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Storytelling in Art Museums

by

Hayley P. Trinkoff

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Museum Professions

College of Arts and Sciences

Seton Hall University

May 2015

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ABSTRACT

Storytelling, in the context of art museums, is a method of communicating the qualities and attributes of art through a story. It helps the visitor bring the work of art to life and understand something the eye cannot see, a compelling narrative. It is important for visitors to discuss art and share stories on tours and through virtual media. We learn and form our own meanings from stories. These interactions will help build more relationships within communities. It is the museum's job to take visitors on a journey and introduce them to new objects and perspectives.

This thesis addresses what storytelling is and how it is being used in museums today. It studies the essential components that lead to successful storytelling campaigns, including online initiatives. This thesis also describes how museums illustrate their mission through storytelling by showing how they bring communities together. This thesis examines the leading institutions in storytelling today: the Delaware Art Museum, Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, the Asian Art Museum, and the Monmouth Museum. These institutions are highlighted to show the current developments of storytelling.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is to demonstrate how museums are currently utilizing storytelling and to show the fundamental tools that lead to its success. Storytelling is the act of presenting a narrative through words and actions. In museums, a story can be about a visitor that embarks on a journey. The visitor will learn something about the institution and the objects around him or her. At the end of the tour, the visitor will have experienced something new and it will change how he or she feels. The museum will lead each visitor through a story that brings objects and history to life. The visitors will feel something and be moved by storytelling and want to share their own stories or experiences, want to go back to the institution again, or give a donation. By determining what elements of storytelling have been successful it will ensure it is effectively used by other museums.

There are many museum departmental areas that now use storytelling including education, membership, marketing, development, and events. This thesis will address how storytelling can be effectively implemented in museums and used as a tool to increase revenue, as well as illustrate the identity and mission of each institution by showing how it brings the community together. I will focus on The Monmouth Museum, Delaware Art Museum, Asian Art Museum and the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History as they all have been implementing successful storytelling campaigns.

The first chapter introduces storytelling, explains its history and discusses its use in a museum. The second chapter discusses the significance of storytelling using everyday items and how it provides tools for a museum to tell its own story. The third chapter describes the outcomes of two museum initiatives, an online campaign by

Delaware Art Museum and a special event by the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History. This chapter will also discuss how stories and personal experiences can be included on social media and blogging. The fourth chapter outlines how storytelling is used in educational programming at the Asian Art Museum and in special events at the Monmouth Museum. The fifth chapter discusses how storytelling is used to increase revenue from membership and crowdfunding campaigns. A concluding chapter will summarize the information presented in the previous chapters, outlining the successful practices.

CHAPTER 1: THE HISTORY OF STORYTELLING

In order to learn how storytelling can be effectively implemented in museums and used as a tool to develop relationships with visitors and increase fundraising it is essential to first study its emergence and history. Storytelling was first initiated in the Deutsches Museum during the 1930s.[1] This concept began from the idea of a working exhibit. A working exhibit allowed visitors to participate in a hands-on learning experience. Visitors are taught and shown the in-depth history of each object through stories, demonstrations, and activities. Visitors have the opportunity to ask questions and provide additional feedback. This chapter will explore the origin of storytelling in museums.

The concept of storytelling in museums is a method of communicating by means of a story, the qualities and attributes that make each individual object unique. The National Storytelling Network defines storytelling as the "interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination. Storytelling involves a two-way interaction between a storyteller and one or more listeners. The responses of the listeners influence the telling of the story. In fact, storytelling emerges from the interaction and cooperative, coordinated efforts of teller and audience."[2] The storyteller conveys stories and memories as part of the history associated with an object.

During the 1930s, the Deutsches Museum, a museum of science and technology, demonstrated the notion of storytelling through its working exhibits. Oskar von Miller founded the institution in 1903 with the mission that, "the exhibitions should give an

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[1] Saroj Ghose, "Rethinking Museums : The Emerging Face of Story-telling

[2] "What Is Storytelling?" National Storytelling Network, National Storytelling Network, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <http://www.storynet.org/resources/whatisstorytelling.html>.

encyclopedic overview of all areas of technology and exact sciences to demonstrate the

historical interaction of science, technology and industry and to illustrate the most

important stages of development by exhibiting eminent and characteristic masterpieces."[3]

With a concentration on science, the collections were comprised of machines, technical

apparatus, and scientific instruments. Each working exhibit demonstrated the natural and

technical processes of these mechanisms. Visitors were able to touch and manipulate

these machines by initiating the process with the push of a button.

An example of a recent working exhibit at the Deutsches Museum that exhibited

storytelling opened in March 2009 and was called "NanoToTouch." This initiative aimed

"to create innovative environments for the broad public to learn about and to discuss

nanoresearch by directly involving the actors of research themselves. This will be

accomplished by taking the laboratory environment and the research work out of the

enclosed academic campuses and relocating them right in the midst of the public in

science museums and science centres."[4] Nanoresearch creates an environment where the

public can learn, observe, and understand current scientific research.

The Museum stated, "in an Open Nano Lab, visitors have a unique opportunity to

gain insight into the processes and methods of a modern laboratory by observing how

doctorate and graduate students obtain data and images from their instruments, and how

these are processed or discarded. The Open Nano Lab is a place where scientists dialogue

openly with museum visitors, including school groups and youngsters. This kind of peer-

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[3] Wolf Peter Fehlhammer and Wilhelm Fuessl, "The Deutsches Museum: Idea, Realization and Objectives," *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (Jul., 2000), pp. 517-520.
[4] Morgan Meyer (2011): Researchers on display: moving the laboratory into the museum, Museum Management and Curatorship, 26:3, 261-272.

to-peer exchange can help form meaningful connections between science and everyday life, both for adult visitors and for youngsters – providing role models for the next generation of researchers."[5]

Following this further, visitors were able to learn about science by interacting with educators and researchers. Visitors had access to live presentations and displays daily. They were able to watch demonstrations, hear stories and the history behind each science experiment, and then participate in an activity. Ultimately, this enabled each visitor to participate in a discussion about the history and objects and express his or her personal experience.

Saroj Ghose, the former President of the International Council on Museums and Director General of National Council on Science Museums, believed that the thinking process museums constantly needed to consider to facilitate learning has helped the shift towards the development of storytelling. He stated, "rethinking museums would result in a plan for a paradigm shift in the concept of museums, the kind of shift that the Deutsches Museum demonstrated in the 1930s inviting visitors' participation in working exhibits."[6] The Deutsches Museum's working exhibit on science and technology demonstrated several characteristics of the storytelling used in museums today. It presented history through the use of artifacts and combined that with stories and memories of the past. As a result, museum visits felt more personal and offered a captivating experience.

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[5] "Open Nano Lab," Nanototouch: Open Nano Lab, Deutsches Museum, n.d. Web. 15 Mar. 2015. <http://www.nanototouch.eu/tools/open-nano-lab/>.
[6] Saroj Ghose, "Rethinking Museums: The Emerging Face of Story-telling Museums," University of Victory Legacy Art Galleries (n.d.): 1-4.Web. 2 Dec. 2014.
<http://www.maltwood.uvic.ca/cam/publications/other_publications/Text_of_Rethinking_Museu ms.pdf>.

The notion of storytelling today has evolved beyond the Deutsches Museum's working exhibits. In 2012, the AAM Press conducted an interview with Andy Goodman, author, consultant, and orator in the communications field, entitled "A Conversation with Andy Goodman," revealing how storytelling has evolved in museums today. Visitors can share their own stories, experiences, and emotions on how the object has impacted them. In a phone interview, Goodman stated "The person entering the museum on that visit are on their own little journey for that day. They may come in with preconceptions about art or certain subjects the museum will cover and in the course of that day they may change how they feel. They may learn new things. A walk through a museum or a experience in a museum can be a journey, can be a story for the individuals and the museum can lead them through that story and maybe take them to a new place that even they did not realize they were going."[7] Storytelling in museums today aims to impact a visitor's personal experience.

The Deutsches Museum pioneered the foundation of storytelling in museums with working exhibits. The museum demonstrated how visitor participation and interaction with the object or work of art was appealing. Similar to the NanToTouch project, visitors can hear captivating stories, ask questions, participate in demonstrations, and communicate the impact it had on them. This new transition to audience participation has established the way for storytelling to grow and expand.

