New Relevance of Art Museums in the Age of Global Mobility:

Language Educational Programs and Their Implications to Art Museum Management

Aya Kinoshita, Tokai University, Japan

Abstract

As we entered into the 21st century, the speed and frequency of global mobility of people, goods, capital, and information accelerated even more. This paper examines an issue of relevance of art museums in the age of global mobility through specific educational programs at art museums.

Art museums are typical destinations for tourists. There are world-famous museums which attract millions of visitors. However, there are art museums struggling to survive because of financial difficulties. Some have decided to close their doors temporarily or for good, while some have sold a part of their collections. In Japan, we call this trend "a wintertime for museums," and in 2011 we saw the decline in the number of museums for the first time. Each museum needs to be accountable for its relevance in order to secure public and private financial support as well as to differentiate itself from and compete with other museums or leisure and entertainment facilities. With this urgency for accountability of its relevance, some museums have started to focus on new stakeholders in local communities. As a result, there is a new kind of programs at art museums: language educational programs mainly targeted to newcomers including immigrants to the society.

In order to prospect a new relevance of art museums, such language programs can be suggestive models. The cases of Getty Museum and Harvard University Art Museums in the United States, Stedelijk Museum and Foam Photography Museum in the Netherlands present a potential role of art museums by utilizing non-verbal visual artistic expressions for cultural integration. In the long run, such programs may contribute to the sustainability of art museum management in the age of global mobility.

1. Introduction

There are more than 54,000 museums including 8,400 art museums in the world (Himmler et al. 2012). While the world's most visited art museums such as the Louvre, the Metropolitan Museum, or the Tate Modern have kept increasing their annual attendance figures (Art Newspaper 2009, 2013), there are art museums struggling to survive because of financial difficulties. Some have closed their doors temporarily or for good. Some have sold a part of

their collections. In Japan, we call this trend "a wintertime for art museums," and in 2011 we saw the decline in the number of art museums for the first time (MEXT 2013). Each museum needs to be accountable for its relevance in order to secure public and private financial support as well as to differentiate itself from and compete with other museums or leisure and entertainment facilities.

Concerning the relevance, there is a discussion about what should art museums prioritize. Some directors from the world's prestigious art museums argue that maintaining and improving their collection in the public trust has the first priority in their activities (Cuno 2004, Takashina and Mino 2006). At the same time, there is a growing interest to put more importance on providing service and programs to audience and community. Now being inclusive is a necessary quality for art museums more than before in order to be relevant to their community. An academic journal "The International Journal of Inclusive Museum" has been published since 2008. Museums no longer limit their minds and activities inside their premises or focus on their regular visitors but reach out into communities outside museums. From the management point of view, it can be also true that it is more practical and economical to make programs utilizing existing collections than to invest into new acquisitions.

As Patrick J. Boylan (2006) points out that educational programs and activities to reach out to disadvantaged groups including racial minorities, immigrants, and people with disabilities have expanded. Indeed, it is obvious in their educational programs who their target groups are. There are a variety of programs, for example, targeted to school children, art-major students, school teachers, parents with children, adults, special interest groups, elderly people, blind people, deaf people, physically-challenged people, people with dementia and their care-takers, and company employees, among others.

In this paper, a particular target group, language learners including immigrants who are adjusting themselves to a new culture, is looked into because they represent a characteristic target group in the age of global mobility. As mobility gets higher, there will be a certain need of support for people in transition no matter if it is a desirable relocation or undesirable displacement. There are already some art museums which have reacted towards such a need and developed pioneering programs and teaching materials.

In Section 2, we pay attention to "global mobility" related to art museums as a cause of an accelerating change. In Section 3, in order to look at actual educational programs, a learning theory and a couple of methods used in art museums are introduced. Then in Section 4, from case studies, how art museums are trying to accommodate a need and make themselves available to a community of language learners is seen. As a conclusion, in Section 5, sustainable

art museum management in the age of global mobility can be suggested from the actual language educational programs.

