Redesigning the Museum: Participatory Art and the Importance of Millennial Engagement

By Alexandra Mosher

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Clare Brown
Program Head, Master of Arts in Exhibition Design
Professor of Exhibition Design

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Abstract of Thesis

Redesigning The Museum: Participatory Art and the
Importance of Millennial Engagement

Is there a "right" way to look at art? The traditional art museum model is static – one where the status quo reigns. New ways of approaching art exhibitions is an uncultivated area. This paper serves as a proposal for the exhibition, *pARTicipate: An Experiential Guide to Art,* that looks to provide a unique art museum experience; one where the visitor will discover new ways to engage with and look at artworks within an exhibition. The exhibition will include modern and contemporary art works that engage the visitor through 2-dimensional, 3-dimensional, and conceptual works. Examining traditional modes of displaying art works, this art exhibition looks to reassess the conventional art viewing experience. Aimed to engage members of the millennial generation, *pARTicipate* analyzes social constructs of this demographic to create a better designed and more relevant museum experience. Interactive components such as writing on the walls, crafting object labels, or creating their own art will encourage the visitor's role to shift from passive to active.

Taking place at the newly constructed Whitney Museum of American Art, *pARTicipate* will be the inaugural exhibition to celebrate the opening of their new building. As a permanent collection installation, this show will use a non-traditional approach to reassess and redefine conventional uses of space, graphics, and overall tone within the art museum, creating an exhibition that aims to engage the visitor.

Table of Contents

Abstract of Thesis……..…..iv

List of Figures…….…….……vi

I. Introduction……...…….....…….….1

II. Audience Methodology……... ……...……...…….....7

III. Research Goals, Methodology, and Findings.…….....11

IV. Contextual Research……...……..…….....18

V. Site Research and Methodology…….....28

VI. Interpretive Plan and Design Strategies …….....39

VII. Conclusion…….....55

Appendix A: Challenges of Exhibition Topic…….....57

Appendix B: Personal Statement of Interest……...…….....59

Appendix C: Audience Research…….....60

Appendix D: Smithsonian Institution and IPOP…….....65

Appendix E: Bibliography…….....66

Appendix F: Visual Matrix.....73

Appendix G: Design Package…….....81

List of Figures

Figure 1, Mark Rothko, *Untitled (Blue, Yellow, Green on Red)*, 1954.....1

Figure 2, Conceptual experience map.....9

Figure 3, Visitors in the British Museum.....19

Figure 4, Visitors in front of Rembrandt's *The Night Watch*.....19

Figure 5, Street view of the Whitney.....28

Figure 6, Aerial view of the Whitney.....28

Figure 7, Section drawing of the Whitney.....30

Figure 8, View of the Whitney from the High Line.....30

Figure 9, Map view of the Meat Packing District.....31

Figure 10, Corner of Washington and Gansevoort Streets, NYC.....32

Figure 11, 5th level floor plan.....33

Figure 12, Installation view of *Singular Visions*.....35

Figure 13, Installation view of *Off the Wall*.....36

Figure 14, Installation view of *Scrim Veil-Black Rectangle-Natural Light*.....37

Figure 15, Installation view of *Full House*.....37

Figure 16, Installation view of *Fireflies on the Water*.....38

Figure 17, Conceptual map of artworks.....44

Figure 18, View of floor and wall graphics……..47

Figure 19, View of typical vignette……..48

Figure 20, Guidebook mock-up…….…...49

Figure 21, Typical exhibition design for 3-D works…….....…..50

Figure 22, Vignette of 2-D works…….50

Figure 23, Brochure from Whitney's new graphic identity……..51

I. Introduction

Imagine you are renowned Abstract Expressionist painter, Mark Rothko. Painting thin layer after thin layer of vibrant color, you are engrossed in your work. The esoteric nature of your practice is mesmerizing – so much so that time seems impenetrable. What if you could see a painting by Rothko just the same way he saw it? How would you experience it? By standing exactly 18 inches away from his painting, Rothko intended for his viewer to have a spiritual awakening – one that expressed a wide range of human emotions – everything from tragedy to ecstasy.[1]

Fig. 1, Mark Rothko, *Untitled (Blue, Yellow, Green on Red)*, 1954, © 1998 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

The proposed exhibition, *pARTicipate: An Experiential Guide to Art*, presents the inaugural permanent collection installation for the Whitney Museum of American Art's newly constructed building in New York City. Exhibiting art works that date from 1945 to the present, *pARTicipate* will offer interactive elements that help the visitor understand the artistic process or the artists' intent behind 2-dimensional, 3-dimensional, and conceptual works and speak to the different ways of experiencing a work of art in person.

[1] "Mark Rothko Biography," MarRothko.org, accessed December 1, 2014 http://www.markrothko.org/biography/.

This art exhibition will examine traditional modes of displaying and viewing art works so that the visitor can experience a painting by Rothko just like he intended.

Mission Statement

This paper is a proposal for an art exhibition that reexamines traditional modes of displaying artwork and offers exciting, new ways of behaving, seeing, and interacting within the art museum. *pARTicipate,* which is aimed for the millennial visitor, will use interactive and participatory elements to help foster personal connections and direct experiences with art. The goal is to engage millennials in the experience of art, by providing unconventional guided directives and participatory opportunities within an otherwise traditional art museum context.

***pARTicipate*: An Overview**

"There is no right way to experience a museum, of course."

–Stephanie Rosenbloom, The New York Times[2]

pARTicipate: An Experiential Guide to Art is a proposed exhibition that will revolutionize traditional notions of displaying and viewing art. It will encourage visitors to create their own meaning around works of art through various elements that are either inherent to the work or are prompted through a sensory interactive that the visitor initiates. *pARTicipate* aims to provide a unique museum-going experience; one where the visitor curates their own journey and is encouraged to engage with the art works through

[2] Stephanie Rosenbloom, "The Art of Slowing Down in a Museum," *The New York Times*, October 9, 2014, accessed December 6, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/12/travel/the-art-of-slowing-down-in-a-museum.html?_r=0.

different tactile or thought-provoking interactives. By transforming the role of the visitor from passive to active, the participatory elements of the exhibition will help establish a deeper connection between the visitor and the art. This exhibition will provide new ways of learning how to experience art through these participatory means with the hope that visitors will build upon previous experiences not only interacting with the art but also from their own lives.

pARTicipate takes an innovative approach to the traditional art exhibition by addressing new ways to experience a work of art in person and teaches the visitor visual literacy strategies through the interactive elements. The concept of an exhibition that focuses on the physical interactions that occur within an art museum and how visitors engage with contemporary and modern artworks is not one that has been fully explored or executed. There are numerous past exhibitions that include the proposed modern and contemporary works and incorporate participatory elements. However, it is not apparent that these exact works and subjects have been used to create an art exhibition that speaks about new ways to experience art in person without the use of digital interactives, which is typically the main method of interaction geared towards millennials. The exhibition will utilize large scale floor and wall graphics, quotes and photographs and of the artist, and analog participatory means such as a guidebook, that help visitors understand the artists' intent or process and further humanize the figures behind these works of art.[3]

Additionally, there is a certain bias towards modern and contemporary art that may be intimidating or off-putting for visitors that feel as if they do not hold the proper background knowledge to fully understand the piece. This exhibition will attempt to assuage those feelings by making modern and contemporary art works approachable and

[3] Design strategies will be discussed further in *VI. Design Selections and Methodology*

interactive so the visitor can discover commonalities between their own lives and the works on display.

Goals of the Exhibition

1. To reassess traditional methods of displaying art in museum exhibitions by creating opportunities for engagement, participation, and introduce non-traditional ways of behaving, seeing, and interacting within an art museum context.
2. To invite the visitor to contribute to their experience and transform their role into active participant.
3. To engage the millennial generation through tactile methods, exploration, and self-curation.
4. To reconnect visitors to the physical object to remind them why viewing art works in person, rather than online, provides a uniquely personal experience.
5. To help the visitor create a meaningful, personal connection with their art viewing experience so that they will remember more about the works than just the label copy.
6. To create a social experience where interpersonal connections can be discovered.

Content Overview

pARTicipate: An Experiential Guide to Art pulls directly from the Whitney Museum of American Art's permanent collection and will be widely regarded as a permanent collection show. This exhibition will include modern and contemporary

paintings, sculptures, installations, videos, and participatory artworks that were all created post-1945.

Permanent collection installations bring their own preconceived notions and historical connotations. The Whitney owns the majority of the works, but there are several pieces from outside collections that greatly enhance the didactic nature of the exhibition. Even though this is a permanent collection, some of the works will be loaned and are not from the permanent collection. The Whitney has borrowed works from other institutions for a previous permanent collection installation, *Full House: Views of the Whitney's Collection*, which was their 75th anniversary show. By including loaned works for a permanent collection installation, the objects can be better placed contextually and historically and enhance the breadth of the exhibition.[4] As well, the newly built Whitney space offers a fresh opportunity to rethink the traditional art museum experience and is set in a neighborhood where there is a younger demographic.

The works included in the show are not revolutionary by any means today. However, they all have historic implications and were innovative at one time or another. They are highly regarded as modern and contemporary art works and many of the artists are recognizable to the general museum going audience, especially if they have visited a modern or contemporary art museum before or taken an introductory art history course.

pARTicipate is not intended as a comprehensive exhibition. It provides highlights of works from the modern and contemporary era while maintaining a basic trajectory of art history, with a focus on conceptual and participatory works. The exhibition will not be

[4] "Full House," Whitney Museum of American Art, accessed September 15, 2014, http://whitney.org/Exhibitions/FullHouse.

grouped chronologically and will use both the intensity of participation and the dimensionality of the work as a guiding element.

Another outcome this exhibition serves is to remind visitors about the value of viewing art in person and provide the visitor with a completely sensory experience. By having fewer than thirty objects within the large gallery space, the visitor will be able to engage with each work that interests them. There will not be a rush to see every work of art – the visitor will have the chance to slow down and not feel the expectation to see everything they can. Visitor will be encouraged to return to the exhibition to see how certain works that require audience participation have changed over the course of time.

II. Audience Methodology

Audience Introduction[5]

The target audience for *pARTicipate* is millennials which encompasses those who are between the ages of approximately 18 and 33 – or who came "of age" in the new millennium. There is a secondary audience that will naturally consist of professionals in the field who study the works exhibited or modern and contemporary art enthusiasts, however, for the context of this paper, millennials will be the primary audience focus group.

The millennial demographic was chosen for several reasons:

1. First and foremost, as reported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the attendance of millennials visiting art museums is declining.[6]
2. Secondly, millennials are currently the largest demographic and offer a wealth of knowledge on numerous subjects as they are also the most educated demographic to date.[7]

Audience Research Goals

When researching millennials, there were several goals to keep in mind:

1. As a demographic, what are their main interests and characteristics?
2. How do they engage in other aspects of their life?

[5] For further information on millennials, please consult *Appendix C: Audience Research*
[6] "To Woo Millennials, Museum Tour Group Taps into the Digital Age."
[7] "Millennials in Adulthood: Detached from Institutions, Networked with Friends," *Pew Research*, March 7, 2014, accessed September 9, 2014, http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/03/07/millennials-in-adulthood/.

3. What will draw them in to this exhibition and what tools have other museums used to appeal to this demographic?

Challenges of Audience

Conducting research on millennials poses several challenges. They are an extremely diverse group and their age range encompasses such a wide span that some millennials have yet to graduate high school. The following was necessary to consider:

1. As millennials are the target audience, how will this exhibition appeal to this demographic?
2. By encouraging viewers to engage with the works, will those who only wish to view the art in silence and introspectively feel alienated?
3. What methods can be used to relate to this age group that has such diverse interests?

Interpretive Plan and How it Relates to the Audience

The largest "take-away" that this exhibition aims to deliver is that there is no right way to look at art and that connections can be made between modern and contemporary artworks and the visitors' life. The act of viewing art in person can produce an emotional, physical reaction to the works that can create a deeper level of understanding and appreciation for the art. Through the interactive and didactic elements, visitors will also consider the physical space of the museum and why artworks are displayed in certain ways.

This exhibition will present the objects and information in an engaging, sophisticated way. Since this exhibition is designed to be interactive and requires audience participation, the areas that prompt or ask the visitor to "activate" the space will be designed in a straightforward manner. Any written text will address the visitor in a mature, but accessible and approachable way. As this exhibition is geared towards millennials, it will speak to them directly using the research conducted on this audience group; however, this will not be used overtly as to not run the risk of patronizing.

