

SENSE OF PLACE

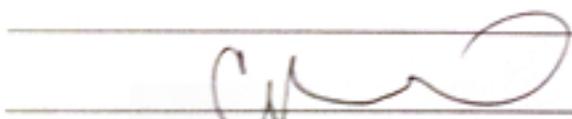
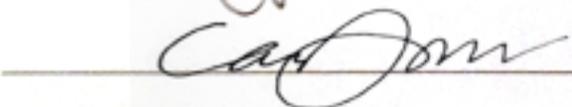
By

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A Thesis
Submitted to the
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of
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SENSE OF PLACE

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Dedicated to all explorers of the universe...

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THINKING... COMMUNICATING

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ABSTRACT

SENSE OF PLACE

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Corcoran College of Art + Design, 2013

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Sense of Place is a unique, temporary exhibition that enhances the visitors experience by stimulating their sense of sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch through installation, sculpture, and graffiti art. While incorporating urban design elements, this exhibition takes place within a city using the cityscape as the arena allowing visitors to have 24-hour access. The five gallery pods are sprinkled throughout the city, leading visitors on a journey discovering public art and local hot spots. The architecture of the pods was specifically chosen as juxtaposition to the neoclassical architecture found in DC. The exhibition invites visitors to participate in immersive environments presenting a platform that calls for true public art. This is aimed to draw a connection between the visitor and the built environment, providing people with a new journey through the nation's capital.

CHAPTER 1 : TITLE

The title of the exhibition is inspired by the concept of “Sense of Place”. Breaking apart the phrase the first word ‘sense’ refers to the exhibition’s content, being that this is an exhibition that stimulates the five human senses. The second word in the phrase ‘Place’ can be defined as where dimension formed by people’s relationship with physical settings, individual and group activities, and meanings. “The term ‘place’ as opposed to space, implies a strong emotional tie, a temporary or more long lasting, between a person and a particular physical location.”¹ The place is a key component to this exhibition being that it does not take place with in a conventional museum setting. Instead the exhibition takes place through out the city of Washington D.C., using carefully chosen and articulated locations through out the city. The entire phrase ‘sense of place’ is a concept that draws a connection between the visitors and the environment, assigning meaning to the place. The exhibition is creating a sense of place by assigning meaning to space.

Sense of place is often used in relation to those characteristics that make a place special or unique, as well as to those that foster a sense of authentic human attachment and belonging. Place is a complex recipe that includes settings, behaviors, (including interactions with others and the local landscape), and evaluations of interwoven personal and social contexts.² Place attachment incorporates individual interactions with the surrounding world. Landscape acts as a teacher in shaping our perceptions of place. This

¹ Sime, Jonathon D. "Creating Places or Designing Spaces?" *Journal of Environmental Psychology*: 50

² Amsden B, Stedman R, Kruger L. *The Creation and Maintenance of Sense of Place in a Tourism-Dependent Community*. *Leisure Sciences* : 33

exhibition will use the landscape and surrounding areas to create new sites for visitors while in Washington DC giving a new twist on the typical tourist visit to our nation's capital.

CHAPTER 2: Mission Statement

Sense of Place is a contemporary exhibition that delves deep into enhancing the visitors experience by stimulating their sense of sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch through installation, sculpture, and graffiti art. While incorporating urban design elements, this exhibition takes place within a city using the cityscape as the arena allowing visitors to have 24 hour access, inviting them to participate in immersive environments presenting a platform that calls for true public art. This allows visitors to question the conventions of traditional art, how it is displayed, as well as drawing a connection between the visitors and the surrounding environment presenting a new perspective on the typical Washington DC pilgrimage.

CHAPTER 3: Teaching Points

- Invites visitors to question the convention of how traditional art is displayed and exhibited.
- The gallery spaces that are dedicated to each sense will educate the visitor about the science behind each sense through the artist work that is transforming the space while evoking the sense.

ex: In the gallery pod dedicated to the sense of smell the exhibit will consist of a room full of trash. The visitors will immediately feel uncomfortable their sense of smell will be evoked and they will be educated on the issue of recycling.

- The site of the exhibit boasts activities of all people of all ages and of all cultural backgrounds, with the hope of creating a “sense of place” for the visitors. People develop a sense of place through experience and a knowledge of a particular area.
- each location of each pod is specific in that it holds some cultural history that pertains to the city of Washington DC.

CHAPTER 4: Take Aways

- I would like for visitors to leave the exhibit with a new perspective about DC, aside from all of the monuments. This exhibition is design to bring together tourist and locals by creating a collective identity and a sense of place for them. Local symbols reflect and enhance sense of place. This knowledge may be used to maintain and enhance place identity.
- Having the visitors participate in the creation of some of the art, also aids in creating a sense of place for visitors. Developing a sense of place helps people identify with their region and with each other

CHAPTER 5: Audience

Primary: This exhibit is directed towards family groups and tourist to the Washington, D.C. area, where most come expecting to see monuments and historical sites. This exhibit will create new sites as well as show them contemporary and historical sites, local symbols, as well as the cultural history of Washington, D.C.

Secondary: The secondary audience would be inner city youths and school groups ages 8 -20 because they can have an opportunity to participate in creating public artwork through public programming giving them a creative outlet. This gives parents and schools a place to take children in the hopes to inspired them.

