at Battersea Arts Centre by a company called Punchdrunk. It was a piece of theatre in a building. I didn't see it but how I wish I had as everybody else who has seen it. But if you Google it, it was a classic promenade performance using a building which in fact Wildworks were involved in.

Fashion at Belsay Hall, for use of a historic building as a space for contemporary art and fashion and in fact it was one of a series where the curator Judith King takes contemporary art and design and puts it in a historic interior. In a similar way to Jeff Koons had a thing at Versa recently and in a sense it is almost a trendy thing to do now. This year The Vine a national trust property in Hampshire is doing something similar, so that idea of mixing the historical and the modern. But for us fashion at Belsay because it was fashion. Tim Walker photographer, a fashion photographer who does amazing fairy-tale like photography in often very grand spaces but with that sense of the strange almost brother Grimm, Tim Burton-esque. The Telling Tales exhibition at the V&A last year, which was about fairy tale in contemporary design that was something we were interested to see. It felt like from December 2008 that fairy tales were the thing to do, to the point where we wondered if we had missed the mark with this. But then it moved beyond this idea simply of fairy tales so that is certainly there. I would hope it's not a Disney fairy tale but a Brothers Grimm, Tim Burton sort of fairy tale. Anything else? I can't think of any other major things as it was really difficult to think of anything similar. Since we have done it and these were working in it at the same time as ours, there was a little exhibition organised by Central St Martin's students at Stafford Terrace, which is just down the road. They put contemporary fashion into the historic interior and that ran until the middle of June. I don't know if you have heard of the exhibition at Blythe House called The Concise Dictionary of Dress. That is an exhibition that takes 11 definitions of dress and has used Blythe house, which is the V&A store, it's an old post office sorting office. Used that as a backdrop to the series of 11 installations which respond to those definitions. You have to be taken on a guided tour and it sort of comes almost a piece of theatre. It's an unusual experience as the groups are really tiny, I went with a friend and there was only 3 other people, so there was only 5 of us. And the guide is there merely to guide you and enhance the definition, you look at the installation and you feel incredibly self-conscious and you are not sure if you are responding to the installation, the definition or the building. It's almost like a piece of theatre about viewing things in museums. I went to a talk given by the curator and the psycho analyst who wrote the definitions and there were a lot of things that intrigued me but weren't answered. It would be interesting to know to what extent they felt they tried to make it a piece of theatre if that was the experience they were trying to achieve.

(52.54)

JG. What role do you think the objects and the original building play and how have you kept those a part of Enchanted Palace?

AK. Well I was having an interesting debate with one of my fellow curators the other week about this; not giving information directly with an object and what message that was giving to a visitor. He was a little anxious that by doing that you were blurring the edges and was that perhaps a step too far. But I was arguing for Wildworks and the whole process of creating this, the very spaces and the very space and the objects were key to this. It wouldn't have worked if we had stripped out all of the historic objects and tried to put replicas objects in and at no point did we try to put in replicas. For us, for example with a knitted throne, that is very obvious it is not the throne that is meant to be there. So if it has been added it's not meant to be exactly as it was. The toy soldiers are plastic soldiers that are ten a penny, they're not the type of tin soldiers that William might have played with and even if we don't agree with it, what they have done is try and enhance the historic objects that are there. So some might argue that by reducing the lighting on something or surrounding it by brambly barriers you have taken

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away its beauty or its mystery. But for us that was partly to show it in a different light but concentrating on the objects that were there and the way that the explainers and the detectors interacted with them, really helped to draw that out. So for us it was really about using the palace and the objects as a backdrop for the Enchanted Palace and it wouldn't have worked anywhere else. You couldn't have done the Enchanted Palace in a theatrical set and you couldn't have really done it in another palace, I don't know if I could imagine it at Hampton Court or the Tower of London. I mean the Enchanted Palace is Kensington.

JG. That has all been very useful and very in-line with what I am doing

AK – well if you have any other questions then please let me know, and from our point of view we would be really intrigued to see and to know more about your research as we are really very fascinated by the way in which these two things can work together and that connection between theatre and museums.

END OF DISCUSSION

**Interview with Sue Hill
Wildworks, Project leader for Enchanted Palace
Conducted via telephone on 05.08.2010**

JG. You are creative director is that correct?

SH. Well Bill is creative director of Wildworks and I am one of the core team in Wildworks but I was kind of project leader of Enchanted Palace for the early part of the project.

JG. {Explains a little about background of research- how first trained and practiced in theatre design, moved to interior design and now looking at how scenographic principles can be applied to museum spaces. So Enchanted Palace is very relevant to that}.

JG. I have spoken with Alexander Kim and she told me a lot about the project but I thought I would like to get a theatre insight on what it was like. Have you or Wildworks theatre worked in the museum sector before?

SH. No but I have been working for the last 10 years with the Eden Project so it's not a museum but it is in the sense of its interpreting content. I was artistic director there from 2000-2006/07 and I was working with Eden developing their interpretation strategy and commissioning artists and playing with the tone of voice and that sort of stuff. That fed straight into the work at Kensington Palace, so the way we start to deal with and manipulate sensual experience and emotional experiences into meaningful things for visitors. Because at Eden we started with a very urgent set of messages that we had to tell and I think what is difficult is that you are working with people who have a huge amount of knowledge, so at Eden it was scientists and at Kensington its curators and historians. They want to transmit this stuff and part of my job at Eden and at Kensington is to go 'well that isn't education' telling people things isn't it. The experience at the Eden project though it's very different lump of content as its to do with sustainability and human beings relationship to nature , completely different point of reference but the means of how we were going to deal with it were the same. Which was that we wanted to use sensual, emotional experience, we wanted to work in the affective domain rather than the didactic domain, and that was our starting point really.

(4.34)

JG. Great so could you tell me a little about the project? Alexander told me that they approached you (Wildworks theatre) and that it escalated from there.

SH. Yes, escalated is a good word for it. I'm assuming that Alexander told you what their conundrum was? That they had this big capital build as they had been given Margaret's state rooms from the Queen and they did the big review and decided that they had to spend £12million on stuff, and they thought they were going to have to close the palace. Then Joanna, who was the lead curator, an extraordinary person, she came up with this idea that they could keep open this suit of the state apartments which is like a tenth of the palace footprint, it's like 22 rooms, a tiny amount of the palace, but they thought they could keep those open during the build but that wasn't enough to charge admission for. So she came up with this idea that they could work with some fashion designers, as they have this intense relationships with some designers as they (Kensington) hold the worlds collection of costumes and they have a lot of stuff, the historic, the baby clothes, the wedding dresses, the dress that Victoria wore the first day she met the council as queen and William IIIs underwear and it's got the coronation regalia. So designers use the palace as a resource for research, and so Joanna thought there could be some pay back here and get some key designers to come in and help out and do a bit of interpretation for this interim period. I think the idea that they came to us with was that they were going to do a sort of fairy tale thing, maybe princessy fairy tales like Cinderella, and they came to us looking for performers who were happy to work in a sight specific way. I think they looked at a few companies, I think they had looked at Punchdrunk and Knee high and then they came to see our work in the Royal Naval Dockyard in Plymouth, called a

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Beautiful Journey. They came to see us and asked if we would supply performers, and we said we didn't really do that, but what we did was that we made worlds. We create whole worlds and we were interested in more than just the acting bit and in fact that is in some ways is the least interesting bit to us. We are interested in the audience and the space and objects they saw, what they heard and what they experience, obviously the performers are a real important part of that experience but it would be wrong to say they are the most important part of that. And I think they were taken back by that, I think they had thought about some other people they might involve in the work. I think the things that really sold it to them was, well there was 2 things that we came up with early on, that I think Joanna an Alexander and the rest of the team decided that we were the company they wanted to go on the journey with. They had been telling us and talking about fairy tales and showed us some artist visualisations they had done which was foxes dressed up in hunting jackets and sparkly things and very fantasy. Also we had gone on a bit of a trawl around the palace and Joanna and Alexander had gone around the rooms with us and we stood there and listened to the stories of the people who had lived in those rooms. We went away and we did some writing and we said we don't need to bring in a fairy story, you have the wonderful stories of these sad princesses' and a court who keep a feral child as a pet, the princess who tried to run away and married for love and died a year later. You don't need to bring in fairy stories, if we did this we want to use your stories and they were kind of gobsmacked that was possible and they hadn't thought that was something that would be desirable. The other thing we came up with which was something they had been threatening about, was that they wanted to make this fairy tale place in the context o f a building site, where there was going to be lots of noise and vibrations and the whole palace is going to be covered by dust sheets and there was going to men in high-vis' jackets and hard hats stomping around. and they couldn't imagine how a fairy tale thing could work in that context. We came up with this story that it was the work that was making that happens, that they were shaking up the walls and setting the stories free and that the building work was shaking the stories and the memories and the dreams free and off on their own journey around the first floor of the state apartments. Again I think that for them made a holding form for the whole thing and made sense of the experience and they thought about how they could sell that to their senior exec but also how it would play out with the public, that it would make sense and that one idea wouldn't eat the other. At that point they weren't talking to anyone else, we knew it was us or nobody and they asked us to come up with a more detailed proposal and they were really great, they told us what the budget was and we hadn't fully understood how much of that money would have to be spent on shifting stuff around and making things secure and how expensive it is in a heritage context. You can't take a painting off the wall without it costing you a thousand pounds. And I think we liked each other and trust each other and knew we could do something beautiful and have fun and it would be exciting and interesting and we would get windows on each others worlds and it would be a journey worth taking. So that was it, it was an exciting prospect and that is how we took our first steps on the journey and we had the first meeting back in June.

JG. So it was quite a short process?

SH. Yeah it was a short lead in so we did a lot of intense devising and budget wrangling through the autumn. And oh, the other thing we said we wanted to do was; we always work with the place and we make theatre and event of place but it isn't just the environment that is important but the people of the place. Wherever we work we try and locate the communities or the individuals who belong to that place and they might literally live there, or they might be transgressive. We have done work in quarries where people are there illegally, riding motorbikes around the place but they are still off the place and we try and work with them and include them and their stories, their ideas, their memories, their values and they sometimes take part in the pieces of work that we do. We talked to the Palace about who their communities are and they talked about some at Nottinghill Gate and they have got strong relationships with Swinthom in the East End and Spittle fields. But the community that we ended up working with

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were the warders; the people who are in the space with the visitors and the conservators, the people who look after the fabric of the building and all the precious things that are in it. They became our source material and also we worked really intensely with them, so from September through until March we were working with them, kind of horse whispering them that this is a good thing to do. There was a lot of resistance, they were really distressed and upset about the whole thing. But gradually getting them on side and being led by them about what was relevant and what wasn't and what would work and what was the boundaries that could take down and those that couldn't; that was taken from them. So that was the other key thing, we worked with that team and they are sort of the jewel in the crown, the explainers, as they are now explainers rather than wardens and they are absolutely fantastic, they are brilliant a real privilege to work with them. The conservers we started working with later in the process. We started the main physical building of stuff in January and the first team went on sight on Valentine's Day and we basically divided all the room up between three designers; Bill Mitchell, another and myself. We each took a suite of rooms and the rooms that I had could be worked on early. So the ticketing room as it was closed to the public at the time and the council chamber where the Diana and Margaret dresses are was closed to the public. So we started installing stuff on site on February 14th so we started to have a much more intensive relationship with the conservators, as we were trying to work out where could do things in the buildings; where we could saw things up, where we could do hot works, what were the limitation with the materials we could bring on site. We had already been working with them as we wanted to bring a lot of organic material in, taxidermy stuff and all that had to be frozen for two weeks. They have this big freezer at Hampton Court and we had to work out this process of freezing for all this stuff, so we had already a formal relationship with them. Then we came on site and it was full on and we were working with the conservors on a daily basis, working out how to do things and how you can attach things to the buildings and what was permissible and what wasn't. To start with it was nothing was allowed and then gradually it became a creative process where we would talk about what we wanted to do and then together we would work out how we could do it. So it was a really steep learning curve on both sides.

(16.43)

JG. Yes, that was one of my questions, which was what were the limitations on this project compared to what you may normally encounter?

SH. In some way very similar to working with the Royal Navy , very strict protocols to do with health and safety and because of part of the dock yard we were working with heritage buildings, so restrictions on what you could do with the building. In the palace also a whole set of stuff to do with dignity and appropriateness as it is still a Royal household and there is still royalty living there and because the histories are the stories of the ancestors of our own dear Queen. So there were things that were sensitive and difficult and some things were surprising. In the room of enlightenment where Steve Jones hats were. When he came around he was fantastic, when he came, with hats being small things, we thought he might take a small room, you know the dining room or one of the room in the Queens apartment. But he was like no, hats are ideas, they are things of the air. When he saw the presents chambers with all the busts of the scientist of Newton and so on, he wanted to put hats on the busts and we thought it was a great idea but that was not to be, it was considered to be disrespectful and I think what we ended up with was better. They were flying in the air like ideas, which was great but just clocking those sensitivities. There was a deal of sensitivities about the stories, that was another starting point, I should have said. One of the first things we did when we got the commission was Mercedes Camp who is one of the writers and a core member of the company. She wrote these mythic stories and she did an amazing amount of research and digging around through the real histories and then wrote the stories that were mythologized versions, so taking the essence of the story and making it mythic. That was kind of easy for the historic princesses but it got harder for Margaret and Diana and we knew they were really keen for us to have Diana exhibited as so many visitors come to see Diana, but I don't

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think we understood the kind of hypersensitivity of the whole thing. I think the Diana story she wrote is one of the best things she has written and she wrote a manual for a princess, and it so delicately touches on her life and it is very beautiful and the ending is really lovely were she goes to her island and that is where she is supposed to be. Because we knew it was sensitive, Joanna sent it to the directors of HRP and we got a go ahead to say that was fine and they were happy with it, then a week later there was an alarm bell had gone off. The director of marketing had gone 'oh my god if this goes out and the press gets hold of it, it's going to be a nightmare and the paparazzi and the press will be crawling over it and it will send out the wrong messages' and we had to be really sensitive with it. And we did manage to get out the stories into the rooms but they weren't there for the press view and all that has been a real eye opener to do with the levels of sensitivity with these people. And it's true of a lot of that heritage sector where they are so used to a particular tone of voice which is respectful and quiet and a bit lavender scented and they kind of know that they have to do something else that the regular visitors are dying, as they are the old folks and they know they have to do something else, but it's hard for them to cope with that, the new voices are going to be challenging and it's going to be transgressive and harder. I think in the end both sides came through and they have coped with it and the stories are there and they are a vital part of the experience and so I think we are happy, it was a scary moment as it was only a couple of weeks before we opened that this challenge came up. Obviously the other limitations are to do with, well we are used to working in industrial sights and it doesn't matter if we drop a scaffold pole or put a window through, as the buildings are derelict. That is generally where we are working for the last 10 years and working in the palace where there is a Vandyke and 40 year old tapestries and the bed that Victoria was sleeping in when she was told she was Queen. All these things are incredibly precious things, some of them literally priceless and we are clattering around in this space with hob nails boots, but I wouldn't put that as a limitation it was just a whole different set of things that we had to think about and be careful about.