Visitors will encounter areas of highly participatory works and others that are more contemplative. By staggering the areas that are participatory versus the ones that are more solitary, a physical break will occur. As well, by juxtaposing the varying areas of participation, the visitor will experience a metered exploration throughout the exhibition.

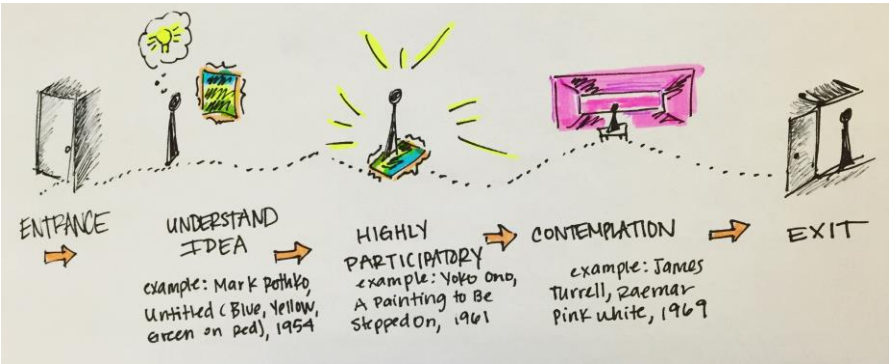

Fig. 2, Conceptual experience map, image courtesy author

This exhibition will appeal to millennials in several ways. First, an emphasis will be placed on social media advertising. A majority of the works can act as a vehicle that the visitor uses to take a picture with.[8] The mirrored works by Jeff Koons invite the visitor to take a "selfie" with the art, which creates a connection between the visitor and

[8] "To woo millennials, museum tour group taps into the digital age."

the work and allows them to share their experience at the Museum.[9] This exhibition will be specifically geared towards millennials by encouraging them to take photographs with the works of art while appropriate hashtags will be assigned so that the exhibition will be evident and searchable.

Additionally, *pARTicipate* will appeal to this generation because of its guidebook that acts as a "curate your own tour." Since this audience enjoys curating the information they receive and their experiences, the floor graphics and guidebook will let the visitor develop a plan of action.[10]

Visitors will also establish fresh ways to look at art and will be offered new ways to consider material and scale. By engaging with the works in a way that is non-intimidating, the viewer will understand that modern and contemporary art is not as complex and is more accessible than they may think. Additionally, by encouraging visitors to interact with the works will hopefully result in dialogue among the visitors – even if they came alone.

[9] Pierroux, et al., "Posing with Art: Researching and Designing for Performative Acts of Interpretation" (presented at the conference *Museums and the Web 2014*) (2014).
[10] "Museums in the Digital Age," 8.

III. Research Goals, Methodology, and Findings

Initial Research

In 2013, I worked in the curatorial office of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, processing their rights and reproduction contracts. After realizing that the majority of the requesters I dealt with could most likely find a high-resolution image of the work they needed by just doing a simple Google search, I continued to research digitized, archived collections and came across online-only exhibitions and artists who created digital artworks. As I delved deeper, I found a large assortment of museums that in addition to the physical space also provided their collection online or curated content for online exhibitions. I started to question why anyone would bother actually visiting a museum if they never had to leave their home. If I proposed an exhibition that offered interactive elements that one could not experience online, then maybe this was the key to attracting visitors.

As I continued this investigation, I found that the issue at hand is not whether interacting with art in person is still necessary – because most would argue that seeing the physical object is better in person than online – but really, how art museums encourage visitors, specifically the millennial generation, to see the works.

There are numerous aspects of research for this exhibition:

1. The history of exhibitions and the historical implications of traditional art display and curatorial goals. What happens if this traditional mode of representation changes? The history of the artwork is indeed relevant; however, learning this information is not the only way to engage with the work.

2. Participatory works and exhibitions: how are these works displayed in other museums? What type of exhibitions are these works typically in? What are the historical connotations of the works included in this exhibition?
3. How do visitors learn within museums? What aspects of art education and art therapy are relevant? According to the Smithsonian's Office of Policies and Analysis' 16 year research project, there are four categories that visitors are drawn to when visiting an exhibition, termed IPOP: ideas, people, objects, and physical.[11] Each category is a typology that appeals to human emotions and interests. If an exhibition appeals to these four classifications, the exhibition is likely to be better received.[12]
4. What role does new technology play into the exhibition? What assets can be utilized to create better modes of engagement? In order to combat the excessive use of technology within exhibitions that is usually more of an item on a checklist, the only technology utilized in this exhibition will be photo ops for visitors to document their experience and share on social media.

pARTicipate is based on previous interactive and participatory exhibitions as well as information on how museum visitors create meaning within exhibitions. Through informed research and by implementing a variety of learning tools and methods within the gallery, the exhibition aims to appeal to all visitors on one level or another. A major research component involves the various ways in which visitors form meaning within the museum setting. According to *Learning in the Museum*:

[11] Please consult *Appendix D* for further information on IPOP.
[12] Andrew J. Pekarik, et al., "IPOP: A Theory of Experience Preference," *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 57.1 (2014), 5.

> …Visitors spend little time at individual exhibit components (often a matter of a few seconds and seldom as much as one minute); seldom read labels; usually stop at less than half the components at an exhibit; are more likely to use trial-and-error methods at interactive exhibits than to read instructions…and that attention to exhibits declines sharply after about half an hour.[13]

If the average museum visitor only has about thirty minutes of dedicated, concentrated viewing time, then it is vital to not include an overload of material. Additionally, since they only spend less than one minute on average at each individual exhibition component, *pARTicipate* will keep in mind that all interactives will need to be quick to understand and complete. As well, the interactives should be appealing from a distance so that the visitor can make an informed decision on which ones to participate in.

pARTicipate wishes to create a connection between the visitor and work of art. As seen through research by Housen (1999) and Yenawine (1997), guided discussions on art works "...results in richer connections and increased engagement with those works." They question: "Can understanding what a visitor actually sees when he or she looks at a museum object help us to provide more engaging experiences for that visitor, inform the creation of gallery interpretation, and have implications for the design of those in-gallery experiences?"[14] This quote considers the visitor and takes their thoughts or emotions they experience when viewing an object into consideration.

A fair amount of the exhibition's design and conceptual decisions were informed by previous exhibitions that were well received in the press. By looking at what aspects of these exhibitions worked and what the visitor got out of the experience, informed decisions were made for the interactive elements included within the exhibition.

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[13] Edward Bachta, et al., "Evaluating the Practical Applications of Eye Tracking in Museums" (paper presented at the annual conference of *Museums and the Web,* San Diego, CA, April 11-14, 2012).
[14] Ibid.

Precedents of Exhibition Topic

There has never been an exhibition about addressing new methods of viewing art and displaying modern and contemporary art works. There are numerous exhibitions within the last six years that touch on aspects and themes of this exhibition, but none that speak directly to changing the way visitors engage with the works within the museum space and the importance of viewing artworks in person. The following examples focus on exhibitions that have happened during the past six years as to keep the list of precedents concise, since there are countless exhibitions that could be referenced.

GALLERY ONE
CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART, 2013-PRESENT

One of the most similar exhibitions in recent years is *Gallery One* in the Cleveland Museum of Art. Often described as an inviting space, *Gallery One* offers areas of digital interactives that help the visitor create a connection with their permanent collection. Participatory interactives, such as ones that utilize the technology of the Microsoft Kinect, instruct the visitor to shape their body into a form of a piece in the collection, further making a direct connection between reality and the artworks.[15]

UNDER THE SAME SUN: ART FROM LATIN AMERICA TODAY
GUGGENHEIM, 2012

In 2012, the Guggenheim encouraged play in their exhibition, *Under the Same Sun: Art from Latin America Today*. Mexican artist Carlos Amorales' work *We'll See How Everything Reverberates*, 2012, urged visitors to hit his work made out of brass

[15] Jane Alexander, Jake Barton, and Caroline Goeser, "Transforming the Art Museum Experience" (presented at the conference *Museums and the Web,* April 17-20, 2013, Portland, OR) (2013). http://mw2013.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/transforming-the-art-museum-experience-gallery-one-2/

cymbals with a mallet. Another work by Jonathas de Andrade encouraged visitors to reposition 77 posters that were hung around the gallery. By having the visitors curate this gallery space, they were able to gain a sense of authorship and pride, creating a connection with the works displayed. A Gallery Guide for the exhibition, Justin Campoy, explained the great success of the show: "It's about making it your own, and in doing that, you're sort of undermining the authority of the institution, which I think people enjoy."[16]

WITHOUT YOU I'M NOTHING: ART AND ITS AUDIENCE
MCA CHICAGO, 2010-2011

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago created a similar exhibition that focused on participatory art works and the importance of visitor engagement. They exhibited participatory works that focused on the shift towards art as a reflection of the personal with their exhibition, *Without You I'm Nothing: Art and Its Audience.* Using works by artists included in *pARTicipate*, such as Félix Gonzalez-Torres, *Without You I'm Nothing* sought to emphasize "the critical importance of interactivity and the physical relationship of the viewer in the experience of contemporary art as it is being created."[17] By recreating participatory works and restaging these historical events, visitors were able to see firsthand these performative works and take part in their recreation.

[16] Caitlin Dover, "'I'm Doing it Because I Can': Playing in the Galleries in the Guggenheim's Under the Same Sun*,"* Guggenheim Blog, September 9, 2014, accessed December 2, 2014, http://blogs.guggenheim.org/map/im-doing-it-because-i-can-playing-in-the-galleries-in-the-guggenheims-under-the-same-sun/.
[17] "Without You I'm Nothing: Art and Its Audience," MCA Chicago, accessed September 9, 2014, http://www2.mcachicago.org/exhibition/without-you-im-nothing-art-and-its-audience/.

THE ART OF PARTICIPATION: 1950 TO NOW
SF MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 2008-2009

Another similar exhibition that included participatory works was done by SFMOMA. *The Art of Participation: 1950 to Now* was a survey of participatory works over the past 60 years that "examine[d] how artists have engaged members of the public as essential collaborators in the art-making process."[18] *The Art of Participation* performed historic participatory works that required the visitor's direct participation within the gallery space.

Additional Precedents

Despite the previous examples being from the past six years, the concept of changing the gallery space is not new. A few examples have been provided as to elaborate upon the history of interactive exhibitions.

In 1927, Russian Constructivist, El Lissitzky created a gallery installation of his work that "reject[ed] individualistic modes of contemplation in favour of an active, collective viewing experience."[19] Through basic techniques, Lissitzky created a sensory experience where the background color of the room shifted on a spectrum from white to black. Additionally, he installed some of his artwork on rails and even had a display case that revolved.[20] Through altering the wall color, not only is the way in which the work is viewed changed, but also the experience. *pARTicipate* will encourage its visitors to physically transform the wall color for several works of art through use of a projector.

[18] "The Art of Participation, 1950 to Now," *SFMOMA*, accessed September 9, 2014, http://www.sfmoma.org/exhib_events/exhibitions/306.
[19] Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors 1800 to 2000*, 16.
[20] Ibid.

Even earlier than Lissitzky, the prolific painter Jacques-Louis David, is noted as using mirrors as a display tactic for exhibiting his paintings *The Intervention of the Sabine Women*, 1799 and *Mars disarmed by Venus and the Three Graces*, 1824. The mirrors seemed to enhance the paintings, creating dynamism within the room and allowing for multiple views of the work.[21] Within *pARTicipate,* the viewer will be exposed to the use of mirrors through the borrowed works of Jeff Koons. Four of his mirrors, all included in the "Easyfun" series, will be displayed in opportune areas so that the visitor can not only see the original works of art but also detect other works within the gallery for an added sense of exploration and discovery.

Additionally, over the last year, the National Gallery of Victoria, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Rijksmuseum have all exhibited shows that focus on art therapy and use non-traditional labels. Written by art therapy expert, Alain de Botton and art historian, John Armstrong, the labels addressed personal questions that related to the works and could better help the visitor make a personal connection to what was on display.[22] Writing "in the language of an intelligent 12 year-old," the labels address the works in a variety of ways, but always bring the focus back to a question or the issue at hand.[23] The exhibitions they created have shifted the focus away from the historical account of the work and have centered on how the work can help address hard issues that visitors or society might be tackling with. By having the visitor write their own label in *pARTicipate,* they are actively contributing to the exhibition and bring an individualized perspective to the works.

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[21] Ward, "What's Important About the History of Modern Art Exhibitions?" 460.
[22] "Alain De Botton's Healing Arts"
[23] James Adams, "AGO's Art as Therapy: It's More Experiment than Exhibition," May 2, 2014, accessed December 1, 2014, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/art-and-architecture/agos-art-as-therapy-more-experiment-than-exhibition/article18389467/.