Today, storytelling is used to further engage and connect the viewer to the history and memories of an object. Museums are shifting away from solely using labels to communicate this history. There are now captivating programs and online campaigns

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[7] Andy Goodman, Telephone Interview by author, 30 January 2015.

being utilized to express the history and memories of the past. Through storytelling, the history of the museum itself can be told along with the history of objects in the collection. My next section will discuss the strategic communication of organizations and how museums currently use storytelling to engage with visitors.

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Museums have been able to utilize storytelling techniques not only to engage

visitors with past history and memories, but also to illustrate their missions. I will analyze

the "Significant Objects" project that was launched by Rob Walker, journalist and co-

designer of "Significant Objects", for the annual meeting of the Center for the Future of

Museums in 2013. This project will be assessed for how it provided storytelling tools to

museums. This chapter will also discuss how storytelling can be used to tell an

organization's own story through its history and mission.

The "Significant Objects" project aimed to "explore how stories add tangible

value to the objects they are connected to." [8] When the stories connected to objects are

explored it becomes more interesting to the viewer because it helps him or her understand

new viewpoints. The stories that are linked to the objects pertain to the ownership and

medium. The ownership of an object becomes personal because it tells a narrative about

the owner and the era.

Walker stated, "Thinking about all this led to an experiment that I was involved in

with writer and editor Joshua Glenn. We set out to explore another variety of object story:

the conjectural, speculative, imagined and outright fictitious. Our hypothesis: Narrative

can be such a profound driver of meaning that even an openly false story could add value

— *measurable* value — to an object."[9] This campaign added value to everyday objects

to prove that unique stories can be told about things people encounter daily. The

campaign was launched with 100 everyday objects. Most were purchased from yard

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[8] "Center for the Future of Museums: On Objects, and Storytelling," *Center for the Future of Museums Blog*, Center for the Future of Museums, 30 Apr. 2013. Web. 04 Dec. 2014. <http://futureofmuseums.blogspot.com/2013/04/ on-objects-and-storytelling.html>.
[9] "Center for the Future of Museums."

sales, thrift shops, and flea markets. Famous writers and storytellers were hired to

develop stories for the items. The stories were all creative and personal. Once each item

had a story it was then listed on eBay to be purchased by buyers. Every listing had a

disclosure about the fabricated story. It explained how the author invented the

significance for the "Significant Objects" Project. All of the revenue from this project

was donated to nonprofit organizations.

For example, one object that was listed on eBay was a Mule Figurine and novelist

Matthew Sharp invented the story. The opening bid for this object was the original thrift

store price of one dollar. The final selling price was $14.50. The story he composed

stated:

"This is the statue of the mule that I have sculpted by my hands, but if you are the serious person about the hand-sculpted statues, also serious when you are knowing how to feel the deep meaning in Life, then you will see that is not really the statue of the mule. I will not be able to say what the statue is truly because then I will be embarrassing and you will be embarrassing too if you are the serious person about it. "Not all of the things are to be talked about in the computer." But the mule is also to show how I am having many nations that I am coming from in my family background.

I, the selling person, am Hans Mifune, Artist. What is the Artist? It is the ancient river running in the new bed. (Also I do not always feel like getting out of the bed! Because my bedroom is small!) I must sell my beautiful artworks for that is sometimes only the way that the other people of the world can see my artworks and also then sometimes I can eat some things that are not the sandwiches with sugar and lard. And even these sandwiches sometimes do not have sugar and bread on them!

I am finishing this selling with saying how the "ashes" in the sculpture is because I have some pain to have so many nations at once as the location where I am coming from in life. The pain is not because of my many birth origins "in and to itself," it is because of the humans that live "in the world of them." I live "in the world of us." I hope that you live "also in the world of us."

You will have also the penny in the photograph of the mule for the same price that you bid the most to the statue of the mule plus shipping and handling."[10]

This storytelling project was successful because, as Walker said, "the speculative form of story we'd set out to explore offered a different form of engagement. Imagination led to participation; boundaries got blurred, and our objects turned out not to be an end point, but a starting point. As a result I've paid closer attention to other experiments, by museums and others, to open up the notion of objects as communicative prompts that invite audience involvement."[11] Although the narratives for some objects were fabricated, people enjoyed participating and sharing their creative tales. People are captivated by stories even if they were invented for everyday objects. It was a starting point for demonstrating how powerful stories are and how people react to them. This initiative proved that visitors are interested in learning the narrative behind objects. They enjoyed engaging with the objects because it enabled them to use their imaginations and make new connections on their own.

This sparked interest from museums because people were sharing unique, personal stories with an audience. Individuals are learning about memories and history of the past. This further connects to museums because Walker worked with Laura Beiles from the Education Department at the Museum of Modern Art in New York to organize an event called "The Language of Objects" on November 2, 2011.

The event "The Language of Objects" was based on Walker's project. It invited innovative writers and storytellers to present imaginative stories and videos about everyday objects. The event displayed a wide range of interesting design objects that had

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[10] Matthew Sharpe, "Mule Figurine by Matthew Sharpe," *Significant Objects*, 8 July 2009. Web. 22 Mar. 2015. <http://significantobjects.com/2009/07/08/mule-figurine/>.
[11] "Center for the Future of Museums."

never before been exhibited in a museum display. The main goal was to transform the

objects through stories and foster conversation among visitors about the story-as-object

and object-as-story relationship it conveyed. For example, one of the participants, the

author, illustrator, and publisher Leanne Shapton, chose to talk about an installation by

artist Alex Metcalf titled "Tree Listening." For this installation, the artist implanted

microphones in the interior of trees and then hung headphones for visitors to put on. This

enabled them to hear the internal sounds of the tree. During the event, Shapton narrated

the experience she had with this installation. She described the noises she heard and

expressed how this installation moved her and visualized to the audience what she felt.

This translation at the event was her personal twist and story about an object people

encounter everyday, a tree.[12]

Walker stated that the event "Language of Objects" was, "a program that, we

hope, uses imagination to enlighten. The successful narrative, whether expressed via

words or a physical object or some thing built of bits, is the narrative that simultaneously

entertains its audience and subtly changes the way that audience sees the world. This is

the difference between information and story: both are motivated by what might be worth

knowing right now—but only one is crafted to be worth remembering."[13] This conveyed

a good use of storytelling because it directly exposed the audience to new objects and

their stories and encouraged them to participate.

Storytelling in museums does not only have to be about objects of the past. It can

include modern, readymade objects. Using everyday objects can get more museum

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[12] "Modern Poets: The Language of Objects," MoMALive, The Museum of Modern Art, Nov. 2011. Web. 25 Mar. 2015. <http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/events/13187>.
[13] Rob Walker, "The Language of Objects," Inside/Out, The Museum of Modern Art, 21 Oct. 2011. Web. 17 Dec. 2014. <http://www.moma.org/explore/inside_out/2011/10/21/the-language-of-objects>.

visitors involved. Ultimately the "Language of Objects" Project invited, "poets and

performers to bring the literary tradition to the Museum's collection. They read historical

works and their own work that reflects on modern and contemporary art."[14] A

supplemental discussion and symposium fostered this interaction by enabling reviews,

critiques, and conversation about the objects and stories to be heard among others.

      A museum can utilize this unique, contemporary approach to storytelling to tell

and illustrate its mission and how it brings the community together. For instance, to

explain how museums can tell stories about its impact to the community, Goodman stated

during a phone interview,

"I spoke to a museum in Orlando, Florida and one of their mission statements or mission
goals was to bring the community together, that all members of the community, rich and
poor, black and white, long term residents and new arrivals could find something to enjoy
and could find community in the museum itself. That's a lovely goal and a noble goal,
certainly worthy and also the kind of thing you see on the website. We bring the
community together to share, etc. and it can seem kind of abstract and not very real. And
so I challenged them through the course of the workshop to tell a story that proves that.
And a woman told a story that one evening they invited members of the community to
come in to wander through the museum and to find the painting that they most identified
with and then be prepared to tell what it was and why. As they stopped by each painting
someone could come forward and say it was the painting I identified with and let me tell
you why. And the moment that she will never forget was they arrived in front of one
painting and two people raised their hands to say that they identified with it. One of them
was sort of your typical older, blue haired patron of the arts as you would think of the
museum goer, and the other person was young with spikey hair and piercings, black
leathered clothing, etc. and they couldn't be more different. And they end up on the same
painting of why they both liked it and you had that moment where this is what we mean
where people in the community as different as can be can find something they can
identify with and that unites them. I'll never forget that story because there was an
example of the mission of the museum coming to life in a real way that you can see and
can remember and feel."[15]

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[14] "Events," MoMA, The Museum of Modern Art, n.d. Web. 17 Dec. 2014.
<http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/events/13187>.
[15] Andy Goodman, Telephone Interview by author, 30 January 2015.

