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Claim, Consume, Curate: Placing Value on Functional Art

Heather Rose Sheets Hanlon
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

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CLAIM, CONSUME, CURATE: PLACING VALUE ON FUNCTIONAL ART

by

Heather Rose Sheets Hanlon

A Thesis Submitted in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts
in Art History

at

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

May 2020

ABSTRACT

CLAIM, CONSUME, CURATE: PLACING VALUE ON FUNCTIONAL ART

by

Heather Rose Sheets Hanlon

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2020
Under the Supervision of Professor K.L.H. Wells of Art History

This paper is the written portion of the thesis requirements for University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Art History, Museums and Curatorial program. It corresponds with the other component, a museum-style exhibition in the Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery, as its catalog. The catalog and exhibition together address the factors of change in decorative art reception since the modern era and how museum institutions can continue to broaden the conditioned meanings of such art in a dynamic, responsive way.

These changes and suggestions are illustrated through objects and their display in the exhibition vignettes “The Home,” “The Boutique,” “The Museum,” and “Storing Stuff.” These settings appear as separate spaces but exist together as one exhibition. As participants walk through the exhibition, they notice items of overlap showing how functions of identity, consumption, and aesthetic all bleed together in the life of just one object. Differing styles of object labels in each section also speak to the variety of functions a decorative art object can have.

The storage section concludes the exhibition by showing that conditioned value trickles all the way down into how people store their surplus at home, at a store, and in a museum. Spoons in a drawer organizer are ready for daily use in the kitchen. Spoons twist-tied in cardboard packaging are ready to be shipped, displayed, or sold. Spoons in Gaylord Archival boxes are prepped for preservation. Which function do you value most? Which spoon seems the most valuable? Why do you think you understand it that way?

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To
my family.
You are all puzzle pieces that,
when put together,
equals me.

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INTRODUCTION

The status of functional art objects in modern Western culture is embedded in traditions revolving around identity-creation of the individual. The value of people's belongings is deemed personal which is why possessions are frequently hard to part with and, at the same time, hard to sell at a garage sale. Personal attachment gives value. This personal identification with an object can represent why a person chooses to purchase it in the first place. Object choices help people visually express their belonging to certain groups. The desire to be a part of a certain group and the objects that allowed it speak to a larger collective memory of race, class, gender, geography, and religion. Functional art objects hold these cultural expressions, and, when curated as fine art, can act in conversation about artistic expressions of the inner life not only of an artist, but of consumers as well.

The push for more intellectual weight to be put on functional art objects has grown in the modern era but is not labeled or treated consistently. For example, in this text, the label "functional art" will be the primary moniker that refers to art objects that were intentionally designed and also serve another purpose that is not aesthetic, like a food vessel, seating, or clothing the body. Functional art is chosen for this text over the more popular label of decorative art because the word decorative is more generally associated with embellishment while this exhibition would rather highlight objects as essential and aesthetic. These objects aren't just adornments or decorations, they are cultural signifiers, tools of survival, and companions of life. Their function is crucial to their design and aesthetic.

The graduate thesis exhibition that corresponds with this paper shares the same name (*Claim, Consume, Curate: Placing Value on Functional Art*). For the requirement of the Art History, Museum Studies graduate program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, students on the "curatorial track" must complete an original exhibition with catalog that addresses a problem or makes an argument about an art historical topic. This project addresses the factors of change in decorative art reception during the modern era and how museum institutions can continue to broaden the subjective meanings of such art in a dynamic, responsive way.

These changes and suggestions are illustrated through objects and their display in the exhibition vignettes to address how functional art objects are conditioned to have different values. Vignettes include “The Home,” “The Boutique,” “The Museum,” and “Storing Stuff.” These settings appear to be separate spaces but exist together as one exhibition. As visitor-participants walk through the exhibition, they will notice items of overlap. A spoon, for example, is in each section, showing how functions of identity, consumption, and aesthetic all bleed together in the life of just one object. The storage section concludes the exhibition (and also includes spoons) by showing that conditioned value trickles all the way down into how people store their surplus at home, at a store, and in a museum. Storage also reflects the different kinds of functions these objects serve. Spoons in a drawer organizer are ready for daily use in the kitchen. Spoons twist-tied in cardboard packaging are ready to be shipped, displayed, or sold. Spoons in Gaylord Archival boxes suspended in foam are prepped for preservation, adept object handling, and pristine future displays. Which function do you value most? Which spoon seems the most valuable? Why do you think you understand it that way?

The life of an object in how it is made, used, stored, and passed on tells the private and public stories of the lives of people. Participants of this exhibition, all experienced actors in this process, are encouraged to engage further by using the “Interactive Station.” Here, paper guides are available for sketching a memorable functional object from one’s past, and pushpins are available to display it as part of *Claim, Consume, Curate*. Responses to other posts are encouraged with guides as well. Ultimately, participants reflect on their own notions of functional art objects and how those notions relate to power, a sense of place, and value. We are all clothed in our own exhibition, eating from our own displays, and spending from our own beliefs.

WHAT IS FINE ART?:

The Nomenclature of Functional Art

The Southdale Center was the first shopping mall to be fully enclosed in a suburb of Minneapolis, Edina, in 1956 (fig. 1.1). The Southdale Center was titled a ‘shopping center’ not a ‘selling center’ and this shift in language meant that it should offer engagement like other public institutions (i.e. parks and museums) “including community buildings, landscaping, art, and programmed activities.”¹ The inclusion of art in this list meant that it also needed to follow display precedents of public institutions like museums. The distinction made between carefully curated art on display (paintings and sculptures) versus functional objects (clothes and dishes) lining the inventory of stores is a strong example of the modern distinction between fine art and functional art items.



Figure 1.1. *Shoppers in interior Garden Court w/ stairway to upper level in Southdale Regional Shopping Center, first indoor mall (1956). Photography by Grey Villet; from Life Magazine Photo Archive.*

This distinction between fine art and functional art is still being played out in the twenty-first century. Functional art still struggles for definition between its many monikers including decorative art, applied art, industrial art, design, craft, ornamental arts, and many other divergent terms within these

categories (like fiber arts, ceramics, furniture). With so many categories, it is easy to classify functional art objects haphazardly. What can make them difficult to define is the complexity behind their creation and their multiple functions. The complexity comes from the fact that an item can be designed by an artist but created by an assembly line, a machine, or studio workers. Furthermore, the multiple uses of functional art objects can also make their most salient purpose hard to pin down: is it primarily a tool or primarily aesthetic?