2. Global mobility for art museums

Now, different kinds of global mobility surround art museums. Starting with mobility of people, mobility of artworks/exhibition, mobility of museums themselves, and mobility of information are considered.

2.1 Global mobility of people

Throughout the 20th century, the rapid advancement and diffusion of transportation, information, and medicine has changed and allowed a diversification of our lifestyles. Now more and more people travel globally. The World Tourism Organization predicts that the number of international tourist arrivals worldwide, 940 million in 2010, will reach 1.4 billion by 2020 and 1.8 billion by 2030 (UNWTO 2013).

Migrants are on a steady increase and counted more than 213 million in 2010 (UN DESA 2009). In OECD countries, immigration accounted for 40 % of total population growth between 2001 and 2011, and the number of asylum seekers increased by more than 20% in 2011, and 7% in 2012 (OECD 2013). Particularly highly skilled immigrants are coming to OECD countries because of selective migration policies and international labor market needs (Dumont and Lemaître 2005). International students in tertiary education increased from 2 million in 2000 to 3.6 million in 2010, backed up by a global surge of enrollment in higher education by 78% in a decade (UIS 2012).

The American Association of Museums (current American Alliance of Museums) pointed out in its report (AAM 2008) that the minority population was about 1 in 10 Americans until the 1970s. It grew to 1 in 5 in the 1980s, and is 1 in 3 now. By 2034, minorities are projected to comprise 46% of the total population. Meanwhile, from the core museum visitors today only 9% is represented by minorities in the States. This seems to be a shared tendency more or less in the world of museums globally.

We will live more mobile lives, and museums will potentially receive more visitors with multicultural backgrounds. Indeed, cultural orientation and language education are and will be in need for a variety of groups of people such as tourists, immigrants, expatriates, refugees, and students. The examples from the art museums which utilize art to engage such people in transition visually and linguistically might be projecting one aspect of an art museum function in the mobile age.

2.2 Global mobility of artworks/exhibitions

Among the art museums, loan of artworks is a regular practice, particularly for a special exhibition. One exhibition may include hundreds of lenders no matter whether private or institutional. It is possible to see the same painting at museums in Paris, New York, and Tokyo at different times in various exhibition contexts.

The other common system which makes a number of artworks mobile as a package is traveling exhibitions. Traveling exhibitions can last as long as a period of a few years being exhibited in different continents. At ICOM, International Committee for Exhibition Exchange was established in 1983 as one of its international committees. It implies a fact that many museums have taken advantage of traveling exhibitions and there are enough needs and professionals with such experience and knowledge to share and develop. There are private companies, like Art Centre Basel, who take charge of curating the contents and arranging and contracting lenders and host museums worldwide.

2.3 Global mobility of museums

Now there are prestigious art museums that are expanding their global networks of their own brand, for example, the Guggenheim Museum and the Louvre. Furthermore a new concept of "mobile museum" has been realized in various forms. "Chanel Contemporary Art Container" was a mobile museum covering 700 square meters assembled by 700 pieces sent by surface and exhibited in Hong Kong, Tokyo, and New York in 2008 (Chanel 2008).

A photographic artist, Gregory Colbert's "Nomadic Museum" was first built on a pier of New York with a stack of shipping containers instead of brick walls, then traveled to Santa Monica, Tokyo, and Mexico City (Colbert).

University Museum of Tokyo University has invented its own mobile museum system using their collection (Nishino 2012). Their collection can be packaged into modules to construct an exhibition. They have been loaned in Japan and overseas and successfully turned public spaces into temporary museums.

Such mobility of artworks/exhibitions and even museums is contributing to widening access to the diversity of artistic and cultural expressions.

