

ICOM Education 31 | Call for papers – Instructions for authors

Focus : Enjoyment

Context

On the scale of a country, museum-goers, our visitors, number up to several million people. Museums count their visitors, and the figures are eloquent: large museums amount to hundreds of thousands – sometimes even more – visitors per year, the smaller ones tens of thousands. To be precise, we should count “visits” rather than the most commonly used “visitors”. This nuance is important, since it takes into account those who come for their first visit to the museum or exhibition as well as those who come back for further visits.

Here’s the interesting point: if they come back, one can assume that they liked at least one of their previous visits. If frequent visitors and museum-lovers keep coming back to see exhibitions, they must enjoy it in some way. More occasional visitors would not go to a museum either if they were expecting a boring or an unpleasant time, would they? As for organized groups such as school classes for example, there is no reason why the participants should not enjoy their stay in the museum as well, even if they did not decide on their own about the museum visit.

We do, of course, acknowledge that not all visitors are enthusiastic or even satisfied with their visit. Some of them may be disappointed, despite the best efforts of the museums. In this case, the museum has failed to meet their expectations – however contradictory those may be. Nevertheless, this time we are not going to focus on those unsatisfied visitors or look for what went wrong. On the contrary, this issue of *ICOM Education* is dedicated to the audiences who had some pleasure while visiting an exhibition.

Thus, let’s focus on the positive aspect of a museum visit and try to understand why audiences like to come so much. Let’s explore the mysteries of the visit experience in order to find out what it is that makes it such a pleasant one, let’s ask the audiences what exactly it is that makes their visit so enjoyable.

Enjoyment

The notion of enjoyment appeared so important that it was included in the 2007 definition of museums. Indeed, enjoyment is the third and last purpose of the museum, coming after “studies” and “education”. Once again, the translation of the word into the other two ICOM official languages is a challenge: “*délectation*” in French is a quite outdated term with an

unfamiliar sing-sang. The Spanish term used is “*deleite*”. Even though it is the last word of the 2007-definition, it has always been an ill-loved one – maybe due to the unsatisfactory translations. There’s been more mocking it than sensible studies about enjoyment. Enhancing the scientific knowledge (“studies”), transmit this knowledge (“education”), those are considered as noble tasks. But enjoyment?

Yet this is one of the main reasons for visiting a museum, and therefore an important factor that accounts for the presence of museums: audiences go there also in order to enjoy themselves. We should never forget that a museum is one possibility among many others to choose as an activity done in our spare time. The visit of an exhibition is – in the vast majority of cases (except for perhaps school classes) – a voluntary occupation. Even though it might also have other purposes, it has no intrinsic necessity as such: it was chosen precisely in the expectation of a pleasant leisure activity. This implies, in one way or another, the hope to enjoy the visit. It is up to the museum to make this possible.

Therefore, it is high time to rehabilitate the notion of pleasure and/or enjoyment in the museum. As is often the case, the English term chosen here has no French or Spanish equivalent that covers all its meanings. The verb “to enjoy” means to have pleasure, to appreciate, to have fun, to feel joy. The term “enjoyment” is both the result (the pleasure felt) and the cause, the satisfaction of the moment, however fleeting. It may be an emotion or the way satisfaction is felt. It may be a positive feeling or the reaction to an expectation that is fulfilled or exceeded. Pleasure(s), “delight,” amusement, the joy felt, happiness in an exhibition, all this is included in our topic of “Enjoyment,” in the “*Plaisir(s) de visite*” in French or the “*Disfrute(s) de visita*” in Spanish, as we chose to translate the word.

It is the pleasure, first of all, that arises from a visit to the museum. Enjoyment as a feeling of pleasure (singular), an agreeable, all-encompassing and perhaps indefinite impression for those who experience it and who do not necessarily look for the deepest reasons for this impression – feeling it and appreciating it is enough. It could also be the lightness of a moment of relaxation, a beneficial cheerfulness, or a deep satisfaction. It could also be pleasures (plural), manifold pleasures and enjoyments connected with the exhibited works of art or objects, with gained knowledge, with conversations, memories, discoveries and so many other things.

The perspective could be taken from the world before, before the pandemic and before the museums were deprived of their visitors, before they had to close for endless months. It could also be taken during this difficult time, or even trying to figure out what the (museums’) world will look like after the crisis. Whichever of these three time-perspectives is chosen, enjoyment remains a key factor of the visit and deserves a prominent place. The closure of museums in almost every country has shown how much we have missed our audiences, but also how attached they are to their museums and how eager they are

to come back. This is a sure sign that they want to return and long to feel the enjoyment of their next visit as soon as possible.

Content of the submitted papers

It is precisely this notion of enjoyment, of the pleasure(s) of a museum visit that we intend to explore in this issue of *ICOM Education*. To cover this field as widely as possible, we would like to receive article proposals that shed light on the different aspects of the term "enjoyment" in the museum and that, put together into an entirety in the publication, paint a picture of what makes the visit such a wonderful moment for so many different audiences.

A thorough analysis of the literature on enjoyment available in French, English and Spanish as well as theoretical thinking about the notions of enjoyment/pleasures of visits are already on their way and will flow into several articles in preparation for this issue of *ICOM Education*. To complement them and to restore the balance between theory and practice, the editorial team is explicitly looking for papers in which the focus is on practical matters to enrich the theory with tangible examples and case studies – without excluding potentially more theoretical papers, of course. These can be before, during or (perhaps) after the (main?) crisis we are experiencing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, since this is an ICOM publication, all submitted papers must be strongly anchored in a museum context. An article with a loose or inexistent connection to museums will not be accepted.

The following list of topics is indicative and does not exclude other possible approaches, as long as they remain focused on enjoyment in the museum context. Moreover, the order in which these themes are listed is purely for the sake of this document and does not prefigure the final structure of the issue itself.