In the context of consumption, miscellaneous classifications are challenging: How does a person know when they are purchasing or making art? Does the display of The Southdale Center tell them? Does the material matter? Or the training of the artist? The answer to the question of how one understands something as art relies on how the object has been conditioned through human-to-object relationships. How people relate to an object give it a sense of place. Relationships contextualize the object and whether it should be considered art.

An example of this conditioning in *Claim, Consume, Curate* includes jewelry. Earrings, rings, brooches, and necklaces are displayed individually with plush backings in “The Boutique” vignette. They are secured in vitrines and lit intentionally to show that the jewelry has high value, justifying a sale at the high cost that is typical in such carefully curated, atmospheric shops. This curation mirrors what is done in museums to imply significance and highlight the individual importance of each piece. This differs from jewelry in a family heirloom jewelry box in the home, which unites items as parts of a personal collection with cultural connection. It also differs from jewelry display at box stores that mount pieces on two-dimensional plastic squares and hang them in layers, unsecured, on swiveling racks next to t-shirts and packs of gum. This projects lower value both as a commodity and as an object of cultural significance. Whether any of those projections—high cost, low cost, art, family culture—are true or not, the jewelry’s story is told by its human-given surroundings. Although the jewelry may be beautiful or valuable or functional, its context determines its primary nomenclature of decorative art, fine art, product, or tool.

A distinction between high and low art especially affects women and women's art.² Typically, arts made in the public sphere with techniques taught formally in institutions (like painting) are more often considered high or fine art in modern society. Arts made in the domestic sphere using techniques learned in the home (like embroidery) are more often considered to be craft, unprofessional, or low art. Historically, these were gendered spheres and the hierarchy then attributed to high and low art becomes gendered as well: Men as professionals with higher status in the public sphere and women whose focus is functional service with lower status in the domestic sphere.³ Furthermore, the consumption of functional art is also more closely associated with women since the domestic sphere is where many functional art objects have their first life.

Inconsistency in labeling also especially affects cultures not typically included in the Western cannon. Art objects from indigenous cultures around the world, and from Asia, Africa, and South America are often displayed as functional art in period rooms or with anthropological focuses. While these can be meaningful displays, it becomes problematic when functional art is conflated with a lower status because it does not solely exist as fine art in all settings. This relegates the art of entire groups of artists in fibers, ceramics, jewelry, and furniture to something less important than a painting because it also provides a service. Issues of over-representing non-Western and indigenous ethnicities in 'functional art' exhibitions and under-representing them in 'fine art' exhibitions are intertwined with the issues of value on functional art. *Claim, Consume, Curate: Placing Value on Functional Art* serves as a point of conversation surrounding these overlaps.

WHO ARE YOUR OBJECTS?:

Personal Objects as Moral Checkpoints

The association of the home as a personal space that expresses one's own inner character is a relatively new idea, developed over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It developed in conjunction with an increased standard of living, industrialization, and imperialism. These changes led to more individual power for people in the West to choose an object among many that expressed their identity or who they wanted to be. It also led to more pressure to make the right choice and be the right kind of person in this 'democratic' world.

People in the United States coped with these evolutions in industry and conquest by prioritizing efficiency. At the first Great Exhibition (World's Fair) in London, 1851, the United States chose to show off their large-scale standardization of objects which happened largely in response to the need for interchangeable firearm parts. In 1824, John Hancock Hall started the revolution that "every similar part of every gun [would be] so much alike that it will suit every gun, so that if a thousand guns were taken apart and the links thrown together promiscuously on a heap, they may be taken promiscuously from the heap and will come right."⁴ This sort of 'promiscuity,' this dissection of objects as just a series of parts, led to ownership of objects becoming more promiscuous in attachment: there were more objects, more choices, and there was more normalization around replacement. It is also a perfect example of how a country's manufacturing techniques became ingrained in the way citizens perceived their belongings. American products at the Great Exhibition of 1851 were no-nonsense, multifunctional pieces, and Americans were thus using the standard of "quantity and utility for wider sections of the population" as a judge for other country's displays of industry.⁵

Standardized production of mass duplicates changed consumption throughout North America and Europe in cultural ways as well. New styles of labor and machinery allowed works with culturally expressive, imitative, and appropriative aesthetics to give people a sense of cultural exploration. Some people desired goods that looked like they were from other cultures to show their sense of adventure or

cultured attitudes. Other Westerners saw owning such goods as a symbol of dominance. Others rejected goods from other cultures in favor of objects that appeared to be more culturally unified with their country or colony. However, these thought processes contain major flaws. The advent of armchair tourism through magazines like *Harper's Weekly* and the growing ability to attain culturally different objects did not express an authentic cultural exchange (fig. 2.1). Instead, it formed a one-sided conversation had between people and their objects that conflated object interpretation to personhood interpretation. This substitution helped inform a national consciousness of an 'us' and a 'them' in America and Europe which created a useful 'other' around which to unify and imperialize. Through possessing actual goods from other countries and through possessing stereotyped imitations, Western people internalized stereotypes of what people from other places were like.