2.4 Global mobility of information

Concerning the information of art and art museums, access to it has been broadened thanks to the development of technology such as publishing, broadcasting, and most recently the Internet. Particularly, the Internet allows the information in different forms, writing, photography, audio or video, to reach all around the world without any time lag. With their

visual art collection, many art museums have started digital archives. Not to mention using their homepages and social networks, sometimes they do it with a media company like Google for "Art Project" (http://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/project/art-project) or make its own video channel like "Louisiana Channel" (http://channel.louisiana.dk) by Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (Denmark), where many viewers can experience art museums even without going there. The visitors are able to become more knowledgeable about artworks or museums by the time they actually visit them. Inside the museum, they may also have an option of different media to use, for example, guided tour, audio guide, downloaded interactive software, etc.

The mobility of information also increases access to art and it can serve globally like some of the teaching materials we will see with the cases.

All these different aspects of global mobility are offering art museums to be accessible, yet also challenging to differentiate themselves from others and relevant to their own communities.

3. Education at art museums

With a background of global mobility especially of people and an interest and need for an art museum to be relevant, educational programs can target people in transition and play a critical role in a community. In order to discuss language educational programs at art museums, first we look at theories concerning why art museums can be a reasonable venue of language education for people in transition. After looking at education theories about empowerment, a couple of methods to interpret art give a more practical framework for developing such programs.

3.1 Art museum as a place of transition

Most historical art museums can be traced back to royal or religious collections as their origins. Carol Duncan (1991, 1995) elaborates on their original function and how it still works. She calls it "civilizing ritual." It is convincing to look at art museums as ceremonial monuments representing secular truth instead of religious truth to bind the community as one civic body. Supported by the idea of "liminality," a transitional stage of ritual, by anthropologist Victor Turner, she points out museums' architectural resemblance to temples, typical ritual sites, and describes the ritual which takes place through contemplation and learning, and is transformative. Particularly the Louvre is a representative earliest art museum of the modern era which opened to the public during the French Revolution not only to share art but also to impress them with a new order. Since then, public art museums have built and enhanced national identities. Art museums became the venue to affirm its people as well as others of their national pride and identity.

Andrew McClellan also writes, "(t)he moralizing and commemorative intent of those paintings and sculptures is of great importance in the history of the Louvre because they signal a desire to integrate the museum into the political welfare (McClellan 1994: 50)." It also signals "civilizing ritual" in its political aspect.

Looking at an art museum as a place of transition and an institution that assigns citizenship lies at the bottom of this paper on language educational programs at art museums today.

3.2 Empowerment by museum education theories

In museum education, empowerment and participation are key elements and provide a framework for civic education at art museums.

Critical pedagogy explains that "knowledge is always concerned with relationships between power, language, imagery, social relations and ethics (Hooper 1999: 22)." Being aware of power, authority, and exclusiveness of museums, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill puts critical pedagogy into the museum context and sees museums' potential to empower individuals and groups because it can provide learners with a "wide range of identities and human possibilities that emerge among, within and between different zones of culture, and this museums are well able to achieve (Hooper 1999: 22)."

In terms of participation, George Hein (1998) explains that constructivist learning theory requires that the learner participate actively, and their ideas need not conform to some objective truth because it allows a variety of interpretations based on learners' backgrounds and experiences. They construct their own meaning themselves. It fits well with learning with artworks because it lets them construct their own meanings individually, and enables to open up themselves in front of the works and others.

The empowerment and participation support the newcomers who are adjusting to a new society, and that's what language educational programs are aiming at. Not to mention, ability of a major language in the society can empower newcomers by giving more opportunities to participate in education or employment, which are integral to civic life.

3.3 Practical methods

The idea of open and active interpretation has been developed into some art museum education methods such as Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) and The Ways of Looking. At art museums, there have been numerous creative workshops or art historical lectures, but now a new genre, interpretive programs, is increasing according to the theories we have seen in the

previous section. It is learning about art, but also learning language through art because interpretive skills require verbalization.