IV. Contextual Research

The Past, Present, and Future of Museums

"It is less what museums show than how they show it that puts into place certain visions of experience and not others."

–Charlotte Klonk, Spaces of Experience[24]

Art historical precedents dictate that art should be revered and is for elite viewing only – those with previous knowledge of the subject. Works in galleries are hung perfectly straight, sculptures are delicately placed on pedestals, and walls are painted stark white as ascribed by the curator. The room is cold, not only due to the conservation requirements, but also because of previously ascribed museum attitudes. Works are generally viewed in solitude. Visitors are hunched over, hands promptly folded behind their backs, with a guide-by-cell device, silently reading the labels. Visiting most art museums today paints this picture. What do these labels tell them? Usually, the name of the artist, title of the work, medium, who owns the work, and if they are lucky, a short paragraph about what they are looking at. This information is relevant for those who have the historical context of the works, but what more can the visitor take away from this experience? What feeling does the artwork evoke? Will they remember the title of the work in years to come? Or, will they just remember the work itself? Maybe they will only remember the feeling they got when looking at the work.

[24] Charlotte Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 11.

Fig. 3, Visitors in the British Museum, image courtesy British Museum website

Fig. 4, Visitors in front of Rembrandt's *The Night Watch*, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

The presentation of artifacts is not a novel idea, however, the notion of exhibition display is relatively current. The study and reflection of past exhibitions is even more recent. As a way to experience the past, exhibitions are entangled with political, social, and economic influences that are often addressed by curatorial writings and text labels. The extraneous items that make up an exhibition – frames, lights, wall colors – are all conscious choices made by either the curator or exhibition designer that can enhance or diminish the visitor's experience.

Exhibitions became a recognized form of presentation in Western Europe during the 18th century.[25] The renowned Paris Salon originated as a regularized establishment in 1737, where it's institutionalized and public nature arguably made it the first type of exhibition in the history of art.[26] In the 1930s, museums became more specialized to their respective fields and the notion of the white cube solidified when MoMA opened its

[25] Barbara Pollack, "The Exhibitions that Changed Art History," April 17, 2013, accessed October 20, 2014, http://www.artnews.com/2013/04/17/exhibitions-that-changed-art-history/.
[26] Martha Ward, "What's Important About the History of Modern Art Exhibitions?" in *Thinking About Exhibitions*, ed. Reesa Greenberg, et. al. (New York: Routledge, 1996), 454.

doors.[27] In modern times, the white cube has materialized as the status quo for modern and contemporary exhibition design. Its basic concept is "...providing art with an escape from history and from the contingencies of real life and the outside world."[28] However, by painting the gallery walls white, any sense of place or connection to personal histories is excluded and individual interactions or interpretations are limited.

As described by Charlotte Klonk in her book, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000*: "Works of art appeared to offer access to the feelings of people from the past in a way that other historical documents did not." As Klonk continues to retell the history of "experience" and exhibitions, she describes this sensation and that what needed to happen was "a gallery experience that would be intuitive, intimate and, above all, would bring the inner, emotional self of the visitor into harmony with the display."[29] As discussed by Klonk, exhibitions show the defining cultural moments of the time. She questions the dual nature of exhibitions as a place for private introspection and how this is juxtaposed with its placement in the public sphere.[30] In her essay, "What's Important About the History of Modern Art Exhibitions?" Martha Ward questions the absence of interactive, engaging exhibitions: "Potentially more revealing for the history of display…is the question of why installation was not more often called upon in such dramatic ways to enhance, enforce or multiply ways of seeing."[31] It is questions like Ward's that are the compelling force behind this proposal.

[27] Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000*, 11.
[28] Martin Caiger-Smith, "Beyond the White Cube: A New Role For the Art Museum?" *Architecture Today*, November 7, 2011, accessed December 6, 2014, http://www.architecturetoday.co.uk/?p=16139.
[29] Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000,* 9.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ward, "What's Important About the History of Modern Art Exhibitions?" 460.

Multiple modes of engagement with the objects on display are essential to the creation of an enlightening, didactic exhibition.

Kathleen McLean, principal of Independent Exhibitions, astutely questions the future of museums and where they are headed: "Museums might become centers for inspiration, reflection, and social interaction, where people connect with their humanity, with beauty, and with the natural world; or they might become more like their amusement park cousins, serving up "fun" determined by a market economy."[32] McLean's observations point to two directions that exhibition design can go. By looking to the past and taking into account the present, exhibition designers must make conscious decisions and understand that their design is influential to the presentation of the topic and affects how well visitors will comprehend the content. Charlotte Klonk argues for the future of museums by stating: "...that museums are the last public space left in which dialogue and interaction between visitors is encouraged...A look at the history of displays not only reminds us of the enduring fascination exerted by art galleries but also gives us an insight into the various forms that people have envisaged human interaction in the past."[33] To understand where museums are headed, we must take into account all that has happened in the past. As well, as new technology emerges, the museum will have to rethink their display of works and appeal to younger generations. The museum's position as storyteller and keeper of the past is a significant role, however, in order to continue this responsibility, exhibitions must be made relevant to today's world. As a major vehicle for the dialog of the past, the art museum needs to expand its ideas regarding visitor

[32] Kathleen McLean, "Do Museum Exhibitions Have a Future?" *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 50.1 (2007), 110.
[33] Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000*, 17.

interaction and provide elements that relate the content back to the visitor, as it is their history that is being retold.

Meaning-Making and the Museum

Traditional art museum exhibitions can be impersonal and historical, relegating the visitor to the role of outsider. In order for the museum to engage with their visitor, the ways in which they display their content and objects must be carefully designed. Charlotte Klonk, states: "It is less what museums show than how they show it that puts into place certain visions of experience and not others."[34] Similarly, Martha Ward suggests that instead of the museum trying to pin down absolutes – histories and facts about the works – their exhibitions should: "acknowledge the temporal fluidity of the museum space."[35] By addressing the shifting nature of the museum space and the content it develops for its objects, exhibitions may not need to take the stance of supreme expert and might delegate some of that responsibility to its audience to create meaning. Shawn Rowe, a Professor at Oregon State University, questions this shift of authority: "...should museums use their objects to transmit accurate information or to transfer authority for interpretation to visitors?"[36] Rowe affirms the necessity of relying correct information but also stresses the importance of inviting visitors into this process of meaning-making, and utilizing the unique perspectives and ways of interaction they bring. Within *pARTicipate,* visitors will not only see the different ways artworks can be interactive, but also recognize processes inherent to exhibition design such as writing an object label.

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[34] Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000*, 11.
[35] Ward, "What's Important About the History of Modern Art Exhibitions?" 463.
[36] Shawn Rowe, "The Role of Objects in Active, Distributed Meaning-Making," in *Perspectives on Object-Centered Learning in Museums,* ed. Scott G. Paris (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2002), 33.

Humans construct meaning through a variety of ways and employ multiple modes of learning. As described by Rowe, "Achieving understanding and making meaning are things people do actively" and that the process of meaning-making is evident in the conversations they have with others.[37] Rowe describes objects as "thinking device[s]" and argues that they are "a cultural tool for generating meaning."[38] The objects are imbued with multiple narratives and interpretations, provided by not only the experts who study them, but also the visitors. By relating aspects of the objects to real life or commonplace concepts, the viewer will be able to better contextualize these historic works that may not be as relevant today.

The process in which humans acquire information occurs through the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Exhibitions that include only text panels as the main source of information are limited to the visual realm. This method prevents those who learn better through a different sense from truly comprehending the content. *pARTicipate* will incorporate as many sensory elements as possible within the constraints of a museum setting. Interactive components that cater to more than one sense will be utilized as interactive features of the exhibition. Additionally, aspects of the Smithsonian's IPOP research strategy will also be used to enhance the participatory nature of the works. IPOP focuses on the notion that humans are more interested in one of the following categories over the other three: ideas, people, objects, and physical.[39] In order to engage the millennial demographic and those who learn through a variety of ways, the four typologies of IPOP will be applied to interactives that function in tandem with the artworks on display.

[37] Ibid., 22.
[38] Ibid., 31.
[39] For further information on IPOP, please consult *Appendix D.*

How to View Art

An article in the Washington Post by acclaimed art critic, Phillip Kennicott, came under attack in 2014. Kennicott could be labeled as an old fashioned art historian, one who's pretentiousness and authority seeps through his directive writings. His article, *How to view art: "Be dead serious about it, but don't expect too much,"* austerely lets the reader know the appropriate ways in which to visit a museum. Commandments like "seek silence" and "study up" are archaic and reinforce traditional art viewing roles.[40] Multiple articles have been written criticizing Kennicott and advocating for their own list of how to view art. One Huffington Post article, written in rebuttal by MuseumHack member and museum educator, Jen Oleniczak, offers a different list – one that doesn't require prior knowledge:

1. Take the time you have
2. Seek your space
3. Just do you
4. Remember in your own way
5. Ignore everything I said[41]

Oleniczak's list refutes Kennicott's orders and further exemplifies the reader's frustration with his article. There is no "right" way to approach art, although there can be recommendations to help guide the visitor. *pARTicipate* will attempt to utilize various

[40] Philip Kennicott, "How to View Art: Be Dead Serious About It, But Don't Expect Too Much," *The Washington Post*, October 4, 2014, accessed October 27, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/how-to-view-art-be-dead-serious-about-it-but-dont-expect-too-much/2014/10/01/28f7cdba-459a-11e4-b47c-f5889e061e5f_story.html.
[41] Jen Olenizcak, "How to View Art: However You Want To," *Huffington Post*, October 6, 2014, accessed October 27, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jen-oleniczak-/how-to-view-art-however-y_b_5936704.html.

methods of looking and engaging with art in ways that are not as commanding and limiting as the ones in Kennicott's article.

The Digital Realm and the Importance of Museum as Space

Museums are posed with the questions of whether including technology within the exhibition space is necessary, and if so, how can it be utilized to create an educational environment? Nina Simon states:

> The cultural and technological shifts that accompanied the rise of the social Web have changed people's expectations of what makes experiences worthwhile or appealing. People assume the right to co-opt and redistribute institutional content, not just to look at it. They seek opportunities for creative expression, both self-directed and in response to the media they consume.[42]

Her quote feeds directly into the self-curation aspect that this exhibition will use. The idea that now anyone can become a curator of their own life through social media is seen through the changes in technology.

We live in a digital world – everything can be accessed from one's computer, phone, tablet, and soon, wristwatch. It could be stated that in a society that is increasingly digital and online, the physical object is no longer required. With the creation of the iPhone in 2007, the digital world was literally right at our fingertips. The way people interacted with their phones changed – text messaging had a 450% increase from 2006 to 2008, as reported by Neilson, and access to social media platforms such as Facebook was easier and more prominently used.[43] Even art dealers are selling works online; a

[42] Nina Simon, "What's Next? Imagining the Participatory Museum," *The Participatory Museum*, March 2, 2010, accessed September 9, 2014, http://www.participatorymuseum.org/imagining/.
[43] "How the iPhone Changed Our Lives," *CBS*, accessed September 27, 2014, http://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/how-the-iphone-changed-our-lives/.

profession that once heavily relied on the physical space of the gallery.[44] The way museum exhibitions are executed has also changed with the growth of technology.[45] Museums all over the world are digitizing their collections and some contemporary spaces, such as the New Museum in New York, have specific online exhibitions that will never be seen in a physical space. Even the Whitney Museum of American Art has an online exhibition space – Artport. In 2006, a study by the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill found that 45% of museum visits were by online visitors.[46] Nevertheless, despite the influxes of digital worlds and realms, new physical museum spaces are being built. In Washington, D.C., the space for a new National Museum of African American History and Culture is on its way to being completed. Why build these new spaces if one can just view its contents online? Blake Gopnik, American art critic, makes the case for the physical space, by arguing that in order for a work to be deemed "good art," people need to see it in person. Galleries and museums are there to offer art to the masses, not just a select few, and the act of viewing art in person creates a completely different experience than it's online counterpart.[47]

Art as Therapy

"Museums…would be more energetic, unpredictable, and useful places if curators thought less like professors and more like therapists."

–Alain de Botton[48]

[44] Blake Gopnik, "Great Art Needs an Audience," *The Art Newspaper*, Issue 254, February 13, 2014, http://www.theartnewspaper.com/articles/Great-art-needs-an-audience/31726.
[45] "Museums in the Digital Age," *Arup Foresight + Research + Innovation*, 2013.
[46] Nancy Proctor, "The Museum As Distributed Network," *MuseumID*, accessed September 30, 2014, http://www.museum-id.com/idea-detail.asp?id=337.
[47] Gopnik, "Great Art Needs an Audience."
[48] Joshua Rothman, "Alain de Botton's Healing Arts," *The New Yorker*, November 19, 2013, accessed October 25, 2014, http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/alain-de-bottons-healing-arts.