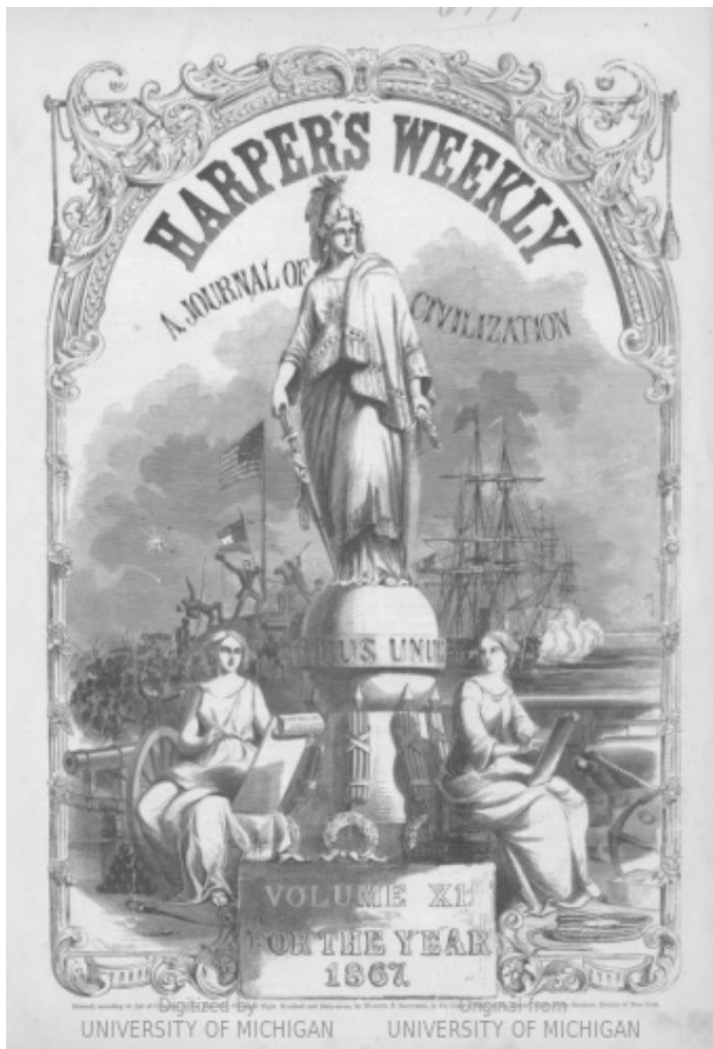


Figure 2.1. The cover page of *Harper's Weekly*, June 15, 1867, depicting glory in Western travel, expansion, and dominance. Unknown Artist, *Harper's Weekly Cover*, 15 June 1867. Journal Cover, Sheet size 16" x 10.75". Image from the University of Michigan.

A good example of this is the concept of *japonisme*, referring to the late nineteenth century Western obsession of Japanese art and design products.⁶ Not only was it fashionable for affluent people to display “connections with Asia prominently,” it also became associated with moral high ground.⁷ In a time where machines ruled and rushing was incessant, Japanese objects were collected as “an enlightened realm that was able to integrate ancient traditions in the course of modernization” which helped American connoisseurs “make sense of their modern existence.”⁸ An issue with this kind of authority of cultural experience is that it makes Japanese culture Western-centric. Japanese cultural objects are viewed as either an antiquation or as a response to the ‘pre-existing’ West. Consuming culture predominantly through objects and images is dangerous because, unlike people, they cannot be a part of the conversation about who they are and why.

The *japonisme Tea Set* in “The Museum” section of *Claim, Consume Curate* offers an example of how Japanese wares were discovered by the West and copied. It was first accessioned to the gallery as a tea set made by the Kinkozan Company, a Japanese manufacturer well known in Japan for their satsuma ware and well known internationally after exhibiting products at the Paris and Chicago World’s Fairs in 1867 and 1893 respectively. The wares became desired widely by Western audiences and were copied by companies throughout the world. Art connoisseurs, however, described these imitations and the Kinkozan designs reacting to the new market as overwrought, going to “extremes in attempting to appeal to Western tastes.”⁹ It was copied so widely, and imitations were offered at such a low cost that even adaptations from the Kinkozan Company no longer held interest in the West.

Many factors of the exhibited set point toward it being an imitation rather than an original Kinkozan product (fig. 2.2, 2.3). Seasonal motifs include spring cherry blossoms, fall plum edging with a chrysanthemum inside, and winter pine. Although these are accurate Japanese motifs, this assemblage would not have been put altogether on the same set in Japan since different plate sets would be used in the different seasons. This kind of comprehensive set of matching teapot, saucer, and cup is also very culturally Western.¹⁰ The material and production indicate that it was made outside of Japan for the

Western market. Its rough interiors show that the quality and texture of the porcelain differed significantly from artisans in Asia who were more experienced with the material. The rather clumsy combination of machine and hand work, like the machine-produced scallops around the bottom edges and the bumpy interior showing evidence of smoothing by hand, reveals notes on the process of trying to make sufficiently imitative works. The busy use of gold paint and naturalistic elements also speak to the exoticism and simplicity that Western people projected on Japanese culture. This tea set not only acts as a stellar example of *japonisme*, but also as a good example of the complications of functional art. Classifying an artist, a culture, and a narrative to which it belongs is complex.



Figure 2.2. Unknown Company, *Japonisme Saucer* (mid-late 19th Century). Saucer: Dia. 5", Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian. Photograph courtesy of the UWM Art Collection.



Figure 2.3. Note the bird finial in the nest of the lid and the bamboo-style handles and spout. Unknown Company, *Japonisme Cup; Saucer; and Teapot with Lid*; (mid-late 19th Century). Cup: h. 2.625" w. 3.5" l. 2.75", Saucer: Dia. 5", Teapot: h. 4.5" w. 6.25" l. 4.5". Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian. Photograph courtesy of the UWM Art Collection.

Δ

The utter efficiency of industrialization, mass production, prefabrication, and consumer agency were met with concerns of aesthetic quality, craftsmanship, and the ‘honesty’ of a thing. Design influencers argued about the role of an object, whether it should be simple and universal, ornamental and retrospective, or rational in expressing the truth of its materials. Once personal preference shopping became the norm, the argument of an object being imbued with morality was helpful to businesses and connoisseurs trying to influence what they argued was good taste in society. This concept of competitive taste-making amidst growing consumer choices evolved what it meant to decorate for personal identity. Objects no longer had to be local or handmade. Objects no longer had to express nearby craft and materials. The objects chosen to furnish the home could now offer the expression of political leanings, growing middle-class wealth, and a wide range of aesthetic preferences.

In 1853, John Ruskin, a scholarly advocate for ornamentation in design, split ornament into three parts: servile, constitutional, and revolutionary. Servile ornament was made in ancient cultures by servants or enslaved people whose standards were ensured by turning man into a tool. Constitutional ornament of medieval times, he argued, was based on the choice to either make a tool or a man of each person.¹¹ Substituting a tool for a man meant allowing imperfection but also embracing honesty in who is constructing the object: imperfect beings. This imperfection eventually became revolutionary ornament when it symbolized the revolution that people could no longer be enslaved to create a falsely perfect object. Imperfection, the kind of labor done by those not tortured and separated from their families, was then a symbol of what makes a crafted thing morally superior. Ornament offered expression and without it, how would man know he is free?

The Arts and Crafts Movement of nineteenth century Europe and North America also begged for the human touch but with utilitarian restrictions. This movement recoiled from the impersonal manufacturing of modern furnishings but also from the ornament of the past. While utility was king and ornament was secondary in Arts and Crafts, utility was not to supersede craftsmanship. Instead, the

craftsmanship of artists over machines would ensure the quality, personality, and utility of an appealing furnishing. An example of a popular technique that expressed this proper combination was frame and panel construction, especially since it could be easily done with materials available during wartime.¹² Eventually, the definition of quality objects in the Arts and Crafts movement morphed into William Morris' maxim that objects be "solid and well made in workmanship, and in design should have nothing about it that is not easily defensible, no monstrosities or extravagances."¹³ The 'correct' thing doesn't have to be old, but it does have to use techniques that are vetted by history. The 'correct' thing is admirable because it is honest to its function, its materials, and, most of all, its construction.