Therefore, museums need to learn and understand what constitutes a good story and what kind of stories should be told so their audiences remember them. Use of storytelling for institutions can change minds and conversations in a positive way, leading to more visitors. If compelling, it will drive individuals to their website for more information.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Goodman stated in an interview with the AAM press that museums need to "tell their *own* story: their impact, their influence, how they inspire and why they matter to communities everywhere." [16] Every institution has a noteworthy story to communicate that will leave a lasting memory with its visitors. According to Goodman, there are rules to storytelling that museums should know when building their story. Museums need to make sure the story has clear and concise meaning because visitors will easily lose focus. It should be about real museum visitors and experiences so it fosters an emotional response. They need to be told in a manner that is easy for the visitor to follow.[17] By following these key rules, museums will be able to communicate to their visitors better and leave a lasting impact.

Goodman stated, "Very often the display of an artist's work will follow a narrative, and I think museums are very thoughtful about that. They may not be as thoughtful about their own narrative about where they came from, what they're all about and where they're going."[18] Museums can tell the story of how they were developed, but many may not know how to craft their story. Goodman's rules can act as a helpful guide to museums.

Goodman emphasized that, "what makes our museum so unique and so valuable is that we bring together communities that maybe would not mix anywhere else and

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[16] Andy Goodman, 55.
[17] Andy Goodman, 56.
[18] Andy Goodman, 57.

cross-pollinate in ways that wouldn't happen anywhere else. And that's a valuable service. It's a worthy claim. I'll say to them, if that's the case, you should be able to tell me a story of one day in your museum where I can see that happening."[19] Goodman's steps to a good story will help museums deliver their message more effectively. People will remember qualitative stories over quantitative data. Not everything is measurable and understood by statistics. Stories are essential to museums because they are more powerful and can persuade minds, especially when it comes to making a donation.

Goodman mentioned, "our outlook on life and past experiences ensure that we will create a plausible story to go along with the picture."[20] People create stories to go along with different encounters and experiences. Museums can use this to their advantage by telling how they were founded and developed. Large institutions and small institutions can all implement storytelling regardless of the budget. As seen through the "Significant Objects" campaign, a compelling story can be created from everyday items.

Museums can use storytelling to engage audiences by telling captivating narratives through social networking mediums. My next section will discuss how the Delaware Art Museum tells compelling stories from its online project "The Art of Storytelling." It will incorporate how the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History uses the social networking medium of blogs to tell stories from visitors' experiences.

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[19] Andy Goodman, 57.
[20] Andy Goodman, 60.

CHAPTER 3: SOCIAL NETWORKING

Museums can use storytelling to engage with visitors through social networking mediums. They can communicate more easily online through a branded website in the form of blogging. It is easier to manage communication online because it delivers quicker responses and people can more easily share stories. I will examine the Delaware Art Museum's online campaign, which engages the viewer with its online collection while encouraging participation. This project demonstrates a virtual interaction and experience with the art by allowing people to discuss art or share stories through a virtual medium. I will also discuss how the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History executed storytelling through a Pop Up Museum model and encouraged visitors to blog feedback or comment about his or her visits and experiences on its website.

The Delaware Art Museum launched an online project for storytelling called "The Art of Storytelling." In 2006, the Museum collaborated with Night Kitchen Interactive, a distinguished design firm known for its expertise in the arts and culture field, for the design of the project. It was made possible in part by funds from both the Wings Foundation and the Pollyanna Foundation. This project was presented with a web address that is separate from the Museum's to construct its own identity, but still connect to all of the collections it has on display.

It was launched with the intention of motivating visitors to create his or her own story after observing works on display at the Museum. Objects on display inspired a majority of the stories, while others encouraged viewers to share their own personal experiences. It can also be used in the classroom to educate students on various writing and storytelling categories through provided lesson plans. Students were encouraged to

participate in this initiative before and after their on-site visit. The project was promoted

through local papers and radio broadcasts to help spread the word.

Dennis Lawson, the Public Relations Manager at the Delaware Art Museum,

stated in a press release that,

"the "Art of Storytelling" first began in 2006, when the Delaware Art Museum invited
storytellers of all ages to create stories about works in the Museum's collection. Children
submitted over 300 original tales, in addition to adults and artists. The 20 winning stories
were recorded and compiled into an audio podcast, and visitors can listen to this podcast
by borrowing an iPod from the Museum's Front Desk. Two computer stations were
added to the Museum to allow users to create works of art and write stories about them.
Now, with the launch of "The Art of Storytelling" website, anyone with access to the
Internet can enjoy the posted stories and create their own." [21]

Visitors can still read and listen to the original 20 stories that initiated the project, but

they are now invited to go online to create their own unique story and share it with

friends and peers from the online Art of Storytelling community to view.

The project was presented in three parts online: experience a story, tell a story,

and picture a story. These parts could be experienced all together or individually. The

feature "experience a story" allowed the viewer to read and listen to unique stories that

were inspired by works of art in the Museum, both permanent and newly acquired. The

element "tell a story" presented viewers with 28 chosen works of art from one of the

Museum's collection. Once they were inspired by one work of art, they typed or recorded

their own story or impression. Each written story was distributed to friends via email or

submitted to the Museum for consideration to be included on "The Art of Storytelling"

website. Participants were able to submit their story into a call for entries for a chance to

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[21] Dennis Lawson, "Press Release," Delaware Art Museum Presents Website for the Art of
Storytelling (2008): n. pag. 21 May 2008. Web. 15 Mar. 2015.
<http://www.delart.org/pdf/about/pressroom/archived_PR/2008/20080521_dampr_art_storytellin
g_web.pdf>.

be featured on the site and a Museum podcast. For example, a featured story in the website's online gallery of stories was by a participant named Emerson Marine. Marine was inspired by a landscape painting and titled the story "Marooned." The beginning excerpt of the story stated, "All hope is lost. I have been marooned on an island not even I can recognize. The sky seems to be burnt permanently gray, and the sand is always hot. I have been here not long, and I am already hungry."[22]

Finally, the aspect "picture a story" guided the viewer to illustrate his or her own unique narrative by selecting a genre and then creating a picture to accompany the narrative. For instance, the genres available to choose from were comedy, mystery, fantasy, drama, western, horror, fairytale, and adventure. Once a genre was selected, viewers began designing their picture by adding characters and props. All elements were resized and customized by the viewer to fit the picture he or she imagined. Finally, the viewer was prompted to write the narrative for their picture.

On the campaign's website, the Museum stated, "the Art of Storytelling" website was created by The Delaware Art Museum to allow online visitors to engage with our collections in a unique and creative way. Beyond experiencing our rich variety of art works in the traditional museum setting, this online project – "the Art of Storytelling" - allows visitors to create their own pictures and stories inspired by works in the museum. These visitor creations can then be shared, both as an email to a friend and published to this site as an entry for all to experience. In addition to creating pictures and writing stories, visitors with microphones enabled on their computers can also record their stories for others to hear. Please explore the site, hear and see what others have created and

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[22] "The Art Of Storytelling: Featured Stories," Delaware Art Museum, 2008. Web. 06 Aug. 2014. <http://www.artofstorytelling.org/2008/01/15/marooned-story-by-emerson-marine>.

submit your own story on "the Art of Storytelling" website."[23] Viewers actively engaged and interacted with one another by sharing his or her story on the website. This campaign has created a dynamic community for storytelling.

Through "the Art of Storytelling," the Delaware Art Museum fostered analytical thinking regarding art and writing. It developed a new online audience for people to inspire one another with stories. Matthew Fisher, from Night Kitchen Interactive, stated, "some visitors have found the contributed content of other visitors inspirational, both enriching their museum experience and emboldening them to contribute in their own voices. On the other hand, other visitors have found the contributions of their fellow visitors outside their expectations, inappropriate, or even, simply, uninteresting. Additionally, a number of the programs launched by museums to encourage and enable visitors to contribute on-line have received lackluster participation."[24] This particular initiative received positive feedback from the ongoing visitor interaction and engagement. In less than six weeks the Museum received over 350 storytelling submissions.

Since the project had a separate web address, people who visited the site were looking for the storytelling initiative and to interact. If it was presented on the Delaware Art Museum's actual website, many people would be more interested in factual information from the Museum and not from other visitors.