Art therapy is widely used in an educational context and can be seen as a method for healing. *pARTicipate* will utilize aspects of art therapy to see how humans interact with art and the benefits they receive from connecting with the works. In addition, the exhibition will utilize design elements to create a relaxed atmosphere. Comfortable seating for meditation and prolonged art viewing will be available.

Alain de Botton recently wrote "Art as Therapy," a guide for improving the art viewing experience. He recognizes that art museums need to change and their static ways of exhibiting works is outdated and remains a hindrance to the visitor actually engaging with the works. The New Yorker article on de Botton provides an overview of his reasoning for a new type of engagement:

> …de Botton argues that museums have taken a wrong turn. They should never have embraced as their guiding paradigm the discipline of art history; it's led them to lose track of what actually makes art interesting…When a visit to a museum succeeds, it usually isn't because the visitor has learned facts about art but because she's found one or two works that resonate in a private way. And, yet, museums do very little to foster these kinds of personal connections; if anything, they suggest that our approach to art should be impersonal and academic.[49]

By making the works relevant to the visitor and their day-to-day life experiences, a deeper connection is established. The works as de Botton points out, are meant to inspire and depict humanity, not necessarily provide an art history lesson. This, however, is a larger paradigm shift waiting to happen. It is not only dependent on the curator, but the entire museum as a whole.

[49] Ibid.

V. Site Research and Methodology

Site Overview

The newly constructed Whitney Museum of American Art building on 99 Gansevoort Street in New York City will house this temporary exhibition. Pulling mostly from their permanent collection that includes over 19,000 modern and contemporary art works, this exhibition is proposing to be the inaugural exhibition for the Whitney's new space.[50]

Fig. 5, Street view of the Whitney from the Southwest corner, image courtesy Whitney website

Fig. 6, Aerial view of the Whitney, from the Standard Hotel roof, image courtesy Whitney website

The new Whitney Museum of American Art is the perfect space for this exhibition. It not only reinforces the relevancy of the museum space as the ideal art viewing area, but as a fresh space, it offers a blank slate – a museum that does not come with direct precedents. By starting with an innovative exhibition like *pARTicipate*, the Whitney can direct the trajectory of their future exhibitions.

Open to the public May 1, 2015, this building designed by renowned museum architect, Renzo Piano, was created to house the Whitney's expanding collection and

[50] "Founding," Whitney Museum of American Art, accessed October 20, 2014, http://whitney.org/About/History.

offer more room for programming. Their website states that this new space will "[provide] the first comprehensive view of its unsurpassed collection of modern and contemporary American art." [51] *pARTicipate* will take over 10,000 sq. ft. within the 18,000 sq. ft. special exhibition floor – the fifth floor up – and will create temporary wall structures to allow for the appropriate viewing of each work.

History of the Whitney Museum of American Art

The Whitney Museum of American Art has a long history in the display of modern and contemporary art. Their mission statement affirms: "The Whitney is dedicated to collecting, preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting American art, and its collection—arguably the finest holding of twentieth-century American art in the world—is the Museum's key resource." Established in the first half of the 20th century by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, a sculptor and art collector, the museum started as a space where Whitney would display the works of contemporary artists who were "disregarded by the traditional academies" and having trouble selling or exhibiting their works.[52] By 1929, Whitney had amassed over 500 works, which were exhibited in the Whitney Studio in Greenwich Village. Her collection included works by Thomas Hart Benton, Maurice Prendergast, and Stuart Davis. After offering these works to The Metropolitan Museum of Art with an endowment and being declined, Whitney decided to start her own museum. Opening to the public on West Eighth Street in 1931, The Whitney Museum of American Art concentrated on art from the United States – a radical idea at the time.[53] Throughout the next three decades, the Whitney changed locations several times, due to

[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.

their growing collection. In 1954 they moved to West 54th Street and by 1966, they relocated to their distinguished building on Madison Avenue at 75th Street, designed by renowned architects Marcel Breuer, Hamilton Smith, and Michael Irving. Now, with a new space opening up within the next year, the Whitney will continue their distinctive, long-standing tradition of exhibiting American artists.

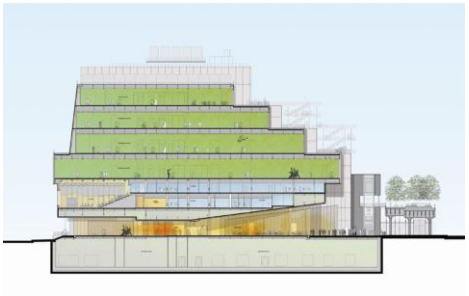

Fig. 7, Section drawing by Renzo Piano of the Whitney, image courtesy Whitney website

Fig. 8, View of the Whitney from the High Line, image courtesy Whitney website

The Neighborhood

As an international hub, New York City is arguably America's premier city for art. With a longstanding history of artists calling New York home and world-class museums, the city would welcome an innovative art exhibition like *pARTicipate.* Located within the Meat Packing District and walking distance to the Chelsea neighborhood, High Line, SuperPier, and Hudson River, this new space will offer a more contemporary environment – as opposed to their previously historic Marcel Breuer building in the Upper East Side on Madison Avenue. Young professionals frequent this area, as there are many high-rise apartment buildings, restaurants, bars, and upscale shopping. On a Saturday afternoon, many of the restaurants have waits and the shops are filled with locals. Nearby in Chelsea are modern and contemporary art galleries that would appeal to those also visiting the Whitney and offer similar artworks on view.

The High Line, which partially opened in 2001, is a 1.45 mile repurposed railroad track that sits above the city, offering an escape from the bustle below.[54] A park within the concrete jungle of New York, the High Line offers areas of peace and quiet, but also views of the city that aren't accessible from anywhere else. Select artists and restaurants have pop-up shops and vending machines that visitors can stop at for a quick break or purchase items for sale.

As you near the end of the High Line, the newly constructed Whitney building comes directly into view. At the south exit, to the right, the Whitney's new entrance begins. Feeding directly from those who just finished the High Line and are looking for more activities within the area, this new space will attract not only those within the community, but also tourists and others venturing out to this part of Manhattan. Located at the southwest end of the High Line and next to the Hudson River, the new Whitney space is accessible by metro (the C line lets you off approximately .3 miles away), walking, biking, or driving. Although there is not ample street parking, the building is accessible by bike, cab, or public transportation. It is easily approachable from several streets – Gansevoort Street, 10th Avenue, or Washington Street.

Fig. 9, Map view of the Meat Packing District with the Whitney's location pinpointed, image courtesy Google Maps

[54] "About the High Line," *Friend of the High Line*, accessed November 20, 2014, https://www.thehighline.org/about.

Fig. 10, Corner of Washington and Gansevoort streets, looking at the end of the High Line, image courtesy Whitney website

Additionally, within the Meat Packing District, designs for the highly anticipated SuperPier are in the works. Just down the road off of 12th street, over 200,000 square feet will be transformed into houses shops, galleries, office spaces, and more. This soon-to-be cultural hub will rapidly transform the surrounding area, making it one of the most desired areas to live, shop, eat, and play.[55] Further heightening the cultural standing of this downtown area and it's surrounding venues, the SuperPier will be a welcomed addition to the neighborhood, bringing in locals, tourists, and art enthusiasts.

Space Constraints, Challenges, and Opportunities

The Whitney's new space offers many opportunities for design, however, there are several challenges that come with the creation of this new building. As it is the largest column-free gallery space in New York City, multiple ways of designing within this space will be available. Inherently a rectangle, the gallery space has the freedom and ability to be constructed in a variety of ways. Freestanding temporary walls can be built

[55] Nathan Kensington, "Once-Neglected Pier 57 Prepares for Its SuperPier Moment," *Curbed*, January 17, 2014, accessed December 2, 2014, http://ny.curbed.com/archives/2014/01/17/onceneglected_pier_57_prepares_for_its_superpier_moment.ph.

to enclose works and create vignettes so that each object is given the proper amount of room.

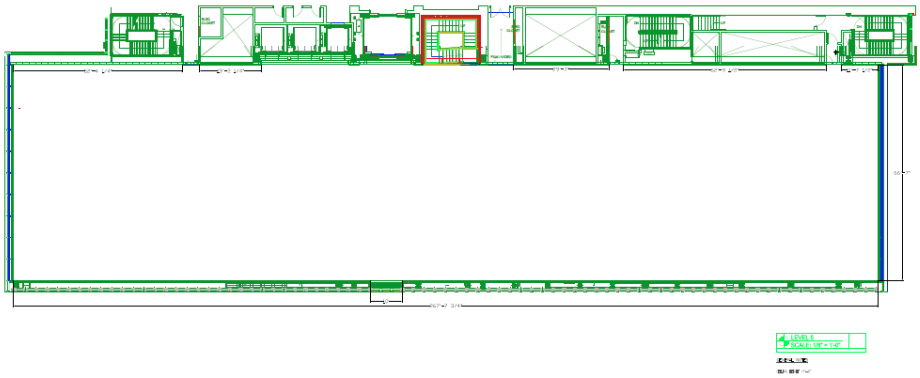

Fig. 10, 5th Level floor plan, Whitney, image courtesy Whitney Museum of American Art

Some of the works will require separate space and some are extremely large and may be difficult to bring into the building. The works that prove to be most difficult to display are those that require separate spaces for light installation. The issue of light within the exhibition space is a matter that will need to be considered as visitors will be walking through areas of higher light concentration and into areas of low light levels. Between these spaces will need to be areas of mid-light levels where eyes are able to adjust.

Additionally, the concrete, cold nature of the exhibition space will need to be addressed through the design of the exhibition. By warming the space up through a variety of design tactics, the exhibition will feel inviting and more familial.

As the inaugural exhibition, *pARTicipate* will set the standard for how future exhibitions will be designed. Additionally, the Whitney has a select following and their exhibitions are held in high regard. There are certain expectations that art museums have and if a visitor experiences something that is not the norm, it may be disappointing.

Exhibition Precedents of the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art has long been a space for contemporary artists to exhibit their works. It is well suited for a permanent collection exhibition – especially one that encourages visitor participation as many of their exhibitions have included participatory works. The Whitney has numerous precedents for this exhibition as they often produce exhibits that deal with conceptual artists and the notion of space and interaction with the work. Known for their renowned biennial, the Whitney has included politically engaged artists who have broken down barriers and displayed radical works. By the temporary nature of the biennial, artists were able to take a more non-traditional approach to their display. The 2014 Whitney Biennial took on an innovative approach to its last Biennial in their Bruer building by asking three curators to take over a floor of the building and curate their own unique show.[56]Additionally, the Museum was also the first to give video artist Nam June Paik an entire exhibition devoted to his work in 1982.[57] Outlined below are some of the most relevant precedential exhibitions at the Whitney from approximately the last decade:

[56] Holland Cotter, "2014 Whitney Biennial Has New Faces and Interesting Choices," *The New York Times*, March 6, 2014, accessed December 1, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/07/arts/design/2014-whitney-biennial-has-new-faces-and-interesting-choices.html?_r=0.
[57] Ibid.

SINGULAR VISIONS, 2010-2012

Fig. 12, Installation view of exhibition, image courtesy Whitney website

The closest exhibition to this topic is the Whitney's *Singular Visions,* which was a permanent collection installation on view between 2010-2012. The exhibition invited the viewer to really engage with the ten chosen artworks through different mediums – size, style, or subject – by providing each artwork with ample amounts of space for the viewer to become "one" with the work. The exhibition description states: "*Singular Visions* presents ten highlights from the museum's holdings, each in its own space, in order to create intimate and compelling encounters with a single work of art. Each piece was chosen to convey a distinct impression and a specific sense of its maker's vision..."[58] They remark that in this age of technology, it is important to slow down and *pARTicipate* would be an ideal continuation of this goal while also addressing the importance of the permanent collection. However, in terms of prompting the visitor to actively engage with the work, it is not clear how effective this exhibition was. Were the visitors just supposed to know that the works were powerful and contemplative? Did the object labels provide a prompt? If the visitor had previous knowledge of the works and read the exhibition title label, then they may have understood the exhibition's purpose. *pARTicipate* will include

[58] "Singular Visions," Whitney Museum of American Art, accessed September 9, 2014, http://whitney.org/Exhibitions/SingularVisions.

prompts for the visitor that ask questions about the work and requires the visitor to stand in a certain place or complete a voluntary action. In addition, by the visitor actively participating with interactive components, it consciously compels them to consider the exhibition's overarching questions.