The Bauhaus School of Design (Germany 1919-1933) had a different area of focus; 'rationality' of a thing even over 'honesty'. The Bauhaus argued that the design of an object should be derived from "its natural functions and relationships."¹⁴ An effectively planned object was a beautiful and honest one. This truth to function was to prove the advancement of the human being. Function design, according to the Bauhaus, helps people have order and unity in a chaotic world. This world view was generally shared by the Dutch De Stijl Movement (1917-1931) that argued for one universal design style. With a globalizing world birthed from world war, the idea of universal beauty norms to produce one universal aesthetic was appealing. This singularity implied the possibility of universal truths, maybe even universal peace. De Stijl emphasized the use of geometric abstraction, straight lines, consistent shapes, and solid, primary colors as visuals that they believed were relatable and accessible to everyone.¹⁵ While this sounds utopian, it is notable that this thought is imperialist in nature and exists within the notion that similarity, not inclusion, is the ideal.



Figure 2.4. An example of an object from the De Stijl Movement. Gerrit Rietveld, *Red Blue Chair* (1918-1923). 34 1/8 x 26 x 33", seat h. 13" (33 cm). Photograph by The Museum of Modern Art.

Meanwhile, a different valuation of functional art had been developing since the nineteenth century; the concept of antiques. Deborah Cohen has explored the rise of antiquing in Victorian Britain and focused a section of her book *Household Gods* on pharmacist Robert Drane whose opinions and debt were consumed by historical decorative arts rather than medicine. Drane rejected the plainness and lack of history in newly manufactured products, and lamented the quality of times gone by. The mid-nineteenth and early twentieth century was the most visibly efficient transformation of the way humans lived. Transportation was faster, cleaning was easier, homes became centers of display to show social class, and the effects of war on consumer choices were more widely felt.

Drane was obsessed with the idea of the afterlife of antique products. Older products could tell stories, resist change, survive. He also saw antique products as protesters. They were 'living' proof that quality objects persist beyond the fads and faux lavishness of new materials and production.¹⁶ Antiques, simply known then as second-hand furniture, could be found at auction houses, estate sales, curiosity shops, small town homes, and, eventually, furniture emporiums that tried to knock-off the antique look.

Notably, the emporiums were often charged with moral violations and Dane used quasi-religious language to attack the “unscrupulous” dealers and the false “idol-worshipping” of “sacrilege” objects.¹⁷ This personal attack on personified objects and their peddlers further marked the evolution of possessing objects as a moral, sometimes supernatural, endeavor. These objects were now gods or false gods, and they were imbued with the essence of their worshiper.

There is no better example of this personification of objects than that of the haunted house, a notion documented in early twentieth century memoirs in Britain. This was Drane’s religious language hard at work. A short story called “An Old Bureau” told of a man who bargained for an old bureau from a house in the countryside.

[He] soon found that the bureau concealed a mid-Victorian tragedy. No sooner had he drifted off to sleep than a ghost appeared before him. It was the bureau’s former owner, a little girl whose illness had forced her father to seek work in another town. She died before he returned home, as, too, did her grief-stricken mother. Her father had committed suicide.¹⁸

Because this object lay witness, powerless amid such intense suffering, it now represents that suffering. And, as a Master Sign of suffering, it goes a step further to not only represent but also become one with the those who suffered. It becomes the drawer that holds the spirit of that time. This notion of objects intertwining with their keepers further projected that people and their objects were connected in identity, in experience, in personality, in life.

The *Jacobean-style Arm Chair* in “The Home” of *Claim, Consume, Curate* offers an example of infusing historicism into modern functional art (fig. 2.5). The Jacobean style is named after England’s King James I of the second half of the European Renaissance. The style was originally known for being hyper-decadent, so much so that one designer asked the Catholic Church to publish a statement saying that his design was not to counter religious purposes.¹⁹ The Jacobean style was adapted by craftspeople in the nineteenth century to show the value of high art and ornamentation in textiles and woodworking from the Renaissance. Utilizing such themes suggested that consumers in the modern era should value

ornamentation since it is connected to the Renaissance. Ownership of such high-quality, artistic goods and materials was frequently reserved for royalty, nobility, and the wealthy during the Renaissance, and this limited ownership was enforced with sumptuary laws.²⁰ Bringing back the Jacobean style also allows consumers to express their value as a person, that, like royalty, they deserve fine things.



Figure 2.5. Unknown Artist, *Jacobean-style Arm Chair* (19th Century). H. 49.75" w. 25" l. 25.625". Gift of Joseph and Ilma Uihlein. Photograph courtesy of the UWM Art Collection.

WHO ARE YOU?:

Relationships with Objects

A mug with one million duplicates can feel special to an individual person because the mug is a stand in for “Art, Love, and Knowledge,” also known as a Master Sign.²¹ This mug may have been a gift from a loved one or a souvenir from traveling. After acquisition, the mug then acts as a reminder of something larger. This process of infusing an object with personal identity is known as aesthetic subjectivity: its value is different for different people depending on how they are conditioned to understand it. In Per Aage Brandt’s article “Objects, Signs, and Works of Art,” he recognizes a diversity of home goods as ‘objects.’ More expected object examples include a mug or a chair. More abstract ‘object’ examples include language and pets.²² He uses all these examples to explain that the value of personal objects is transformed by a human’s relationship to them. This conditioning matters amidst changing consumption habits of the modern era. The life of a functional object can be replaced quickly, cheaply, and without sentiment. For an object to matter, to stick around, it needs to do more than not break. An object needs to have a point of connection to its owner expressed in its aesthetic.