CHAPTER 6 : Location

The location of this exhibition was inspired by the idea of ‘why does the museum experience have to end at the museum doors?’ I would like to break down the walls of the museum and create an exhibit that uses the cityscape as its venue. This will create an environment that is 24 hour accessible to visitors. The exhibition will highlight public art, sculpture, installation, street art, as well as city landmarks. Mobile apps can provide maps of the exhibition as well as supporting facts for visitors to perform self guided tours. The exhibit is a contemporary melting pot of cultural expression where local artist and musicians produce exhibits and performances. Two of the five locations are in typical tourist areas, and the remainders of the pods are in local hot spots. The locations of the gallery pods give tourist to DC a new perspective on their visit to the nation’s capital. The site is also perfect for inner city youth because they will have access to the exhibit because it will literally be in their front yards.

Five gallery pods will be architecturally designed to house a specific ‘sense’. Each pod will be LEED certified. This exhibit will work in conjunction with two architects who came up with the design of the gallery pods. *The Peoples Meeting Dome : Deconstructed Geodesic Dome* was designed by candidate of architecture Kristoffer Tejlgaard and candidate of architecture Benny Jepsen. They designed a deconstructed geodesic dome with the “wish to stick out, but in the right way. We have the ambition that architecture is

to be as site-specific as possible, that architecture is influenced by the local surroundings; the view, the landscape, the wind and the sun, and the features it offers.”³The idea behind the design of this pod works in correlation to the title of the exhibition *Sense of Place*. Being influenced by the surroundings and creating a ‘meeting’ place of tourist from all over the world as well as locals to Washington DC. The modern design of the dome will provide an interesting juxtaposition of the neo-classical architecture that already exists through out most of the district.

The size of the dome provides ample room for the visitors to walk inside and acclimate to the immersive environment. There will be areas in each dome for visitors to become familiar with the artist and their installation and how it correlates to the site of the pod and the sense it is targeted to evoke. There will also be an area where visitors can share experiences and stories to support the theme of creating a sense of place.

The location of the sight pod will be in the seven-acre park Lafayette Square. The public park located within President’s Park, directly north of the White House on H STREET, is bordered by Jackson Place on the west, Madison Place on the east, and Pennsylvania Avenue. The Square and the surrounding structures were designated a National Historic Landmark District in 1970. Lafayette Square has been used as a racetrack, a graveyard, a zoo, a slave market, an encampment for soldiers during the War

³ 3. Behance, “People’s meeting dome.” Last modified 2012. <http://www.behance.net/gallery/Peoples-Meeting-Dome/5228001>

of 1812, and many political protests and celebrations.⁴ It will be interesting to present the work of Yayoi Kusama. Her environmental installations, most of which exhibit her thematic interest in psychedelic colors, repetition and pattern will evoke the sense of sight. Kusama's work is based in conceptual art and shows some attributes of feminism, minimalism, surrealism, Art Brut, pop art, and abstract expressionism, and is infused with autobiographical, psychological, and sexual content. Kusama being a very political activist in her work will be an interesting juxtaposition to hold in front of the white house which can be seen as a symbol of power and leadership.

The location of the smell pod will be at the tidal basin which is a partially human-made reservoir between the Potomac River and the Washington Channel in Washington, D.C. It is part of West Potomac Park and is a focal point of the National Cherry Blossom Festival held each spring. The Jefferson Memorial, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and the George Mason Memorial are situated adjacent to the Tidal Basin. The basin covers an area of about 107 acres and is 10 feet deep. The concept of the Tidal Basin originated in the 1880s to serve both as a visual centerpiece and as a means for flushing the Washington Channel, a harbor separated from the Potomac River by fill lands where East Potomac Park is situated. This is the perfect platform to present the “The Plastic Garbage Project exhibition”. It is the average amount of plastic that every citizen local to Washington,

⁴ 4. National Park Service, Washington DC a National Register of Historic Places of Travel. Accessed October 22, 2012.

<http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/wash/dc30>.

D.C. uses in 100 days. The installation will use trash collected from the tidal basin over a 100 day period and will be installed in the gallery pod evoking the sense of smell while allowing visitors to question sustainability and recycling.

H Street is one of Washington, D.C.'s northeast neighborhoods and is the perfect location for the sense of taste pod. The H Street neighborhood was one of Washington's earliest and busiest commercial districts, and was the location of the first Sears Roebuck store in Washington. H Street went into decline after World War II and businesses in the corridor were severely damaged during the 1968 riots. The street did not start to recover until the 21st century. Today it is considered one of the most up and coming neighborhoods of the district. It has local flavor and has been named the Arts and Entertainment District because it began to revitalize as a nightlife district. Locals enjoy spending nights venturing from bar to bar. The neighborhood is known for its eclecticism and as you can find the street walls decorated with street art, murals, and graffiti. This will be the perfect platform to introduce Jennifer Rubell who is an installation artist whose main medium is food, transforming real food into art that encourages visitor participation.