OFF THE WALL: PART 1—THIRTY PERFORMATIVE ACTIONS, 2010

Fig. 13, Installation view of exhibition, image courtesy Whitney website

Off the Wall: Part 1—Thirty Performative Actions, utilized the physical space of the museum as part of the artwork and looked to question re-performance. Using participatory and performative works, the gallery space was transformed into a theater. The exhibition was not organized chronologically or thematically and just focused on the performative nature of the works.[59]

[59] John Sherman, "Off the Wall: Part 1—Thirty Performative Actions," *BOMB – Artists in Conversation*, August 4, 2010, accessed December 2, 2014, http://bombmagazine.org/article/4285/.

SCRIM VEIL—BLACK RECTANGLE—NATURAL LIGHT, 1977/2013

Fig. 14, Installation view of exhibition, image courtesy Whitney museum

The Whitney has invited artists to create site-specific works in their gallery spaces. Robert Irwin's installation, *Scrim veil—Black rectangle—Natural light*, was made just for the 4th floor of their previous Bruer building. It will be interesting to see if they exhibit this piece in their new building, as it was not intended for this space.

FULL HOUSE: VIEWS OF THE WHITNEY'S COLLECTION AT 75, 2006

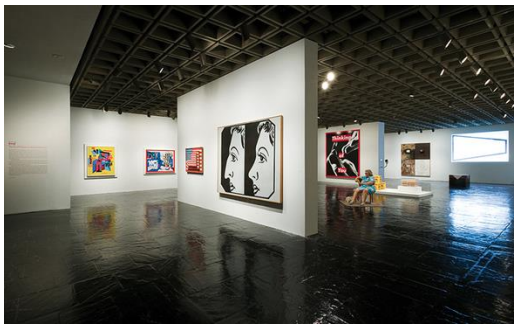

Fig. 15, Installation view of exhibition, image courtesy Whitney museum

In 2006, the Whitney celebrated their 75th anniversary with an exhibition, *Full House: Views of the Whitney's Collection at 75.* The exhibition was stated as "…a lab for experimentation, a way of seeing art through art to suggest new perspectives and meanings on the last seventy-five years of collecting at the Whitney while flashing

forward to the next important chapter in its history."[60] *pARTicipate* would be a natural progression from this exhibition, as it is also a permanent collection installation and a celebration of their move to the new building. Additionally, its goal of suggesting a new way to view art coincides with *Full House's* previous goal of viewing their permanent collection through a fresh perspective.

FIREFLIES ON THE WATER, 2002

Fig. 16, Installation view of exhibition, image courtesy Whitney website

A previous exhibition at the Whitney included Yayoi Kusama's *Fireflies on the Water*, which will be recreated for *pARTicipate*. "With its carefully constructed environment of lights, mirrors, and water—[*Fireflies on the* Water] is one of the outstanding examples of this kind of installation, which creates a space in which individual viewers are invited to transcend their sense of self."[61] The opportunity to view Kusama's work in *pARTicipate* will allow the visitor to encounter a fully experiential installation.

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60 "Full House: Views of the Whitney's Collection at 75."
61 "Fireflies on the Water," *Whitney Museum of American Art*, accessed December 6, 2014, http://whitney.org/Exhibitions/FirefliesOnTheWater.

VI. Interpretive Plan and Design Strategies

Summary of Exhibition Content

There are 23 artworks included in *pARTicipate.*[62] The works are grouped into three main sections – 2-dimensional works, 3-dimensional works, and conceptual works, with two spaces in between that help tie the sections together. The following is a chronological description of the works in the exhibition, but does not reflect the exhibition layout.

The exhibition begins with seminal paintings by Mark Rothko, both painted in the 1950s. Rothko's works *Untitled (Blue, Yellow, Green on Red),* 1954, and *Four Darks in Red,* 1958, are meant to encompass the viewer – as Rothko's works usually do – with color. The complimentary colors and shades make for a contrast, one that enhances the colors to show a more vibrant image. Rothko intended for his works to be viewed at a distance of 18 inches as to fully experience the work.[63] Jackson Pollock's *Number 27, 1950,* 1950 is a large-scale work that "dissolve[s] all discrete and figurative elements into an all-over composition that evenly covers the entire surface of the canvas."[64] Another painting in this section is *Homage to the Square: "Ascending",* 1953 by Josef Albers who was well known for his use of color and interest in how colors responded to each other.

Works from the 1960s provide clearer opportunities for active participation. Yoko Ono's *A Painting (Work) To Be Stepped On,* 1961, is clearly instructive – "leave a piece

[62] Please consult *Appendix F* for a list of the works included in the exhibition.
[63] Ibid.
[64] "Number 27, 1950," The Whitney Museum of American Art, accessed November 27, 2014, http://collection.whitney.org/object/2634.

of canvas or finished painting on the floor or in the street."[65] By including her directions and an actual piece of work to be stepped on, the visitor will be provided with a comprehensive understanding of the work and the context in which it was originally displayed. The visitor becomes an active participant – not only contributing to the work but also leaving their physical mark while questioning the reputable nature and functionality of art.

During the 1960s, many artists started creating works that introduced elements of light. There are several light installations included in this exhibition that will allow for more contemplative, ethereal experiences. Dan Flavin's *untitled (for Robert, with fond regards) 2, 1977* is supposed to be displayed in a corner of the gallery – a space not usually intended for art. The colors play off of the dimensionality of the intersection of the walls and are intended to change the nature of the space. Unlike Rothko and Turrell, Flavin did not see his work as sublime but pictured it more as an intersection between "real objects and their representations."[66]

Robert Irwin, the creator of the Los Angeles Light and Space movement in the 1960s, was interested in the way his works reacted to their environment and how that in turn, related to the viewer's experience. Inspired by Piet Mondrian's view that: "By the unification of architecture, sculpture and painting, a new plastic reality will be created. Painting and sculpture will not manifest themselves as separate objects . . . but being purely constructive will aid the creation of a surrounding not merely utilitarian or rational but also pure and complete in its beauty," Irwin strove to create a new reality – one where

[65] "Group Show: Off The Wall [Whitney, NY, USA]," *Imagine Peace*, 2010, accessed September 9, 2014, http://imaginepeace.com/archives/11337.
[66] "Dan Flavin," *MoMA*, accessed November 20, 2014. http://www.moma.org/collection/artist.php?artist_id=1911.

the line between the object and it's space was blurred.[67] His installation, *No Title,* 1966-67, will require its own space and will have at least three walls enclosing the work as to not let other sources of light interact.

Out of the several light installation artists included in this exhibition James Turrell is arguably the most well-known. His installation, *Raemar Pink White,* 1969 is an all-encompassing experience where the viewer is completely surrounded by the florescent light of the work. Similar to Rothko, Turrell wants his viewer to have a spiritual encounter with his work: "I want to create an atmosphere that can be consciously plumbed with seeing."[68] The transcendental sense of awe is what Turrell hoped his art would achieve. The work, *Raemar Pink White,* will be exhibited in its own room, built specifically for this work. As instructed by Turrell, the surrounding walls will be painted white as to produce the best light display.

Chuck Close's work, *Phil,* 1969, is another addition to the works from the 1960s. Known for his highly detailed paintings that mimic photography, Close used numerous inventive styles to create his images.[69] Visitors in *pARTicipate* will have the chance to take a Polaroid photo of themselves and compare the quality of the photo to Close's painting. The visitor will consider the amount of detail that went into each of his works and the personal, almost voyeuristic quality of these paintings.

Works from the 1970s and 1980s start to become more active and participatory while considering repetition and the materials used. Eva Hesse's work, *No title,* 1970, is constructed from a variety of materials – latex, rope, string, and wire. The materials used

[67] Michael Govan, "Robert Irwin: Introduction," *Dia Art Foundation*, accessed November 20, 2014, http://www.diaart.org/exhibitions/introduction/84.
[68] Art21, "James Turrell," *PBS*, accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/james-turrell.
[69] "Chuck Close," *MoMA*, accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.moma.org/collection/artist.php?artist_id=1156.

will be on display for the visitor to touch and understand the physical nature of these manmade and organic materials. The visitor will reflect upon the experimental techniques Hesse utilized and consider the ephemeral quality of the work.[70] Similar to Hess is a contemporary artist, Arturo Herrera. His 2001 piece, *Before We Leave,* is constructed from wool felt and has a similar dynamic quality to Hess's installation. Visitors will be able to compare these two works that were created 31 years apart and feel examples of wool felt similar to what Herrera uses. Another work from the 1970s is Carl Andre's sculpture *Twenty Ninth Copper Cardinal,* 1975. Previously exhibited in the Whitney's shows *Sculpture From the Permanent Collection*, 1982 and *Off the Wall: Thirty Performative Actions,* 2010, Andre's work is an art piece that requires the visitor to step on it. In the 2010 exhibition, the piece was used as a passage way from one part of the gallery to the other.[71]

Participatory works by Chris Burden, John Baldessari, and Sol LeWitt will be featured within *pARTicipate*. Art students in Helsinki originally performed Baldessari's work: *I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art*, in 1971. The students were instructed to write the phrase "I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art" repeatedly on the gallery wall. The piece was re-performed in 2010 at the Whitney for the exhibition *Off the Wall: Part 1* by local art students.[72] Within *pARTicipate,* the museum visitor will have the opportunity to assume the role of artist and write the phrase on a designated wall within the gallery. As time goes on, the wall will change with the participation of the visitor.

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[70] "Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art: Feminist Art Base: Eva Hesse," *Brooklyn Museum*, accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/feminist_art_base/gallery/eva_hesse.php.
[71] Gia Kourlas, "Off the Wall," *TimeOut New York*, July 5, 2010, accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.timeout.com/newyork/dance/off-the-wall.
[72] Sherman, "Off the Wall: Part 1 – Performative Actions."

Chris Burden's piece, *The Atomic Alphabet*, 1980, will also be included as a participatory piece. Burden originally performed this work by shouting out each word on a printed list and stomping loudly after each shout. *pARTicipate* will let visitors re-perform the piece in the manner of Burden, where they will have the opportunity to stomp and yell within the exhibition after listening to a clip of this performance. Sol LeWitt's piece, *4th wall: 24 lines from the center, 12 lines from the midpoint of each of the sides, 12 lines from each corner*, 1976 provides instructions in the title of the work and allows whomever is reperforming this piece to interpret it freely.

Felix Gonzalez-Torres' work *Untitled (Portrait of Ross in L.A.),* 1991 is an installation that consists of 175 pounds of multi-colored candies wrapped in cellophane, where visitors are invited to take a piece of candy. *Untitled* is "an allegorical representation of the artist's partner, Ross Laycock, who died of an AIDS-related illness in 1991." The work directly references Laycock's weight loss as the pile gets smaller and is meant to be "continuously replenished, thus metaphorically granting perpetual life."[73]

Charles LeDray's pieces, *Milk and Honey,* 1994-1996, and *Untitled/Clothesline,* 1992 are currently in the Whitney's permanent collection. *Milk and Honey* was previously exhibited in his 2010 Whitney retrospective "*Charles LeDray: workworkworkworkwork."* Consisting of 2,000 porcelain objects that are no larger than 1 inch tall, his works "...exude nostalgia for the touch of the human hand."[74] These pieces offer a chance for visitors to experience scale within artworks and speak to the process of construction.

[73] "About this Work," Art Institute of Chicago, accessed September 25, 2014, http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/152961.
[74] Ken Johnson, "Getting Small: A Man's World in Miniature," *The New York Times*, December 2, 2010, accessed November 10, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/03/arts/design/03johnson.html.

Four mirrored works by Jeff Koons will also be installed within *pARTicipate.* *Kangaroo (Red),* 1999, *Kangaroo (Blue),* 1999, *Cow,* 1999, and *Giraffe,* 1999, are all part of his "Easyfun" series. Koons' work is no stranger to the Whitney, as the Museum's final exhibition in the Bruer building was his retrospective. "The shiny surfaces invite us to touch them but at the same time deny such an opportunity as these pristine objects would only be blemished in doing so."[75] The mirrors will be positioned to reflect upon each other, fusing the colors while also providing new angles of the other works in the gallery.