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[23] "The Art Of Storytelling: Picture A Story," *The Art Of Storytelling: Picture A Story*, Delaware Art Museum, 2008. Web. 06 Aug. 2014. <http://www.artofstorytelling.org/picture-a-story>.
[24] M. Fisher, et al., The Art of Storytelling: Enriching Art Museum Exhibits and Education through Visitor Narratives, in J. Trant and D. Bearman (eds.). *Museums and the Web 2008: Proceedings*, Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics. Published March 31, 2008. Consulted December 28, 2014. http://www.archimuse.com/mw2008/papers/fisher/fisher.html.

A type of project involving viewer participation could end up with more visitors than active contributors. If promoted properly, more people will visit the site if they can obtain an emotional impact or value from peer contributions. Some initiatives required login in credentials to enter the site, which turned many people away. For instance, the Speed Museum launched an audience participation endeavor for the artist Flavia Da Rin that required an SMS code to be entered before the visitor was granted access to the project's content. Visitors had to enter a number to obtain the particular code word, which for some people may not seem worthwhile. This could be seen as a flaw or barrier to the project. Although the code word added suspense to the project, it affected the creative input people could actively provide. Others may believe that only certain people or elitists may be able to contribute creatively. Thus, museums need to ensure that any visitor participation is simple and easy to access. Simple and easy access will inspire more visitor participation, which "The Art of Storytelling" does. This is an important factor because many people may feel more comfortable reading other responses first before providing their own.

The exposure to art and stories fostered life-long learning because it becomes part of the visitors'' everyday lives. Participant Virginia Hertzenberg stated, "after creating my own story to accompany a wonderful art work, I felt connected to the museum, like I'd left my own footprint by engaging in the creative process."[25] People were able to make connections to art more easily and responded to what they were looking at through observations and evaluations.

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[25] M. Fisher, et al., The Art of Storytelling: Enriching Art Museum Exhibits and Education through Visitor Narratives, in J. Trant and D. Bearman (eds.). *Museums and the Web 2008: Proceedings*, Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics. Published March 31, 2008. Consulted December 28, 2014. http://www.archimuse.com/mw2008/papers/fisher/fisher.html.

"The Art of Storytelling" aimed to continue to get all visitors interacting and engaging with the site. To go along with the online campaign, there were tools within the galleries that each person explored. These tools consisted of interactive kiosks that connected to the current gallery and objects on display. All three elements from the online site, picture a story, tell a story, and experience a story, correlated to the kiosks in the Museum. Visitors were guided on how to create and generate pictures and written stories. They typed stories onto the kiosks based on what they saw around them. Each kiosk had one of "the Art of Storytelling" exercises. This was targeted to all ages, especially children ages eight to twelve. The main objective from this was to make a connection between visual narrative and storytelling. These kiosks and online project brought more excitement and enjoyment to the art for some visitors.

To determine how successful the project was after it launched, the Museum emailed a survey to each participant, asking them if participation in the project altered the way they perceived art and if their new outlook on art has caused them to visit and support more art museums. Fifty percent of participants responded to the survey. The results suggested that participating in the project had a positive impact on the contributors' lives. Many expressed interest in long-term participation with the campaign, and, they felt more connected to the art on display and the Museum from the online project. One participant stated, "it made me realize how visual input can influence creative output, and how enjoying art is not a passive, but active pursuit."[26] Storytelling has enabled these participants to feel more involved and in touch with art. Museum

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[26] M. Fisher, et al., The Art of Storytelling: Enriching Art Museum Exhibits and Education through Visitor Narratives, in J. Trant and D. Bearman (eds.). *Museums and the Web 2008: Proceedings*, Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics. Published March 31, 2008. Consulted December 28, 2014. http://www.archimuse.com/mw2008/papers/fisher/fisher.html

attendance for this group of participants was not assessed before the project, but out of

the fifty percent that responded to the survey, ninety-four percent of them have visited an

art museum since they first participated. Many of the participants view art museums

differently because they now search for stories within the artwork and try to make

personal connections. The project was able to impact and educate visitors outside of the

museum.

"The Art of Storytelling" was successful both online and in the Museum. Fisher

concluded that, "the use of programs like "the Art of Storytelling" seems to meet art

museum goals of developing observation skills, critical thinking, and personal meaning

making." [27] More people were inspired to visit a museum after contributing to the project

and as a result began looking for stories and more meaning within art. People found value

in reading other stories before providing their own. It facilitated life-long learning skills

for both storytelling and writing. People were exposed to new genres of writing and art,

especially students who participated before taking a tour of the Museum. Overall, this

initiative inspired many people to create and share stories among others.

Museums have also explored blogging to foster more visitor participation and

engagement. Blogging has been used through museum websites to create a forum where

people can talk about their own personal experiences and stories. The Santa Cruz

Museum of Art of History has used blogging and Pop Up Museums to promote

storytelling initiatives.

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[27] M. Fisher, et al., The Art of Storytelling: Enriching Art Museum Exhibits and Education through Visitor Narratives, in J. Trant and D. Bearman (eds.). *Museums and the Web 2008: Proceedings*, Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics. Published March 31, 2008. Consulted December 28, 2014. http://www.archimuse.com/mw2008/papers/fisher/fisher.html

The Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, or MAH, is known as a participatory museum. A participatory museum focuses on the dynamic interests and needs of its audience to foster more visitor engagement. Nina Simon, the Executive Director of the MAH, stated, "we tried with every event to meet a clearly-expressed demand or interest in the community. People wanted a fire festival, so we did a fire festival. People love crafting, so we created Radical Craft Night. Sometimes the interests were overt, and sometimes they were something we sensed in the wind. But we tried never to create an event without partners or audiences who were invested in what we were making."[28] To increase audience engagement and visitation, the museum began experimenting by providing events the community wanted to attend.

The engagement seen through these events paved the foundation for storytelling. Storytelling was used for visitors and families, but also school groups. Similar to how the Delaware Art Museum had storytelling lesson plans for school groups, the MAH has also incorporated storytelling into school tours. School groups, from kindergarten to second grade, learned about the community through storytelling. Students learned about the community by sharing stories, handling artifacts, and listening to the stories the artifacts possessed.

The major area that displays storytelling regularly is its unique Pop Up Museums. The goal of the Pop Up Museums, which began in 2012, is to "connect more deeply to museum artifacts. At Pop Up Museums, you can share your own artifacts and stories and

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[28] Nina Simon, "Museum 2.0: How We Doubled Attendance in a Year: One More Post about How Events Changed Our Attendance," Museum 2.0: How We Doubled Attendance in a Year: One More Post about How Events Changed Our Attendance, Nina Simon, 18 July 2012. Web. 15 Mar. 2015. <http://museumtwo.blogspot.com/2012/07/how-we-doubled-attendance-in-year-one.html>.

learn more about the unique objects that our community holds dear."[29] Visitors who attend Pop Up Museums actively engage with their own narrative while learning the history of artifacts. Simon stated, "the Pop Up Museum is a traveling museum created by the people who show up to participate. Popping up in unorthodox spaces, like libraries or Laundromats, Pop Up Museums focus on bringing people together and creating conversational spaces through stories, art, and objects."[30]

Michelle Delcarlo created the concept of Pop Up Museums in Washington. Delcarlo stated, "First, a theme is chosen. For example, the pilot test's theme was "Handmade." From this theme, you are invited to bring something to share that is meaningful to you, kind of like show and tell. Next, when you arrive, you can write a label to give others an idea of why your object is meaningful to you. Using the "Handmade" example, you could bring in a picture you drew or a quilt your grandma made you. At the end of the day, everyone takes their items home with them. It's that simple! The museum exists for a few hours on one day, and its location will travel in order to include an array of communities."[31] The MAH used this idea and transformed it into a two-year initiative and began to spread it throughout the community.

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[29] "Pop Up Museum," The Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center, Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center, 2015. Web. 15 Mar. 2015. <http://www.santacruzmah.org/blog/popupmuseum/>.

[30] Nina Simon, "Introducing the Pop Up Museum to Santa Cruz County," The Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center," Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center, 20 Sept. 2012. Web. 15 Mar. 2015. <http://www.santacruzmah.org/2012/popupmuseum/>.

[31] Nina Simon, "Introducing the Pop Up Museum to Santa Cruz County," The Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center," Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center, 20 Sept. 2012. Web. 15 Mar. 2015. <http://www.santacruzmah.org/2012/popupmuseum/>.