(23.20)

JG. That brings me to the next question actually, how did it differ from creating your normal theatre work?

SH. In many ways it was very much the same, different contexts but the process, the journey you go on is the same. We are making a piece of work on the Quay at Cornwall or the Green Line at Cassia or underneath the merchant city in Glasgow. The process is you attend to the space and you go there without lots of preconceived ideas you don't bring things with you, you go with open eyes and an open heart and open ears and you listen and you look and you smell things and people tell you stories and you are open to serendipity, and you are alert to the fact that chance will provide you with interesting encounters. And you sniff around like truffle hounds and things present themselves to you. As a gang you put things together and look at the patterns they make, and you meet really interesting people who then become part of your gang and they offer you new insights and it's a question of going as open as possible and not trying to shut the door too quickly, I think in a lot of creative processes people try and get certainty to quickly and I think one of the great things that will be good at is keeping the door open to the very last minute, so things can come in and we were kind of finding things and opening things and all the way through new things were happening and we were getting new things in and ideas from the explainers and Mercedes would turn up an amazing bit of history or Joanna would find a picture. For instance in the last few weeks of making when we were making the toys, we wanted to make impossible toys for the royal children, so we made a dolls house out of wax and paper animals, and we were trying to source images for this and then Joanna turned up this sketch book from a duchess who had been part of Princess Victoria guardianship. She had done lots of drawings of Victoria as a child and there was a whole sequence of Victoria and her toys and a wonderful one of Victoria with a pull along rabbit. It was just such a wonderful strange little thing that the rabbit was made rather quickly in the last 3 weeks. It's opportunistic but it's not aimless, you know when something sings to you and you start to

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build a very cohesive world and things start to build into your world. If you have got it right, if you got the architecture of your world right, then things present themselves to you and you will go yes this is perfect, or things will present themselves and you can go; actually no this one doesn't fit, so it is a very open, porous process, I think porous is a good word. When we started this work and we were all members of Kneehigh theatre at the time and you go out and because of your insecurity you take things with you to punch into the space and you take a story and things to fit but as time has gone on we have become more confident about just taking a tool kit and believing that you will find treasure. Because if you take things with you, you can't see the treasure, if you take a story with you, you can't see the things that are there and so it's a question of trust and you just have to trust there is treasure there and you have to look and listen and it will present itself to you.

(28.08)

JG. I suppose the museums treasure is perhaps a little more obvious.

SH. Yes but I think the kind of lens that we put on the treasure, which is a very useful lens, is to do with humanity. Because as I was saying, the danger of working with experts is that they have all of this knowledge that they want to transmit. When we first went to the palace we listened to the audio guide and it was an absolute fucking nightmare, it was endless dates and information that nobody needed or wanted to know and it was stuff and kind of interference. Then when you apply the lens which is to do with humanness and you question OK, so where in all this information you are being presented, where is the humanness? And then it kind of jumps straight out at you and the idea that we can have the story about William and Mary and importing a new king from Holland, but when you look at this story, it is of this child, this 14 year old child who is told she is going to marry a man twice her age, who she has never met, who speaks a different language to her and he is coming on a boat in 3 days time she will be married to him. And she cries and she weeps at the thought of this, and you can understand that. You can understand that experience of a teenager with this state burden as she is being married to him to produce an heir and to secure a political relationship between Britain and the Netherlands. If you look at it through a human lens it becomes more immediate and it is easier to think about it in terms of theatre and in terms of narrative and story and so that's applied all the way through. We look at the cabinet of curiosities where there is Caroline and Mary, who because they have such subscribed lives, they try to bring the world in to the castle and this idea that you understand people by the things that they collect and it becomes, I understand this. I mean Caroline is very bright, unlike her husband who is thick as shit and very pompous but she is very bright and sparky and has this really developed aesthetic sense. And you know she had such fun at her swarays of her conversations of Boyle and Newton and collecting these things from all over the world and you understand so much more about the world and that 18th century world by understanding her as a human being. So that was key thing, so when we were looking at all the histories and all the information and the stories to tell, that exercise of applying a lens of humanity on things was a way in which we could most easily frame this work, make it accessible to a new audience. It's really important as we were set the task of bringing a new demographic into the palace and we first went there they had just had their annual stats and only 9% were local to London and the rest were mainly foreign visitors, no return visitors, no repeat visitors, people would just come once. So we had these stats for the first 3 months and the local visitors are now on 24% and now there are lots of families there and young people the whole focus is shifting.

32.30

JG. Why do you think this lens of humanity appeals to the new audience, this new demographic?

SH. Because, this kind of a thing we use at Eden as well, I believe that we are interested in education in the broadest sense of the word, so you're interested in learning. The interesting thing is that the traditional museum world tends to think of learning about being the transmission of facts or the provision of information and one of things we are experimenting with at Eden is that actually, the world has changed, information has changed, in a world where information is one Google mouse click away

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that not the most interesting thing you can do. The most interesting thing you can provide for your visitor is a kind of fertile space where their curiosity is peaked and maybe they start to see patterns and gain understanding rather than getting facts and information, that knowledge is not as interesting as understanding and in my experience as I worked as an actor for hundreds of years, I think I have a very visceral understanding of what turns people on. I know what makes people alert and what makes them learn and what makes them interested or curious and what makes them sad. I believe that real education only ever happens in the presence of emotion, there has to be an emotional transaction happening.

JG. What kind of emotion?

SH. Any emotion, it can be shock it can be humour, the Victorians understood this, they used to beat their children up if they didn't learn their timetables and it can be fear, but there has to be an emotional connection and that it was you are looking for. And that emotion can be provided by a sensual experience, people could feel joy, you can make them laugh, you can make them cross but there has to be some emotion in the engagement or else nothing is going on. We did some research early days at Eden where we looked at other science centres and how they were communicating and we had a couple of really interesting encounters at the London aquarium. We watched this little boy and they had one of those kind of classic didacteractive, interactive displays that were teaching you things, telling you things, fairly close ended. You hit the big red shiny buttons and if you could match the fish with where it lived and then something lit up and showed you what it ate, something dreary like that. There was this child there, this 8 year old boy and he was whacking away at the buttons, having a great time making the lights go off but nothing was going on, no learning was taking place but he was having a good time. But about an hour later we saw the same boy he was queuing up to touch the back of a skate or a ray in one of those touching pools, where you put your hand in and a fish will come up and nibble your fingers. And we watched what happened and it was beautiful, as you knew that of that day's experience the thing that will probably stay with him forever is the feel of that fish touching his finger. Now where that went in terms of what the learning takes out was, my guess is that he would have had a different relationship to the natural world as a result of that encounter, but it's not a quantifiable thing that you can deal with. That's the kind of transformative experience we were interested in creating, rather than being able to test people when they come out. You can test people when you can, when they know how photosynthesis works or at the palace; when they can recite the dates Victoria was on the throne, but what is really interesting is whether people have been engaged by the subject area and has their curiosity been provoked and are they enthusiastic enough about the experience to talk to other people about it and say I never knew that, or isn't that amazing or what a wonderful thing that was. That feels like that's the finest response on a world where information is freely available and you don't have to fight for it anymore. If people want to find out they can do really easily and it's not a privileged thing anymore and so I think our responsibility as a theatre company is to make great theatre. So if you were talking to Bill he is not particularly interested in the educational aspect of it, because of my experience at Eden I am interested in the educational aspect of it and I think our responsibility educationally is to provoke and engage and if we have done our job then people take their own learning journey because of that.

JG. So they have motivated themselves to learn?

SH. Yes

(38.31)

JG. So how do you think you have communicated those stories at Kensington? What did you feel were the best methods for delivering the human stories rather than factual information?

SH. I think it works on lots of different levels. The other thing we were playing at with Eden is that lots of people learn in different ways and you are appealing to different demographics, so you are going to be having 5 year olds and you are going to be having mums and elderly people, and what the marketing

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department at the palace calls 'cool rejecters'. All these people, and historians and the regular palace visitors who are very pissed off about what we have done, but you have all these people and as far as possible you try and make as many layers to the experience as possible, so that everyone can find something that will speak to them. At Eden we would provide comic signage with cartoons on that were engaging to anybody but also serious bits of plant labelling that the serious botanist can go and find out what the Latin name was, and you provide the story tellers who will engage in conversation. As well as music concerts where you get your teens and 20s in, you do it in lots of ways. At the palace it was a much narrower frame than at Eden, as we were looking at a different set of resources and a smaller footprint but you provide experiences where there is intellectual content in terms of the writing Mercedes did and there is visual and aesthetic interest in the fashion installations but also in the installations that Wildworks did. There is serious historical content from the explainers and there is whacky left field stuff from the detectors, who are giving a sort of theatre art experience. So you are working on lots of different levels and I don't think there is one best way, the one thing we do know is that people love different things and that people will say; just anecdotally, my favourite room was the nursery or no I loved being able to sit on the throne, everybody has got a different favourite. The participatory element works really well for families, so the fact that you can open all the doors on the cabinet and poke in, you can sit on the throne and have your two pennies worth, or you can play with the soldier in the gallery of war and play. They work really well for families but an older age group aren't necessary going to, they might find more interest in the tiny lace bonnets that Victoria's children wore of the ridiculously tiny lace gloves that some poor nanny had to force a 3 year olds fingers into. I think the things about this stuff is that, my philosophy of interpretation is; you just do lots and you don't try and force people through one experience, there isn't one take out in it. You provide as much diversity of stimulation and ways in and you know bits of curiosity, but so incidental stuff that will touch some people and not others, because human beings are diverse and the absolute is that there are thousands and thousands of ways of understanding the world and experiencing it and you can't expect there is one correct way of interpreting or seeing it, as that isn't true, it's about diversity.

(43.07)

JG. You mentioned that the existing audience do not like this and there has been some very mixed feedback to the exhibition, what do you think of that?

SH. I think it's great I think it's really good and luckily the director ship at the palace thinks so to. Did you look at the comments book- it's fantastic, there's this dialogue going back on forth, you get someone saying its brilliant and then someone else saying what have you done to the palace and then someone else will have drawn an arrow to that, and say this person needs to get a life, there's this whole dialogue going on. I think it's hard on the ground for the people who are there to handle. It's to do with managing expectations, one of the problems we had, one of the challenges was that we had a really difficult relationship with the marketing department who had got it in their head that they were selling one kind of experience and that has not served us well in people arriving at the palace and think they are coming for one thing, and they are actually getting something very different, that is hard but it's out of our control. So I think our job is to provide the best kind of solution to that.

JG. Do you think the market department was hung up on the traditional experience?

SH. Yeah, well I think they went very much more for the sugary princess thing. But one of the things that needed to explicit was that it was a very active event, it was more like an experience of Punchdrunk than going to look at a series of static cases. That didn't seem to come out and that features nowhere in the marketing, they focused so majorly on the fashion side of things in the lead up to the opening of the palace so I think people were initially shocked that it was so interactive; that they were expected to go off on this quest and to find stuff. Certainly I think it's kind of getting better now that people's expectations are much more in line with what actually happens. So the level of complaints has gone down and the level of enthusiasm has gone up as word of mouth has got out, it's gone viral and people

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know what they are coming for and generally it's a bit more self-selecting. The people who are going to be pissed off by it are not coming, with the exception of the occasional American visitor who's come to see Diana apartments, which they were never going to see anyway so they would have been pissed off before we did Enchanted Palace. They (Kensington) can never do enough Diana stuff to keep the Diana people happy. I think generally that our job wasn't to keep everybody happy and I think they knew that was going to be part of the deal, that if we were going to do this brave thing and all credit to them for doing it, to Historic Royal Palaces as they didn't jerk from it, they were going to do it and it's 2 years of experiment and they weren't going to do it unless they did it properly. I can't imagine how we could have done it in such a way that we wouldn't have pissed off this traditional visitor but I can't imagine another way of doing it, we could have played it safe but we wouldn't have done the beautiful thing we have.

(47.20)

JG. Did you look at the audience as theatre audience rather than a series of museum visitors?

SH. Yes, we thought about people, about human being, we kind of tend not to frame for a particular audience, as we are used to working for people with different ethnic contexts, different cultures as well. You're not doing something as tightly focused as this is a show for young people, we try to make things accessible to human beings, which means you are not specifically framing it for a traditional museum visit, we were thinking about what would touch and reach human beings of different ages.

JG. So more like what would reach the largest audience?

SH. Yes, I think it comes back to that thing that we are trying to tell human stories. So if you are trying to tell a story about the relationship between a child and their parents, these dysfunctional parents, or these children who are 'precious but not loved' as that is something that people can identify with whether you are a child or an adult and you recognise the truth in that relationship. So we have always tended to resist parcelling audiences into horrible market research pockets. Are favourite audience is a really mixed audience, so you got kids there with their parents and elderly people and students and everybody and the more we celebrate diversity and plurality as part of our culture, so we don't countenance the idea that you can parcel off segments of an audience and say well this is for them and this is for them, but actually we want to speak to human beings. If people are prepared to be human beings then they will find something in here, if they have come with another set of expectations then they won't they won't get it. The other thing to say is that we mostly not thinking about the audience when we are making the work. We are mostly thinking about what we are interested in and what excites us and I think that's because it's an artist led process so we are making the piece of work that we are interested in, that we are excited by. There is a part of my brain that is about the interpretation side of things but in terms of the theatre company we are following an artist path which is about following your nose in what excites you and if you believe that if it excites you, it will excite other people as well. So you're not necessarily thinking about what will please an audience but what is fun and exciting for you, and you do that in a very consciously playful way so that you don't exclude the young and the young at heart. You make it as broad a church as you can because it's to do with humanness. I should probably find another word for that.

JG. I have the same problem, I did some research and one of things that came out was that people really valued the human story and how it would have felt and I've tried desperately to find another word for that humanness, so I know what you are trying to talk about with trying to get the research across. Which is the key potential of scenography in museum spaces for me is that theatre is about telling stories and museums are directing themselves more toward that.

(52.38)

SH. Yeah it a narrative and the other thing for us I suppose is that we are not Punchdrunk we are interested in narrative, we are not just interested in the instillation or the image we are really interested in stories and it was the stories I think that we wanted to do this, the stories were so amazing.

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SH. {Offered to send original stories written by Mercedes and some further resources}.

END OF DISCUSSION

Appendix 6- Focus group summary

A focus group was held with a small sample of students from Birmingham City University who recognised themselves as being museum visitors. Fourteen students attended the focus group, there was no incentive to participate but refreshments were provided. The aim of this focus group was to begin investigating common motivations for visiting museums and the outcomes of museum experiences. Because of the opportune sample the results were not intended to be representative of the wider audience of museum visitors. The participants' feedback during the focus group was used to help plan the online survey with museum visitors and select appropriate answer options.

The focus group was audio recorded but was not transcribed verbatim. Notes were taken and the motivations and outcomes were categorised using the proposed value groupings. At the time of the focus group it was still proposed that there were five value groupings. The two tables below show the discussion from the focus group categorised in to the original five proposed value groups.