Meridian Hill Park is a structured urban park located in the Washington, D.C. neighborhood of Columbia Heights. Some city residents also unofficially know the park as "Malcolm X Park". The 12 acre park is bordered by 15th, 16th, W, and Euclid Streets NW, and sits on a prominent hill 1.5 miles due north of the White House. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1994. On Sunday afternoons during the

warm weather months, people gather from 3 to 9 p.m. in the upper park to dance and participate in a drum circle. The activity has been held in the park since the 1950s, and attracts professional drummers from time to time. This is the perfect platform for the sound gallery pod. This gallery will feature Haroon Mirza's installation "Preoccupied waveforms", where he creates dynamic compositions of sound and light. Also shown, Carsten Nicolai installation which visualizes sound. The final installation is Doug Aitken "sound pavilion"; a sculpture located in the center of the gallery pod where Aitken creates a structure that houses a two hundred meter deep hole with a microphone dropped in the middle that allows visitors to hear the sound of the earth in real time.

Dupont Circle is a traffic circle, park, neighborhood, and historic district in Northwest Washington, D.C. The traffic circle is located in the northwest region, at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue, Connecticut Avenue, New Hampshire Avenue, P Street, and 19th Street. Dupont Circle is located in the "Old City" of Washington, D.C. The neighborhood is centered around the traffic circle with a park located in the center. The park within the circle is a gathering place for those wishing to play chess on the permanent stone chessboards. Tom Murphy, a homeless championship chess player, is a resident. The park has also been the location of political rallies, such as those supporting gay rights and those protesting the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. This is a perfect location, being that it cultivates local history and culture. Brazilian artist Ernesto Neto will dramatically transform the gallery pod with his site-specific installations that evoke the sense of touch. His installation will

bring together a series of interrelated installations and sculptures that draw on Neto's diverse interest in the fields of cultural history, physics and anthropology.

CHAPTER 7: Visitor Narrative

The design of this exhibition is made to give the visitors a multi-dimensional and transformative experience. Carefully selected installation art will provide new outlooks for the visitors and how they view art and educated them on the five senses. Each pod will contain an entrance area where there is an introductory seven minute looping, documentary style film that is playing in an alcove area with benches. Visitors can sit down to watch the short film and become acclimated to the gallery pod. This film will inform them of the location of the pod and the cultural history behind the site and location. This film will also tie in the scientific research behind the sense and visually communicate the connection of the location's cultural history to the specific sense it is tied to. Once finished with the seven minute short film visitors will move through each gallery pod to find an area where they will be greeted with a life size replica of each artist who's work is in the pod. A mannequin with the artist face projected on the surface of the body form will be actually talking to the visitors giving them a glimpse into why they have created these installations and how it will evoke a specific sense.

The visitors are now informed and have a general sense of what they are about to experience. Moving through the center areas of each gallery pod visitors will experience an immersive environment. Some are participatory and rely on the visitor's contribution

in order for the art to exist, and some are installations that are just multi-dimensional and transformative. All installations were created with the intention to evoke a specific sense. After visitors move through each pod there will be an area at the end of the gallery where visitors will be able to discuss their experience with one another, which in turn contributes to the creation and support of the idea of “sense of place”. They will be informed of the other pod locations as well as the mobile app designed specifically for this exhibition. The mobile app allows visitors to create their own self-guided tour throughout the city and allows visitors to tag graffiti and sculpture art they find throughout the district. They can tag and upload photos of the work as well as write their own curatorial excerpt of the piece. This creates an international dialogue between visitors and locals. The visitor experience does not change depending on what pod they visit first or last. Each is a self-contained experience, but also is an experience that transcends through all five pods. This is intentional to leave the visitor wanting more so they go out and explore. The visitor will have the opportunity to embark on a journey throughout the city of Washington D.C. and experience the city with a new perspective on art and the district. The pod dealing with the sense of sight is located directly in front of the white house in Lafayette Park. For almost every tourist venturing to Washington DC the white house is already on their list of things to do while in D.C. Once they arrive to the white house it will be almost impossible for them to not see the sight gallery pod. Yayoi Kusama’s work will flood the surrounding area with her “sculptures and environmental installations most of which exhibit her thematic interest in psychedelic colors, repetition and pattern.”

Several of her installations will be placed throughout the gallery pod giving the visitors an experience that manipulates and stimulates their sense of sight.

Walking up to the sight pod the surrounding area in Lafayette park will be filled with mirror balls which is part of Kusama's "Narcissus Garden". The onlooker's reflection is reflected in 1,500 mirror spheres, which is meant to refer visitors to their own narcissism. Not only are the mirrored balls reflecting the onlooker's image but also reflecting the surrounding environment, being the white house and the park that is surrounding them. Once inside the gallery pod of sight the first installation will be Kusama's "Love Forever – Art as a Requiem". The visitor will walk up to and sit inside this hexagonal box. "A becoming- imperceptible that is particularly perceptible in the installations and environments in which Kusama staged interplays of mirrors so that as to appropriate the image of the infinite. In a man-sized hexagonal box, with two small apertures made for the eyes, and with the interior sides completely covered in mirrors, onlookers could get a glimpse of their reflection multiplied ad infinitum, at the same time as little bulbs of five different colors installed on the ceiling went on and off at brief intervals, giving rise to color combinations and changing forms like a kaleidoscope." This gives the visitors the experience of stepping into an 'infinite' box that contains an infinite image of the visitor, creating a multiple self image of the visitor which is in turn manipulating the sense of sight.