The Pop Up Museum project partners with local schools and organizations. A grant from the James Irvine Foundation helped the Museum develop a Pop Up Museum Organizer's Kit. This kit was developed so people could create their own museum environment on their own. People could still share stories and learn about artifacts outside the museum setting. People in the community could share more narratives with one another while having a set of guidelines for newcomers.

This is one initiative that turned into a unique, successful way of sharing the collection MAH houses while still evoking the participatory environment it strives for. Each participant is encouraged to bring his or her own object to share. For instance, the first Pop Up Museum had twelve participants and partnered with the Resource Center for Nonviolence. It focused on the theme of objects of conflict. Simon wrote in a blog, "an object of conflict could be something as common as a remote control or as powerful as military Dog Tags. So come and bring an object down that evening, and stay tuned as we develop this project and the museums begin to pop!"[32] People participated and were able to socialize and share narratives regarding history. Handwritten labels by each visitor were used to accompany each object on display. Pop Up events were free to the public and all were welcomed. People were driven to participate and bring an object to show.

Each Pop Up Museum is blogged about before and after on the Museum's website. People are welcome to comment and share their experiences on the website's blog. This is another way people continue to interact after the event. People are constantly sharing narratives and experiences with one another. The MAH fosters

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[32] Nina Simon, "Introducing the Pop Up Museum to Santa Cruz County," The Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center," Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center, 20 Sept. 2012. Web. 15 Mar. 2015.
<http://www.santacruzmah.org/2012/popupmuseum/>.

participation, interaction, and storytelling among its visitors. The Museum constantly encourages viewers to comment on blog and share their opinion and interests. Everyone's opinion and narrative is important and brings significant value to the participatory environment.

As Pop Up Museums became more popular and known throughout the community, more people began to participate even if they did not bring an object of their own with them. Instead, visitors improvise with common objects just so they could share a narrative and socialize. An employee at the MAH, Nora Grant, stated, "this spontaneous thinking demonstrates how the Pop Up Museum encourages people to rethink the stuff and space around them. What happens when you take a dollar out of a wallet and put it in a frame? The dollar becomes objectified and aestheticized. It becomes a symbolic object suggestive of a story. The Pop Up Museum can transform the ordinary into the extraordinary in a casual and even spontaneous fashion. A common workspace becomes a playful gallery. It is also true that people inspire people. Because other members were participating, those who didn't bring objects wanted to join in on the fun."[33] People are motivated by peers and are inspired to contribute stories of their own. This storytelling initiative is very successful and powerful. People enjoy the value of listening to others' stories and experiences in the museum setting.

The Delaware Art Museum and the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History both encouraged visitor participation and engagement with their storytelling initiatives. The Delaware Art Museum's website, "the Art of Storytelling," enabled visitors to share their

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[33] Nora Grant, "Taking Risks with a Private Pop Up Museum," The Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center," Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center, 31 Jan. 2013. Web. 15 Mar. 2015. <http://www.santacruzmah.org/2012/popupmuseum/>.

stories and become more engaged with the Museum's collection. Visitor attendance from those participants increased because they felt more connected with art. The Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History encouraged visitor participation through Pop Up Museums. The community was able to share stories and personal objects. The community was brought together to share the history of objects and personal experiences. Participants also engaged with one another on the Museum's blog to further discuss their experience and stories. These two initiatives demonstrate the impact storytelling has on visitor attendance and participation.

My next section will discuss how museums have been incorporating storytelling into everyday events. I will study how the Monmouth Museum includes storytelling in daily programs and artist talks. I will also discuss the storytelling resources the Asian Art Museum provides and how it is made accessible to the public.

CHAPTER 4: STORYTELLING IN PROGRAMMING

Small institutions have been incorporating storytelling into daily events to increase attendance and foster more engagement from its visitors. For any storytelling program to be successful, it needs to be properly advertised and promoted throughout the community. Once it is promoted, it can then begin to grow and prosper especially because of word of mouth. One small institution that incorporates storytelling into daily events is the Monmouth Museum. The Monmouth Museum promotes narrative from artists through gallery talks. Additionally, it is important to offer storytelling resources online. By offering materials online, people, especially teachers, can implement storytelling tactics outside of the museum. This section will analyze the resources the Asian Art Museum provides for storytelling programs to all ages.

One program that is unique to the Monmouth Museum was its New Jersey Emerging Artists Series. The series is located in the Nilson Gallery and every year it houses six annual solo exhibitions. New, upcoming artists from New Jersey showcase their artwork to the public and entire community, which presents diversity, talent, and creativity. Each solo artist provides insightful gallery talks to the public to discuss his or her technique, medium, and inspiration.

As mentioned in previous chapters, when asked how museums implement storytelling Goodman stated, "I think that tour guides can do storytelling and the entire arrangement of an exhibit can be a narrative with a beginning, middle, and end, and often they will do that, you can have the early works of this artist, here are the works in the middle of his life, here are his late works here so you can have just in the way the exhibit

is set up a narrative."[34] The Monmouth Museum's gallery talks resemble the narrative Goodman quoted. Each artist tells the narrative of his or her life with the structure of a beginning, middle, and end.

As a result, visitors actively ask questions and engage with the artists. Many people are encouraged to share their stories when communicating with the artist. It facilitates the flow of dialogue and inspires more people to socialize. The Monmouth Museum can also be considered as a participatory institution. Aside from gallery talks, every aspect of the hands-on experience it offers incorporates narrative and personal experiences and feedback.

One example of a successful storytelling gallery talk was for the exhibition "All Aboard! Railroads and the Historic Landscapes They Travel." This exhibition was on display from November 16, 2014 until January 4, 2015. Guest curator Michael Froio led the gallery talk on December 12, 2014.

Froio stated in press materials that, "railroads played a vital role in the development of the United States, providing the vehicle to feed the industrial revolution, the means to bridge the east and west coasts and the ability to move the American people, goods and raw materials over a network that greatly shaped the American landscape. "All Aboard!" is a celebration of railroads in the American landscape detailing some of the most transformative times in railroad history. This visually stunning and informative historical exhibition features the work of eight renowned photographers, including David Plowden, Jim Shaughnessy (both on loan from The Center for Railroad Photography and Art), Ron Wright, Mel Patrick, Scott Lothes, John Sanderson, Travis Dewitz and Guest

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[34] Andy Goodman, Telephone Interview by author, 30 January 2015.

Curator Michael Froio. Also featured are vintage travel and advertising posters (on loan

from the Private Collection of Bennett Levin)."[35]

During the gallery talk, Froio shared the story and experiences of each of the eight

photographers featured in the exhibition. He led an open discussion with the visitors and

encouraged them to share their own experiences and narratives with railroads and

photography. The audience was able to make an emotional connection with each of the

eight photographers' truly inspiring stories and leave with added value and significance

from the talk.

These narrative opportunities aimed to increase curiosity and education amongst

individuals of all ages. All of the wings and galleries within the Museum provided

storytelling opportunities and programming. For instance, the volunteer agency United

Way of Monmouth County believed,

"each of the programs at the Museum is designed with the goal of increasing curiosity
and learning. Since many of the visitors are children who come with their families and
schools, the Museum has created two children's exhibitions - the Wonder Wing for
children age 6 and under, and The Becker Children's Wing for children ages 7 – 12.
These exhibitions are designed to make learning fun by employing hands-on,
participatory activities, which engage and focus young visitors. The Wonder Wing
provides interactive learning in an Under-The-Sea adventure. The Becker Children's
Wing offers programming geared to school curriculum. Some exhibitions present
fascinating looks at local history, flora and fauna. Others, like Blast Off! A Space
Journey features an air-inflated planetarium."[36]

Another program that utilizes storytelling is Museum Member Mornings. Member

Mornings is a perk of membership that only adult members are invited to once a month.

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[35] Michael Froio, "All Aboard!" Monmouth Museum, Monmouth Museum, Nov. 2014. Web. 15
Mar. 2015. <http://monmouthmuseum.org/in-the-galleries/main-gallery/>.
[36] "Volunteer," *Agency*. United Way of Monmouth County, 2008. Web. 3 Jan. 2015.
<http://volunteer.truist.com/uwomc-10/org/10339896452.html>.