Why do you go to museums?				
Intellectual	Interpersonal	Physical	Emotional	Community
- To learn - To enhance my existing knowledge - Interested in the subject - Find out specific information - To see a specific exhibition - Curiosity - Learn about other cultures	- Spend time with friends/ family - Interact with other people		- Have fun - To de-stress - Be entertained - Be surprised	- Because it is a cultural landmark
Other answers:				
- Day out - Kill time - Was made to go - To look at objects		- To say I have been - Status. - People watch		

How do museums make you feel?					
	Intellectual	Interpersonal	Physical	Emotional	Community
Positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to date - Educated - Enlightened - Informed - Clued up - Aware to new things - Curious - Open to new ideas - Motivated to learn more - Stimulated (mentally) 	- Conversant		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surprised - Shocked - Relaxed - Peaceful - Excited - Offered escape - Calm - Untroubled - Good about yourself - Ambitious 	
Other answers:					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anticipating - Contextualised 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determined - Engaged - Impressed 		
	Intellectual	Interpersonal	Physical	Emotional	Community
Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confused - Over informed - Stupid - Undermined - Embarrassed (that don't know more) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harassed - Hassled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exhausted - Disorientated - Strained - Tired - Lost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Angered - Nervous - Shocked - Anxious 	
Other answers:					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skint - Disappointed - Bored 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frazzled - Unimpressed 		

Appendix 7- Online questionnaire form



Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey on visiting museums. This survey forms part of a PhD research project at Birmingham City University. This information will be used to help find methods of improving the experience of museum visiting. No sensitive information about your person is being stored or used and all responses will be securely held and disposed of appropriately after use.

If you have any questions please contact jenniespen@gmail.com

If you would like to receive a summary of the findings of this study please tick here and provide your email or postal address below.[†]

Section 1: About you.

For authorisation purposes only, please can you fill in today's date:

Q1. Age: Under 18 18-30 31-50 51-70 over 70

Q2. Gender: Female Male

Q3. What kind of site or attraction do you visit most often? (Please select only one)

Museums Art Galleries Parks /gardens Theme parks/ fairs Historical sites

[†] Other[†] (please specify).....

Q4. Why do you visit this kind of site/ attraction most often?

.....

Section 2: Your museum experiences

Museum includes: all sites listed as museum, zoos, aquariums and living history sites.
It does **not** include: art galleries or cultural history sites (such as churches, castles or parks)

Q1. Can you briefly sum up how visiting a museum makes you feel?

.....
.....

Q2 What is the best thing about visiting a museum?

.....
.....

Q3 What is the worst part of visiting a museum?

.....
.....

Q4. From the list select and number using the scale all you feel applies to you when visiting a museum. Only number feelings that are applicable to you.

1= always 2= often 3= sometimes 4= occasionally 5= rarely

energised † exhausted † enlightened † bored † impressed † disappointed † moved
† disinterested † up to date † harassed † comfortable † disorientated † stimulated †
confused † fulfilled † intimidated † excited † annoyed † engaged † crowded †

Q5. Is there anything else that you feel when visiting a museum?

.....
.....

Q6. How do you think museums should make you feel?

.....
.....

Section 3: Your visiting habits

Q1. Who do you usually visit museums with?

Alone With family † With partner † With school/ college group †

With friends † Other† (Please specify)

Q2. Why do you normally visit museums?

From the list below select and number using the scale all the reasons that you visit museums. Only number reasons that apply to you.

1 = always

2 = often

3 = sometimes

4 = occasionally

5 = rarely

kill time learn new things was recommended be entertained spend time
with friends/ family for food/ drink enhance existing knowledge lots of people
you know have been to de-stress interact in a group to get out interested
in topic a tourist attraction personal connection friend or family member wanted

Q3. Please give details of any other reasons why you visit museums:

.....
.....

Q4. Approximately how often do you normally visit museums?

Two or more times a month †

Three – six times a year

One or two times a month

Once – three times a year

Six – nine times a year †

Once every one – three years †

‡

Q5. When was the last time you visited a museum?

Within the last week †

Within the last year †

Within the last 30 days †

Within the last 3 years

Within the last 6 months

Over three years ago †

†

Appendix 8- Results from online questionnaire

Section 1- About you				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	age	gender	attraction visit most often	Why do you visit this type attraction most often?
E001	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	To see some green in London
E002	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	
E003	18-30	F	art galleries	
E004	18-30	M	parks/ gardens	
E005	18-30	M	theme parks/ fairs	Greatest personal appeal, more fun, greater range of things to do
E006	18-30	F	theme parks/ fairs	
E007	18-30	M	art galleries	
E008	31-50	F	theme parks/ fairs	
E009	18-30	F	art galleries	I love art
E010	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	
E011	18-30	F	art galleries	
E012	31-50	F	parks/ gardens	
E013	18-30	F	museums	Probably museums AND historical sites, really. Am geekily interested in learning about the past. Museum exhibits have more of a story behind them than exhibits in art galleries.
E014	31-50	M	museums	very interested in looking at historical artefacts in a peaceful environment
E015	18-30	F	art galleries	
E016	31-50	F	art galleries	
E017	51-70	M	historical sites	I grew up during the second world war and was always attracted the why, what and whens of that period. This extended into other historical periods. I live in Pennsylvania, USA and travel 90 minutes to the Civil War battlefield at Gettysberg. I get a sense of being there at the time of the event when I visit. In my native England (Yorkshire) the country itself is a museum.
E018	18-30	F	art galleries	
E019	51-70	F	parks/ gardens	
E020	31-50	F	historical sites	
E021	51-70	M	historical sites	Our heritage means a lot to me; it's a part of what has formed us.
E022	31-50	F	museums	whole family entertainment
E023	18-30	F	art galleries	
E024	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	
E025	31-50	M	other (YSP)	Lunch, walk, scoff at art, meet in laws halfway.
E026	18-30	M	art galleries	
E027	18-30	F	art galleries	

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E028	18-30	F	museums	im an archaeology/ palaeopathology PhD student so I go for research and just for fun! I also did my masters dissertation on human remains in museums in England and Greece so I visited about 40 that year.
E029	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	relaxation and photography
E030	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	
E031	51-70	M	art galleries	
E032	18-30	F	art galleries	
E033	31-50	M	museums	Entertainment - a lazy weekend activity
E034	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	
E035	18-30	F	art galleries	
E036	under 18	M	museums	broad knowledge
E037	18-30	M	parks/ gardens	To close the nature, and to relax
E038	31-50	M	historical sites	
E039	18-30	F	art galleries	
E040	18-30	M	historical sites	
E041	18-30	M	museums	I like to see and be educated by past & present, and also like to take my son o educate him also.
E042	18-30	F	historical sites	
E043	18-30	F	art galleries	
E044	under 18	M	other (sporting event)	
E045	31-50	F	art galleries	v interested in history of art and love looking at paintings, painting techniques, styles etc...
E046	31-50	M	art galleries	
E047	31-50	F	art galleries	
E048	over 70	M	parks/ gardens	
E049	31-50	F	parks/ gardens	child friendly
E050	18-30	F	art galleries	
E051	18-30	M	historical sites	
E052	18-30	F	art galleries	
E053	31-50	M	historical sites	interest, keeping up to date, fresh air
E054	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	
E055	31-50	F	theme parks/ fairs	
E056	31-50	F	historical sites	
E057	18-30	F	museums	I like to find out about the history of the place I live or am visiting, and to see tangible objects on display, eg a trip down a mine shaft for a mining museum etc.
E058	51-70	F	art galleries	
E059	18-30	M	art galleries	
E060	31-50	F	parks/ gardens	
E061	31-50	M	parks/ gardens	Cheap day out, give kids chance to run around.
E062	18-30	F	art galleries	
E063	51-70	F	art galleries	
E064	18-30	M	theme parks/ fairs	
E065	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	outside

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E066	18-30	F	historical sites	
E067	18-30	F	theme parks/ fairs	
E068	31-50	F	museums	interest and to learn about new things
E069	18-30	F	art galleries	Interest in art and social aspect with some friends and family
E070	under 18	M	other (cinema)	
E071	under 18	F	theme parks/ fairs	
E072	under 18	F	parks/ gardens	
E073	under 18	F	art galleries	for the swings
E074	under 18	F	theme parks/ fairs	
E075	under 18	M	theme parks/ fairs	
E076	under 18	F	parks/ gardens	
E077	under 18	F	theme parks/ fairs	they are fun, a good day out
E078	under 18	M	parks/ gardens	
E079	under 18	M	theme parks/ fairs	
E080	under 18	M	theme parks/ fairs	
E081	under 18	M	parks/ gardens	love history
E082	31-50	F	parks/ gardens	
E083	51-70	F	historical sites	
E084	31-50	F	historical sites	
E085	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	It is relaxing and there are so many close to wherever I am, It's great to have an experience of nature when you live in the city.
E086	31-50	M	museums	mainly to satisfy a sense of boyhood nostalgia which I find inspires my own creativity and also just a basic interest in the history of the area where I grew up and the British Isles in general.
E087	18-30	M	parks/ gardens	
E088	18-30	M	art galleries	
E089	18-30	M	other (internet)	I'm a passionate person about music and so I like to be kept up to date in this field, I do visit museums and art galleries sites but this is like a third priority cuz I like to check out about artists found there and not the actual museums.
E090	18-30	*	historical sites	
E091	18-30	F	historical sites	
E092	31-50	F	historical sites	
E093	51-70	F	historical sites	Just joined the National Trust, so trying to go to as many properties as possible in this year. Also very interested in History, Gardens and Architecture.
E094	18-30	F	historical sites	
E095	31-50	F	parks/ gardens	
E096	31-50	F	parks/ gardens	
E097	18-30	F	theme parks/ fairs	Fun. Outdoors
E098	31-50	F	art galleries	
E099	31-50	F	art galleries	
E100	31-50	F	theme parks/ fairs	

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E101	31-50	M	art galleries	I am most interested in contemporary arts. They are easy to visit and often provide delightful and thought provoking experiences.
E102	31-50	F	art galleries	
E103	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	
E104	51-70	F	art galleries	
E105	31-50	F	art galleries	to stimulate thought; to wander round beautiful buildings; to visit the shop/ café.
E106	31-50	F	parks/ gardens	
E107	31-50	F	parks/ gardens	
E108	18-30	F	parks/ gardens	
E109	18-30	M	theme parks/ fairs	Enjoyable and sociable.
E110	18-30	F	museums	I enjoy learning about history and ancient civilization and culture
E111	31-50	M	*	
E112	31-50	F	historical sites	
E113	18-30	F	museums	To gain more knowledge on what's going on within the city or town. It helps me to understand the difference in culture and sometimes even custom.
E114	18-30	M	art galleries	
E115	31-50	F	art galleries	
E116	18-30	M	art galleries	
E117	51-70	M	theme parks/ fairs	For pleasure
E118	31-50	F	museums	professional interest nad general interst

Section 2- Your Museum Experiences

	Q1	Q2	Q3
	Can you briefly sum up how visiting a museum makes you feel?	What is the best thing about visiting museums?	What is the worst thing about visiting museums?
E001	If it's a good museum it makes me feel if it's a good museum it makes me feel like I'm exercising my brain and learning something (for once)I like I'm exercising my brain and learning something (for once)	Seeing something inspiring or interesting that relevant to your life or experiences	Information that's boringly presented and lacking in detail, lack of info, badly written blurbs, too much focus on dates and timelines, poorly laid out with lack of fluid direction in the exhibits, no imagination in the presentation
E002	Cultural! More in touch with the world and satisfied that I've made the effort to go and see something, it's always a reasonably special occasion...either friends or family visiting	Seeing things you've probably never seen before!	Queuing, or when you feel you've not had your money's worth.
E003	Invigorated by what I see, better informed, prompts a more analytical outlook / approach.	Having the opportunity to be exposed to and learn from exhibitions that you wouldn't encounter anywhere else other than in a 'museum'	Having to pay expensive prices for access to certain exhibitions - I wouldn't have a problem with this had I more money!

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E004	Makes me feel like I'm actually learning something. Taking stuff in y'know?	The history of it all. You realise you're part of something MUCH bigger.	Being on your feet all day. Tourists. ...and of course, the expensive shops!
E005	Depends on the museum - Generally intrigued, although a standard museum is quite boring - more recent museums are interesting.	Seeing things I haven't seen before.	Forced routes through a museum - Free motion through the museum should be allowed.
E006	Bored if it's a museum or history place, fun and exciting and if it's a zoo or aquarium	Not a lot really as it isn't my cup of tea!	All the history - Not my bag!
E007	Mostly makes me feel intelligent and interested as I like finding out about old things. Occasionally there are boring exhibitions, which I tire off. Visiting museums reminds me of being a child.	Discovering new things and learning new stuff. Taking time looking at exhibitions.	I feel obliged to be very quiet. Depending on museum, there is sometimes not enough interactivity.
E008	Bored	Café	Boring
E009	Actual Museums make me feel a little less intelligent than an am, zoo's and aquariums I get excited.	feeds my curiosity.	sometimes I feel hurried by the staff.
E010	Interested & enlightened	The History	prices
E011	It is a positive thing to do, you are faced with knowledge and in some cases enjoyment and the surroundings often have a calm relaxed feel to them. It almost feels like a getaway from normality for a short while so can be refreshing.	Sometimes the ambiance. If I can feel relaxed and enjoy my visit then I can in turn enjoy what the museum has to offer. A hectic and busy atmosphere can make the experience stressful.	This also links with the ambience as with Q2. I would also say that upkeep of a museum is important. If things look rundown and badly kept then the experience is disappointing.
E012	Depends on museum... best experiences I've had have been interesting, enchanting and often moving	information given in an interesting and accessible way. seeing things that you would never otherwise have the chance to	sometimes crowded noisy or not a subject I'm very passionate about!
E013	Educated, interested - like I've done something useful with my day!	In a well set-out museum, it's experiencing history/science/whatever, in a more hands-on, memorable way than in books or TV. Bringing the subject to life.	If it is not set out well, it can be dull... Personally, I tend to look at stuff and don't read the huge tracts of text or labels, so for me they are the worst bit, but they can be useful if you are particularly interested in that thing. I think maybe some museums make themselves too 'stuffy' and worthy and put people (especially children) off visiting.
E014	VERY RELAXED, REFRESHED & INVIGORATED	Helps you to focus on things of interest and to enjoy them. Helps me to forfeit the monotony of everyday life etc, so it becomes a form of escapism.	THEY ARE NOT OPEN LATE ENOUGH.CAN BE EXTREMELY BUSY/CROWDED DEPENDING ON WHEN YOU ARE VISITING & IF THEIR ARE ANY SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS ON.
E015	Interested and entertained.	Learning something new, sharing the experience with other people. Observing other peoples' reactions to different things.	Can often be crowded and many charge a lot of money to see certain things.
E016	Informative, but quite formal	learns a lot	can be quite tiring and boring