This is echoed by Gaston Bachelard’s notion of ‘reading a house’ or ‘reading a room’ in his book *The Poetics of Space*. He uses examples from archeology and poetry to show how the home acts as a protective universe from the outside world. The fact that the house is separate implies isolation. Isolation implies individuality. In this space of individuality, the house and its contents become the world of the dweller. The dweller’s existence and survival conflict with outside forces. Violent acts of nature and violent acts of other people turn the house into an intimate refuge, its things, its “drawers, chests and wardrobes,” become the holders of secrets, Master Signs of the meaning of survival.²³

Case furniture, “drawers, chests and wardrobes,” act as especially good representations of how people exist physically and metaphysically at the same time. A chest exists physically and immediately on the exterior. A chest also has an inner space that can store functionally and imaginatively. Of course, a chest can store socks, but, Bachelard argues, it also stores sentiments like:

Orderliness. Harmony.
Piles of sheets in the wardrobe
Lavender in the linen.²⁴

Bachelard uses this poem to express the need to classify or control what would otherwise be chaos. The sheets not only have a place to belong, they also belong together and offer beauty. The use of senses shows the transition between the physical and the sentimental. It allows a house to be a physical and conceptual home, as something more meaningful than just a conglomeration of pieces. This calls upon the notion of gestalt, that the whole is greater than the parts. Furthermore, the home is something that has an intimate interior because it is given an intimate interior through aesthetic subjectivity. “This happens when the owner, in seeing the object, feels that: his or her desires are in harmony; his or her goals might be reached; the past and the future are related in a sensible way; that the people who are close to them are worthy of love and love them in return.”²⁵ The home is then an altar of belonging.

In “The Home” section of the *Claim, Consume, Curate*, objects imply the actions of the hypothetical owner. The one cup, one spoon, and one book resting on the table implies the activities and preferences of the owner: Likely the owner was drinking something that needed to be stirred, implying the owner would be present in that space for at least the amount of time it takes to have a drink. The aesthetic and origin of the cup (fig. 3.1) along with the selection of the book *The Middle Kingdom; A survey of...The Chinese Empire and Its Inhabitants, 1848* also shows he or she has an interest or experience with Chinese culture. This could be a professional interest in Chinese goods or aesthetic, an experience with China as a resident or visitor, or a relationship with someone who has had one of those experiences. The same could be said about the Jacobean-style chair, the Tiffany lamp, and the still life painting all working together to make ‘the owner’s home’ a universe of his or her own belonging. These objects exist to function and to provide the aesthetic of what makes this person’s survival meaningful. This “creation of private meaning is no less miraculous than the accomplishments of Rembrandt or Michelangelo.”²⁶



Figure 3.1. Unknown Artist, *Wine Cup* (18th Century). H. 2.75” Dia. 3.25”. Gift of Mr. And Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian. Photograph courtesy of the UWM Art Collection.

Because these selected objects represent the space of a home and the personal connections of their ‘owner,’ they are not overtly labeled either in function or design. No one would have their children or partner wear a name tag around the house, and these objects in this context are also of that relational, gestalt space. That is why labels for these objects exist in maps available in a bin on the wall. This lack of overt labeling contributes to the immersive period room type of installation, except that in this exhibition the atmosphere created is even more important than the period or place.

WHAT DO WE HAVE?:

The Evolution of Shopping

The ruins of Pompeii show that shops have been popping up since ancient times.²⁷ Urban materiality evolved rapidly in empires, even more so when travel became more accessible. Shops that could rely on steady income in one location tended to congregate into markets or fairs, and because of this collective, artisans could even maintain a reliable market for specialized goods. A need for a unified code in exchanges and bookkeeping was addressed in the Middle Ages after some artisans struggled seasonally or even exploited customers during shortages. A principle of morality-based “just price” was imposed around Europe to put a standard practice into play.²⁸

In the early modern period, shopping was highly regulated by the state. The Royal Exchange in London in 1571 specifically established state-sponsored shopping activity where governing bodies got to shape international trade and local consumption experiences.²⁹ This helped ensure fair policies for shops and tracked economic gain especially through taxation. The next century was then marked by the pressure of competition in selling similar goods which caused merchants to spend a great deal on furnishing the atmosphere of their shop to lure customers into choosing their space, not just their products.³⁰ Decorations, wall paint, and displaying goods began to make a difference. In the sixteenth century, window displays in ground-floor shops started to be utilized as a marketing method. By the eighteenth century, Britain became known as “a nation of shopkeepers,” so much so that urban districts were redesigned around maximizing the activity, and thoroughfares still retain their nicknames like The Strand, Cheapside, and High Street.³¹ Competing with display became a ‘fair’ (state-approved) way for shopkeepers to undermine rivals. This is how shops became interactive, educational, entertaining, and luxurious to help entice choosy buyers. A shop became a place to see and be seen while ascertaining cultural norms, international insights, and local taste.

After the French Revolution, guilds in Europe dissolved allowing business competition to boom in big cities. The need for a clean, consistent, uncongested space was answered in the “arcade” which

was, essentially, the first kind of mall. The glass roof over the pedestrian walkway allowed shoppers freedom from weather constraints and limited the space to foot traffic only. This haven-like space “created an entire world of shopping.”³² The stakes for an enticing window display heightened in concurrence with expectations of the shopping experience. This acted as a heavy precursor for the French National Industrial Expositions starting in 1844, then imitated by other Western nations. Eventually, the first World’s Fair occurred in The Crystal Palace of London in 1851, officially titled the “Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations.”³³



Figure 4.1. *Interior of the Crystal Palace during the Great Exhibition designed by Sir Joseph Paxton (1851).* Image from Hulton Archive/Getty Images.

The notion that shopping and consuming was a world in itself instigated new architectural engineering to accommodate shopping centers like Le Bon Marché in Paris, France. The interior was “so open and grand that the vast array of merchandise could be seen all at once.”³⁴ The owner and creator of Le Bon Marché, Aristide Boucicaut, was inspired by the Great Exhibition and its location in London at

the Crystal Palace. Boucicaut pieced together much of the modern shopping experience including fixed pricing (meaning sale prices were non-negotiable), return policies, the expectation of friendly service, free delivery, buying in bulk, advertising, and entertaining shopping moments like tours, in-store events, and live music.³⁵ Deciding to own an object was beyond necessity and even beyond desire of the object; choosing an object was about exploring what is valuable and where a person fits into that equation. It was exploring one's own value. This new contest of value in a space that is technically open to anyone but not affordable to some unpacked that “consumer goods should not be seen as objects [that represent] democracy, but rather as the objects through which social struggles are conducted and social relationships between groups articulated in everyday life.”³⁶



Figure 4.2. E. Plon, Nourrit and Co., *Souvenir of the Bon Marché, Paris Plan of Paris Central Stairway* (1892). Image from John Hay Library, Brown University Library.

Claim, Consume, Curate exemplifies this change in “The Boutique” through its atmosphere created through fashionable wall art, intentionally curated items, the suggestion of touching, the sparkle of lighting, and the immersive nature of stands and mannequins which allow all 360 degrees of an object to be on display. This conditions consumers to value functional art objects in three ways: experiment, identity, and status.