These events are led by a docent and are focused on the current art exhibitions. Members are given a tour and then invited to participate in a discussion and activity afterwards. Helen Brown, Membership Coordinator at the Museum, stated, "members look forward to member mornings, they're so enjoyable and a nice way to start the week."[37] Members are inspired to socialize and share their own stories. After learning about the current artists technique and inspiration, members are seated in a circle around a table. The narratives from the artwork on display are used as inspiration before they produce their own artwork. As they create their own work of art, related to the theme of the exhibition, visitors share stories and express how the exhibition inspired them. Members interact with one another and are encouraged to bring a friend.

One popular Member Monday Morning was during June 2014 when well-known artist Mare Akana was invited to perform a demo for the members. Brown said, "Mare Akana, award winning demo artist captivated us as she hand-built in clay using a variety of techniques. Members observed Mare's process as she shared her passion and inspirations for her sculptural creations."[38] Helen mentioned that members gathered around Mare Akana as she conducted her demo.

The artist maintained open communication with the members during the entire demo. Akana shared her inspirations, techniques, and personal narrative with the visitors. Members began to share stories about their own experiences with art and clay. Others felt comfortable in sharing personal stories of what the demo reminded them of. Members were engaged and inspired to participate in the open dialogue.

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[37] Helen Brown, Personal Interview by author, Monmouth Museum, Lincroft, NJ, December 2014.

[38] Helen Brown, Personal Interview by author, Monmouth Museum, Lincroft, NJ, December 2014.

Throughout the demo, Akana taught the members her technique with hands-on objects. Akana brought objects and tools to pass around to each guest. As she passed around her materials, she shared a narrative and the history of each one. People learned about art materials through touch and story. For example, one object was a clay block that she used to obtain texture on a majority of her sculptures. She shared the history of artists using blocks similar to that one for texture rubbings as well as her own personal experience and narrative with it. This storytelling initiative demonstrated life-long learning because guests found value in the demonstration, since many left with new skills and knowledge. Brown mentioned members were leaving the event saying, "Thank you Monmouth Museum, count me in for a dose of inspiration!"[39]

With that in mind, a special Member Morning was held for the 2014 Thanksgiving holiday. According to Brown, "Docent Maureen Starace gave an historic overview of the one and only Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. Guests viewed photos and memorabilia of the parades past."[40] The docent taught visitors the history of the parade through narrative. She brought in official parade memorabilia from her family, since they have been involved with it for decades. All materials were primary resources from the parade itself. Visitors enjoyed learning the history of it through actual narrative. People engaged with the docent, who facilitated an open forum for dialogue.

A children's program that utilized storytelling was the MMKIDS StarLab Planetarium Show. Visitors were invited to, "explore the night sky during the day! In this 20 minute Docent-led StarLab presentation, kids will become Junior Astronomers as they

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[39] Helen Brown, Personal Interview by author, Monmouth Museum, Lincroft, NJ, December 2014.
[40] Helen Brown, Personal Interview by author, Monmouth Museum, Lincroft, NJ, December 2014.

learn how to locate constellations in the night sky while hearing the stories and

mythology behind them."[41] Docents shared the story and history of constellations with

each visitor. Visitors were encouraged to share narratives of their own experience with

constellations or even looking up at the night sky. There were two to three planetarium

shows a day and each show communicated a different constellation narrative. The stories

that combined with the history made the concepts easier for children to grasp. This

enabled them to leave the show knowing some essential information.

       Furthermore, the Asian Art Museum, located in San Francisco, California, utilized

storytelling through its online resources it provided visitors. Its website contains its own

section for storytelling called "Explore Resources." Within this page, visitors can find a

plethora of storytelling initiatives. These initiatives consist of webinars, tours, lessons,

and case studies.[42] Visitors can easily find resources based on their interests because they

are differentiated by grade level, resource type, duration, and description. These varying

storytelling methods are very resourceful for visitors because it provides tools for people

to implement on their own outside the Asian Art Museum. Many people will still be able

to experience the history, collections, and stories this museum possesses even if they are

unable to visit in person.

       For instance, the resource titled "Artful Storytelling (lesson)" provides teachers

ways to incorporate storytelling into the classroom. The description states, "students gain

an appreciation and understanding of art and culture, and build language skills by

reading; developing scripts; making choices about gesture, voice, and expression; and

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[41] "MMKIDS," Monmouth Museum, Monmouth Museum, 2014. Web. 28 Jan. 2015.
<http://monmouthmuseum.org/>.
[42] "Explore Resources," Asian Art Museum, Asian Art Museum, 2012. Web. 28 Jan. 2015.
<http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/storytelling>.

performing traditional stories alongside art objects in the Asian Art Museum's collection galleries." [43] This lesson is one class session over the course of a week and is intended for both middle school and high school students. It is an easy way for teachers to utilize storytelling techniques to teach history and it takes the place of an actual field trip to the Museum for a tour. Their museum educators and professionals made these resources available for public use.

The lesson is extremely beneficial because it meets Common Core Curriculum standards. Academically, it covers Visual and Performing Arts, World Languages, and English and Language Arts. The Asian Art Museum incorporates the story behind artifacts and objects from its own collections on display. Teachers are provided the necessary skills and knowledge to successfully execute storytelling in the classroom because they can easily download the lesson plan. The lesson guides teachers step by step through the activities. For example, the lesson plan for "Artful Storytelling" states,

 "**Materials:** Internet access; pencils and paper; props to enhance storytelling

Procedure:
1. Explore education.asianart.org or go to your local library to gather traditional stories from the culture you are studying.
2. Students read traditional stories, note the key events, and write a summary of a story in their own words.
   a. Divide the story (in English) into 4 or 5 sections.
   b. Have students form groups of 4 or 5. Each student of each group gets a section of the story.
   c. Students read their sections, and the group organizes the sections into their proper sequence.
   d. Students write a summary of the story in their own words
   e. Optional: Students translate the story into Mandarin or another language.
3. Groups choose an art object from education.asianart.org that relates to their story.
4. Each student should then write one sentence describing the artwork and one sentence explaining how the artwork relates to the story.

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[43] "Explore Resources," Asian Art Museum, Asian Art Museum, 2012. Web. 28 Jan. 2015. <http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/lesson-or-activity/artful-storytelling-lesson >.

5. Each student should then practice telling their stories to their peers. (Before they do so, emphasize the importance of storytellers using descriptive language, relevant gestures, and eye contact to make a connection with their audience.)
6. Each student gathers feedback and revise their stories and performance.
7. Each student performs his/her stories at the Asian Art Museum or another local museum, to a partner class, or to other students in their own class.

Tips for Teaching and Differentiating Instruction
- Provide key words and phrases in the target language.
- Conduct class discussions to break down and identify meanings of key phrases.
- Share stories many times to make them clear, exciting, and easy to understand when presented.
- Provide different versions of each story in the target language. Compare and contrast the versions."[44]

Another intuitive storytelling resource is titled "The Art of Storytelling: Ramayana Character Studies." It contains both a lesson and activity for students in elementary school, middle school, and high school. Through this sixty minute activity, "students will: 1.) discuss storytelling, a tradition that is passed down and preserved orally; 2.) examine how storytellers use voice, movement, drama, and music to tell a story; 3.) examine the Indonesian storytelling tradition using rod puppets (wayang golek). 4.) read a summary of the Ramayana or a scene from this Hindu epic; 5.) analyze a character from the Ramayana."[45] Thus, it uses storytelling to teach beliefs, rituals and celebrations in Southeast Asia. The academic subjects it concentrates on are Visual and Performing Arts, History and Social Science, World Religions, and English and Language Arts.