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E017	I feel that I am part of the museum	Seeing the product of the talent of the artist	Inattentive distractible children.
E018	I sometimes feel intrigued, full of awe, and makes me feel in contact with modern and historical culture	learning something new	the formality of museums can stifle the enjoyment of the exhibits. i have been disappointed at the value for money in some attractions.
E019	Curious - who lived there - what did they do	The range of things to see	Too quiet
E020	Like I'm using my time usefully - I'm educating myself at the same time as enjoying doing something different.	Seeing different stuff - for instance unusual fish at an aquarium - makes you appreciate how wonderful nature can be.Seeing different stuff - for instance unusual fish at an aquarium - makes you appreciate how wonderful nature can be.	Sometimes the exhibits look dusty and uncared for. Or false.
E021	I often feel a sense of awe. I love the discovery of new information. There are usually some things which bore me.	Happening across something awesome	too much emphasis on warfare
E022	The wonder of the different artefacts seen.	learning	sometimes the explanations on artefacts are poor or too lengthy to take in on one visit.
E023	Museums (Like national history or Science) I feel a little patriotic and like I've learnt something (sometimes too much) Zoos and Aquariums are hard as I don't like the captivity side of them, but do feel honoured and enjoy that I can see these animals when I ordinarily wouldn't. If I've explored it all I will feel very tired!	Finding out random fact about an era or animal (and pushing all the buttons to interact with things)	The Zoo etc can be quite expensive, queues to get in, the expensive (sometime poor quality) food inside
E024	Engaged and generally gives me a renewed interest in the subject of the exhibition. Gives me a lot to think about	Displays, information, often am interested in the history and architecture of the building. Gift shop at V&A fantastic, imaginative and really adds to your interest in the exhibition.	Queues, lack of seating areas if you need to rest during the visit. Food can be a disappointment (some cafes are great e.g the V&A) but others not so good Out of date displays with little imagination
E025	Bored unless it's an old castle	lunch or the building, construction, design, history	interactive bollox
E026	Appreciative, happy.	free and peaceful.	screaming kids!!!
E027	Excited	Seeing and learning about new things	Sometimes too long a walk round, also the cost of some exhibitions is very high.
E028	I feel like I can learn whilst picking and choosing based on what aesthetically attracts me and those displays I may be specifically going to see; museums make me happy. It's a relief to learn away from books and journals and be able to browse. Good displays make me feel satisfied because I'm part of a community that can relate its research to the wider public	Being able to browse at leisure away from books and articles. Interactive displays are great - I like seeing kids engage with museums.	Some older museums can be quite 'boring' and lack imagination but I know again that a lack of resources does not help!

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	which interests me. Bad displays bother me, partly because it reminds me that so many museums struggle with funding and resources and secondly, in terms of human remains specifically, a recent exhibition really angered me because their 'interpretation' was poor, misguided and did no justice to the work done by archaeologists and osteologists.		
E029	Nostalgic, happy	leaning about history	having to share the space with other people!
E030	Enjoy the peace and quiet of traditional museums but also enjoy the fun light-hearted atmosphere in museums like the TATE Liverpool	Traditional - quiet contemplation Modern - alternative exhibitions	Some traditional museums have a snotty approach to people disturbing the peace, prices in cafe's are usually incredibly expensive
E031	Varies enormously. Best make me feel I have a new way of understanding something or that I know about something I did not.	Varies - like scholarship and being with unusual things of some old fashioned ones. Like feeling of glimpsing how the people or animals experienced life in some new ones.	VARIES!! I do not like it when piles of 'stuff' is just stacked up with no help to understand. I don't like it when it is just entertainment either.
E032	Exploratory - like a child. Generally relaxed, but sometimes scrutinised. Stimulated, but not always positively- sometimes a bad exhibition will stimulate because it will lead me to think how it could be improved! Beneficent and amazed.	Enjoyment in learning new things or taking part in activities that are out of context or unusual. For instance, i recently visited an exhibition where visitors were encouraged to model little figures out of clay and leave them in different places - this was so much fun! I think that museums have a great potential in making visits enjoyable and memorable like this, removing people from the every day and repositioning them in a new situation to make them think about how they react and why.	Being watched by the security staff and followed around - this makes me feel as though I am a threat to the exhibits and is not very welcoming. Museums are supposed to be places of learning and enjoyment - you can't do either when you are made to feel like a shoplifter! I also dislike very linear exhibitions (the large London ones are bad for this) where you enter at 'the beginning' and there is almost a queue of visitors trailing through to 'the end'. Often, you cannot return once you have left the area. This feels a bit theme park-y and not the experience i look for, but i understand that with popular shows and great crowds, there is little alternative.
E033	I always go with someone else and the museum is a social catalyst to interesting conversation with other people.	Seeing something new to me, or something I knew about explained in an engaging way; specially when the experience adds something beyond the book or video.	The dull bits, which are nearly always because of a lack of info at the level that suits me (based on prior knowledge and mood). When there is not a pyramid of information at different levels, ranging from the obvious down to further reading, then it is extremely likely that the level that is there will not be what suits me.
E034	It depends which museums- for me personally, a museum about trains etc, would not interest me so I would feel bored, agitated. However, museums about ancient civilisations etc, may interest me, encourage me to want to find out more.	learning new, interesting things. they are great for children to learn in a different way- esp. interactive museums	pretending to be interested if you're no
E035	Excited, happy & creative.	The best thing is that they have objects and	Sometimes the process can be too long.

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		things that you wouldn't find anywhere else.	
E036	Stuff	increase knowledge	lots of people
E037	Grandeur ,solemnness	widen my horizon	someone need pay money
E038	Understanding the story from history	learning	walking around to be tired
E039	Like I have done something useful with my day, slightly more educated, interested to find out more about what has intrigued me	how the displays are created	parts that don't interest you - I like museums on specific subjects
E040	Museums make me feel exposed to cultural elements, creativity of the artists - craftsmen, and also to the life experiences of the people during the age that the exhibits refer to. It feels like I have permission to be in contact with another world. Some museums, promote more extensively their exhibits in order to encourage people to join the experience while other provide a totally raw space with the exhibits viewed sincerely in the original state and condition and it depends on the user whether or not he/she decide to join the experience. This refers to freedom of choice within a museum.	The most fascinating thing that helps the museum experience to rise is the arrangement of the exhibitions within the space which creates the flow from one room to an other. In my opinion how the individual spaces are connected is vitally important. Also lighting (natural or artificial) is very important as well as the temperature of the light (artificial).	Maybe not that bad but a little bit inconvenient can be the part right after the entrance where people have to store possible items that they do not allowed to carry into a museums (bags, cameras etc). Sometimes this area is less studied in terms of design and as a result it becomes dysfunctional and congested. Another area is the museum shop, where there is an imaginary sign which says OK NOW WE WANT YOUR MONEY. There is not such a sign actually but the way gifts and other exhibit copies are presented, sometimes looks more like a bazaar. The values of the previous museum experience (which are based in respect for the subject) are totally lost sometimes.
E041	It makes me feel good and refreshed	learning about all sorts of things	the crowd
E042	Excited and invigorated - if the museum is a good one. I normally come away with a greater understanding of whatever their subject matter may be - eg. I didn't want to visit the RAF museum in Cosford having no interest in planes or the RAF, but after being convinced I had a really good time and found myself looking at huge planes for their aesthetic appeal rather than anything else!	Seeing something REAL - whether it's an artefact, a mummy, a priceless jewel, or even a visual demonstration of how a scientific theory works (eg air passing over the wing of a plane). This same reason applies to visiting zoos and aquariums - the sense of awe from being so close to something so amazing!	Some museums are old and run down - the photography museum in Bradford was a MASSIVE disappointment because half the floors were closed and the others were overtly dumbed down for children and even those parts were all broken and out of order. I don't like having to pay to go in, although I don't mind paying for a special exhibition etc.
E043	It depends on the museum - sometimes it can be quite dull and I feel quite tired for no particular reason, other times it can be inspiring.	Learning new things and seeing things that you did already know presented in a new light.	Standing up for hours and having all the information presented to you in the same format e.g. lots of text to read.
E044	Bored and interested	leaving the thing	walking around bored
E045	Interested in culture, history, creativity, ideas..... and curious to find out more.	Discovery, seeing original items / paintings rather than just copies or prints.	queues, or not being able to get in never did see the Terracotta Army! Couldn't get tickets. Too many people at some specific exhibitions.
E046	It depends on the museum really. I enjoy visiting museums, but have also been to some	learning about something	frowning visitor assistants, or ones that won't leave me alone, or badly designed visitor 'workshops'

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	bad ones where they seemed like dead displays without any contextualisation		
E047	Interested in history	Seeing how things were like many years ago	Realising that life was harder back then!
E048	*	*	*
E049	Usually nostalgic in someway, understanding past but also nostalgic for visits I made to these places as a child	Usually discussing historical context of things with my daughter especially if there is promise of cake and tea at the end of it.	When exhibits and presentation look warn out or if you feel like its endless artefacts with no human context or story to aid understanding - this can also go too far to so a tricky balancing act.
E050	Depends on what's on show, I tend to loose interest quite quickly if the exhibition isn't interactive, generally makes me feel like I should know more, appreciate facts that are on show. I always remember the images so that is very important.	Learning new facts, I always think of it as a experience to share with someone, or a group. You can discuss objects etc, makes it more interest.	Repetitiveness, the way in which objects are displayed, I get bored very quickly.
E051	Depends if it's a good museum or a bad one. If the museum is badly curated or doesn't really contain anything of note it can be a frustrating experience. However a well curated museum makes it not only an interesting experience but makes you feel you have not wasted you time and you take a lot more from it.	Learning more about the subject matter your viewing.	Not enough explanation
E052	Interested	looking at stuff.	the other people
E053	Fantastic!	the smell of the air is quite interesting...not the people though.	people farting. terrible really.
E054	Tired	Seeing objects in the flesh	falling into the habit of looking at text without reading it
E055	Theme parks are fun, the rush of the fast rides etc	Spending time with cousins, friends and laughing having fun	The travel, as some are far away or sometimes the food is not so good
E056	Curious and that I should know more about history	The large range of visual stimulants	Things written in original format (eg handwritten letter) and not transcribed so that you can read it.
E057	Cultured, part of the history	The smell :-). Also, something extra as well as objects on display, eg a trip down a mine shaft for a mining museum etc.	Occasionally there is too much on display and I get a bit bored if it is all very similar but then I feel guilty and stay longer than I really wanted to, without really enjoying the end experience
E058	Clever	seeing new objects, seeing how ideas are being projected in ways I've not thought of, revisiting familiar objects and pictures.	stale cakes and old sandwiches
E059	Small and insignificant	seeing something you haven't seen before	sometimes too much stuff- gives me a headache, as does the funny lighting
E060	Educated	Opportunities for learning	At half term when there are too many people to feel relaxed.
E061	Interested and the feeling of learning something.	Learning something new	The expense, poor value for money. EG Sealife centre Birmingham.

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E062	Cultured! Enjoy finding out about different things and in general I like what they represent	I enjoy learning new things and I always enjoy the shop!	queuing
E063	Generally good	seeing old favourites and finding new good things	crowds
E064	Depends on the individual museum. Could be boring sometimes or really interactive.	would love to get as close to the display as possible...	monotony
E065	interested, educational	learning something new	when text accompanying an artefact is too small, too detailed or boring
E066	Depends very much on the museum, sometimes inspired, sometimes bored (!), sometimes challenged. Often prompted to do further reading.	Again, depending on the museum, sometimes it's the visitor's shop! Mostly it's the insight one gains into either the past, or someone else's way of life. Also the way you can wander round at your own pace.	Sometimes they are expensive, and there is a definite class of people who tend to visit museums which can be off putting.
E067	In awe of history and want to find out more but never have enough time.	Learning about the past.	You feel you have to be quiet - nothing really to interact with.
E068	Enlightened - I feel that I have learnt something new or that I have consolidated my knowledge about a topic	Enlightened - I feel that I have learnt something new or that I have consolidated my knowledge about a topic	reading lots of information
E069	I like the quiet, being able to take my mind of the outside world. I find museums and art galleries very peaceful and also gives me the excitement to go home and start drawing and painting.	Looking in depth, taking my time, a cut-off from the world outside	the cost
E070	Boredom	the gift shop	the exhibition
E071	Interested	finding out new stuff	too long/expensive
E072	Happy and excited	the valuable treasures dating back to centuries ago	the tape and the earphones that you have to listen to
E073	Interested	the history	boredom - quite a lot of the same things
E074	Interesting	learning new things	having to read everything to understand about it
E075	Bored	leaving	entering
E076	I enjoy visiting aquariums and zoo's because there is something in particular to see such as animals which is a fun thing to do however I find museums and art galleries boring because I don't think they appeal to my interest	to see the different cultures however I find this boring because they don't appeal to my interest I would prefer to go to a place where you can do something instead of just look at something	you have to be quiet and its generally boring just looking at things instead of doing something
E077	I like visiting aquariums I think they are really interesting	some can be quite fun	some of them are boring
E078	Bored	the food	too much of the same thing
E079	Love going to the zoo and aquariums, but museums...nah! I only go to museums with the school, so naturally id find it boring.	leaving probably	the food- costly Looked down on because your a kid ("rowdy teenagers")

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E080	Depends what kind of museum I go to but usually interesting if I like the type of museum it is or boring if it does not interest me	either the gift shop at the end or something that stands out for me	if you have to read a lot of facts or texts
E081	Tired	to see the art and artefacts	walking
E082	Happy, fun exciting	reaction of my child. getting away from daily life. Family time.	queuing
E083	Living history makes me feel very humble that someone has really done this and broken ground	the history	never having enough time and how quite it is I would like to be able to be excited when I make a discovery
E084	Old, especially now I usually see something I had when I was little.	The history, artefacts, everything because if it wasn't for these types of places all of our history would be lost.	Nothing really
E085	I enjoy the feeling that I am learning something, that I am engaged with history and culture, but it can sometimes feel isolated from contemporary culture.	It can bring me new wonder at the world and God the creator	Often they feel dark, there are too many people and lots of things to read
E086	I find museum visits engaging and sometimes exciting, particularly if it relates to a subject I have a specific interest in.	it gives me a sense of heritage and my own place within history, also an appreciation for people and events that came before me.	paying, sometimes, extortionate admission fees, and other visitors who may not be respecting the fact that myself and others are enjoying the experience.
E087	Interested, peaceful, relaxed	Education and inspiration	Can sometimes provide a stale environment, lack of participation somehow and does not encourage engagement
E088	Intrigued, relaxed some times baffled	When you see something you have never seen or heard of before or something completely original.	It really depends upon the museum, some are very outdated and fail to hold your attention, others can be too busy for example touring exhibitions (Monet at the RA)
E089	Enthusiastic to produce my own art (as an artist), admiration, an urge to meet the artists exhibited!	knowing what happened in the history of art cuz it is the base point for our modern and future artworks	long hours standing up, too much to see in so little time, getting the tickets in the long queues especially in touristic areas!
E090	Interested normally - like to see what has shaped the world of today.	chance to see new things or learn about new aspects of an already familiar topic	sometimes the experience can be a little passive - prefer it when i can immerse myself in something new.
E091	Intrigued usually but some can be a little intimidating	Learning something that you didn't know when you walked in. Imagining another life or culture, stepping inside someone else's shoes	if they are intimidating, feeling you don't know enough to appreciate what you are seeing
E092	Very nostalgic	the smell	Queues
E093	Sometimes useless!! Ignorant!! Generally, very interested in learning new things and seeing the development of different ideas.	Variety of things on show or sometimes the fact that you are going to see a specific theme - black history or American Indians.	Nothing - unless you have to pay a ridiculous amount of money to go in.
E094	Guilty for not taking more interest in a wide range of History.	Looking at exhibits that show how life would have been for people living in past generations	Some exhibits can be poorly laid out with no interaction for visitors
E095	Interested but soon lose interest	Learning new facts and historical facts	the ambience
E096	Calm	natural history exhibits and the interactive	exhibitions can be a bit 'dry' and boring