The next installation in the space will be her "Fireflies on the Water". The installation consists of a small dark room lined with mirrors on all sides, a pool in the center of the

space, and many small lights hanging from the ceiling, creating visual effects that may be disorienting to some viewers. To experience the work, visitors must step up onto a 6-inch-high platform, pass through a 30-inch-wide doorway, and travel over a 30-inch-wide platform with no edge protection. One visitor at a time will enter the room. Once inside the experience is magically meditative. No sound, no smell, no touch, just an altered sense of sight because of the small lights hanging from the ceiling are reflecting on every surface, giving an awe-inspiring experience to the visitors.

The final installation in this pod will be a site-specific installation of Kusama's 'Infinite Nets' environmental installation. As the visitor walks through this installation Kusama's use of color and dots creates an immersive environment that one can't help but pause and gaze at what surrounds them. This can be true for all of her pieces; however specifically for the infinite net series Kusama herself describes them as "compositions less pictures, with neither beginning nor end, nor center, in which this endless repetition produced a hypnotic sensation." The walls are covered in dots as well as abstract rounded shapes that protrude from the wall and the ground creating an environment that visitors will be able to explore.

The gallery pod dedicated to the sense of Smell is located along the Tidal basin. After a tourist has explored the various monuments that are in and around the tidal basin they will stumble across the sense of smell pod. From a distance they will notice the deconstructed geodesic dome that is surrounded by giant fish sculptures made from discarded plastic bottles. Massive in size these fish will appear to be coming out of the

ground. The sculptures are illuminated from the inside at night creating a pretty spectacular light show. This gives a hint as to what the visitors can expect when they step inside the gallery pod. The show inside the gallery pod is titled “The seventh Continent”, making reference to the birth of a new continent, the plastic continent. Once inside their sense of smell will be overwhelmed with disgust. The gallery will literally be filled with trash that was collected from the tidal basin and the surround areas over the course of 100 days before the installation goes up. This exhibition endeavors to present facts about plastic pollution in an illustrative way and in this context examines various questions about the advantages and disadvantages of using synthetic products, the considerations of product design, the recycling potential and the influence on health.

The gallery pod dedicated to the sense of taste, that is located in the H street neighborhood of Washington DC is not a typical tourist stop. In fact, for most tourists they have no idea about this neighborhood. One could say that this location is off the beaten path, but H Street is a thriving cultural hub of DC and has some of the most fantastic restaurants of the district! Upon entering the gallery pod visitors sense of smell will be stimulated by the scrumptious aromas of the surrounding restaurants. Once inside Jennifer Rubell’s Food installation will invite visitors to participate in tasting and eating the artwork as a way to contribute and participate in the installation themselves. “Food, social interaction, the structure of celebration or the structure of social interaction particularly inside the art world was just always interesting to me.” The gallery will be open and visitors will be able to see everything. Drinks will be dispensed from large,

minimal canvases, each with a spigot, which Rubell calls "Drinking Paintings." The wall labels specify the concoctions each of the "paintings" dispensed and the medium of which they were made. Once visitors are finished with the drink they are encouraged to throw the remainder on the canvas to create and build on the artwork. Next visitors will walk to an area where 12 pieces of cheese are suspended 10 feet above their heads from wooden slabs. The 12 life-size cheeses, which she intrepidly cast from her own head, remained solid until they will be blasted with heat guns, at which point the melting cheese will drip down onto sculptural stacks of crackers. When the heads really started melting, large fragments would violently drop, creating ghoulish forms on the slab. Visitors are welcomed to eat some cheese and crackers! A massive pile of potato chips became another canvas, as closet painters in the crowd realized their inner Jackson Pollocks by squirting multi-colored dips from 700 blank paint tubes. An instant Pollock-like drip painting would form, only to disappear from the grubby hands that reached in for a bite of the art.

The next pod is dedicated to the sense of touch and is located right on top of Dupont circle. The deconstructed geodesic dome will be placed right on top of the circle and the fountain will be contained inside of the dome. The surrounding areas will be covered in Olek's Yarn bombed installations wrapping the trees and park benches in vibrant colors. Once visitors enter the inside of the gallery pod they will experience "Edges of the World" by Ernesto Neto. Neto has created a site specific installation that is a domed nylon structure. Called The Edges of the World, the exhibition features interior

spaces covered entirely in stretched nylon tulle fabric, with fabric columns that emerge from the floors and ceilings. A series of domed structures of the same material form a labyrinthine tunnel, which take visitors on a meandering journey. The center of the gallery will have the fountain that will be covered in Olek's yarn that will tie in the surrounding areas.

The final pod that is dedicated to the sense of sound will be located in Meridian Hill Park. This is also not a typical tourist destination but is a cultural hub for the D.C. community. When visitors walk to this site they will be greeted with the sounds of drum circles that are hosted by locals every Sunday afternoon if weather permits. Aside from the geodesic dome another installation will be located in the park called "Sound Pavillion" Doug Aitken provides to the visitor the experience of listening, in real time, to the sound of Earth's inside. The work consists of a sound installation located in a round, glass-enclosed pavilion devised by the artist. At the center of the pavilion, in a 200-meter deep hole, high sensitivity microphones have been set to capture different sound frequencies. The sounds of Earth's inside are amplified into the building, bringing to surface traces of a nearly always-unimaginable reality. The next sound experience visitors will encounter is Haroon Mirza "Preoccupied wave forms". Mirza uses simple industrial materials to radically transform the perceptual experience of architectural space. Over the past ten years, Mirza has deployed a range of analog and digital devices to create dynamic compositions of sound and light. Strands of LED lights, fragments of video, and amplified electricity are programmed to disrupt and destabilize the exhibition