First, objects in “The Boutique” offer experimentation because they are (hypothetically) to be touched and examined before purchasing. People could become more informed consumers both in quality and aesthetic through such an experiment. This leads into the second point of conditioning: objects as expressions of consumer identity. Individual identity can be confirmed through individual purchases made among the variety of options. Objects have to do more than work; they have to personify in order to go from product to possession. Lastly, this conditioning through commercial display culminates in status experimentation through object selection. As democracy evolved in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, people were looking differently at their autonomy in moving social classes. Stores that were becoming increasingly luxurious to be competitive encouraged consumers to view shopping as a piece of that autonomy. Objects could be used to prove intellect, financial success, and belonging. Going to a store that encouraged trying on allowed people to put on different personas, different statuses, different identities altogether. After all, in a democracy, who is to keep you from becoming what you want to be? Although that was the argument presented by shopping, the rhetorical question actually does have notable answers. For some the answer was money. For others the answer was imperial overlords. For others, still, the answer was access to urban areas or even the desire to be a part of them.

The department store was born from techniques used in World’s Fairs and such “democratic luxury” stores in Britain and France. Lifestyle display techniques welcomed the ‘right kind’ of customer, and the scenes created with props and mannequins demonstrated desirable features like convenience, style, and the propensity for fun.³⁷ This atmosphere was adapted for American audiences in stores ranging from Marshall Field’s to Tiffany’s. Window displays welcomed shoppers, customer service policies

engaged, and events like product demonstrations, toy menageries, and even orchestras convinced shoppers to stay; and to come back.³⁸ Notably, these displays were often geared toward women, much like in *Claim, Consume, Curate*. The wall art in “The Boutique” contains fashion plates modeling women’s attire, and the items on display such as jewelry, dresses, and dishes are most associated with female consumers in the modern era. Spending power changed for women throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as their access to the formal workplace increased. Women were also seen as more valuable consumers since they became the main buyer and furnisher for the home. This change in the surface value of women in the economy reflects complexities of their abuse and empowerment addressed more in the next section “What Does She Have?”

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Figure 4.3. Wedgwood, *Queen’s Ware Table Centerpiece (epergne) Catalogue Illustration* (1774). Image from The Wedgwood Museum.

Many of the aspects we associate with modern marketing were developed by Josiah Wedgwood in the eighteenth century. Wedgwood revolutionized consumption in the United Kingdom in a variety of ways. When his manufacturing techniques for ceramics were not fully covered by patents, he turned to marketing to gain profits. He essentially created celebrity endorsements to create popularity and an air of luxury surrounding his goods. This was used to catch a high profit from the wealthy. He also orchestrated prices so that when wealthier markets dwindled over time, he dropped the price to attain middle class sales on items that once seemed out of reach. These marketing and pricing strategies were complemented by a masterful display of goods in Wedgwood's catalogs for people to shop remotely, as well as exciting, pop-up style street exhibitions to showcase products and create buzz.³⁹ Crucial to purchasing decisions was material/manufacturing, artistry/brand/company, size/lot number, and price. The display of these details on a price tag, along with the image and colors chosen, would work to tell the customer what kind of company and product they saw: patriotic, romantic, or even exotic.⁴⁰ The cloth tag from the collection of the American Textile History Museum (fig. 4.4), shows the Pepperell Company relying heavily on notions of heterosexual Victorian gentility in the visual that accompanied necessary information. The list of information points to what is most valuable to consumers: The answer to the question "Does this item belong in my world?".



Figure 4.4. Pepperell Manufacturing Company, *Cloth Tag 2* (19th Century). Image from the American Textile History Museum, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution.

Tags in “The Boutique” section of *Claim, Consume, Curate* also communicate the mission of the store and openly acknowledge items as commodities unlike traditional museum labels (fig. 4.5). The *Head of a Dancer* sculpture shows off the perfect female head shape and face on top of the store’s jewelry vitrine. It is also used as a focal point on each price tag. Her face is unadorned by hair, make-up, or jewelry. Shoppers can use this beautiful blank canvas to mentally project or physically decorate the sculpture with what their purchases may look like on a beautiful face...like theirs. This positive interpretation could also be complicated by the fact that such beauty is unattainable, so adornment could be available to solve that problem. Either way, the striking figure cannot be ignored in its central location and connects shoppers to the space and its goal in projecting that beauty is valuable.

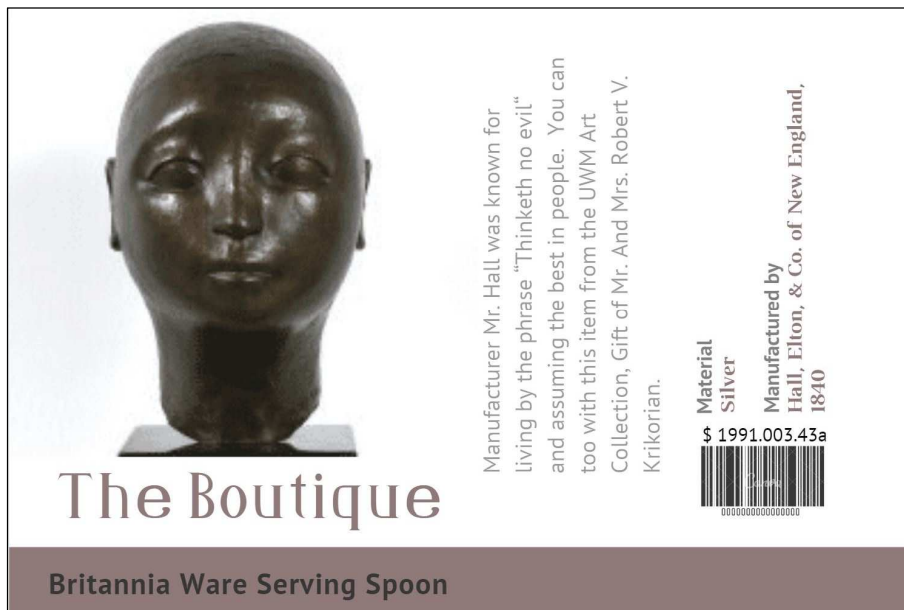


Figure 4.5. George Goundie, *Head of a Dancer* (1959). H. 13” w. 5.25”. Gift of Joseph Friebert. Photograph courtesy of the UWM Art Collection. “The Boutique” tag made by *Claim, Consume, Curate: Placing Value on Functional Art* exhibition curator Heather Hanlon.