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		exhibits	
E097	Knowledgeable, interested,	Learning new things, seeing things you usually wouldn't.	Some are really old, need a bit of revamping
E098	It really depends on the museum. It's hard to get the right balance of not being too patronising to audiences and also being accessible to all ages.	Seeing 'artefacts' that are relevant to how we see the world today. Imaginative curation	exhibitions, pieces that feel 'tired', that have just been added to fill space (eg the circular room at BMAG - the penguins! I think they've been there since I've been in Birmingham - the early 90s!)
E099	It depends on the exhibition but generally these experiences are stimulating, of thought and discussion. It might also be a sociable experience with my boyfriend or friend.	Learning about something, thinking about something new - outside of usual concerns, sparking my imagination.	I can be frustrated by poor curation, but this is still food for thought.
E100	Enjoy museums where you can interact and feel involved ie the Black Country Museum.	Understanding things outside your normal daily spectrum.	Sometimes there is too much to see and read about lose interest in the exhibits if not able to interact.
E101	Relaxed and exhilarated at the same time.	It feeds ones mind.	cost
E102	Relaxed	if they're free!	tacky shops
E103	Interested, inspired	Excitement at discovering something new	cost?!
E104	It awakes interest in learning about the past.	It makes me realise how much things have changed and moved forward.	Some museums are charging for entrance eg science museum in Birmingham, this then makes things inaccessible to children whose parents are on lower incomes. they should be accessible to all to learn about the past, present and future. Some also need updating.
E105	If it's a zoo or aquarium, I feel conflicted - fascinated by seeing the animals close up, but sad that they are trapped in unnatural habitats	learning new things	seeing animals that are distressed when my attention span fades and i have to wait for my other half to read every single exhibit label being stuck in a crowd if it's really busy
E106	If it is a good museum, it can make me feel enlightened about a particular subject	To learn or see something new and interesting	Badly designed museums can be dull
E107	Like I am on a mystery adventure	See something with a great story attached to it.	Too much to see and too much fine print or dry language and commentary on handholds.
E108	Enthusiasm is usually an emotion I feel when visiting such sites, due to the new information learnt and the context one is able to place such information in.	The visual aids!	Presentation can really quash one's experience.
E109	Mixed feelings. Sometimes it bores me if the museum is very much behind glass other times it excites me if it's interactive or on a topic I enjoy	Interactivity	stuffiness
E110	I think it mainly makes me feel excited?	The opportunity to learn and broaden your horizons.	Waiting in line, or when a part of the museum is closed early, such as the British Museum.
E111	I think some "media" leading you go around- 360 degree, go inside, travel in "time tunnel"	first, definitely free is best, second, to see countless valuable and unique stuff, such as	everything is dead, everything is standing on ground as usual drew by gravity

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	as witness of key time.	bigest diamond in the world, Mars stone.....in short, try every effort to make visitor open their eyes larger, enlarge their mouths wilder :1, :0 :)	
E112	Hopefully feeling I have had a good time - seen interesting things and the children have enjoyed it.	opportunity to see new things and relax	Q's - to many people - overpriced gift shops and cafe's
E113	It could be interesting if the museum exhibits interesting artefacts.	meeting new people ! and gaining knowledge! And also..part of my photography collection!	queuing up to see certain exhibits.
E114	Learn new things	none	none
E115	I can't generalise. It depends on the museum - its contents, its design, how busy it is. Some are profoundly moving - e.g. Imperial War Museum in Salford. Others are quite gimmicky and feel more like an amusement (Jorvik Centre in York).	When they work - gaining an insight into past through objects, space - augmenting what you can learn from books.	Poor labelling and unimaginative presentation of artefacts.
E116	Museums make me feel compelled to explore but only in short bursts. I'm not likely to wander around the whole place for extended periods of time. More than likely I will find which parts I want to visit and go straight there. Museums can make me feel overwhelmed sometimes, as there are so many different exhibits, artefacts, pieces of information, and I find I switch off as I feel I won't be able to take it all in.	THE CANTEEN! no only kidding. The best thing is immersive exhibits - whether audible or visual. An example of this would be the launch pad at the science museum (i know it's meant for kids) but it engages you and actually makes you feel like part of the exhibit	Having to walk around for so long just to find things you're interested in. Call me lazy but sometimes i just don't want to have to walk through the steam engines to get to the space shuttle.
E117	Gives a sense of history.	Seeing artefacts makes the history real.	other people getting in the way.
E118	It depends on the museum! It can be inspiring and make you feel like you've learnt something new. On the other hand it can be disappointing.	Potential for learning something new.	Crowds / inaccessible information / lack of imagination in displays.

Section 2- Your Museum Experiences

Q4.From the list select and number using the scale all you feel applies to you when visiting a museum. Only number feelings that are applicable to you.
 1= always feel 2= often feel 3= sometimes feel 4=occasionally feel 5= rarely feel

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	energised	exhausted	enlightened	bored	impressed	disappointed	moved	disinterested	up to date	harassed	comfortable	disorientated	stimulated	confused	fullfilled	intimidated	excited	annoyed	engaged	crowded
E001	3	2	4	2	4	3	5	3	5	5	5	3	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	5
E002	2	4	1	4	2	4	2	4	4	4	1	4	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	4
E003	2	3	2	4	2	4	2	5	2	5	1	4	2	5	2	5	2	5	2	4
E004	*	2	1	5	1	5	3	5	4	5	4	2	1	4	2	5	2	5	1	2
E005	4	3	2	4	3	2	*	*	*	1	*	3	*	*	*	*	3	*	2	
E006	5	1	5	5	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	3	5	2	5	4
E007	3	5	3	3	3	3	4	5	4	5	2	5	2	3	4	4	3	5	3	5
E008	5	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	5	4	4
E009	4	4	2	4	2	4	3	4	5	4	4	5	3	4	3	4	3	5	2	4
E010	3	4	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	3	2	5	1	5	2	5	4	5	3	3
E011	*	*	2	4	2	3	5	*	*	*	*	*	3	*	4	*	*	*	2	2
E012	5	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	2	5	3	5	3	5	4	5	3	3
E013	3	2	2	4	2	3	2	4	4	5	2	5	2	5	2	5	3	5	2	3
E014	1	*	1	*	1	*	2	*	*	*	1	*	1	2	*	*	2	*	1	3
E015	*	3	2	4	3	4	*	*	*	*	2	*	1	*	*	*	2	*	1	3
E016	3	1	1	4	3	5	*	5	2	3	3	5	2	4	2	4	3	5	3	3
E017	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	3	5	1	3	1	3
E018	4	3	2	*	*	3	*	*	3	*	*	*	4	*	*	3	*	*	2	3
E019	1	*	1	*	2	*	3	*	*	*	*	*	2	*	*	3	*	*	*	*
E020	4	4	2	4	2	4	4	4	5	5	2	4	2	5	3	5	2	5	2	3
E021	4	3	1	4	2	4	2	5	*	5	1	*	3	5	*	*	4	4	2	5
E022	2	1	2	4	2	3	4	5	3	5	3	3	2	5	3	5	2	5	3	4
E023	3	2	3	4	2	4	4	5	4	5	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	5	4	4
E024	3	3	1	4	2	4	2	4	3	4	3	4	2	3	2	5	2	3	2	2
E025	4	5	4	1	4	3	5	2	*	5	5	4	3	4	3	*	5	2	3	5
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Section 2- Your Museum Experiences

	Q5	Q6
	Is there anything else you feel when visiting museums?	How do you think museums should make you feel?
E001	Frustrated	Engaged
E002	That I have learned something I didn't know before.	Museums should engage you, provoke thought and interest or at least provide an option to do that. A lot of museums now do have an air of superiority about them and it is rare you come out with the WOW factor which is what I would want if it was my museum!
E003	Privileged	Depending entirely on the type of exhibition, the experience should make you feel informed, curious, stimulated and privileged (UK citizens) to have access to such a wealth of 'free' (paid for by our taxes) exhibitions and events to visit.
E004	Happy	Like you've learnt something.
E005	*	Happy, intrigued, interested in the subject,
E006	*	*
E007	Because of the general quietness, I feel very relaxed normally.	I do like the quiet atmosphere of museums, but sometimes, something a bit more lively would be good.
E008	*	Enlightened intersted and advised
E009	*	Like you want to learn, focused.
E010	*	*
E011	In some cases a sense of awe, for example in a magnificent building with equally amazing decor. This might be a period building or an imposing building such as the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. This could also be in relation to manor houses or national trust properties as opposed to museums so may not be relevant.	You should leave with a sense of fulfillment, as though your day wasn't wasted. It is difficult as there are so many types of museum, but it should be interesting and should be a positive way to spend a rainy day!
E012	*	interested, stimulated and that the information is
E013	*	Inspired, energised - like you want to find out more.
E014	great value for money as they are generally free!	ENLIGHTENED/MOVED/STIMULATED & ENGAGED.
E015	no	Excited about what they have to show. Educated. Time and money well spent. A fun day out.
E016	*	*
E017	nothing	Appreciative
E018	*	*

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E019	Peaceful and calm - this is my heritage	Definitely enlightened
E020	Privileged, lucky, grateful.	Lucky to live in such a fascinating world, despite all the bad things there are an amazing amount of wonderful things to see and experience.
E021	awed - suptley different from impressed I think?	engaged
E022	good family day to share with other family members	enlightened and enjoyable
E023	Occasionally befuddled	Stimulated, enlightened, empowered, tired, good!
E024	Hot and stuffy!	Enlightened, excited, informed, inspired
E025	hungry, angry	enlightened
E026	*	Appreciative, respectful, enlightened.
E027	*	Stimulated and enlightened.
E028	*	Museums should make you feel engagaed and interested in things you may never have heard of or considered before. Even if you walk away having learnt one thing that you'll remember and you've enjoyed learning it - a museums has done it's job. Museums are there to educate without pressure, engage without boredom and encourage the visitor to ask questions; the museum is a tool that deserves to be used to its full potential. The museum should also encourage and welcome visitors from all sections of the community whilst being proud of displaying its own country's history and heritage. Outreach activities are also important as these can certainly help to make communities feel more involved in the museum and its activities.
E029	*	*
E030	*	interested, relaxed, peaceful
E031	Yes, lots depending on which one it is.	Depends what they are setting out to do: may be fascinated, may be informed, may be surprised, may be happy, may be sad (eg Holocaust museums, etc) - lots of possible answers.
E032	Often there is a sense that they are hallowed spaces, especially in art galleries, where visitors should be quiet and accepting and grateful to be allowed in. I often can't help feeling indignant at being followed or that my behaviour is being curbed, when i should really be exploring and enjoying the exhibition	Welcome and relaxed- these objects are after all held in posterity for the population. Inspired and enthralled by historical and contemporary examples. Challenged to think about things from different perspectives or even to think about things that you wouldn't normally.
E033	I often feel that the supporting shops and food outlets are week and expensive. I actively return to a good cafe embedded in museum.	To be honest I think they should make me feel crowded out because they are full of children and other people. Being less altruistic, they should make me feel like I learned or experienced something new and as a result want to buy a book on something. Or, they should make me feel pleased to have taken someone who had that feeling.
E034	*	All the positive words stated above.
E035	no	creative, happy and engaged.
E036	boring stuff	like play video game
E037	*	more enlightened
E038	romantic	more private space
E039	*	engaged and enlightened, never tired
E040	Sometimes museums can be too crowded. This can affect the museum	The museum experience need to make people feel both excited and humble

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	<p>experience by disrupting the focus of the visitors and turn a museums to a big public corridor where some people run and other behave not appropriately for a place like a museum. This usually happens within Weekends and it is indeed difficult to control (especially when young children and toddlers involve). However the it is not impossible to control.</p> <p>A way can be to control the number of people that enter.</p>	<p>regarding the messages and meaning they are exposed to. They need help to engage and reach the level of communication with the other side of the glass and they must respect what they see at the same time.</p> <p>Regarding the congestion and flow control within the museum space various factors can contribute towards the desired above experience. Some of the factors can be the materials used (i.e. floor) together with the acoustics (softer materials used for the floor achieve two things: reduce sound and because of that encourage people to behave accordingly: in a way which is more quiet)</p>
E041	no	as per some of the mentioned above - energised, impressed, fulfilled and engage with the activity
E042	That's a pretty exhaustive list!	Inspired, excited, intrigued.. excited about learning and inspired to go on to find out more ON YOUR OWN!
E043	Sometimes I wonder what the other people who are wandering around the museum are experiencing / how they feel.	Very interested and ideally enlightened.
E044	no	interested and moved
E045	yes never enough time to see it all, sometimes you wish you could touch things - particularly sculptures.....	enlightened curious
E046	patronised by being talked down to	interested, curious, like i want to come back, like the exhibitions are not going to always be the same each time i come
E047	*	engaged and interested
E048	*	*
E049	Nostalgic, peaceful, a proper parent (if my daughter is with me)	connected to the past
E050	Easier when you have earphones to explain to you verbally, what you are seeing. When it is crowded you don't really get a chance to read things. viewing art pieces, you generally would view from a distance anyway. So I having something you can take around with you or read from a distance is a plus point.	Informed, refreshed, inspired and excited to come back. It should be a memorable experience, so you carry it with you and take things from it.
E051	*	*
E052	*	enlightened
E053	inspired	inspired, awstruck, educated
E054	restricted, subject to a narrative, heavily guided	inspired, in control of your own experience, like an explorer
E055	no	Theme parks, should be fun, exciting, noisy. Museums - should make you feel you have learnt something, kids always enjoy dinasours,
E056	Bored if it is not a good one, or has too much text	Educated in a interesting way
E057	I often feel calm when i am in a museum.	They should make you feel better, and more positive than when you went in.
E058	good information	make ? Hopefully it should help you to think and to feel - how was it done, why was it done, what is it?
E059	*	intrigued
E060	I don't like having to pay for specific exhibitions	educated
E061		enlightened
E062	*	*

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E063	*	happy interested taught
E064	don't think so	interested and enthusiastic
E065	all are covered above...	*
E066	*	educated
E067	Sometimes challenged, some museums put life and today's difficulties into perspective.	excited
E068	no	Positive and enlightened
E069	no	inspired
E070	inspired	interested
E071	nope	happy
E072	no	enticed from the beginning
E073	*	interested
E074	bored	stimulated and impressed
E075	*	excited
E076	That its boring!	intrigued and excited
E077	its quite interesting seeing some of the older stuff	interested and should have found it fun or helpful
E078	no	happy, wanting to see more
E079	nah	comfortable, welcome and people should make you feel that you are ok there.
E080	not really	interested
E081	no	fulfilled happy
E082	*	enable you to see things in an artificial setting that you are unable to see in its true time or setting.
E083	*	interested stimulated excited coming away knowing something new
E084	Was a little disappointed with THE BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM. It used to be fantastic and now they hardly have anything left inside all the dinosaurs and most of everything else has gone. Kids don't want to just see a few pictures and stamps they want to see things that excite them and what they are studying in school.	welcoming
E085	Hungry or Thirsty, but often the museum cafe is expensive.	Engaged with the world, and excited about it. They should make us look harder at the place we live in, and that should make us feel in awe.
E086	grateful to have been born in a country with such a rich and varied history.	all of the above that i have specified.
E087	*	*
E088	Thick!	Relaxed and enlightened
E089	luxurius!	more enthusiastic, they should be more informative about the exhibited artist
E090	not really	Enlightened - interested - eager to find out more
E091	*	enlightened, interested, impressed, grateful,
E092	usually hungry	nostalgic
E093	As question 1	Don't think they should make you feel something specific. You go for different reasons and people are stimulated by different things. Sometimes I go for modern art, even though I don't particularly like it.