space. The last piece is an audiovisual installation by Carsten Nicolai, the German artist, musician and leading player in contemporary research on the rapport between electronic music and images: “unidisplay” is an impressive installation created specifically for the deconstructed geodesic dome. It will consist of a single wall display that follows the structure of the dome, flanked by two reflecting walls at the corners, thus expanding the images ad infinitum. It is a powerful work that interacts with the industrial dimensions of the geodesic dome. The installation is based on a series of modules with different visual effects: constantly changing abstract forms processed with software that can attribute signs and colors to the decomposition of sound. The images interfere with the spectator's perception through optical illusion, the flicker effect, imperceptible movements and the complementarity of colors. The public, involved on a sensory level, is thus facing sequences, motifs and graphic forms with various units of time that are alternated and follow each other like an enormous abstract fresco in motion. Rhythms, forms and colors converge, offering visitors a powerful perceptual experience and a transversal immersion in the world of visual and sound art.

In between each gallery pod there will be designated areas where graffiti artist and sculpture artist will be invited to present their work. A mix of local graffiti writers as well as international writers will paint the streets of Washington DC with eclectic, psychedelic, and awe-inspiring murals. The city streets will transform into the walls of the museum, leaving ‘bread crumbs’ for the visitor to stumble upon. One example of this is using the work of Belgian street artist ROA. ROA generally paints wild animals such

as rats or birds in black and white. Roa started off in the street art scene painting animals on abandoned buildings and warehouses in the isolated industrial areas of his hometown. Today, Roa's animals may be found slumbering on the sides of semi derelict buildings and peering out from shop shutters in city streets all across the world from New York to Berlin and Warsaw to Paris. As the visitors embarks on their journey to each pod, in between they will be faced with public art works that are meant to be seen on sides of buildings and abandoned walls.

This is important for visitors to experience this art where it is meant to be seen, on the streets. Visitors have the opportunity to explore the city and find artwork that speaks to them. Through the mobile app that is specifically designed for this exhibition visitors can tag and upload images of street art and write their own curatorial voice on the piece. This allows for locals and tourist from all over creating an international dialogue of the work as well as creating a digital archive of past and current work found in the streets. This gives visitors 24-hour access to the art.

CHAPTER 8: Content Narrative

Sense of Place is an exhibition that uses the five senses to tie contemporary art to public spaces. Five sites throughout the city are chosen to represent various venues that hold a connection between the cultural history of the location and the five senses. This is achieved through carefully curating installation, graffiti, and sculpture artist that elicit each of the senses by understanding the psychology of each sense. Installation art provides new areas of content and experiences for visitors.

“In the contemporary period, the multivalent character of installation art has yet to be grasped. First and foremost, it must be understood and recognized as a medium, however elastic in its material definition, offering the broadest possibilities for investigation and expression. Second, having achieved worldwide reach, this practice may enable art to actually achieve and ambition for universality. Third, because there is no frame separating this art from its viewing context, the work and the space having melded together into an approximation of a life experience, the sphere of art has effectively been compromised, even democratized.”⁵

With the medium of installation art, visitors are given the opportunity to participate in the artwork and are directly involved with the experience. “As Robert Rauschenberg once

⁵ Rosenthal, Mark. *Understanding Installation Art: From Duchamp to Holzer*. Munich: Prestel, 2003. 25

stated that he worked ‘in the gap between art and life’.⁶ The ambitions and goals of the modern installation artist are to reflect the experience of life, its complex issues, forms, and appearances. The viewer is asked to investigate the work of art much as he or she might explore some phenomenon in life, making one’s way through actual space and time in order to gain knowledge.⁷ The exhibition will contain site-specific installations located in the five different gallery pods that are sprinkled throughout the District of Columbia. A site-specific installation is inextricably linked to the locale: the parts relate to one another but, more importantly, they relate to the larger space.⁸ The visitor witnesses a dialogue between the artist and the space around them.

One of the most important aspects of this exhibition is the visitor's participation and the exchange of interaction between the visitor, the artwork, and the surrounding place. The content is designed to encourage the visitor to explore and engage in the various installations. To engage denotes the occupation, attraction, or involvement of someone’s interest or attention. This exhibition brings together an array of creative minds who work from the fringes of art, design, science, and architecture, and that emphasize the audience’s personal participation in their interactive and immersive environments.⁹ The content will engage the visitor by providing scientific information about each sense. The content of this exhibition also provides visitors the opportunity to explore Washington

⁶ Rosenthal, Mark. *Understanding Installation Art: From Duchamp to Holzer*. Munich: Prestel, 2003. 26

⁷ Rosenthal, Mark. *Understanding Installation Art: From Duchamp to Holzer*. Munich: Prestel, 2003. 27

⁸ Rosenthal, Mark. *Understanding Installation Art: From Duchamp to Holzer*. Munich: Prestel, 2003. 28

⁹ Klanten, Robert, Sven Ehmann, Verena Hanschke, and Lukas Feireiss. *A Touch of Code: Interactive Installations and Experiences*. Berlin: Gestalten, 2011: 149