Alongside store name, mascot/logo, and object title, “The Boutique” tag also provides geographical information, material, date made, and a blurb of interest. This information exists to attach customers to the cultural capital, material quality, and age of the object. The blurb humanizes or moralizes the object, allows it to talk, and implicates a purchase of the object with an agreement of the blurb’s sentiments. Blurbs can include information about the company, the process of creation, or the culture from which it originates. The accession number acts as the price line near a barcode allowing

objects which are still, ultimately, a part of an art collection to maintain the privacy or irrelevance of their price while still showing numbers where expected on the price tag.



The twentieth century saw a shift from object relationships to brand relationships due to cars and groceries. Popularization of the automobile allowed businesses to rent spaces in less urbanized areas for less money and the visitor base would travel to them. The first “superstation” located in Los Angeles in the mid 1900s was a kind of gas station convenience store that worked to vertically consolidate goods and services into a one-stop-shop.⁴¹ Consumers were now expected to take a more active role. Grocery stores went from counters with clerks fetching ingredients to cooperative stores that sold multiple varieties from multiple brands. Packaging, display, and marketing not only of the space but also of the object on the shelf became crucial in consumer choice-making. The “self-service store was a space of discourse between a shopper and a series of manufacturers’ proxies[:] the package. The closest precedent for such a space would be a museum, where visitors serially encounter objects that would be identified and possibly explained by a label.”⁴² Customers weren’t just choosing the morality and quality of an object anymore; they were also choosing the morality and quality of a brand. Who consumers patronized was now becoming a part of their identity and the relationship with their objects.

Mass merchandisers tried to reconcile low price points and enormous options with their need for more storage, lower wages, international trade, and sustainable packaging. This reconciliation evolved from Stewart’s and Macy’s department stores (1860) to the around-the-clock Wanamaker’s (1907) to the air-conditioned Marshall Field’s (1909). Remote shopping through mass merchandisers ranged from the mail-order Montgomery Ward (1872) to “send no money” Sear’s (1897). Chain stores like the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company (1859), Woolworth’s (1879), and Kroger Grocery (1882) defined ‘big business’ through their Wall Street sponsorships.⁴³ This meant that personal choices to fill intimate spaces were increasingly held captive by businesses whose interest was not design or quality, but financial

opportunity. What was being offered as good taste frequently represented the partnerships between the cultures of power and the causes or people they wanted to support. Personal and communal identity were blending in new ways, and so was the value people put on their functional objects.

The concept of display as vital marketing became a principle of modernity as cultural norms became more conditioned by that display than even the objects themselves. The title “The Boutique” within *Claim, Consume, Curate* appeals to a sense of small-shop specialization that implies personalized consumer attention during visits. The open feeling of the area and curated selection of store items speaks to the invention of browsing as shopping became an experience over a task. What grew qualitatively about the experience was that selected, displayed clothing, jewelry, dishes, or other functional items contained more aesthetic variety driven by consumers. This variety could be viewed, touched, compared, and experimented with in new ways before purchasing. Not only could objects be ‘tried on,’ the status and feeling could also be ‘tried on.’ This is enticing. Belonging was just a purchase away. The glimpse into something new that an object offers is a powerful incentive. Modernity offered the narrative of what one could be, a consumer revolution, through the visual opportunities in a display.

WHAT DOES SHE HAVE?:

Women (still) working for a place at the table

The paternalistic systems in which modernity existed further pushed for “distinctions between design and ‘high’ crafts” which affected women as employees and consumers.⁴⁴ Working at a department store was appealing to status-conscious women, especially older women who were unmarried, divorced, or widowed. Women who needed their own jobs were motivated to continue even when asked to work undesirable hours, when others were striking, or when pay and promotion were lacking in comparison to their male counterparts.⁴⁵ Women as consumers were also targeted through advertising with a paternalistic lens. These marketing efforts were especially degrading in the era of mass industrialization when some traditional duties of housewives were supplemented by domestic machines for cooking, washing, and cleaning. “The housewife became highly susceptible to the products of the beauty industry which were often accompanied by advertisements that played on her personal and sexual fears.”⁴⁶ Women were further conditioned to believe they had inborn, personal deficiencies that required products to fix those apparent problems (fig. 5.1).⁴⁷

Despite stereotypes of modern women being frivolous or insecure shoppers, less serious members of the workforce, and lower status artists, there were also opportunities for empowerment. Women who worked for department stores behind the counters or as tailors were expected to have deep knowledge of competing merchandise and craft quality. This information was not offered at most colleges, so stores were forced to implement rigorous training programs to educate their predominantly female workers about the job.⁴⁸ More women-to-women interactions in the public sphere created “the phenomenon of ‘sisterly solidarity’ across the counter between women assistants and customers.”⁴⁹ Here women had the opportunity to question and advise on quality and price points in ways that transcended business interests to help one another find what was best for the individual or her family. This provided agency and efficacy for women on both sides of the interaction. It also created, within the paternalistic system, a smaller maternal system that functioned without the oversight or contributions of men.

The stereotype of the domestic arena as the woman's arena gave modern women more opportunities to be seen as valuable consumers (mainly of household goods) and as experts in the workforce (mainly of household goods). This discrepancy between how men and women move through the same world also points to the fact that the subjective aesthetic value of an object is not just determined by taste makers, big business, or museums, but rather by individuals. Men and women have been conditioned to have different standards, different preferences, and different buying power. This also contributes to how an object gains financial, historical, or personal value conditioned by the spaces they are in and who is in charge of those spaces.

To give atmosphere to "The Boutique," nineteenth century women's fashion plates and *Head of a Dancer* express a target audience. These display items which are 'not for sale' model how the items may retain or even increase in value after being purchased. This also associates the value of the products for sale with the value of the buyer in that the objects need the right buyer to make it the most valuable it can be. The curation of the store to condition specific kinds of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors reflects the system of consumption as an originally paternalistic endeavor, but a possibly empowering one with choices even so. The counter-style display which implies a consumer on one side and a seller on the other also offers any audience member, but especially the target audience member, agency as a citizen with spending power or an economic asset in the workforce. This human-constructed interface in commercial spaces shows how "marketing and advertising seek to ensure that a product's form prominently expresses its benefits."⁵⁰

In this way of associating the store as a mirror to a potential home or life, the store becomes what Gaston Bachelard refers to as a "nest-house."⁵¹ The store becomes a place that markets the "function of inhabiting. For not only do we come back to it, but we dream of coming back to it...An intimate component of faithful loyalty reacts upon the related images of nest and house."⁵² It is important here that "values alter facts."⁵³ While it is true that a home, a nest, is created in the inner life of a person, that creation of inner life can be hard to control and access. Instead, the daydreams, the experiments, that a

store lends to a shopper through tangible material culture can give a sense of rare control over the value of one's deepest desires. Purchasing to belong, to understand, and to survive can give the daydream of value whether a person belongs, understands, survives...or not.

