

CALL FOR PAPERS

INTERPRETING THE ART MUSEUM

We invite international submissions to be included in this forthcoming collection of essays to be published by MuseumsEtc [www.museumsetc.com] in 2015.

Interpretation aims to do more than simply communicate facts. It uses original objects, first-hand experiences, and media to communicate meaning and understanding.

Unlike most other museum disciplines, interpretation within art museums poses a range of particularly challenging - even contentious - issues. Among them:

- a concern not to spoil the direct, often sensitive, relationship between the viewer and the work of art;
- the perceived difficulty of tackling sometimes particularly esoteric, complex or controversial themes;
- an unwillingness to offer one single interpretation or meaning for a work;
- the view that a work of art should be allowed to “speak for itself” and not be interpreted.

However, the days of the two-line factual label are on the decline, as both visitors and museums search for greater engagement and improved communication. And the range of resulting initiatives is wide: enhanced labelling, audioguides, videos, AV consoles, trails, gallery interpreters, and many more...

Purpose

Interpreting the Art Museum aims to help encourage the provision of sensitive, effective art museum interpretation by:

1. sharing examples of innovative and successful practice in interpreting works of art to a wide range of audiences;
2. sharing access to the results of testing, research and analysis of specific initiatives undertaken in the field of art museum interpretation.

Submissions

We welcome international proposals for both (longer) chapters and (briefer) case studies from museum and gallery professionals, academics and researchers. Proposals from those with practical experience of assessing and evaluating outcomes in this field are particularly welcome, as are contributions which detail practical experience of innovative programmes, or which present the results of the impact of new initiatives. Submissions may be drawn from the fields of fine art, contemporary art, photography, crafts, sculpture, artists' films etc.

Aspects of interest include - but are not limited to - one or more of the following:

- innovative or successful **aims** of interpretation
- innovative or successful **media** of interpretation (activities, audioguides, consoles, docents, gallery guides, graphics, publications, social media, storytelling, talks etc.)
- innovative or successful **content** of interpretation (approach, delivery, style, vocabulary etc.)
- innovative or successful **timing** of interpretation (pre-visit, in-visit, post-visit, non-visit etc.)
- innovative or successful **audience** for interpretation (family, special interest, research etc.)
- **research**, analysis and evaluation of art museum interpretation programmes.

Submitting a proposal

If you are interested in being considered as a contributor, please submit a proposal and a short biography (in Microsoft Word format). Proposals should be 300-500 words in length and biographies 100-200 words.

You can propose to submit either a *chapter* or a *case study*. Chapters will be 4000-6000 words in length. Case studies will be 1000-2000 words. Please prepare your proposal with these parameters in mind. The work should not have been published elsewhere. All contributions must be submitted in English - translation services will not be provided.

The deadline for proposals is Monday 30 March 2015. Please email your proposal to artmuseum@museumsetc.com. Any queries in advance of submission should also be sent to this address.

Interpreting the Art Museum will be published in print and digital editions by MuseumsEtc in 2015. Contributors will receive a complimentary copy of the publication and a discount on more.

Key dates

PROPOSALS DUE: MONDAY 30 MARCH 2015

CONTRIBUTORS NOTIFIED: 10 APRIL 2015

COMPLETED PAPERS DUE: 1 JUNE 2015

MuseumsEtc | February 2015

MuseumsEtc Ltd

UK: Hudson House | 8 Albany Street | Edinburgh EH1 3QB

USA: 675 Massachusetts Ave., Ste 11 | Cambridge | MA 02139