As discussed earlier, Yayoi Kusama's work, *Fireflies on the Water,* 2002 will also be included as a fully encompassing, sensory experience. A combination of mirrors, plexiglass, lights, and water, this piece surrounds the viewer in its entirety: "it builds on her hallucinatory approaches and psychedelic space conceptions."[76]

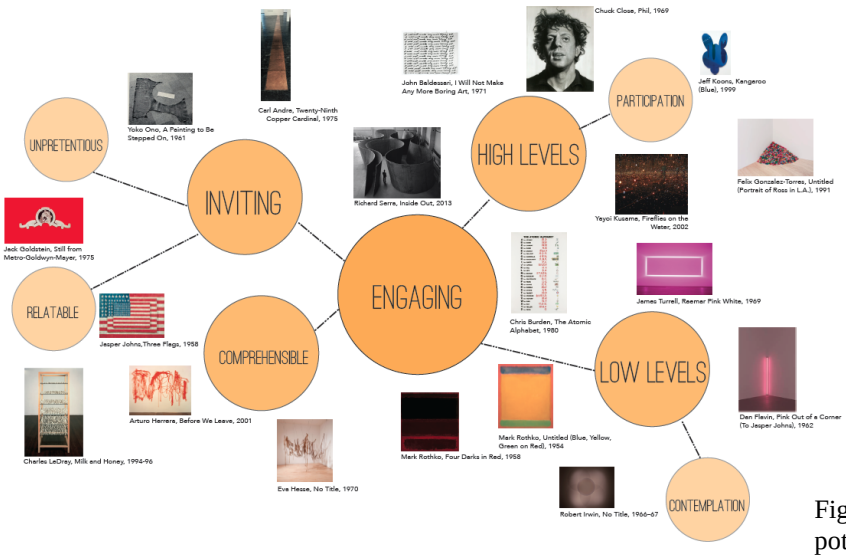

Fig. 17, Initial conceptual map of potential artwork, image courtesy author

[75] "Artists Room: Jeff Koons," National Galleries Scotland, accessed December 6, 2014, https://www.nationalgalleries.org/whatson/368/artist-rooms-jeff-koons/easyfun.
[76] Katherine Brooks, "Yayoi Kusama's 'Fireflies On The Water' At The Whitney," *Huffington Post*, June 7, 2012, accessed December 6, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/07/yayoi-kusamas-fireflies-on-the-water_n_1577626.html.

Goals for Design

The design goals that this exhibition will achieve are:

1. Create an engaging environment that will encourage visitor participation and play to the aspects of self-curation and self-discovery.
2. Create signage that is more dynamic and appropriate than traditional wall labels.
3. Have a linear floor plan so that the visitor can build upon their previous experiences.
4. Create areas of high levels of engagement, contrasted with areas of low levels of engagement so that the visitor is not overwhelmed and is able to process the information given.
5. Allow visitors to see the works of art from different heights, angles, and distances
6. Have visitors explore the materials used in order to make a connection to materials in their everyday lives.
7. Provide ample seating arrangements so that the visitor can stay at the exhibition for an extended period of time – comfortably.

Design Methods to Achieve Goals

pARTicipate will provide the following methods to achieve the aforementioned goals of this exhibition:

- Display the works in a linear order that walks the visitors through 2-dimensional works, 3-dimensional works, and conceptual works so that their experiences build upon each other.

- Create a linear floor plan that utilizes floor graphics to help lead visitors through the exhibition.
- Have certain materials used in the exhibited works available as a tactile experience.
- Encourage visitors to stand at particular heights to achieve an optimal or fresh perspective of the work.
- Have a separate space (the "pARTicipate Your Way" gallery) for visitors to create their own art and exhibit it.
- Provide the opportunity for visitors to create their own object labels.
- Install vinyl quotes by artists that speak to the process and intention of the artwork and will take the place of traditional wall labels, while large-scale photographs of the artists will be utilized to contextualize the works and humanize the artists.
- Prompt visitors with questions within the space that ask them to consider the work in new ways and that speak to the process of the artwork and what the artist intended.
- Keep the number of works in the exhibition low so that visitors can fully experience each work of art.
- Provide an analog, paper guidebook for navigating through the exhibition.
- Initiate areas for relaxation and contemplation through the use of individual stools and unusual seating.

Strategy for Communication and Engagement

The main design strategy for communicating with the audience is to create personal connections between the visitor and art on view. By connecting the artworks to an aspect of their life, a better, more engaging experience can be had. *pARTicipate* will veer towards non-traditional methods of hanging and installing art and utilize different methods of displaying information when possible. The use of jagged floor graphics will be widely used throughout the exhibition as a way finding device, helping the visitor

Fig. 18, view of floor and wall graphics in use, image courtesy author

choose their own path and expressing the notion that there is no correct way to view art. The floor graphics will be the color yellow, which is taken from the Albers' painting and is used as the main color of the exhibition.

Writings by Tom Hennes and Barry Lord and Gail Dexter Lord have brought to light the numerous issues that arise with the traditional wall label. An aspect of exhibition design that *pARTicipate* will investigate further is the use of traditional wall labels. By

reinventing and examining the use of the conventional object label will allow for a more engaging visitor experience. By prompting visitors with questions and information about the works that appear on different surfaces and through different mediums, the visitor will receive accurate information but in a non-traditional way. In lieu of these traditional wall labels, there will be contextual clues around the exhibit – on the floor or ceiling – that will help the visitor engage further with the pieces of art. Additionally, acid-free sticky notes and a pencils will be available at various vignette spaces that act as a center point for each space within the exhibition. Here, visitors will be encouraged to write their own label and stick it next to the work of art, creating a dialogue with the other labels present.[77] Within each of the three main exhibition spaces, these distinct vignette areas will highlight a chosen work and let visitors write their own label on a post-it for this piece. As the gallery space is large, cold, and made of drywall and steel, these vignettes will provide intimate spaces for visitors to interact with the work. Additionally, by authorizing visitors to create their own labels, they will actively reflect upon the works and bring a diverse narrative that is influenced by their background.

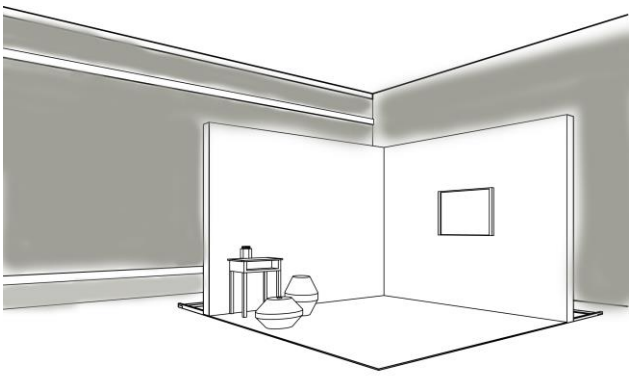

Fig. 19, view of typical vignette, image courtesy author

[77] This interactive element was utilized in the Boston Museum of Fine Art's exhibition *The Label Show,* 1995, where artists, staff members and visitors were encouraged to write the labels and accompanying text.

As this exhibition serves as a guide to looking at art, visitors will receive a guidebook upon purchasing their ticket. This analog feature will help the visitor navigate each artwork and provide suggestions for how to interact with the work. The visitor will also be able to write their own notes on each piece and group the works into different interactive categories.

Fig. 20, Guidebook mock-up, image courtesy author

Look and Feel

pARTicipate will exhibit an energetic feel; one full of dynamism and controlled chaos. Loud noises from audience participation will be heard throughout the gallery. In direct contrast with the gallery's large space, bright wall colors and floor graphics inspired by the works on view will adorn the space. This exhibition will take on contemporary design choices – bright pops of yellow with sans-serif fonts that use light and bold elements. Light and airy spaces will be contrasted with smaller vignettes

structures that bring attention back to the work of art while creating a more intimate view. Unusual seating arrangements that evoke a domestic feel will be utilized so that the visitor feels more ownership of the space and their experience.

Fig. 21, typical exhibition design for 3-dimensional works

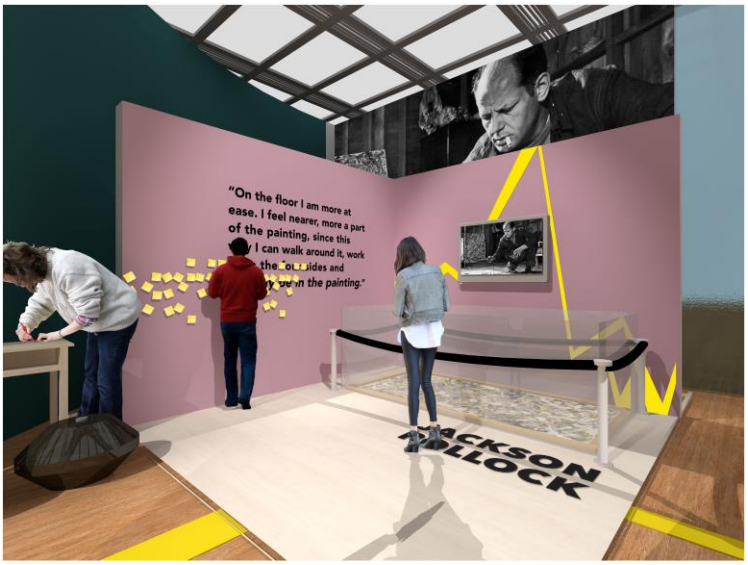

Fig. 22, vignette of 2-dimensional works featuring Jackson Pollock

Taking into account the Whitney's new branding created by the firm, Experimental Jetset, this exhibition will stay stylistically in-sync with these clean, contemporary design elements. Their new branding created to accompany the new space, is a thin, sans serif "W" that "embraces the inventive spirit of the Museum" and "responds to the artworks and words around it."[78]

Fig. 23, Brochure with the Whitney's new graphic identity, designed by Experimental Jetset, image courtesy Whitney website

Design Concept Narrative

Visitors will enter the 5th floor gallery space from either the stairs or three elevators and will immediately see vinyl floor graphics that take them towards the exhibition. The first area that visitors will encounter is the entry wall. From either entrance, the visitor is funneled towards this curved wall that includes interactive elements such as touch activated floor lights or the title wall – which is made up of pads of paper that serve as posters for the exhibition that the visitor can tear off and take home. Vinyl floor graphics help lead the visitor to various artworks in a non-linear path that references the notion that there is no right way to look at art. By utilizing the floor as an

[78] "A New Graphic Identity for the Whitney," Whitney Museum of American Art, accessed October 29, 2014, http://whitney.org/NewIdentity.

additional surface in which to interact, visitors will start to move through the museum space with this awareness.

As visitors enter the exhibition, they will encounter the first space where the goal is to introduce new ways of understanding 2-dimensional works, such as paintings, since this is a more familiar medium to most visitors. This area includes elements that prompt the visitor to look at paintings in new ways and learn about the artists' process through interactives such as deconstructing the colors in an Albers painting or standing 18" away from a Rothko. Throughout the exhibition, each piece will have an image of the artist and a quote talking either about their work or their process – further humanizing the artists and providing context for these works. Additionally in this first section, Jackson Pollock's *Number 27, 1950* will be displayed on the floor, under glass and with extensive security measures, in order for visitors to fully understand Pollock's artistic process. A last interactive element in this first section will encourage visitors to take photos of themselves and their friends and compare the quality of these photos to the Chuck Close painting on the wall. They can also leave their photo in the gallery, adding to the collection.

The next room is a space for visitors to hang out and relax, and is the first of three areas within the exhibition that provides ample seating. This space is a room with a mirrored floor that is composed of 2-dimensional objects that are reflective and show the room as three dimensional – reinforcing its space as transitional. The mirrored surfaces provide many opportunities for visitors to take photos of them and document their experiences on social media. Mirrors from Jeff Koons' series, "EasyFun," will reflect and play upon the miniature sculptures by Charles LeDray.

As visitors continue through to the next room, they will encounter this next area that focuses on works that deal with the materiality or dimensionality of the object. Tactile experiences are available to further understand the artists' use of various mediums. Unconventional seating provides an area for contemplation while the unusual textures refer to the materiality of the works in this section. The walls will use materials found in the works to surround the visitor and provide a chance to actually touch materials that the artists used. Felt walls echo Arturo Herrera's work while plaid and burlap wall coverings refer to the works by Charles LeDray and Eva Hesse. Interactive elements where visitors can cut off a piece of their clothing and add it to the exhibition reference Charles LeDray's 1992 work *Untitled/Clothesline*.

If the visitor chooses to go through the corridor, instead of directly into the last area, they will be guided through this space, which is designed to have them walk directly on Carl Andres' 1975 floor piece, *Twenty-Ninth Copper Cardinal*. The act of physically stepping on the work sets up the next area in the exhibition – where visitors will become an active participant within the works.