VTS was developed by Abigail Housen, a cognitive psychologist, and Phlip Yenawine, former Director of Education at Modern Museum of Art, New York. "VTS uses art to teach visual literacy, thinking, and communication skills – listening and expressing oneself (Yenawine 2013)." With positive research results, now VTS is used in museums and schools in the U.S., Europe, Russia, Central Asia, and Japan, and applied to different subjects such as language art, math, social studies, and science. A question "what's going on in this picture?" guides the learners to focus on observation. The following question "what do you see that makes you say that?" leads them to evidential reasoning. This has already been used for English learners and has produced certain results including oral and writing outputs.

In London, the Tate Modern developed the method, The Ways of Looking, already created at the Tate Liverpool. Since most of art education at school focused on making art, they found a need for interpreting art. The aim was "to enrich the students own art work, and to improve the skill of interpretation necessary to negotiate our world of visual complexity and richness (Charman and Ross 2004)." They have four frameworks: a personal approach, "what do I bring?"; looking at the subject, "what is it about?" ; looking at the object, "what can I see?"; looking at the context, "relating the work to the wider world." As it shares the idea of making one's own meaning, it starts with the learners' own experiences and backgrounds.

Both methods are developed for school programs using their first language. However the participating aspect as well as empowerment by valuing personal context and ideas shared in a group is often seen in the programs targeted for mostly adult language learners.

From both educational and museum perspectives, participation is a key and museum educational programs are no longer limited to passive art historical lectures. Except for creative workshops, participants need to verbalize to participate. Usually it takes a form of group discussion because it is important for them to present their ideas to others and listen to others.

4. From case studies

To be inclusive and relevant, museums are starting a variety of programs for particular groups of people. One such group are the newcomers to the society learning its major language. Here, I focus on representative language educational programs which have published their own teaching materials because it implies their experience and prospect for long-term involvement.

One of the earliest programs is from Paul J. Getty Museum, Los Angeles. Furthermore, there was a recent publication from Harvard University Art Museums. We will also look at one city-driven project in Amsterdam.

4.1 Form of management

Since the organization of museums are varied, their language programs are managed differently. Paul J. Getty Museum is a privately funded museum and their education department staff members cooperated with local language teaching professionals to create curricula and three publications, "Language through Art: An ESL (English as a Second Language) Enrichment Curriculum" since 2002.

Harvard Art Museums, a university museum, have developed "Engaging New Americans: Preparing for US Citizenship with the Harvard Art Museums." Their education department worked closely with the local ethnic NGOs and community learning centers. The grants from National Endowment for the Arts, $75,000, made their publication possible.

City of Amsterdam, as a part of their integration policy, launched "City and Language (Stad en Taal)" in 2006 involving five city museums (two of them are art museums: modern art and photography). Each museum developed its own curriculum with the fund, € 70,000, provided by the city. Museum educators collaborated with each other and they consulted some experts including linguists and language teachers. City arranged the system with language schools and museums concerning collecting the program fees.

4.2 Participants and leaders of programs

Even though the funding and initiatives are different, the target groups are similar. Big cities like Los Angeles, Boston, and Amsterdam, all have certain numbers of immigrants. For example, "(i)n Los Angeles, … current student demographics indicate that 41 percent of students are English learners, 94 percent of whom are Spanish speaking (J. Paul Getty Museum 2012: 5)." City of Amsterdam has a population of 767,773 and 178 nationalities (City of Amsterdam 2012). These museums provide the programs mostly to local language schools where newcomers are taking language courses for the purpose of application for citizenship.

Concerning the leader or teacher of the program, it varies. Getty have held one-day workshops for language teachers to be able to make use of it themselves. While Harvard educators actually have led the programs, the recent publication made it possible for the language teachers to use it in the classrooms and at the museum. In Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum (modern art) and Foam Photography Museum, both created materials for classroom teachers to use at school and materials for museum visits led by museum educators. Because

Foam intends to make the participants feel welcomed and familiar, a museum educator can go to a school to give a pre-visit workshop and the same educator will give one at the museum.