This online resource is an excellent example of how storytelling is developed and applied by museums. It demonstrates the power of storytelling and the history it

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[44] "Explore Resources," Asian Art Museum, Asian Art Museum, 2012. Web. 28 Jan. 2015. <http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/lesson-or-activity/artful-storytelling-lesson >.
[45] "Explore Resources," Asian Art Museum, Asian Art Museum, 2012. Web. 28 Jan. 2015. <http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/storytelling>.

encompasses. This specific resource includes all of the supplemental materials that are

needed in the classroom. Teachers are able to download PowerPoint presentations and all

of the necessary worksheets, maps, videos and activities from the Asian Art Museum's

website directly. The lesson plan is mapped out so anyone can follow easily. More

background information and videos are provided at the end of the lesson plan to reinforce

some concepts and history. Teaching history through narrative can now easily be

implemented into anyone's home or classroom. The storytelling procedure is listed

below:

Procedure:

1. Using the slides and accompanying descriptions (see "Downloads above) and
Background Information (see "Related Resources" below),
and discuss with your students the following questions:
  - How is the Indonesian storytelling tradition similar to or different from the
    storytelling traditions that you are familiar with?
  - How does the puppet master (dalang) signal to his audience that a particular type
    of character is on stage (voice inflection, movement, the level of respect one
    character shows toward another, and artistic features)?
  - Describe some of the puppets shown in the slides. Ask students to guess which
    character type each puppet belongs to.
2. Locate Indonesia on a map. Introduce the Indonesian tradition of rod puppet theater
(wayang golek). Using the slides and accompanying descriptions, review the discussion
questions (above) with your students.
3. Have students read a summary of the Ramayana or focus on a scene from this Hindu
epic. Ask students to choose a character from the story.
4. Have students Indonesian Rod Puppets (below) to give them a sense of how music,
voice, and puppet manipulation come together during a performance.
5. Have students do an analysis of their chosen characters using the Character Study
Worksheet.
6. Next, have students write a scene from the Ramayana from the perspective of their
chosen characters.
7. Finally, have students act out their scenes to their classmates. Students may wish to
collaborate with one another on their performances. [46]

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[46] "Explore Resources," Asian Art Museum, Asian Art Museum, 2012. Web. 28 Jan. 2015.
<http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/storytelling>.

Storytelling can be implemented into small institutions, the classroom, or the comfort of one's home. A small institution, such as the Monmouth Museum, included narrative into daily programs and events for all ages. Local artists delivered storytelling through regular gallery talks at the Museum. Visitors were invited to hear artists' stories and inspirations at these talks. An open forum of narrative and communication was created between the visitor and speaker. People learned about the history of the exhibition, technique, and materials and visitors were encouraged to share his or her story, opinion, and experience. Programs, such as Member Monday Mornings and planetarium shows, all featured storytelling through the narrative that was used to teach history.

Other institutions market storytelling initiatives that can be executed from outside the museum setting in places such as a classroom or one's home. The Asian Art Museum provided visitors a plethora of storytelling resources online. People downloaded and viewed storytelling webinars, tours, lectures, activities, and lesson plans. Each resource contained easy to use guidelines and any supplemental materials. The target age group, academic subjects covered, and objectives were all outlined. The power of storytelling can now be implemented anywhere with no problem at all. For those that cannot visit a museum, they can still learn from the museum educators and collections. The Asian Art Museum taught the visitors history from narrative through its artifacts, objects, and collections. Storytelling was advertised to all ages on its website through the section exploring resources and each one specified the target group.

When a museum successfully implements storytelling into its daily programs, events, or online resources it can increase the monetary amount of philanthropic

contributions from individuals, foundations, and organizations. Storytelling can be used

in crowdfunding campaigns to not only increase funds, but also connect with each visitor

emotionally. My next section will analyze how storytelling can increase revenue through

crowdfunding, grant proposals, and raise the number of membership renewals. The

Monmouth Museum and Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation will both be discussed.

CHAPTER 5: STORYTELLING IN FUNDRAISING

The use of storytelling in museums directly engages the visitor and begins to leave an emotional impact and value. This emotional connection can lead to an increase in philanthropic monies. I will describe how storytelling can generate an increase in charitable gifts. In this chapter, storytelling will be examined as it pertains to crowdfunding and grant proposals. Crowdfunding campaigns will be assessed for how they convey storytelling. The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation will be assessed for its recent crowddfunding campaign that helps give back to countless nonprofit organizations. I will also study how the Monmouth Museum incorporates storytelling into its grant proposals and membership renewals.

Crowdfunding is defined by the Miriam Webster Dictionary as, "the practice of soliciting financial contributions from a large number of people especially from the online community."[47] Crowdfunding platforms have facilitated a do-it-your self-phase for fundraising. There are currently over 500 crowdfunding platforms that are estimated to raise over five billion dollars for organizations' services.[48] Platforms such as Kickstarter, Indiegogo, and GiveForward make it very easy to create and launch a crowdfunding campaign. This way of fundraising has become very successful and continues to grow because each campaign can provide help to an organization in need. It does not take much time to create a campaign and it can immediately launch upon completion of the initial setup.

After finding the platform that best suits the project in need of funding, a museum

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[47] "Crowdfunding," Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2015. Web. 28 Jan. 2015. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/crowdfunding>.
[48] "Crowdfunding for Charitable Causes," BBB Wise Giving Alliance Journal, Summer 2013: 1-9.

needs to communicate its unique story on why it needs the money. Crowdfunding enables museums to express their compelling narratives with passion. It has become very successful because institutions can make emotional connections to a large audience. Institutions can further their mission and effectively communicate their stories.[49]

Organizations will be able to tell their stories and leave an emotional impact on their audience. The crowdfunding campaign should be accompanied by an image or video to attract a larger audience. It is also suggested that each organization has a social media account with Facebook to link to each project. Organizations may also incorporate other branding elements, such as logos. Providing a picture, video, or social media account brings more assurance to the donor that the project is legitimate. Today, people prefer to learn about an organization through their website or social media page. The picture essentially validates the campaign and familiarizes more people with the organization.[50]

Through this method, museums will be able to tell their stories and create an emotional impact on their audience. A museum's story should be accompanied by an image or video to attract a larger audience. The greater the emotional impact, the more people will likely give and continue to give. Compelling narratives on crowdfunding campaigns can lead to more people investing in the museum financially.

In today's society, it is easier to manage relations and communicate with visitors through social networking. Social networking, as seen from crowdfunding, is a very important medium to utilize when trying to reach the most people. People today are very

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[49] "Crowdfunding for Charitable Causes," BBB Wise Giving Alliance Journal, Summer 2013: 1-9. Print.

[50] "Crowdfunding for Charitable Causes," BBB Wise Giving Alliance Journal, Summer 2013: 1-9. Print.

social and go online to sites, such as Facebook, to find out essential information

regarding museums and organizations.

During 2013, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation launched a campaign to help

give back to nonprofits worldwide. This campaign was called Jersey-Give Back Guide.

According to Dodge,

> "In 2013, we launched the Jersey Give-Back Guide, a new project meant to help New Jerseyans learn about some of the most effective and inspiring nonprofits across the state, and encourage the public to make year-end donations to these organizations. It is not uncommon to read year-end giving guides in national media – the New York Times and elsewhere. We wanted to do a New Jersey version, to celebrate the incredible passion and commitment of New Jersey nonprofits, and to make it as easy as possible to make a donation with just a few clicks."[51]

Visitors were able to read the narrative of several nonprofits and then easily made a

donation to the ones that interested them. It was given its own website and was promoted

on social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter. For example, the stories were told

in "a campaign prior to #GivingTuesday called #ArtsMatterYA where supporters were

invited to share videos of why the arts matter to them. Another nonprofit featured the

stories of people helped by the organization followed by a link to the Guide."[52] One

featured nonprofit that helps museums is Monmouth Arts and its narrative pitch was,

> "If you live in Monmouth County, or you have ever enjoyed arts and culture events while visiting the Jersey Shore, chances are you can thank Monmouth Arts for that. Their mission is simple: Enrich the community by inspiring and fostering the arts. That means supporting arts education, encouraging collaboration, giving grants to nonprofit arts organizations and community groups with arts programs, and supporting events — lots of them. Monmouth Arts funds more than 2,500 high-quality, inexpensive or free concerts,

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[51] "Generating Generosity: A Philanthropic Experiment," Geraldine R Dodge Foundation, Dodge, 19 Nov. 2014. Web. 28 Jan. 2015. <http://blog.grdodge.org/2014/02/05/generating-generosity-a-philanthropic-experiment/>.

[52] "Generating Generosity: A Philanthropic Experiment," Geraldine R Dodge Foundation, Dodge, 19 Nov. 2014. Web. 28 March 2015. <http://blog.grdodge.org/2015/03/08/jersey-give-back-guide-by-the-numbers/>.

films, dance and theater productions, musicals, creative writing programs, art exhibitions, and arts education programs for over 700,000 children and adults throughout the region each year. Monmouth Arts is where community and arts connect. Support Monmouth Arts to keep the arts alive at the Jersey Shore."[53]

Initially, the guide began by featuring fifteen nonprofit organizations. With the

help from Cast Iron Coding and NJ.com the guide was created with a unique design and

was presented on its curated Kickstarter page. Dodge stated that the results from the

primitive guide,

"were inspiring. We want to thank you and share some of the success of this year's Give Back-Guide: The total raised by the Give Back Guide was $28,564. With Dodge underwriting the cost of the Guide, every penny of the $28,564 went directly to the organizations. Almost 500 donations were made through the Give Back Guide. New Jersey Conservation Foundation raised the most through the Guide with a total of $7,405. The Institute of Music for Children had the most donors: 73. Dodge offered a $1,000 challenge grant to each of the organizations able to get 50 donations through the Guide. Seven of the 15 organizations met the match. Many organizations reported a large number of new donors, which was a primary goal of the Give-Back Guide. CASA of Morris and Sussex Counties reported 35 new donors, City Green reported 19 new donors, and Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey had a donor from as far as Arizona."[54]

The results portrayed the power of narrative and an individual's desire to help out

nonprofits and watch them succeed. The local content director of NJ.com, Tony Dearing,

stated, "this is a unique foundation/media sponsorship, and we're delighted to help spread

the word to support some of New Jersey's best nonprofits." [55] The spread of the stories

and services of the selected nonprofits helped New Jersey be a better place for residents.