D.C. bringing them to new sites other than the sites found on the typical D.C. pilgrimage. Exploration describes the act of searching or traveling through a terrain for the purpose of the discovery of resources of information.¹⁰ The content encourages visitors to explore the city in new ways. “The idea of the modern city as uncharted territory to be explored- each city in a unique space imbued with something unfamiliar, mysterious, and at least in part, incomprehensible”¹¹

Each gallery pod will have an introduction area where visitors will be introduced to the cultural history of the location of the pod and why it is paired with each specific sense. This gives visitors the opportunity to understand why they are in that location, as well as, understand the local and cultural history of Washington DC. This transforms the space into a place and brings together locals and tourist. This begins to build community between the visitors. Communities are built upon collective organizations of people who are either territorially bounded or symbolically linked.¹²

Next the visitor will be presented with information regarding one of the five senses. Our five senses are our connection to the outside world. They send messages to our brains, our brain interprets the information, and perceives what is around us and in turn creates our life experience. “In psychology the term "sense" has the following meaning: "The faculty possessed by conscious creatures whereby they perceive external objects by

¹⁰ Klanten, Robert, Sven Ehmann, Verena Hanschke, and Lukas Feireiss. *A Touch of Code: Interactive Installations and Experiences*. Berlin: Gestalten, 2011: 90

¹¹ Höller, Carsten, Lisa Phillips, Massimiliano Gioni, Gary Carrion-Murayari, and Jenny Moore. *Experience*. New York, NY: Skira Rizzoli, 2011 : 67

¹² Amsden B, Stedman R, Kruger L. *The Creation and Maintenance of Sense of Place in a Tourism-Dependent Community*. *Leisure Sciences* : 34

means of impressions made upon certain organs of the body, or whereby they receive impressions concerning changes in the condition of the body."¹³ The selected installation artist for each sense does just that. They evoke the sense through their art and bring visitors to a heightened sensory experience. They create a sensation for the visitor, "an impression made upon the mind through the medium of the nervous system, and usually through one of the organs of sense."¹⁴ Aristotle, a Greek philosopher, is credited with the traditional classification of the five sense organs. As far back as the 1760's, the famous philosopher Immanuel Kant proposed that our knowledge of the outside world depends on our methods of perception. In order to define what is "extrasensory" we need to define what is "sensory". Each of the 5 senses consists of organs with specifically designed cellular structures that have receptors for a particular stimuli. These cells have links to the nervous system and to the brain. Sensing is done at primitive levels in the cells and integrated into sensations in the nervous system.

Once the visitor is acclimated to the environment, they are aware of the cultural history surrounding them, as well as, informed about the artist intention and the sense that will be evoked, they will enter the main part of the gallery pod. Here, interactive installations will flood their senses. They will be invited to engage, explore, and interact with one another and with the artwork. Installations provide a new outlook on they typical

¹³ Dumont , Theron. The Master Mind, The Sense and Sensations. Accessed November 10, 2012. <http://www.psitek.net/pages/PsiTek-the-master-mind5.html>.

¹⁴ Dumont , Theron. The Master Mind, The Sense and Sensations. Accessed November 10, 2012. <http://www.psitek.net/pages/PsiTek-the-master-mind5.html>.

experience of observing artwork. “The explosions of new technologies and the breakdown of medium-specific artwork in the 1960s provided myriad opportunities for physically engaging the viewer in a work of art.”¹⁵

The gallery pod dedicated to the sense of sight will contain the artwork of Yayoi Kusama. Visual perception is the term used to define sight. Visual perception is the ability to interpret the surrounding environment by processing information that is contained in visible light. What we see are not objects; we see light waves reflected off the objects. Once the light waves reach the retina in the back of our eyes, cells called rods and cones convert the waves into neural impulses that travel up the optic nerve to the brain.¹⁶ They eye ‘touches’ or ‘feels’ vibrations of the light waves coming in contact with the nervous matter of the organ of sight. The various psychological components involved with vision are referred to as the ‘visual system’. The visual system is a part of the central nervous system that enables organisms to process visual detail. It interprets information from visible light to compile a representation of the surrounding world. Yayoi Kusama’s installations in the sight pod evokes the sense of sight and manipulates it. *Fireflies on the Water* installation heightens the visitors sense of sight by tactfully playing with the visitors reflection with mirrors and a floor filled with water.

Kusama’s work often contains political undertones so housing her work in the sight pod directly in front of the white house in Lafayette park is the perfect juxtaposition. Yayoi

¹⁵ Bishop, Claire. *Participation. Documents of Contemporary art* London: Whitechapel, 2006: 10

¹⁶ Amsden B, Stedman R, Kruger L. The Creation and Maintenance of Sense of Place in a Tourism-Dependent Community. *Leisure Sciences* : 34

Kusama being a political activist and the white house being a symbol of power, leadership, and government. Historically Lafayette park and the surrounding structures were designated a National Historic Landmark District in 1970. Lafayette Square has been used as a racetrack, a graveyard, a zoo, a slave market, an encampment for soldiers during the War of 1812, and many political protests and celebrations. The gallery will tie in Kusama's installations to evoke the visitors sense of sight, while the underlying tones of her work speaks to why the gallery pod is in that specific location and how it relates to the cultural history.