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E094	*	A sense of connection with our past
E095	*	Extremely interested
E096	calm	Informed
E097	The entry cost sometimes a lot	educated, comfortable,
E098	*	excited, disorientated, sometimes take you out of your comfort zone
E099	*	Museums should be packed with objects that fascinate and stimulate the mind and imagination, with the aid of unintrusive interpretation that can be used or not. I want to feel diverted, that I have food for thought and dialogue.
E100	*	Enlightened and impressed should make you leave with a feel good factor that you have learned something through participation
E101	Relaxed and good sometimes educated.	Good and at ease, relaxed and thought provoked anxious and angry. Most importantly they need to arouse feelings and thoughts.
E102	*	that you have learned something and/or seen something beautiful
E103	*	Engaged, excited or moved- depends on the subject matter
E104	*	Interested, enlightened and stimulated.
E105	*	inspired; enlightened; happy
E106	*	enlightened
E107	*	Awestruck, curious, ah ha moments, educated, enlightened
E108	Perhaps a sense of accomplishment if it's a site you've been wanting to visit for some time.	Definitely comfortable and informed. They should also always try and engage you in the exhibition/ site etc.
E109	Always makes me tired!	Refreshed, entertained and interested
E110	*	enlightened and happy that one has learned something.
E111	no	*
E112	Irritated that sometimes exhibits are not engaging enough - not to sound arrogant, but I could do better!!	Not like this
E113	*	Exited, engaging and should be a fun place to be!
E114	*	*
E115	*	It depends what they are trying to achieve. Museum of the Holocaust at one end, Musuem of Cadbury's Chocolate at the other...
E116	*	Museums do what they are supposed to. It's hard to suggest that they should do anything else especially as a lot of them are housed in very historic buildings. I do believe museums should however make you feel more alert and energized - similar to the way some art exhibitions/installations do. This can be done in a multitude of ways but i believe is usually achieved through fascination - having the exhibits which wow people and make them engage more.
E117	*	Like coming back.
E118	no	Enthused and energised

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Section 3- Your Visiting Habits																				
	Q2. Why do you usually visit museums? From the list below select and rate all the reasons that apply to you. 1= always 2= often 3= sometimes 4= occasionally 5= rarely																			
	kill time	learn new things	recommended	entertained	time with friends/ family	food/ drink	enhance existing knowledge	people know have been	de-stress	interacting in group	get out	interested in topic	tourist attraction	personal connection	friend wanted to	forced to	insight something new	advertised	be engaged	Take part in organised activity
E001	1	3	3	2	5	5	2	2	2	5	3	2	2	5	3	2	3	2	3	
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E012	3	1	1	3	2	5	2	3	5	3	2	2	2	2	3	4	2	2	2	
E013	3	2	2	2	2	5	2	3	4	4	3	2	3	4	1	*	2	2	4	
E014	3	3	2	1	5	5	3	3	2	5	2	2	2	4	3	5	2	2	5	
E015	3	1	3	5	3	4	2	4	4	5	5	2	5	5	4	5	2	5	2	
E016	3	1	2	1	2	*	2	3	*	*	*	2	*	*	3	*	2	2	1	
E017	3	1	*	2	3	*	1	*	3	*	3	2	*	3	*	*	2	*	1	
E018	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	
E019	3	2	2	2	2	5	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	2	5	3	2	3	
E020	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
E021	3	4	4	2	2	4	3	3	4	5	3	3	3	3	3	5	3	2	4	
E022	3	1	2	2	1	5	3	4	5	3	2	1	3	2	3	5	3	4	1	
E023	3	4	3	2	2	5	3	5	5	5	3	3	2	3	3	5	3	2	5	
E024	3	5	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	5	2	4	4	3	4	
E025	3	*	2	*	*	*	*	2	*	*	*	2	2	*	*	*	1	*	2	

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E026	4	1	2	2	2	5	1	1	3	2	2	1	2	3	2	5	1	4	3	3
E027	4	1	2	2	3	5	2	5	4	5	5	2	2	1	4	5	1	2	1	5
E028	4	3	2	3	3	*	2	*	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	1	2	2	*
E029	4	3	1	1	1	5	1	1	*	2	1	1	2	*	1	5	1	3	3	*
E030	4	1	2	2	1	3	1	3	5	4	1	3	2	5	3	5	2	3	3	2
E031	4	2	3	5	2	5	2	3	4	3	3	3	4	5	3	5	2	3	2	3
E032	4	3	3	2	5	5	2	3	4	5	2	2	2	5	3	5	2	2	3	3
E033	4	3	5	2	1	5	4	4	5	5	2	4	2	4	2	2	2	3	4	3
E034	4	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	5	4	3	2	2	5	4	5	2	2	1	4
E035	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	5	2	4	4	1	5	1	3	5	2	2	2	4
E036	4	1	2	1	1	5	2	2	2	4	1	2	4	2	3	5	2	2	2	5
E037	4	1	3	2	2	4	1	3	3	3	3	2	4	2	3	5	2	2	2	5
E038	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	5	2	3	4	3	5	2	2	2	5
E039	4	2	3	2	3	5	2	5	5	5	3	1	3	4	4	5	2	2	2	5
E040	4	2	2	2	5	5	2	3	3	4	4	2	4	4	4	5	2	2	2	5
E041	4	2	3	3	5	2	3	4	3	4	2	5	4	3	*	2	3	2	5	5
E042	4	2	2	2	1	4	1	3	5	5	5	2	5	5	2	5	2	2	3	5
E043	4	3	3	2	3	5	2	3	4	5	4	2	2	3	2	5	2	2	4	5
E044	4	3	2	3	2	*	2	4	2	*	2	2	*	*	2	*	2	2	*	*
E045	4	2	2	3	3	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	5	3	3	3	2
E046	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	5
E047	4	3	2	2	1	2	3	2	3	1	2	3	3	2	2	5	3	3	5	5
E048	4	2	1	4	3	4	3	3	3	5	5	3	3	3	2	4	3	3	4	5
E049	4	3	2	4	5	5	4	3	5	5	4	3	3	5	5	5	4	3	3	4
E050	4	1	3	3	2	5	2	5	5	5	4	2	3	3	3	5	4	4	3	5
E051	4	1	2	2	1	*	1	*	*	3	*	*	4	3	*	4	3	*	*	*
E052	4	5	4	4	3	5	5	5	5	4	3	4	4	5	3	3	5	5	5	3
E053	4	1	2	1	5	5	1	2	2	5	5	1	3	3	2	5	*	1	1	5
E054	4	2	4	5	*	3	1	*	*	*	*	1	2	*	3	*	*	2	*	*
E055	4	*	*	*	2	*	3	*	*	*	*	2	2	*	*	*	*	2	*	*
E056	4	2	5	3	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
E057	5	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	*	*	2	2	2	2	5	1	1	1	2
E058	5	1	1	1	4	5	1	3	3	5	5	1	5	2	2	3	1	3	1	3
E059	5	3	3	2	2	5	3	5	1	3	3	2	3	2	3	5	1	2	2	3
E060	5	2	4	4	2	5	1	4	5	5	5	1	1	3	2	5	1	4	4	5
E061	5	2	3	4	2	5	4	5	5	4	4	2	1	4	4	4	2	2	1	3
E062	5	2	3	5	5	5	1	3	4	5	5	2	3	2	2	4	2	3	2	3
E063	5	2	3	1	2	3	2	1	5	3	2	2	2	3	2	5	2	3	2	3
E064	5	1	1	2	3	5	2	3	5	2	*	2	2	3	3	5	2	3	2	3
E065	5	1	2	3	5	5	2	4	4	5	5	3	1	2	3	5	2	4	3	3

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E066	5	3	3	3	3	3	4	2	2	3	4	2	1	3	3	4	2	2	3	4
E067	5	4	3	1	4	1	2	4	5	4	3	2	2	4	2	1	2	3	3	4
E068	5	2	2	2	2	5	2	5	5	5	5	2	2	2	2	5	2	2	2	5
E069	5	3	3	3	5	5	2	2	5	5	5	2	2	5	3	5	2	2	2	5
E070	5	2	3	3	3	5	3	3	4	5	2	2	3	5	4	5	2	4	2	5
E071	5	2	4	2	5	5	1	4	3	*	*	1	4	2	4	*	2	2	*	*
E072	5	1	2	4	2	5	1	3	5	4	5	2	2	5	3	5	3	4	4	2
E073	5	1	3	2	2	5	1	3	2	5	2	2	3	3	3	5	3	3	3	3
E074	5	2	3	5	5	2	3	4	3	3	1	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	5	3
E075	5	3	2	2	2	5	3	4	5	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	4
E076	5	1	3	4	3	5	1	1	5	4	5	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	4
E077	5	2	1	2	*	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	5	3	5	3	2	1	5
E078	5	3	3	2	1	5	3	5	4	2	3	2	3	4	2	5	3	2	3	5
E079	5	2	2	2	4	5	3	3	5	5	5	3	2	5	3	5	3	3	3	5
E080	5	3	3	*	*	*	2	*	5	*	*	2	*	4	4	*	3	4	3	5
E081	5	2	5	5	5	1	5	5	3	5	4	2	5	2	1	3	5	5	5	5
E082	5	2	3	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	3	*	*	3	*	3	3	*	5
E083	5	1	2	3	5	5	*	*	*	*	*	2	*	3	3	*	3	3	3	*
E084	5	1	3	2	2	3	2	*	4	*	4	2	4	*	3	*	3	3	4	*
E085	5	4	2	*	*	*	3	3	*	*	*	2	*	2	3	*	4	2	*	*
E086	5	3	5	3	2	5	3	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5
E087	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	4	2	5	5	5	5
E088	5	1	5	1	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	2	*	*	*
E089	5	2	3	3	2	*	3	*	*	3	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
E090	*	3	2	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	3	1	*
E091	*	1	2	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	1	1	*	*	*	1	*	1	*
E092	*	1	2	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	2	2	2	*	*	*	1	1	*	*
E093	*	*	*	*	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	*	*	4	*	1	*	*	*
E094	*	1	*	2	2	*	1	*	*	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	1	*	*	*
E095	*	2	*	2	*	*	1	*	3	*	3	1	3	*	*	*	2	3	1	*
E096	*	2	3	3	4	5	2	*	3	*	*	2	5	*	*	*	2	3	2	*
E097	*	*	2	*	*	*	2	*	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	2	2	*	*
E098	*	1	3	2	4	5	3	*	2	*	3	1	3	*	4	*	3	4	1	4
E099	*	3	3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	*	*	3	*	3	3	3	*
E100	*	2	3	3	3	*	3	*	*	*	3	*	3	*	*	*	3	3	*	*
E101	*	3	2	*	*	*	3	*	*	*	*	3	*	*	*	*	3	3	*	*
E102	*	3	*	*	3	4	1	*	4	*	4	2	3	*	2	*	3	5	*	*
E103	*	5	*	*	*	*	5	*	*	*	*	5	5	*	*	*	5	5	*	5
E104	*	5	*	*	*	*	5	*	*	*	*	3	*	*	*	*	5	*	*	*
E105	*	1	1	*	*	*	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	4	*	5	*	

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E106	*	2	1	2	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	2	*	*	*	*	*	1	*	*
E107	*	3	3	2	*	*	*	*	1	*	2	2	2	*	2	*	*	2	*	*
E108	*	1	2	2	*	*	1	2	*	*	*	1	1	2	*	*	*	2	*	*
E109	*	2	2	*	*	*	2	*	*	*	*	1	2	*	*	*	*	2	*	*
E110	*	*	*	*	1	*	3	3	*	2	*	2	2	*	*	*	*	2	*	*
E111	*	*	*	3	2	5	*	*	*	*	3	*	3	*	*	*	*	2	*	*
E112	*	*	3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	2	*	*
E113	*	2	3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	*	*	*	*	*	*	2	*	*
E114	*	*	*	3	*	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	2	*	*	3	*	*	*	
E115	*	*	*	*	2	2	4	*	*	*	*	*	2	4	*	*	*	*	*	
E116	*	1	2	*	2	*	4	*	*	*	*	3	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	
E117	*	*	*	*	4	*	*	*	*	*	*	4	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
E118	*	*	*	1	1	*	*	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	

Section 3- Your Visiting Habits

	Q1	Q4	Q5
	Who do you usually visit museums with?	How often you usually visit museums?	When was the last time you visited a museum?
E001	friends	6-3 per year	30 days
E002	friends	9-6 per year	30 days
E003	alone	2+ per month	7 days
E004	other (all above)	9-6 per year	30 days
E005	friends	6-3 per year	30 days
E006	partner	1-3 years	3 years
E007	partner	3-1 per year	6 months
E008	family	1-3 years	30 days
E009	partner	1-2 per month	1 year
E010	family	3-1 per year	1 year
E011	family	9-6 per year	7 days
E012	friends	3-1 per year	6 months
E013	partner	6-3 per year	1-3 years
E014	alone	2+ per month	30 days
E015	partner	6-3 per year	7 days
E016	family	9-6 per year	30 days
E017	partner	3-1 per year	7 days
E018	partner	6-3 per year	7 days
E019	family	6-3 per year	6 months