Study/observe enjoyment in museums:

1. How to measure the enjoyment of the visit? (methods and results)
2. How to recognise the signs of visitors' pleasure or displeasure, of enjoyment or lack of enjoyment? How to take this into account in the design of exhibitions or programmes?
3. What are the factors that enhance enjoyment in the exhibition? What, on the other hand, causes or enhances displeasure and how can this be remedied?
4. Is the concept of enjoyment universal, do all visitors react in the same way or are there differences according to target groups?

Constituent elements and manifestations

5. What does the enjoyment of/during a museum visit consist of? Which elements are constituent, which factors are influencing? How does enjoyment/pleasure become visible?
6. What are the pleasures/ways of enjoyment that the museum can offer to its visitors? Are there different ways of enjoyment according to the museum or the topic of its collections for example?
7. Emotion, feeling, satisfaction, exceeded expectations, or a mixture of all these?

8. How do the notions of happiness, well-being, satisfaction, usefulness, relaxation, leisure, voluntary activity, exchange or community relate to a museum visit and its enjoyment?
9. Having fun vs. learning, or both? Are the two notions antinomic or complementary?
Enhancing enjoyment
10. What actions can be taken to offer/enhance enjoyment during the visit?
11. What kind of educational programmes would enhance enjoyment in the exhibition or in the museum?
12. How does enjoyment work for so-called captive audiences, for example schoolchildren, or to a lesser extent other organised groups?
Going beyond
13. How does the enjoyment of previous visits impact the motivation to return to the museum?
14. Does “museum-enjoyment” last or extend beyond the visit? In what form and for how long?
15. Do enjoyment and fun lead to a "downgrading" of the museum into a place of entertainment? (... and would it be such a problem?)
16. From the point of view of museum professionals: do we enjoy ourselves in our work (mounting an exhibition, presenting the museum's collections, welcoming visitors), and how?
17. Can we go so far as to talk about happiness in coming to the museum?

Writing an article

“Enjoyment” seems to be understood in diverse ways according to the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of different countries. We would appreciate if each author could state very clearly which meaning/understanding of enjoyment and/or pleasure(s) of a museum visit is/are underlining his/her article.

Articles are expected to have between 25.000 and 35.000 signs maximum, blanks included. Each article should have a minimum number of 3 relevant illustrations (photographs, charts, tables, drawings, pictures...), provided by the author and FREE of any copyright. Pictures should be in high definition, i.e. at least 300 dpi for 10cm, and sent in separate files (including them into the Word-file might lower their definition, and thus their quality for printing). Since there is only limited space, articles with charts, tables, pictures and references included should not be longer than 10 A4-pages (Arial 11, single spacing).

Articles may be submitted in either of CECA's working languages, i.e. English, French or Spanish.

Layout and other considerations

Please send your text with as little formatting as possible except for these guidelines: -

document format: Word

- paper format: DIN-A4

- font: Arial, size 11

- footnotes: please avoid footnotes and endnotes

- spaces: single spacing between lines for the complete text, including first lines, titles, subtitles etc. - quotations: in italics, with precise reference directly next to it, example (Hein, 1998, p. 39)

- references: bibliographical references are all at the end of the paper and presented according to the APA 6th style. Some examples are provided at the end of this document.

Submitting the article

If you are interested in submitting an article, please contact Stéphanie Wintzerith, swi@wintzerith.de

Articles are due by 15th of January 2022. They will be peer-reviewed before being accepted for publishing. Since the time frame is extremely tight, all submissions arriving after the submission deadline (Mid January 2022) will be automatically refused.

Your submission must include the following:

- the text of your article, between 25.000 to 35.000 signs (blanks included),

- at least 3 pictures and illustrations in separate files, please also write a caption for each of them and indicate the picture credits,

- summaries in ALL THREE languages (3.000 signs each, blanks included) English, French and Spanish. Please note: we would like to give all readers the opportunity to understand the core message of the article, even if they do not speak the language in which it has been written. Therefore, the summary should be a bit longer than “just” an abstract of a few lines. We will allocate up to one page per language to those summaries,

- up to 5 key-words,

- your contact details: name, institution, function, email-address, postal address, telephone number.

Time plan

15th January 2022: deadline submission of articles February-March: peer-reviews

April-May: editing of the articles

June: preparation of publication

Summer 2022: publication

Official launch of the publication in August 2022, during the CECA annual conference which will be held as part of the ICOM General Conference 2022 in Prague.

Examples for the bibliography

Book

Hein, G., (1998). *Learning in the Museum*. New York: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P., & Darbel, A. (1969). *L'amour de l'art : les musées d'art européens et leur public*. Paris :

Les Editions de Minuit.

Eidelman, J., Roustan, M., & Goldstein, B. (Eds.). (2007). *La place des publics : De l'usage des*

études et recherches par les musées. Paris : La Documentation française.

Article

Falk, J. H., Scott, C., Dierking, L., Rennie, L. & Jones, M. C. (2004). Interactives and Visitor Learning.

Curator: The Museum Journal, 47, 171–198. doi:10.1111/j.2151-6952.2004.tb00116.x

Contribution in book

Rubiales Garcia Jurado, R. (2014). Gramática museológica. In E. Nardi, C. Angelini & S. Wintzerith

(Eds.), *ICOM Education 25: Change of Perspective: (New) ideas for presenting museum objects* (p. 23-32). Rome: Edizioni Nuova Cultura.

Brochure

ICOM. (2004). *Código de deontología del ICOM para los museos*, downloaded from <http://icom.museum/la-vision/codigo-de-deontologia//L/1/>

The previous issues of *ICOM Education* are available free of charge on the CECA website <http://ceca.mini.icom.museum/publications/icom-education/>