The gallery pod dedicated to the sense taste will house the artwork of Jennifer Rubell. The sense of taste manifests by means of certain nerves terminating in tiny cells of the tongue, known as taste receptors or taste buds. Taste buds are responsible for recognizing the four sensations of taste: sweet, sour, salty and bitter. The bumps we see are called papillae and contain multiple taste buds. The information is sent by afferent nerves to the brain where we recognize the taste as either pleasant or unpleasant. Interestingly, our mood can affect our sense of taste, explaining various appetite changes associated with mood disorders. Taste is also dependent on smell, like when you have congested sinuses food will taste bland. Our brain uses signals from our eyes, nose and mouth when we eat, so when one of those signals is missing, our brain can have difficulty differentiating what we are eating.

Jennifer Rubell's food installations invite visitors to taste, smell and drink their ways through the gallery. Visitors are actually eating her work and as a result they are

contributing to the creation of her pieces. H street is the perfect location to house Rubell's work. The H Street neighborhood was one of Washington's earliest and busiest commercial districts. H Street went into decline after World War II and businesses in the corridor were severely damaged during the 1968 riots. The street did not start to recover until the 21st century. Today it is considered the one of the most up and coming neighborhoods of the district. It has local flavor and has been named the Arts and Entertainment District because it began to revitalize as a nightlife district. This location is crucial because it is not the typical DC tourist spot. Most tourist travelling to DC do not even know about this neighborhood and the amazing restaurants and nightlife it contains. The gallery pod dedicated to the sense of smell will contain an ongoing project titled *The Seventh Continent*, by the Plastic Garbage Project. The sense of smell manifests by means of delicate nerves terminating in the mucus membrane of the nostrils. When you breathe in through your nose, chemical molecules suspended in the air stimulate olfactory receptors, and messages are sent to the olfactory bulb at the base of the brain.¹⁷ Smell is the sense most strongly linked to memory. The particles of the "smelled" object must have actually entered the nostrils and have come in contact with these nerve ends in order to be sensed. The *Seventh Continent*, is an installation making reference to the birth of a new continent, the plastic continent. Once inside their sense of smell will be overwhelmed with disgust. The gallery will literally be filled with trash that was collected

¹⁷ 22. R, Joeel. ehow, "Psychological Theory on the Five Human Senses." Last modified May 28, 2012. Accessed November 10, 2012.

from the tidal basin and the surround areas over the course of 100 days before the installation goes up. This exhibition endeavors to present facts about plastic pollution in an illustrative way and in this context examines various questions about the advantages and disadvantages of using synthetic products, the considerations of product design, the recycling potential and the influence on health.

Having this gallery pod location at the Tidal basin is critical because not only is this a hot spot for tourist to go to while in DC, its also very polluted. Walking along the basin, around the edges of the water, you immediately see all of the trash that pollutes the basin. Water bottles, candy wrappers, soda cans, plastic bags, the list can go on, just a big pile of trash. Historically the Tidal basin is a partially human-made reservoir between the Potomac River and the Washington Channel. It is part of West Potomac Park and is a focal point of the National Cherry Blossom Festival held each spring. The Jefferson Memorial, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and the George Mason Memorial are situated adjacent to the Tidal Basin. The concept of the Tidal Basin originated in the 1880s to serve both as a visual centerpiece and as a means for flushing the Washington Channel, a harbor separated from the Potomac River by fill lands where East Potomac Park is situated. Having an installation that pertains to pollution is inviting the visitors to participate by showing them how they are contributing to pollution and shows them alternatives and new means of prevention. The gallery pod dedicated to the sense of touch located in Dupont Circle will house the artwork of Ernesto Neto. To touch means to cause, or permit a part of the body,

especially the hand or fingers, to come in contact with, and feel, or touch something; the physiological sense by which external objects or forces are perceived through contact with the body.¹⁸ Our skin's three layers, the epidermis, dermis and hypodermis, are made up of millions of sense receptors. Once stimulated by touch, these receptors trigger nerve impulses that communicate with the somatosensory cortex of the brain, relaying information about temperature, pressure and pain. Sensory receptors encode information about everything skin comes in contact with. Neurotransmitters, or brain chemicals, are released into our body, giving us the sensations or feelings. The sense of touch is so important to humans that a lack of touch can lead to physical and behavioral problems, improper brain development, and even death.

Ernesto Neto's tactile installations provide visitors with a completely engulfing, immersive, multi-dimensional environment. *Edges of the World* is the title of the site-specific installation that Neto has created right in the center of Dupont Circle. Called *The Edges of the World*, the exhibition features interior spaces covered entirely in stretched nylon tulle fabric, with fabric columns that emerge from the floors and ceilings. A series of domed structures of the same material form a labyrinthine tunnel, which take visitors on a meandering journey. They are invited to touch and explore this world that Neto has created. The park within the circle is a gathering place for those wishing to play chess on the permanent stone chessboards. Tom Murphy, a homeless championship chess player,

¹⁸ Klanten, Robert, Sven Ehmann, Verena Hanschke, and Lukas Feireiss. *A Touch of Code: Interactive Installations and Experiences*. Berlin: Gestalten, 2011: 46

is a resident. The park has also been the location of political rallies, such as those supporting gay rights and those protesting the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. This is a perfect location, being that it cultivates local history and culture. Brazilian artist Ernesto Neto will dramatically transform the gallery pod with his site-specific installations that evoke the sense of touch.

