

Art History 490 Personal Museum Experience Reflection

Typed and double-spaced essay of 1-2 pages in length. Using informal voice is fine. Each student will share his or her reflection by reading it out loud.

Goal: To recollect and reflect on a significant personal museum experience
To develop a shared body of questions, issues, and experiences for the term
To become familiar with the interests and experiences of the class as individuals

Objectives: to capture a clear, relevant, narrative that supports your point of view

To evaluate how the exhibit you saw functioned for the visitor/audience

To describe your experience within the context of how art and culture were related

To apply the models generated by Alpers (visual distinction) Baxandall (museum effect)
Cf. too Lavine's model of object based versus culturally based sites

Process:

1. Choose a museum or gallery visit that stands out in your mind.

People have chosen a first memory, family or school trips, a recent exhibition, gallery visit, or museum (art or other field). Historic houses, theme parks, theme parks, museums of anthropology, history, children are some other possibilities.

2. Make it evocative of your experience, as the others in class may not have had a similar experience.

Some ways of doing this might be taking the listener along through your experience of a particular day, time, and space, or evoking the sensations that you recollect (sights, smells, etc.) on this particular occasion.

3. Link it to the class readings by considering the type of institution, and their functions in the community, and likely audience.

The first two essays in Exhibiting Cultures contrast the museum as a way of seeing versus a place of exhibiting intention. Does either of these models reflect your experience or point of view? Ivan Karp situates this discussion within the context of "Culture and Representation" in which he compares and contrasts the global perspectives of the five authors of Part 1 of your text. You may find it useful to review his introduction as well.

4. Members of the class are invited to respond by asking a question, commenting on the reader's experience, or identifying a major theme in the reader's paper. We will draw some conclusions as a class.

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