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E020	family	6-3 per year	6 months
E021	partner	*	*
E022	family	1-2 per month	7 days
E023	friends	3-1 per year	1 year
E024	partner	6-3 per year	30 days
E025	friends	6-3 per year	6 months
E026	partner	*	over 3 years
E027	friends	1-2 per month	30 days
E028	partner	9-6 per year	1-3 years
E029	friends	*	1 year
E030	partner	6-3 per year	6 months
E031	friends	1-2 per month	30 days
E032	partner	1-2 per month	7 days
E033	partner	3-1 per year	30 days
E034	partner	9-6 per year	30 days
E035	partner	*	1-3 years
E036	school/ college	1-2 per month	6 months
E037	friends	1-2 per month	6 months
E038	partner	*	1-3 years
E039	other (all above)	6-3 per year	30 days
E040	alone	3-1 per year	1 year
E041	family	1-2 per month	30 days
E042	partner	9-6 per year	6 months
E043	alone	9-6 per year	30 days
E044	family	3-1 per year	6 months
E045	family	2+ per month	7 days
E046	partner	3-1 per year	1 year
E047	friends	3-1 per year	6 months
E048	friends	*	1-3 years
E049	family	9-6 per year	30 days
E050	alone	6-3 per year	6 months
E051	friends	9-6 per year	30 days
E052	friends	3-1 per year	1 year
E053	partner	2+ per month	30 days
E054	family	1-2 per month	30 days
E055	school/ college	3-1 per year	1 year
E056	partner	3-1 per year	6 months
E057	partner	1-2 per month	7 days
E058	partner	*	1-3 years
E059	alone	1-2 per month	30 days

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E060	family	*	1-3 years
E061	family	9-6 per year	30 days
E062	partner	9-6 per year	7 days
E063	alone	6-3 per year	30 days
E064	friends	2+ per month	7 days
E065	friends	9-6 per year	6 months
E066	friends	6-3 per year	30 days
E067	partner	9-6 per year	30 days
E068	partner	6-3 per year	30 days
E069	family	9-6 per year	30 days
E070	school/ college	1-3 years	over 3 years
E071	*	*	1-3 years
E072	friends	1-3 years	1-3 years
E073	family	3-1 per year	1 year
E074	school/ college	1-3 years	1-3 years
E075	family	1-3 years	6 months
E076	friends	*	1-3 years
E077	school/ college	3-1 per year	6 months
E078	family	6-3 per year	6 months
E079	school/ college	1-3 years	1 year
E080	family	3-1 per year	6 months
E081	family	3-1 per year	6 months
E082	family	2+ per month	7 days
E083	family	6-3 per year	6 months
E084	family	9-6 per year	6 months
E085	partner	6-3 per year	6 months
E086	alone	1-2 per month	30 days
E087	partner	9-6 per year	6 months
E088	partner	1-2 per month	30 days
E089	friends	6-3 per year	30 days
E090	partner	6-3 per year	6 months
E091	family	3-1 per year	1 year
E092	family	9-6 per year	30 days
E093	alone	9-6 per year	6 months
E094	school/ college	6-3 per year	6 months
E095	family	3-1 per year	30 days
E096	family	3-1 per year	6 months
E097	friends	1-3 years	30 days
E098	*	6-3 per year	6 months
E099	partner	2+ per month	7 days

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E100	family	3-1 per year	6 months
E101	alone	2+ per month	7 days
E102	partner	6-3 per year	6 months
E103	family	9-6 per year	6 months
E104	family	*	1-3 years
E105	partner	2+ per month	30 days
E106	friends	6-3 per year	30 days
E107	partner	6-3 per year	6 months
E108	alone	6-3 per year	6 months
E109	alone	2+ per month	7 days
E110	school/ college	2+ per month	30 days
E111	family	3-1 per year	30 days
E112	school/ college	9-6 per year	1-3 years
E113	friends	3-1 per year	6 months
E114	alone	6-3 per year	6 months
E115	family	1-2 per month	30 days
E116	friends	1-3 years	1 year
E117	family	3-1 per year	6 months
E118	partner	1-2 per month	30 days

ppendix 9- Table demonstrating how value groups can overlap

	Interpersonal	Collection	Emotional	Physical	Community
Intellectual	'We loved the trail sheet; we could learn together as a family' 'I like discussing the things we have seen or heard about with my partner'	'I like discovering history by looking at things from the past' 'I never realised how they looked into space until I saw those telescopes'	'I find it kind of exciting learning new things' 'It's so harrowing when you find out what really happened'	'I learnt so much from being able to take part and get involved' 'He really got stuck into all the hands on stuff, it helped him make sense of it'	'I never knew how much had happened in this area, it was really interesting to learn about the local history'
Community	'I like that the demonstrators are people who used to work here, they can tell you the real stories of the site'	'It's good that the museum keeps these objects, it preserves our local heritage'	'It makes me really proud to be from Leeds'	'It's nearby and its somewhere the kids can run around a bit, but be safe'	
Physical	'We liked the game, were having a friendly competition of who could do it quickest'	'You can touch things that are actually thousands of years old'	'I didn't realise how hard it must have been for the soldiers until I put on the chainmail, it was so heavy, I felt really sorry for them'		
Emotional	'We made lots of happy memories as a family' 'It's chance to relax and spend time with my boyfriend'	'When we stood on that landing boat, it really made me think what it must have been like for those soldiers, it really moved me' 'I haven't seen one of those since I was a kid, it brought back all sorts of memories'			
Collection	'I liked the guided tour of the mosaics, it was good being in a group and the staff knew so much'.				

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Appendix 10- Onsite survey form used at the Thackray Medical Museum



Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. This forms part of a PhD research project at Birmingham City University. This information will be used to help find methods of improving the experience of museum visiting. No sensitive information about your person is being stored or used and all responses will be securely held and disposed of appropriately after use.
If you have any questions please contact jenniespen@gmail.com.

1. Age

Over 16 † Under 16 (guardian consent required)

2. On a scale of 1-5 how much do you agree with the following statements

The Street exhibition is:

Realistic	1	2	3	4	5
Enjoyable	1	2	3	4	5
Accurate representation	1	2	3	4	5
Believable	1	2	3	4	5
Emotional	1	2	3	4	5
Exciting	1	2	3	4	5
Moving	1	2	3	4	5
Educational	1	2	3	4	5

3. On a scale of 1-5 how much do you agree with the following statements

1 = strongly disagree 2 = somewhat disagree 3 = neither agree or disagree
4 = somewhat agree 5 = strongly agree

(A) The Street made me feel like I was
in the Victorian era.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Can you explain why?

.....
.....

(B) The Street made me feel like I was
in a slum

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Can you explain why?

.....
.....

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1 = strongly disagree 2 = somewhat disagree 3 = neither agree or disagree
4 = somewhat agree 5 = strongly agree

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| (C) The street made me think what it would have been like to live in a Victorian slum | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (D) I enjoyed following the characters stories | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (E) I felt sorry for the people who lived there | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (F) I know more about life in the Victorian era after visiting The Street exhibition | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (G) I know more about diseases after visiting The Street | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (H) The Street is more exciting than other types of museum exhibition | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (I) The Street is different to other types of museum exhibition | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Space for notes and any other comments

Appendix 11- Data collected from onsite survey at Thackray Medical Museum

	Q1. Age	Q2. How much do you agree with the following statements? The Street exhibition is: 1= strongly disagree 2= somewhat disagree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=somewhat agree 5= strongly agree								
		Realistic	Enjoyable	Accurate Representation	Believable	Emotional	Exciting	Moving	Educational	
IS201	Adult	5	5	5	5	3	4	4	5	5
IS202	Adult	5	5	4	4	4	2	5	5	5
IS203	Adult	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	4
IS204	Adult	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4
IS205	Adult	3	4	4	4	2	3	3	3	4
IS206	Adult	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	4
IS207	Child (14)	5	3	4	5	4	4	4	4	5
IS208	Adult	3	2	3	4	5	2	5	5	5
IS209	Adult	5	5	5	5	3	3	4	5	5
IS210	Adult	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	4	4
IS211	Adult	4	4	4	5	3	4	3	5	5
IS212	Adult	5	3	5	5	5	2	5	5	5
IS213	Adult	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4
IS214	Adult	4	4	3	4	2	3	2	4	4
IS215	Adult	4	5	3	4	4	3	4	5	5
IS216	Adult	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	4
IS217	Adult	5	5	5	5	2	4	3	5	5
IS218	Adult	4	5	4	5	3	3	2	4	4
IS219	Child (7)	5	1	4	4	3	4	2	2	2
IS220	Adult	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	4.5	

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	How much do you agree with the following statements? The Street exhibition is: 1= strongly disagree 2= somewhat disagree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=somewhat agree 5= strongly agree				
	Q3A. The Street made me feel like I was in the Victorian era			Q3B. The Street made me feel like I was in a slum	
		comments		comments	
IS201	4	SMELLS, THE PEOPLE	4	SMELL	
IS202	5	SMELLS, dirt, lack of hygiene	5	as 4A	
IS203	4	*	4	*	
IS204	4	felt very depressing and grim	5	as 4A	
IS205	4	the atmosphere created, sense of dirty smelly lives lived by people always struggling	4	*	
IS206	4	walk through rather than stand behind a barrier and look at it	4	as 4A	
IS207	4	look of the buildings, costume, smells, made me grateful to think what it was like then	4	the conditions	
IS208	3	didn't feel like I was in Victorian era. I think it is trying to show you what it was like, not make you feel like you are there. To make people feel like they were there would have to get them to dress up, that might make you feel you were there	4	conditions people were living in	
IS209	3	it was a museum place, I wasn't part of it. Aware things weren't real, been in medicine along time, if I was 10 might feel different	4	was filthy and horrible, was disgusting	
IS210	4	the smells, the unsanitary depiction of butcher, the minister. The industrial accident depicted	4	Depiction of dirty beds, was cramped, loud speaker of coughing. People living with animals	
IS211	4	the smells	3	because know its not	
IS212	3	More the words, so hard to imagine what it was like	4	the basic human needs not there, no water/food clothing	
IS213	3	know wasn't there	2	wasn't dirty enough	
IS214	4	had smells as well as what's going on but telling background as well	3	technically would be but know was like then, but in context know it isn't	
IS215	3	exhibits are fairly static	5	the smell, the street is fairly realistic	
IS216	4	the smell and dinginess and darkness	4	same as above, oppressive	

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IS217	4	smelly, the lights, gloomy, a lot about Leeds, local knowledge streets that I knew and recognised	5	really nasty smells		
IS218	4	the smells, the lighting	4	same reason as above and narrow streets		
IS219	4	seen it on TV and it looks like that	4	*		
IS220	5	the smell, well decorated, graphic, everything in period	5	decoration, smell		
	<p>How much do you agree with the following statements? The Street exhibition is: 1= strongly disagree 2= somewhat disagree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=somewhat agree 5= strongly agree</p>					
	3C. The street made me think what it would have been like to live in Victorian era	3D. I enjoyed following the characters stories	3E. I felt sorry for the people who lived there	3F. I know more about life in the Victorian era after visiting The Street exhibition	3G. I know more about diseases after visiting The Street	3H. The Street is more exciting than other types of museum exhibition
IS201	5	5	5	5	5	4
IS202	4	3	5	5	4	5
IS203	4	5	5	5	4	5
IS204	5	4	5	5	5	5
IS205	4	4	4	3	3	4
IS206	4	5	4	3	3	4
IS207	4	5	5	4	4	5
IS208	5	4	5	5	2	4
IS209	5	5	5	5	3	5
IS210	4	3	4	4	4	4
IS211	5	4	4	4	4	3
IS212	4	5	5	4	4	3
IS213	5	5	4	4	5	4
IS214	3	4	4	3	3	3
IS215	4	3	5	5	3	5
IS216	4	5	4	4	4	3
IS217	5	5	4	3	4	5
IS218	5	5	5	4	4	4

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IS219	4	4	5	2	4	5
IS220	5	3	4	4	4	4

Appendix 12- Onsite survey form used at Night in the Trenches



Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. This forms part of a PhD research project at Birmingham City University. This information will be used to help find methods of improving the experience of museum visiting. No sensitive information about your person is being stored or used and all responses will be securely held and disposed of appropriately after use.
If you have any questions please contact jenniespen@gmail.com.

- On a scale of 1-5 rate please rate the following reasons for coming to this event.

1 = strongly disagree	2 = somewhat disagree	3 = neither agree or disagree
4 = somewhat agree	5 = strongly agree	

- A- Something I could do with friends/ family
- B- I enjoy group events
- C- I am interested in the topic
- D- I thought it would be educational
- E- I have friends/ family who fought in World War I (N/A)
- F- I thought it would be moving
- G- I enjoy re-enactments
- H- I enjoy visiting museums
- I- I did not want to come
- J- Any other reasons (please specify)

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

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2. On a scale of 1-5 rate (1 being strongly disagree – 5 being strongly agree) rate the following statements.

A Night in the Trenches ...

- A- Made me feel like I was in a World War 1 Trench
- B- Made me think what it would have been like to fight in the trenches
- C- Has given me more insight into how the soldiers would have felt
- D- I now have more empathy for the soldiers who fought in the trenches
- E- Taught me more about the trenches than a static exhibition would

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

2. Continued

1 = strongly disagree 2 = somewhat disagree 3 = neither agree or disagree
4 = somewhat agree 5 = strongly agree

- F- Was more immersive than a static exhibition
- G- Was more moving than a static exhibition
- H- Was more enjoyable than a static exhibition
- I- Was something I could relate to

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

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3. For the following statements please circle if you agree or disagree and explain your answer.