The final gallery pod is dedicated to the sense of sound which is located in Meridian Hill park, or as some may know the location as Malcom X Park. The ear is the organ of hearing. The outer ear protrudes away from the head and is shaped like a cup to direct sounds toward the tympanic membrane, which transmits vibrations to the inner ear through a series of small bones in the middle ear called the malleus, incus and stapes.¹⁹ The inner ear is a circular shaped chamber covered internally by nerve fibers that react to the vibrations. The nerve fibers then transmit impulses to the brain by the auditory nerve. The brain then determines the direction and distance of sounds. The human ear can perceive frequencies from 16 cycles per second, which is a very deep bass, to 28,000 cycles per second, which is a very high pitch.²⁰

Doug Aitken's piece "Sound Pavillion" allows visitors to sit and listen to the sounds the earth is making in real time. At the center of the pavilion, in a 200-meter deep

¹⁹ Dumont , Theron. The Master Mind, "The Sense and sensations." Accessed November 10, 2012. <http://www.psitek.net/pages/PsiTek-the-master-mind5.html>.

²⁰ R, Joeel. ehov, "Psychological Theory on the Five Human Senses." Last modified May 28, 2012. Accessed November 10, 2012.

hole, high sensitivity microphones have been set to capture different sound frequencies. The sounds of Earth's inside are amplified into the building, bringing to surface traces of a nearly always unimaginable reality²¹ The second artist to deal with the sense of sound is Haroon Mirza. His installation titled "Preoccupied Waveforms" uses simple industrial materials to transform the perceptual experience of the gallery pod. This project for this exhibition will use LED lights, video, and remixed samples of music and sounds to dissolve and reconstruct the deconstructed geodesic dome. The final artist whose work will be presented in the sound gallery pod is Carsten Nicolai. Carsten Nicolai is an artist, musician and producer German, born in 1965 in Karl-Marx-Stadt, East Germany. He is known internationally for his installations that draw a connection between vision, sound, architecture, science, and technology. "Unidisplay" combines the most important themes of the work of Nicolai: the ability to make audible sound optically, the minimal aesthetic that results in the use of monotone color and sonority, and the propensity towards abstraction and one to infinity.²² Having these three sound artist present their work in Meridian hill park is important because it ties the sense of sound to the artist as well as to the local and cultural history of Meridian Hill park. The park is a local gathering spot, especially on Sundays, for drummers, visitors, and locals to the district to participate in drum circles. For most tourists visiting Washington, D.C. Meridian Hill Park is not a

²¹ New Nine Destinations. Accessed September 22, 2012. http://www.inhotim.org.br/novenovosdestinos/eng/release_doug-aitken.html.

²² Bertola, Chiara, and Andrea Lissoni. "Hangar Bicocca." Last modified 2012. Accessed September 18, 2012. <http://www.hangarbicocca.org/mostre/carsten->

place on the map for them to see. Having the gallery pod location at the park will bring tourist to areas of Washington, D.C. that are not typical and show them new neighborhoods and show them a slice of local flavor.

Once the visitors have passed through each installation area of the gallery pods there is an area at the end of the designated for the visitors to decompress and share their experiences with one another. Tourist engaging with locals and vice versa helps build a community that is larger than just residents of Washington. This is an area where they can reflect on their experiences, digest the artist intention, and process their whole experience together. This addresses the over arching theme of creating a sense of place. In between each gallery pod there will be designated areas where graffiti artist and sculpture artist will be invited to present their work. The city streets will transform into the walls of the museum, leaving 'bread crumbs' for the visitor to stumble upon. Rather than trying to displace these inherently public works of art within a gallery setting, this exhibition will coexists with the Washington DC's urban environment. Street art is meant to be seen on the streets with no limitations of when to view it, who can view it and how they can view it. Admission is always free and the hours are limitless.

CHAPTER 9: Collateral

- Exhibit media component 1:

For every gallery pod there will be an exhibit media component that is a video which is specifically made for this exhibition. Each video will be seven minutes long and will be on a continuous loop to assure visitor flow. The video will inform visitors about the location of the gallery pod and show the connection between the location and the specific sense. The video will also educate the visitor about the science behind the sense and how that sense can be activated.

- Exhibit media component 2:

In every gallery pod there will be a mannequin that is modeled after the artist who's work is presented in the gallery. The mannequin will have a video projected onto the face of the figure bringing the mannequin to life. This will give visitors the experience of interacting with the artist as well as giving the artist the opportunity to explain his or her work and how it is used to evoke a specific sense

- Artwork:

All of the artwork in each gallery pod is installation work. This provides environments for the visitor to explore and engage with artwork which really provides new realms of exploration for the visitor as well as new experiences. Each installation is designed to elicit a particular sense.

- Mobil app

A mobile app specifically designed for this exhibition provides visitors unlimited access to the exhibit. The mobile app will contain maps so that visitors are able to navigate their way through out the city to each pod. In between each pod there are graffiti and sculpture artist transforming the city streets into the walls of the museums. This app will allow visitors to tag location where they find local or international graffiti artist and it will also give them the opportunity to share comments creating a virtual dialogue between one another

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