4.3 Curricula and teaching materials of programs

The levels and contents differ from introductory to advanced, or from art-oriented to citizenship-exam preparation. In terms of the level, Getty made three curricula and publications for three levels: beginning, intermediate, intermediate/advanced (J. Paul Getty Museum, 2005, 2008, 2012). Harvard targets the high intermediate level (Murray and Williams 2012). Foam made a curriculum effective for introductory to advanced level (Foam 2008b), and Stedelijk produced one for advanced level (Stedelijk Museum 2007).

Getty is known for its extensive Western art collection. Their curricula are mostly built up on European classical paintings and American photographs. The activities are based on observation and sometimes extend to creative writing/speech. It includes short readings about the artists and focused on the art and art history. At the teachers' workshop, they demonstrated other activities like creating collage, acting as the people in the painting, and doing a weather report about a landscape painting. They also offer these teaching materials including digital images on their website (http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom_resources/curricula/index.html), and it allows teachers around the world to use them.

While Harvard uses a variety of artworks such as traditional Asian art during the museum visit, yet the publication deals with strictly American history and democracy still taking advantage of their collection. It says, the book "address(es) almost half of the questions on the citizenship test (Murray and Williams 2012:79)." Each chapter highlights a certain point of history, and presents one artwork. There are questions to lead the learners to "see" (observe), "think" (interpret), and "connect" (make connections to learners' own lives). Together with vocabulary, key concepts are listed and explained in the reading material. Quizzes and timelines are supplemented.

Sedelijk's curriculum, "Encounter art (Ontmoet kunst)," is about modern art and art museum. The textbook called "Bookazine (Stedelijk Museum 2007)" invites learners to look at their environment and take notes of personal languages about their family members, classmates, television, books, newspaper, or music. There is an activity of "acquisition proposal" and they have to chose one work and persuade the worth of it. A characteristic section is the reading material which introduces personal stories of the museum employees who used to be Dutch language learners.

Foam encourages the learners tell their own stories in "Storytelling with Foam (Verhalen vertellen met Foam)." They provide some photographs from their past exhibitions to observe and discuss. But the main activity is to write about their own stories. They choose one topic like "what I liked to do when I was a child" (Foam 2008a; 2008b). If they cannot write sentences, they can draw pictures. Finally they make a photograph and present it and tell the story to the class.

Even though each institution shows its own unique quality in the curriculum, we can recognize some elements of constructivist theory or VTS or The Ways of Looking in it. Particularly, inviting students to connect to the subject personally and getting them to actively participate are shared.

5.   Discussion and Conclusion

For museums to be relevant, one viable option is to be inclusive. It means to be able to encourage the participation of diverse people and empower them. Even though many art museums have been typical tourist sites and welcomed international visitors, with the background of increasing multidimensional global mobility, museums have to look into the potential audience in their community and beyond.

These art museums in Section 4 found their relevance in a function to facilitate newcomers to adapt to the society. Though the contents of curricula are varied, they seem to share a certain value of participation, empowerment, and art. Indeed those participants are mostly first-time visitors to the museum or any museums. Then such programs invite them into the art museums and offer language education, or civic education in a larger sense. As a result, it may lead to generation of new citizens and regular audience.

Contemporary civilizing ritual seems to take place from a rather inclusive approach. However, the power and authority are still behind art museums and it is important to be aware of that. As educational programs are opening up interpretation for visitors to participate, even the power and authority may start to change since the interpretation had been a privilege reserved for the museum or art professionals.

In these programs, most of the language learners are immigrants, yet for example, at the Getty workshop, some English teachers were teaching international students as well. As we have seen, the global mobility of people, the chance that we cross a border to move a place of living will probably increase for different reasons. Individually, we may experience more transitions. If we look at the demographic change, there is also the change on a society as a whole. "(Museums) strongly advocate the central role played by culture in adjusting to rapid

changes, thereby establishing a role for museums as mediators in the process of cultural transition (Bandarin 2010)."

In the age of global mobility, art museums can become a venue of transition. It can prospect a new relevance and contribute to global society and be able to find supporters like local communities, local governments, foundations, and most importantly future visitors, which may help keep art museum management sustainable.

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