[53] "The Jersey Give-Back Guide," Jersey Give-Back Guide, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, n.d. Web. 28 Jan. 2015. <https://jerseygivebackguide.org/#MA>.

[54] "Generating Generosity: A Philanthropic Experiment," Geraldine R Dodge Foundation, Dodge, 19 Nov. 2014. Web. 28 Jan. 2015. <http://blog.grdodge.org/2014/02/05/generating-generosity-a-philanthropic-experiment/>.

[55] S.P. Sullivan, NJ Advance Media for NJ.com, "Generosity Generator: Dodge Foundation Launches Innovative Holiday Giving Guide," New Jersey On-Line LLC, 20 Nov. 2013. Web. 28 Jan. 2015.
<http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2013/11/generosity_generator_dodge_foundation_njcom_team_up_on_holiday_charity_guide.html>.

The chosen nonprofits were innovative, collaborative, and actively engaged with their community.

Fifteen organizations were able to spread their story, mission, and goals to more people than before. To ensure the guide would continue in 2014, Dodge used the results for ways to improve the project. Dodge stated, "for us, this Guide was an experiment. Could we help the public better understand how nonprofits contribute to our quality of life? Could we help inspire our philanthropic colleagues to think about ways that they can support the sector beyond grants – or inspire them to join us for the 2014 Guide? Could we raise enough money to justify the $30,000 we spent building the Guide." [56] Dodge wanted to use this feedback to make changes for the next holiday season.

The Jersey-Give Back Guide turned into, "a seasonal project led by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, produced in partnership with the Victoria Foundation, the Community Foundation of New Jersey, and the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers. It is designed to encourage everyone to give back and get involved with New Jersey nonprofit organizations whether you have $5 or $500 to give." [57] This project was separated into categories of community, arts, environment, and Newark. Art Museums in New Jersey shared their story and showed potential donors what great service and programs they provided the community. These narratives brought new donors to the institution, left a lasting impact, and formed long-term relationships.

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[56] "Generating Generosity: A Philanthropic Experiment," Geraldine R Dodge Foundation, Dodge, 19 Nov. 2014. Web. 28 Jan. 2015. <http://blog.grdodge.org/2014/02/05/generating-generosity-a-philanthropic-experiment/>.

[57] "The Jersey Give-Back Guide," Jersey Give-Back Guide, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, n.d. Web. 28 Jan. 2015. <https://jerseygivebackguide.org/#generator--description>.

Additionally, storytelling can be used in grant proposals and membership renewal letters. The Monmouth Museum incorporated narrative into all grant proposal and membership letters. This helped the reader visualize how the Museum's services and programs benefited the community. In regards to grants, it was important to show how the Museum made a difference through narrative because it developed an emotional impact. People don't want to just hear about a mission statement, but they want to hear how the service actually impacted someone.

The Museum found it important to keep a file of quotes and visitor feedback to incorporate into the grant documents. Visitor experiences were invaluable resources that were essential to securing grants. This kind of supplemental material demonstrated how the museum was affecting the community and how it was fulfilling its mission statement. Incorporating narrative enabled the Museum to receive and maintain grants from: the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Discover Jersey Arts, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, and the New Jersey Cultural Trust.

For example, in a past grant application with the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation the Museum used storytelling to illustrate how the community was engaged. Some responses from surveys were incorporated. This demonstrated the experience and stories visitors shared. Narrative from art demos and collaborations demonstrated how the Museum was working with others in the community to form partners. One example that was given by the Marketing Director, Kathy Kamatani, was an art demo that was done with the Collective Art Tank in September 2014. She mentioned how visitors had very positive feedback regarding their experience and how it fostered life-long learning. Many

of them agreed to share their comments for use by the Public Relations Department.[58] Kamatani mentioned how quotes throughout the year during programs were great narrative for this section of the grant. Using these quotes and feedback really enabled foundations to see how much of the impact the Museum had on the community. It illustrated to readers a sense of what happened over the course of the year and enabled them to the feel the journey visitors experienced during his or her visit.

The Membership Coordinator, Helen Brown, integrated narrative into membership renewal letters. The narrative helped members remember what the Museum had to offer and the immeasurable effect they had on the arts. It showed how the museum was fulfilling its promise to the community for the service it provided and the life-long learning it fostered. For example, Brown revealed that a story was used to promote each current exhibition in her letter. She said, "It is important to give each member a glimpse into each exhibition to spark interest in visiting the museum if they hadn't in a while."[59] The emotional connection will increase the number of renewals and visitor attendance.

For example, an exhibition titled "The Neo Outsider: The New Outsider Artist" was on display at the Museum during Summer 2014. For summer membership renewals, Brown incorporated stories about the artists in the shows, stories about how children were inspired to look at art, and stories about how much fun families had at the opening reception and self-guided tours. The Neo exhibition concentrated on artists that did not have formal art training or chose different career paths before turning to art. Everyone in the family, all ages, was able to relate to the art on display. This was one exhibition where narrative was utilized and engaged the visitors from every aspect.

[58] Kathy Kamatani, Personal Interview by author, Monmouth Museum, Lincroft, NJ, December 2014.
[59] Helen Brown, Personal Interview by author, Monmouth Museum, Lincroft, NJ, August 2014.

Furthermore, storytelling was used in post-event thank you letters. A recent event at the Museum was a Wine Club tasting. The Wine Club met quarterly and was limited to fifty people per event. The Marketing Director, Kathy Kamatani, mentioned that it was necessary to incorporate narrative into the letters to make them more personal and applicable. The narrative of what occurred at the event enabled the guest to remember what good time he or she had. It also began to form a relationship with the Museum.

Storytelling has been used by museums to form more relationships and personal connections with visitors. Storytelling is very important when exploring crowdfunding campaigns. The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation launched a holiday guide to help nonprofits receive more funding. This project was promoted and advertised through social media networks. The Monmouth Museum has incorporated storytelling into grant proposals, post event letters, and membership renewals. This narrative enables the visitor to visualize the services and programs the museum promises to the community. My next section will summarize the successful practices of storytelling in museums and why it is essential to museum professions.

CONCLUSION

Storytelling has become a powerful tool that has helped museums reach new

audiences and increase revenue when used effectively. Every aspect of the museum can

benefit from storytelling. Museums have been able to incorporate storytelling into

educational programming, membership, crowdfunding, special events, and marketing. By

analyzing significant institutions, this thesis has identified successful initiatives and

campaigns for strategic communication of storytelling.

It has demonstrated that is important to engage and communicate with visitors

both onsite and online. It is important to blog and use social media to connect with

visitors and continue to build relationships within the community. As museums learn

more about storytelling, they will develop more techniques and initiatives to engage

visitors with. Museums will build better relationships with the community as visitors

begin to share their own personal stories, experiences, and meaning they form during

visits.

Museums can easily implement storytelling into their daily operations, even with

limited resources. Storytelling is still a relevantly new topic and concept in museums so

there is still much to learn and understand. In a phone interview with Andy Goodman for

this thesis, he stated, "you know we communicate in story, we think in story, we are

moved by story. So if you tell stories about how your museum brings the community

together, I think the audience will feel something, they will be moved by it, and when

you feel something in your body, this is just human nature, it leaves markers in your brain

and you remember. And if you remember, the chances are you will actually act on it at

some point. So I think storytelling is a very powerful and amazing tool for museums or

for any organization and I encourage that wherever I go."[60] The future and growth of storytelling is limitless, but this thesis demonstrates how effective and powerful it is right now.

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[60] Andy Goodman, Telephone Interview by author, 30 Jan. 2015.

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