A- A Night in the Trenches was enjoyable

Agree	Disagree	Undecided
-------	----------	-----------

B- I felt immersed in the environment

Agree	Disagree	Undecided
-------	----------	-----------

C- I found a Night in the Trenches was believable

Agree	Disagree	Undecided
-------	----------	-----------

D- I found a Night in the Trenches moving

Agree	Disagree	Undecided
-------	----------	-----------

E- I think it was educational event

Agree	Disagree	Undecided
-------	----------	-----------

F- I think the re-enactment was accurate

Agree	Disagree	Undecided
-------	----------	-----------

Appendix 13- Data collected from onsite survey at Night in the Trenches

	Q1. On a scale of 1 – 5 please rate the following reasons for attending this event 1= strongly disagree 2= somewhat disagree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=somewhat agree 5= strongly agree									
	Something I could do with friends/ family	I enjoy group events	I am interested in the topic	I thought it would be educational	I have friends/ family who fought in WWI	I thought it would be moving	I enjoy re-enactments	I enjoy visiting museums	I did not want to come	other reasons
IN301	5	4	4	5	NA	1	1	3	1	Family- kids education
IN302	4	2	5	5	5	3	4	4	1	*
IN303	4	2	5	4	5	4	4	4	1	Uncle won Victoria Cross
IN304	4	5	5	3	4	4	5	5	1	to support the museum
IN305	5	1	3	3	2	1	5	5	1	something different to do, do re-enactments
IN306	5	4	2	5	2	2	4	2	3	came as son wanted to

	Q2. On a scale of 1-5 rate (1 being strongly disagree – 5 being strongly agree) rate the following statements.								
	Made me feel like I was in a World War 1 Trench	Made me think what it would have been like to fight in the trenches	Has given me more insight into how the soldiers would have felt	I now have more empathy for the soldiers who fought in the trenches	Taught me more about the trenches than a static exhibition would	Was more immersive than a static exhibition	Was more moving than a static exhibition	Was more enjoyable than a static exhibition	Was something I could relate to
IN301	4	5	3	1	5	5	4	4	4
IN302	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
IN303	3	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	3
IN304	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
IN305	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	3

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IN306		3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
	Q3. For the following statements please circle if you agree or disagree and explain your answer.										
	A- A Night in the Trenches was enjoyable			B- I felt immersed in the environment			C- I found a Night in the Trenches was believable				
IN301	AGREE	Educational activity			DISAGRE	As its difficult to put yourself in what it would have been like. This is not a realistic environment as you know you are only a mile away from home. It's hard to really understand what they went through.			AGREE	Shows 2 sides of the story	
IN302	AGREE	Was interesting, educational. The noise and atmosphere. Costume staff were very informative, there was a lot I didn't realise.			AGREE	Being in a trench, atmosphere, noises, gunfire, bangs ,the re-enactments, costumes, equipment in trenches (artillery) the pigeons and the rats.			AGREE	Got all the ammunition and the re-enactors made it seem real	
IN303	AGREE	Gives interest in the subject			AGREE	When in the trench your imagination can wander and you get some insight. Kids probably felt it more. The sounds help and probably better as it gets darker and the flashes become more prominent.			DISAGREE	Trenches weren't like that in real life.	
IN304	AGREE	It takes you outside, not like a static exhibitions. Can see the people moving all around you and you become immersed.			AGREE	Your head is in an actual trench not a parade ground. Have Germans firing at you and sounds of fire from behind. The sounds, the flashes and the infantry.			AGREE	People (the actors) were reacting properly	
IN305	AGREE	A period we don't see as often as others in re-enactments.			DISAGRE	As I'm used to being a part of it. You are looking at it from outside. Do become immersed when doing it (re-enactment) yourself.			AGREE	The people were very knowledgeable	
IN306	AGREE	It gives insight into what it was like. Thought it was very well done. I didn't really want to come but when was there I thought it was amazing			AGREE	Actors, noises, when the guide was talking the actors were still engrossed so it didn't look like they were acting, was good how they carried on			AGREE	The atmosphere, noises felt when the guy was talking like you were there then scene was set very well.	
IN301	AGREE	Educational activity			DISAGRE	As its difficult to put yourself in what it			AGREE	Shows 2 sides of the story	

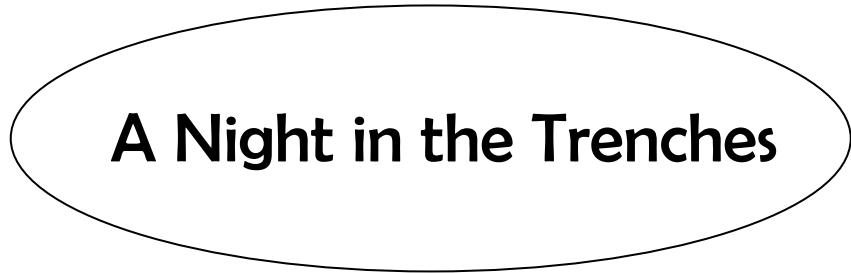
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			E	would have been like. This is not a realistic environment as you know you are only a mile away from home. It's hard to really understand what they went through.		
	Q3. For the following statements please circle if you agree or disagree and explain your answer.					
	D- I found a Night in the Trenches moving		E- I think it was educational event		F- I think the re-enactment was accurate	
IN301	DISAGRE	Just personal, comes to relating to people know but didn't know anyone so it's not moving to me	AGREE	Not educational to self, but to the kids. They realised what war was about and what guys had to go through	AGREE	I don't know enough, the guys performing know more. This is not like your typical Disney attraction.
IN302	AGREE	As you realise what they went through, this is nothing like it but it gives some sort of an idea.	AGREE	Learnt about miners and about the nurses.	AGREE	The re-enactors made it feel more accurate, like when the Germans attacked and came over and took German prisoner. You're in an actual trench.
IN303	AGREE	A bit for the fact that people had to live on those conditions. Gives a feel of what it might have been like	AGREE	The talks and the atmosphere. The medical side was very interesting but again probably more for the kids.	UNDECIDED	Compared to what seen in pics it probably was but I don't know.
IN304	AGREE	Especially at this time of year, brings to life things that only seen in a picture book.	AGREE	Not in a book, you're doing things and as they would have been done there.	AGREE	Defiantly all the kit and weaponry was, even the movements they made.
IN305	DISAGRE	Don't know, just wouldn't use the word moving.	DISAGRE	For the kids yes.	UNDECIDED	Don't know as don't have sufficient knowledge. Would say it was accurate in way soldiers acted and their responses but as we do a lot of re-enactment know it's not when you look closer.
IN306	DISAGRE	Just didn't, maybe if played some music. If you watch a film and music playing you get emotional but like with the gun fire here people just laughed. If you watch a	AGREE	The lead giving information, some I didn't know like about the mining and how 10,000 people died on last day of war I just thought, Oh my God!	AGREE	They just looked like know what they were doing they look like soldiers can imagine them being in the army. Looked at them and thought they had been (in army).

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		film without music its flat. Important to create an emotional response especially as near Remembrance Day. Good if could make more involving people, like giving them a helmet to wear so not just looking from outside but bringing into it more. Give people jobs to do like in a troop, Good if feel more part of it not an outsider looking in.				
IN301	DISAGRE E	Just personal, comes to relating to people know but didn't know anyone so its not moving to me	AGREE	Not educational to self, but to the kids. They realised what war was about and what guys had to go through	AGREE	I don't know enough, the guys performing know more. This is not like your typical Disney attraction.

Appendix 14- Personal meaning making used at Night in the Trenches



A Night in the Trenches

Appendix 15- Data collected from personal meaning maps at Night in the Trenches

Instructions to participants: What were your reasons for coming, what did you expect to happen, and what you expect to gain from it?

Text in red is participants' original written comments

Text in *italics* is participants' spoken comments in discussion with researcher

P401 (Adult)

- Night out and to see how fighting and tactics went on in the First World War (*Just to fill time*)
- And to let my son see the conditions they fought in (*Hear that many variations on TV etc but this is 1st hand, its more accurate and you get to take part*) (*He's never seen it and I think it is important for him to see it, gets to learn, more than he would at school*)

P402 (Adult)

- 1- Came with family (*enjoys doing things with family – reason for coming*)
- 2- Interested in History (*always something been interested in*)
- 3- To see what it's really like for the soldiers in time of war (*As near enough as the real conditions. It's always best to see things 1st hand than on TV as get more of a feeling for it. Your actually out there in a trench not just at home, its more realistic*)

P403 (Adult)

- To appreciate the bravery of the men/women that have fought in past and present wars (*Reason for coming*) (*all wars- not just WWI*)
- An understanding of how it may have been for men in the trenches (*educational and insight into the feelings*)
- Sons interested in World War history (age 8)
- Great Grandfather fought in World War 1 and died from injuries on return home (nurse poisoned him with lead in ointment)
- To understand what life was like in the trenches
- To show son that it was not all glory
- To talk to men who may have served in the war
- To leave a lasting impression (*different to normal museum*)

P404 (Adult)

- Grandfather in Grenadier Guards @ Loos- WWI (*reason why came*)
- Interested in re-enactments of WWI events (*interested in the whole topic*) (*Its an experience to see what they went through- already know some of it*) (*Want to know so can try and understand*) (*expecting an experience but used to the bangs and fires*) (*Just moved to the area but thought it would be a nice*)

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thing to do) (Nice that people remember otherwise people will forget) (You'll never replicate what the conditions were like, the real places where this happened are very touching)

P405 (Adult)

- **Interest in military history** (*Learnt from God daughter who 9 years old, never thought a kid would be interested in this but she is- it's important for them to come and see how horrible war is*) (*places like this need support and the more who come the better*)
- **Grandfather in Africa 1915-18 military MBE** (*Grandfather in WWI was one of reasons got interested in military history- became more interested as got older*) (*Came to the museum and saw this advertised and was looking for a night out*) (*Been to museum several times and they always add something*)
- **Great Aunt Nurse in Mesopotamia 1st War** (*Trying to research about Grandfather and Great Aunt*)
- **Bit of fun (Entertainment)** (*Not usual leisure activity but never done anything like this before*) (*come more for knowledge than entertainment but do expect it to be entertaining*) (*Gun fire sounds make it more alive*)
- **Been in Imperial War Museum trenches very atmospheric** (*went early in the morning and could imagine how horrible it would have been*) (*expect same thing from this*) (*tied to comment of children seeing horrible it was* *they can get it here (at IWM)*)

P406 (Adult)

- **Came because son and daughter-in-law invited me** (*reason for coming*)
- **not my thing (attitude to event)**
- **re-enactment (what expect to happen)** (*they (re-enactments) are fine for those who enjoy it but I've not been to one, this is the first time*) (*expect will be watching those dressed up showing you what like in WWI. Will re-enact fights and how it went*) (*Expect to hear a lot of banging and shouting*) (*would learn if wanted to – but no interest in learning as I live for the present not the past*)

P407 (age 7 years)

- **I came here because it sounds interesting.** (*I've got loads of things on war- toys and books*) (*I think there will be fighting as I saw a German soldier*) (*Interested in the topic*) (*Want to feel what it was like*)
- **I want to see what it was like in the war trenches** (*In books it doesn't have bangs- just tells you it doesn't feel like that*) (*bangs*)

P408 (age 8 years)

- **I think the British are gong to win** (*expect to see some fighting*) (*like learning about WWI and WWII*) (*I'm in to history we do it at school but its more fun doing it this way*) (*I expect it will be fun for me but not for them who were on the trenches*) (*brilliant with all the gun affects- good for me, not them*) (*Come before to watch a talk on the vehicles*)
- **My great-great-great-granddad was in WWI** (*so wanted to come*)
- **What it was like for the men** (*just like to think what it would have been like for them I want to know*)

Appendix 16- Further information on Enchanted Palace exhibition

The Enchanted Palace was a temporary exhibition at Kensington Palace, which is managed by Historic Royal Palaces. It was developed as a joint collaboration between a team from Kensington Palace and Wildworks Theatre Company. It occupied the palace for 2 years, from spring 2009 until early 2012. Enchanted Palace was developed so that the palace could remain open during a period of structural renovation, but without providing a reduced offer to visitors. During the necessary building work only a fraction of the usual palace footprint would be able to remain open to the public. Furthermore, concerns over conservation care meant that some of the more precious, valuable and fragile artefacts would need to be removed from display during this time. Rather than close for a lengthy period, Historic Royal Palaces decided to keep the site open, and the staff at Kensington saw it as an opportunity to do something different. As many museums and heritage sites have experienced, closing for extended periods is extremely risky, without an operating site it is difficult to maintain presence and engagement with the community, without which it is hard to retain visitor figures on reopening. Furthermore, closing a property brings the added problem of loss of income from ticket sales and secondary revenue such as shop and cafe spend.

Enchanted Palace saw the regal rooms of Kensington Palace transformed into a fantastical world of fairy-tale, where visitors were sent on a quest to discover the story of seven princesses. The Enchanted Palace exhibition was a far cry from the usual experience offered at Kensington Palace; which was previously a more traditional historic property. Previously at Kensington Palace visitors wandered around opulent rooms, accompanied by a well-informed warden or a fact filled audio guide, a hushed and respectful atmosphere filled the opulent rooms as visitors took in the didactic interpretation of Kensington's history, and the many luxurious items on display. Before Enchanted Palace, offering opportunities for interactivity was not a primary concern, as most visitors were happy to admire with respectful awe from behind the barriers. The Enchanted Palace exhibition was perhaps the complete opposite to this. Difficult to summarise, Alexandra Kim described Enchanted Palace as:

In many ways what we are trying to do is use the word 'experience' because that begins to suggest something in between an exhibition and a theatrical performance and for us we want it to be somewhere in the middle. And it will differ in who comes round but it's not about being a static presentation of history, and it's not normal theatre performance, it tried to combine both things (Kim, 2009)

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Kensington Palace had not made regular use of performance previously, the team were inspired by the way other *Historic Royal Palaces* properties did. *The Tower of London* and *Hampton Court Palace* both consistently and extensively use costumed interpretation to tell historic stories in a distinctive way that helps bring the places to life, and helps visitors to imagine what it might have been like to have been there at the time (Kim in interview 2010). Inspired by the use of costume interpretation at other Historic Royal Palaces sites, the team at Kensington thought that an element of performance may be useful to distract from the inevitably loud and disruptive building work. When the team from Kensington approached Wildworks in the hope of them providing performers, what Wildworks suggested was not to use performance to hide or distract from the building work but to make a feature of it, as if the renovations were setting the stories free from the very fabric of the building. It was at that point the collaboration was formed.

From very early in the planning process, the collaborative team realised that the experience of Enchanted Palace would be very different to the previous offer at Kensington Palace. It was a concern that being so radically different could upset the existing users who were a dedicated and hence reliable market. The aim of the Enchanted Palace was not to exclude existing audiences, but to use the opportunity of change to do something different and the team hoped this would attract new audiences in the process. Kensington Palace previously had a high ratio of international visitors, so one aim for Enchanted Palace was to help engage more local residents, particularly families and families with young children. They planned to do this by offering something more exciting, magical and interactive, and most crucially by using interpretive messages that would focus on the humanness of the stories rather than dry historical facts.

Upon entering Enchanted Palace visitors were handed a map of the exhibition and sent on their adventure to discover the stories of seven princesses. The princesses were all former residents of Kensington Palace and their capturing stories were presented as if fairytales. Each room presented the story of a different princess, with dramatic names such as: 'The Room of Lost Childhood' and 'The Room of Royal Sorrows'. Each room contained a theatrically staged tableau's, an atmosphere of mystery, fantasy and enchantment was created using theatrical lighting, sound, projection and an all over theatrical dressing to symbolically and semantically communicate the poignant narratives. Trees and foliage were brought inside as well as a series of seemingly peculiar and surreal props, that were displayed in irregular and non-conformist ways alongside the original collection of artefacts, The aim of

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this method of presentation was to try encourage visitors to question what was being presented to them. Performers roamed the rooms interacting with visitors and inviting them to participate in impromptu moments of activity.

There were two kinds of performers in the Enchanted Palace; 'detectors' and 'explainers'. Detectors depicted a curatorial like character monitoring the palace during the building works. They interacted with visitors explaining that they were; ensuring the emotional ambience of rooms had not changed, and checking if a tear is one of sorrow or joy. The detectors were completely fictional characters, who were posed to have always lived in the palace and to have seen everything that had ever happened there. Their costumes reflected the fictionalisation with irregularly shaped overcoats and headlamps. The detectors were played by trained actors, who had little or no knowledge of the site or its collections. To help in answering visitors questions and were the explainers. The explainers were formerly the gallery wardens. As explainers they did not adopt characters and were not in costume. Their role was essentially no different to what it had previously been, except that Wildworks worked with them to improve their storytelling skills, enabling them to communicate the stories of the palace in more exciting and engaging ways.

The response to Enchanted Palace came as a huge surprise, both in the volume and strength of opinion; '*What we perhaps weren't prepared for was the dichotomy of opinion and the strength of opinion people would feel, that really did take us by surprise and particularly the aggression in the negative comments'* (Kim, 2009). Visitors responses were either immensely praising of the approach or hugely negative and critical, with very little middle ground. During the first few weeks of opening Enchanted Palace, Kensington received record numbers of feedback in visitor books as well as through more public mediums including blogs and forums.