This final area allows visitors to actively contribute to art works or physically be in them. These works are more ethereal in nature and often deal with light or re-performance. As visitors walk through this last section, a recreation of Yoko Ono's piece, *A Painting to Be Stepped On* is installed on the floor, complete with the artist's instructions next to the work. At the last vignette, visitors have the opportunity to recreate John Baldessari's piece *I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art*. Using chalk, they will be able to contribute to this artwork by writing on the other half of the wall, while also viewing a lithograph of the original.

Within the next interactive section of the exhibition, is a space for visitors to create their own artwork and install these works on the wall. "pARTicipate Your Way" allows visitors to play the role of artist and designer, and have free range over the display of their work by changing the height of the frame or adjusting the lights. The artists they have encountered in the exhibition can provide "feedback" or "commentary" on this chalkboard wall.

As visitors leave the "pARTicipate Your Way" gallery, they will encounter various conceptual or participatory artworks, such as Yayoi Kusama's 2002 installation, *Fireflies on the Water*. Here, visitors will enter a space full of lights, mirrors, and water, and are completely absorbed by this seemingly endless room. Other participant-driven works like a Sol LeWitt will provide instructions for visitors to complete the work, like drawing particular lines on a designated wall.

As visitors circle back towards the end of the exhibition, they will encounter a light installation by Dan Flavin, which prompts them to consider how light changes space. Quotes by James Turrell are displayed on the nearby wall, leading up to his work, which is the final piece in the exhibition.

To exit the exhibition visitors must pass through Turrell's piece, *Raemar Pink White*. This final room encompasses the visitor entirely with light. The visitor becomes part of the art and the art becomes part of the visitor – playing upon their movement and presence within the space.

After exiting through the Turrell, visitors are right back where they started and can exit the way they came in or peer through the glass wall to see back through to the exhibition.

VII. Conclusion

The standard art museum experience is dated. Long gone are the days of quietly meandering through the exhibition, listening to an audio guide and trying to contextualize the art within the vast expanse of history. Exhibitions, as established in the modern sense, are thwart with social, political, and economic influences. As an exhibition designer, the role is increasingly difficult to navigate and the immense responsibility to display the works in a manner that appropriately them provides strict parameters. The meaning of a work of art can be drastically altered by the context in which it is displayed. By looking at the past and the history of the display of art, we can start to form new opinions and standards for the future – boundaries can be pushed and innovative ideas can take place.

pARTicipate: An Experiential Guide to Art proposes to create an experience where the static art hung on the walls comes alive, the artists behind the works are humanized, and the visitor creates meaning between their own life and the works on display. Through tactile experiences, play, and the act of creating and contributing to the works of art, *pARTicipate* will establish a didactic environment that looks towards the future of art exhibitions. By administering avenues of self-expression, exploration and discovery, *pARTicipate* hopes to foster a dialogue between the objects on view and the visitor.

Geared towards the millennial generation, *pARTicipate* will engage this demographic through informed design choices, features of self-curation, and displays that show visitors new ways to look at art. As informed by the influx of technology and social media, millennials want to become an expert and have a unique time. Additionally, set

within the newly constructed Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City, this exhibition will pave the way for future exhibitions within this space. Through the change in location, the new space will attract a more diverse and younger demographic.

This exhibition questions larger issues that relate to the museum as an institution such as: How does the physical space of the museum dictate how visitors experience the artwork? What is the museum's purpose in displaying the art? And, who is the art for? Now, more than ever, exhibition designers have the opportunity to study their audience and really explore the best possible ways and methods to display the artwork they are entrusted with exhibiting.

pARTicipate: An Experiential Guide to Art presents art in an accessible, exciting way. By guiding visitors to make new discoveries about the art, artistic process, or artists' intent, this exhibition breaks down the barriers between life and art, creating a collaborative relationship where each the visitor and object are influencing each other. The future of museums is in a fluid state; how do you want to experience art – statically or actively?

Appendix A: Challenges of Exhibition Topic

As the nature of this exhibition is participatory, one of the main challenges is how to create opportunities for engagement that are accessible to all. Additionally, there are numerous other challenges that come with any exhibition and many that accompany *pARTicipate*. The most evident challenges and their solutions are briefly outlined below.

1. By questioning traditional ways of displaying art, will this exhibition isolate or upset those who wish to view the works in a typical setting? Visitors will be able to walk through *pARTicipate* without "opting in" to any of the interactive elements. The works will be displayed in a relatively traditional sense – it is the extraneous elements that help facilitate meaning and that add to the visitors' understanding of the exhibition goal.
2. Are the works that are reproductions or re-performances changed or reinterpreted in a different way? Does this change the nature of the work? Many of the participatory works included in this exhibition are re-performances and have been re-performed in earlier exhibitions. This does change the nature of the work, but the fundamental concept is still relevant and inherent within the work.
3. What is the narrative of this space? What story does this exhibition deliver? The story that *pARTicipate* aims to deliver is that there is no right way to look at art. Visiting a museum is an opportunity to create relationships with the art on display and relate a concept or idea about the work back to the visitor's personal life.
4. How does this exhibition show, not tell, the visitor how to interact with the works? By encouraging visitors to create their own labels, inviting them to touch

materials that the artist used, and enticing them to become one with the work, the physical process of engaging with the objects will help facilitate the connection between viewer and artwork.

5. How is each work accessible to everyone, especially those with disabilities? Since some of the works may require looking at it from a different height or physically going through the work, Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) guidelines will need to be put in place.

Appendix B: Personal Statement of Interest

My passion for this topic arises from my personal interest in visiting art museums and engaging with the works. I believe in the significance that physical objects hold and often collect objects that have a personal connection to me. I am my own archivist; owning boxes filled of old cards, dolls, and craft projects. An avid museumgoer, I am always ready to see a new exhibition, however, I have noticed that many of my peers are not as enthusiastic about this type of outing. They are often reminded of elementary school field trips to museums and have certain associations and assumptions with museums that may prohibit their enthusiasm for visiting.

This topic also resonates with me because even though I am completely enthralled with the subject of digital art and online archives, I feel as though there is a loss of physical connection within society, especially among my contemporaries. The museum is the guardian of history and humanity. It is the direct link to the past – where the physical object becomes all we have as evidence and is the premier storyteller. As not only the keeper of these stories and evidence, but also the medium in which context is given to these objects, the museum as a physical institution is necessary for the continuation of a material history.

Appendix C: Audience Research

"Even if I didn't want to touch the Mona Lisa, I want to have the option to touch it. You go to a museum and you're just walking around looking at everything. And not even that you want to touch anything but it just seems like 'OK this is the museum, and this is me.' We're not connecting on any level other than visual."

-Focus group member, Demographic Transformations and the Future of Museums[79]

According to the American Alliance of Museum's Center for the Future of Museum's 2010 report, the millennial demographic when surveyed wanted museum experiences that are "immersive, interactive" and include "participatory activities."[80] Interestingly, this research conducted also showed that this demographic "did not describe their museum-going experiences from perspectives shaped by race or ethnicity, but rather in terms of modes of participation."[81] The participants of this study continued to stress the value of activity within the galleries and the importance of making exhibitions relevant to their lives. Within the study, a participant is mentioned as pondering about a lounge space within the museum – a space where conversations can be had and an area that offers opportunities for leisure.[82]

Millennials are the most educated generation to date. As reported by Pew Research: "…fully a third of older millennials (ages 26-33) have a four-year college degree or more—making them the best-educated cohort of young adults in American history"[83] and: "In 2012, for the first time ever, one-third of the nation's 25- to 29-year-

[79] Betty Farrell and Maria Medvedeva, "Demographic Transformations and the Future of Museums," *Center for the Future of Museums, American Association of Museums* (2010), 25.
[80] Farrell and Medvedeva, "Demographic Transformations and the Future of Museums," 23.
[81] Ibid., 23.
[82] Ibid., 23.
[83] "Millennials in Adulthood."

olds have completed at least a bachelor's degree."[84] With higher education degrees and the constant use of technology, millennials are interested in receiving accurate, concise, and relevant data. Millennials are also described as: "confident, self-expressive, liberal, upbeat and open to change."[85] By being well rounded and interested in many different areas, millennials require an unconventional, innovative exhibition that delivers current information and is relevant to their lives.

Millennials are racially diverse – 43% of millennials are non-white, and they have many different interests. Despite being such a diverse demographic, several commonalities have been tracked throughout studies on millennials. This audience is well-educated, generally vote Democratic and are liberal on social issues, linked by social media, prefer cities over suburbs, unattached to organized politics, up-to-date on current affairs, optimistic, not eager to marry, and extremely technologically savvy.[86]

According to the American Association for Museums, Center for the Future of Museum's *Trend's Watch 2013*, 75% of millennials donated to charity in 2011, showing that they have an interest in giving back. However, their donation means more than just writing a check – millennials are interested in seeing how their money is spent and where it is going.[87] Museums will have to change the way in which they court these new donors, such as showing them what their donation is funding and presenting them with a tangible

[84] Richard Fry and Kim Parker, "Record Shares of Young Adults Have Finished Both High School and College," *Pew Social Trends*, November 5, 2012, accessed September 9, 2014, http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/11/05/record-shares-of-young-adults-have-finished-both-high-school-and-college/.
[85] "Millennials: Confident. Connected. Open to Change," *Pew Research*, February 24, 2010, accessed September 9, 2014, http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/02/24/millennials-confident-connected-open-to-change/.
[86] "Millennials in Adulthood: Detached from Institutions, Networked with Friends."
[87] "Trends Watch 2013: Back to the Future," *American Alliance of Museums Center for the Future of Museums* (2013), 9.

result.[88] Ford W. Bell, the president of the American Alliance of Museums, states: "It used to be you gave because it was the Metropolitan Museum of Art. But today younger donors have a lot of things they can give to. They ask what the impact is going to be and how you're going to measure that impact. The Rockefellers gave, but they weren't looking for specific metrics."[89]

In addition to museum events held in the evenings or weekends, other attempts have been made to engage the millennial demographic. The City of Philadelphia along with 15 cultural institutions created Art Philadelphia, a $2-million, two-year initiative that was "the first coordinated and sustained visual arts marketing campaign aimed at the Millennial generation."[90] Described as a "digitally-savvy campaign," Art Philadelphia utilized social media apps such as Foursquare, Twitter, and Facebook to provide interactive maps and tours so that the user could create their own museum tour. "So much of art is personal that we allow you to curate your own experience," says City of Philadelphia's Melanie Johnson. "Everything is on the Web, you just go through and pick what you want to put on the list."[91]

MuseumHack, a company based in New York City, runs small tours geared towards millennials that encourage participants to pose like the painting and take a picture to post on social media. In addition to encouraging this playful behavior, the tour

[88] David Gelles. "Wooing a New Generation of Museum Patrons," *The New York Times,* March 19, 2014, accessed October 3, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/20/arts/artsspecial/wooing-a-new-generation-of-museum-patrons.html?_r=0.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Larissa Faw, "Philly Targets Millennials With $2 Million 'With Art' Campaign," *Forbes,* August 14, 2012, accessed September 27, 2014, http://www.forbes.com/sites/larissafaw/2012/08/14/philly-targets-millennials-with-2-million-withart-campaign/.
[91] Faw, "Philly Targets Millennials With $2 Million 'With Art' Campaign."

guides are also telling stories about the works in a colloquial, unassuming way while asking the visitor questions throughout.[92]

Millennials and the Digital Environment

Growing up with direct and ubiquitous access to computers and the internet has accustomed this generation to using technology and often viewing it as more efficient. Described as "digital natives," this is the first generation that has not had to learn how to use new technologies such as the Internet.[93] 89% of 18-29 year olds use some form of social networking sites, the highest number out of all Internet users. Additionally, 67% of cell phone users ages 18-29 use social networking sites on their mobile device – also the highest number out of all phone owners.[94] Millennials are more likely to be interested in a digital curated experience rather than viewing an exhibition in person.[95] "Most consistent is that this generation is technically savvy, almost as if it has a digital sixth sense. A wired, connected world is all that Millennials have ever known."[96] The exceedingly connected world has made millennials create new types of relationships and social constructions. "They have also taken the lead in seizing on the new platforms of the digital era—the internet, mobile technology, social media—to construct personalized networks of friends, colleagues and affinity groups."[97] By utilizing technologies and

[92] "Museum Tours," *MuseumHack*, accessed September 10, 2014, http://www.museumhack.com/about/.
[93] "Social Networking Fact Sheet," *Pew Research: Internet Project*, January 2014, accessed September 9, 2014, http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheets/social-networking-fact-sheet/.
[94] "Social Networking Fact Sheet."
[95] Betty Farrell and Maria Medvedeva, "Demographic Transformations and the Future of Museums," *American Association of Museums Center for the Future of Museums*, 2010.
[96] "The Millennial Generation Research Review," *U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation*, accessed September 9, 2014, http://www.uschamberfoundation.org/millennial-generation-research-review.
[97] "Social Networking Factsheet."

integrating them in educated ways within exhibitions, the content can effectively appeal to this generation.

This audience is interested in digitally documenting their experiences and showing that they are "in-the-know." By having the ability to post to social media and show others that they are having a "unique" experience, this exhibition will appeal to this age group. "They embrace multiple modes of self-expression. Three-quarters have created a profile on a social networking site. One-in-five have posted a video of themselves online."[98] Appealing to aspects of self-curation and self-expression is key to targeting this demographic.

Millennials rely on their friends' input and are encouraged to visit someplace or use a product if their friend recommends it. They are more likely to go to an exhibition if their friend recommends it on Twitter and are more apt to find artists and art works through Facebook or other forms of social media.[99] According to the 2012 Millennial Impact Report, 81% of millennials would prefer to learn about volunteer opportunities in museums from their peers. This statistic was followed by the percentage that 72% of millennials would rather hear about these opportunities through email.[100] Despite the constant accessibility to the digital world, millennials do not always want to be connected and 60% of them have reported feeling guilty when using their electronic devices too often.[101] While visiting *pARTicipate,* visitors will hopefully be so engaged with the different ways to interact with the art, that they will not even think to pull their phone out except for the opportunity to take a picture to post on social media.

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[98] "Millennials: Confident. Connected. Open to Change."
[99] Maura Judkis, "Art Works Blog: Arts Criticism for the Millennials," August 3, 2011, accessed September 25, 2014, http://arts.gov/art-works/2011/arts-criticism-millennials.
[100] "Millennial Impact Report 2012," *Achieve and Johnson, Grossnickle and Associates (JGA)* (2012), 18.
[101] Ibid., 11.

Appendix D: Smithsonian Institution and IPOP

In 2014, the Smithsonian Institution published their 16 yearlong visitor survey within *Curator: The Museum Journal*. Researchers within the Office of Policy and Analysis observed and interviewed visitors within various Smithsonian museums since the late 1990s. The purpose of this study was to provide visitors with the best possible museum going experience. Throughout their research, many conclusions emerged. The most pertinent information discovered were the ways in which visitors described what interested them within exhibitions and what they paid attention to most. Four typologies emerged and thus termed the acronym, IPOP: I for ideas, P for people, O for objects, and P for physical. "The evidence suggests that exhibitions that strongly appeal to all four visitor typologies—that leave out no one, in effect—will be highly successful with visitors."[102] Although all visitors will have an affinity towards all of these elements, there is usually one that is dominant over the other three. The "I" appeals to those who are conceptual thinkers; the first "p" draws in those who are attracted to the human experience; "O" is for visitors who want to see the objects and value aesthetics; and the final "P" attracts those who enjoy sensory components such as touch, sound, light, and smell.[103] Exhibitions that are designed with these four learning styles will be more successful and appeal to a much broader museum-going audience.

[102] Andrew Pekarik, et. al. "IPOP: A Theory of Experience Preference," 5.
[103] Ibid., 5.

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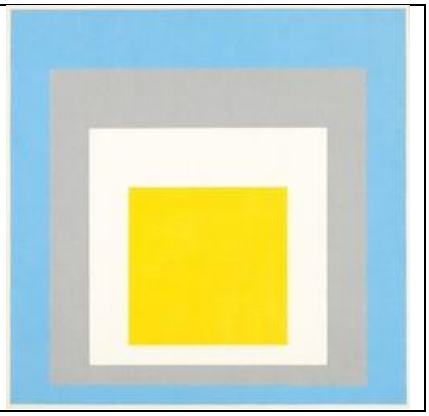
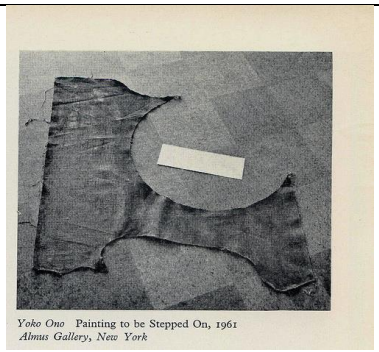
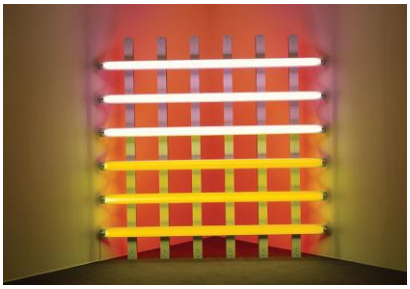
Appendix F: Visual Matrix

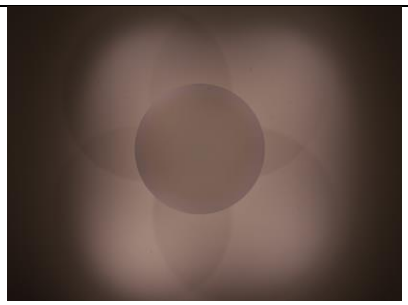
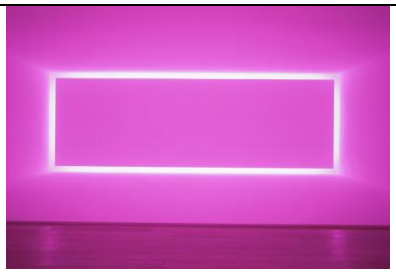
1950s

Jackson Pollock American, 1912-1956 *Number 27, 1950*, 1950 Oil, enamel, and aluminum paint on canvas 49 1/16 x 106 1/16 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase	
Mark Rothko American, 1903-1970 *Untitled (Blue, Yellow, Green on Red),* 1954 Oil on canvas 77 3/4 × 65 1/2 inches Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of The American Contemporary Art Foundation Inc., Leonard A. Lauder, President 2002.261	
Mark Rothko American, 1903-1970 *Four Darks in Red,* 1958 Oil on canvas, 102 × 116 in. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene M. Schwartz, Mrs. Samuel A. Seaver, and Charles Simon 68.9	

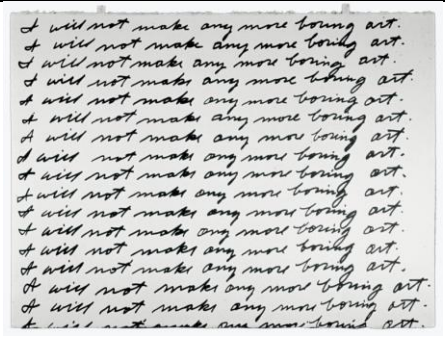
Josef Albers 1888-1976 Homage to the Square: "Ascending", 1953 Oil on composition board 43 7/16 x 43 7/16 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase	

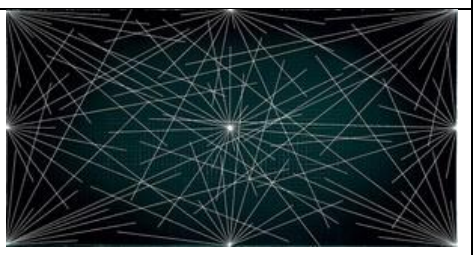
1960s

Yoko Ono American, b. 1933 *A Painting (Work) To Be Stepped On*, 1961 Paintings and Drawings exhibition, July 17-30, 1961, AG Gallery, New York 1961 Photo Credit: George Maciunas ©1961 Yoko Ono. Courtesy Lenono Photo Archive	
Dan Flavin American, 1933–1996 *untitled (for Robert, with fond regards) 2*, 1977 Pink, yellow, and red fluorescent lights 96 3/16 × 96 × 9 in. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase, with funds from the Louis and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc., Seymour M. Klein, President, the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc., by exchange, and gift of Peter M. Brant, by exchange	

Robert Irwin American, b. 1928 *No Title*, 1966–67 Synthetic polymer on aluminum with four flood lights, 48 in., diameter; 13 in. depth Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 68.42a-e	
James Turrell American, b. 1943 *Raemar Pink White*, 1969 Shall Space, Collection of Art & Research, Las Vegas. (all images © James Turrell, photo by Florian Holzher, and all images courtesy LACMA)	
Chuck Close b. 1940 *Phil*, 1969 Synthetic polymer on canvas 108 x 84 in. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from Mrs. Robert M. Benjamin 69.102	

1970s/1980s

Eva Hesse American, 1936–1970 *No title*, 1970 Latex, rope, string, and wire Dimensions variable Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from Eli and Edythe L. Broad, the Mrs. Percy Uris Purchase Fund, and the Painting and Sculpture Committee 88.17a-b	
Carl Andre American, b. 1935 *Twenty-Ninth Copper Cardinal*, 1975 Copper, twenty-nine units 3/16 × 20 × 20 inches each; 3/16 × 20 × 580 in. overall Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Gilman Foundation Inc. and the National Endowment for the Arts 75.55a-cc	
John Baldessari American, b. 1931 *I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art*, 1971 Lithograph: 22 1/2 × 30 in. Printed and published by Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from Susan Hess 2007.121© John Baldessari Ed no. 48/50 http://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/john-baldessari-i-will-not-make-any-more-boring-art-1971	

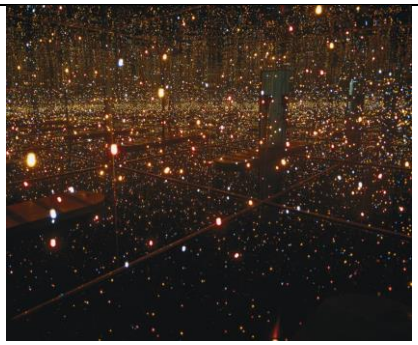
Chris Burden American, b. 1946 *The Atomic Alphabet*, 1980 Hand-colored soft-ground etching and photo-etching, printed in black and red ink plate, 54 × 36 inch sheet, 57 1/2 × 39 in. Artist Proof, edition of 20. Printed and published by Crown Point Press. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Print Committee 2003.110 © Chris Burden	
Sol LeWitt 4th wall: 24 lines from the center, 12 lines from the midpoint of each of the sides, 12 lines from each corner, 1976 White crayon lines and black graphite pencil grid on black wall Dimensions variable Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase, with funds from the Gilman Foundation, Inc.	

1990s/2000s

Felix Gonzalez-Torres American, born Cuba, 1957–1996 *Untitled (Portrait of Ross in L.A.)*, 1991 Multicolored candies, individually wrapped in cellophane Ideal weight 175 lb.; installed dimensions variable, approx. 36 x 36 x 36 in. Promised gift of Donna and Howard Stone, 1.1999 ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO	

Arturo Herrera American, b. 1959 *Before We Leave*, 2001 Wool felt 84 × 144 in. overall Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Contemporary Painting and Sculpture Committee and Chris Vroom and Illya Szilak 2002.144a-c	
Charles LeDray American, b. 1960 *Milk and Honey*, 1994–96 2000 porcelain objects, glass, and wood 77 × 30 × 30 in. overall Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Contemporary Painting and Sculpture Committee 96.75a-b	
Charles LeDray American, b. 1960 *Untitled/Clothesline*, 1992 Fabric and buttons 82 1/4 × 4 × 2 in. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Jack E. Chachkes Bequest	

Jeff Koons American, b. 1955 *Kangaroo* (Red), 1999 Crystal glass, mirrored glass, carbon fiber, foam, colored plastic interlayer, and stainless steel 92 × 59 × 1 1⁄2 in. (233.7 × 149.9 × 3.8 cm) Private collection; courtesy Sonnabend Gallery, New York. © Jeff Koons	
Jeff Koons American, b. 1955 *Kangaroo* (Blue), 1999 crystal glass, colored plastic interlayer, mirrored glass, stainless steel 92 x 59 x 1 1/2 inches © Jeff Koons 4 unique versions (Blue, Dark Pink, Orange, Red)	
Jeff Koons American, b. 1955 *Cow*, 1999 Crystal glass, mirrored glass, carbon fiber, foam, colored plastic interlayer, stainless steel 90 x 59 x 1 1/2 inches © Jeff Koons	

Jeff Koons American, b. 1955 *Giraffe*, 1999 Crystal glass, mirrored glass, carbon fiber, foam, colored plastic interlayer, stainless steel 81 3/4 x 59 1/4 x 1 1/2 inches © Jeff Koons	
Yayoi Kusama American, b. 1929 *Fireflies on the Water*, 2002 Mirror, plexiglass, 150 lights, and water, 111 × 144 1/2 × 144 1/2 in. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Postwar Committee and the Contemporary Painting and Sculpture Committee and partial gift of Betsy Wittenborn Miller 2003.322a-tttttttt	

Appendix G: Design Package