First showing outside London!

THE GLASS HAT

Here to-day at FENWICK'S



Sensational introduction from PARIS!

A glass hat . . . transparent . . . glinting . . . with a picture brim to see your eyes and curls! But wearably pliable, and stitched with a band of soft blue velvet. A romantically lovely hat, rushed from Paris to London . . . from London, to Fenwick's . . . to you. See it to-day in the French Hat Salon **78/6**

FENWICK Ltd., Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Figure 5.1. An example of females being conflated with an object that is necessarily tantalizing, romantic, worldly, and local all at the same time. Fenwick Ltd., 'The Glass Hat' advertisement (20th c). Image from Fenwick Ltd.

WHO MAKES ART?:

The Power of an Institution

In 1917, Marcel Duchamp signed and dated a urinal he did not make and sent it out for exhibition.^{54*} The act was rejected for display by the board of the Society for Independent Artists; the original urinal, lost. ‘The Fountain’ is now hailed as the quintessential example of twentieth-century art. This controversial ‘readymade’ helped to push the modern conversation about art from what is good and bad to “what is art?” This also helped to navigate questions on art versus craft at the time of industrialization to determine thresholds between design, production, and intent. If something was designed stylistically but then mass produced for a bathroom, was it art? What if that container was homemade; was it art? What if that container was ugly; was it art?



Figure 6.1. Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain* (1917, replica 1964). 2' x 1'2" x 1'7". Image from Tate Gallery.

* It is possible that this act was instead done by female artist Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven and later attributed to Duchamp (this attribution accepted by him). Maurice Hoogendoorn, “Het urinoir is niet van Duchamp,” In *Nederlands Dagblad* (2018), trans. Theo Paijmans in *See All This* (2018).

In the nineteenth century, resistance in defining ‘art’ in elitist or purely connoisseurial ways helped to open the cannon in fine arts, music, and poetry. Ralph Waldo Emerson criticized fine art as an out-of-touch social flourish that doesn’t speak to an honest expression of nature or existence.⁵⁵ Simultaneously, the Arts and Crafts Movement pioneer John Ruskin criticized the British government’s separation of fine and applied arts. He argued that art should either “state a true thing or adorn a serviceable one.”⁵⁶ These changes in thinking led curators in the twentieth century to rethink why museums separated fine art and functional art collections. Curators like Alois Riegl of the Austrian Museum of Art and Industry developed new classifications of “art impulse” or “artistic will.”⁵⁷ These phrases were to capture the sense that functional art was not just equal to fine art in its ability to be expressive, but rather, that it was superior.

Duchamp, Ruskin, and Riegl alike marked a departure from the tradition of civilizations displaying “their finest productions” which started in ancient cultures within temples and palace treasuries.⁵⁸ This tradition continued over time within private libraries and galleries through evolving collections, preservation, and curation. Museum collections actually started through donations of such private collections from wealthy collectors. Famous examples of European patrons and donors included the Medici family of Fifteenth Century Italy, Charles I of Seventeenth Century England, and the Habsburgs of the Seventeenth Century Holy Roman Empire, who all collected expensive local and international art according to and in creation of high-status taste.⁵⁹ These collections had a focus on what is now considered high art, especially painting and sculpture, and donated or loaned much of their collection for public use to continue, to broaden the family status, and to ensure their influence even after they were gone. Collections translated into Master Signs of power, wealth, and class.

The significance of this cannot be understated as the earliest museums began to form in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. During this period, private and royal collections “slowly developed into museums. The Medici collection became the Uffizi Palace collection; the Habsburg collection was installed in the Belvedere Palace; and the Vatican collection was officially born in the Pio-Clementine

Museum.”⁶⁰ Over the next centuries, the establishment and destruction of museums were used as expressions of revolution, national glory, political leanings, historical connection, and collective memory.⁶¹ These processes speak to the power of tangible representations of identity, belonging, and memory. Destroy the memory of a culture, destroy the culture.

Although historically functional art had an inconsistent inclusion in these museums, their ability to show identity, belonging, and memory made them valuable additions, the layers of this value still being uncovered. In 1416, Jean de France of the French royal family died and his collection opened up the definition of art since it included not only paintings and sculptures, but also functional objects like coins, fabrics, and “curiosities” like ostrich eggs and unicorn horns (actually narwhal tusks).⁶² Many museums also broadened their collections through similar items of conquest, stolen from other countries to display as Master Signs of dominance and national superiority.

The first museums that specialized in decorative arts opened when the world’s fairs segregated funds for their existence. These fairs proved continued interest in the collection, study, and display of “architecture, furniture, metalwork, ceramics, glass, textiles, and the like.”⁶³ The South Kensington Museum for applied art (later renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum) opened in 1852 with funding from the first World’s Fair in London, 1851. After the World’s Fair in Paris in 1855, the Central Society of Decorative Arts established a museum in 1882, later absorbed by the Louvre. Berlin and Vienna followed suit.⁶⁴ In the 1930s, the new director of New York’s Museum of Modern Art, Alfred H. Barr Jr., echoed the organization of the Bauhaus in “bringing together the visual arts, including architecture, industrial design, film, photography, graphics, and typography.”⁶⁵

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Starting in the nineteenth century, a museum’s job was not only to store art and promote design exemplars but also to emphasize community identity and educational objectives. This started as specialized teaching for artists, craftsmen, and industrial designers.⁶⁶ Involvement in public school

systems soon followed, and in 1905, the Metropolitan Museum devoted an entire department to educational public programming. This programming included gallery lectures, traveling exhibitions to schools, publications, Saturday morning story hours, and radio programs for children with disabilities.⁶⁷ This attempt to treat museum art collections as multi-faceted tools that included connoisseurship and public education helped to democratize access and knowledge of art. This meant that value of all art items, including functional ones, existed in museums for public interaction through context, community interaction, and public dialogue. Prioritizing points of access in the museum mission upended the previous stereotype that art knowledge belonged primarily to society's elite.

The collapse of the traditional definition of fine art allows art to communicate value as it's curated, not as it's made. This means that an object's value can change over time from something that was once touched and used to something that is displayed and considered. A urinal could be valuable in multiple different ways throughout history. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) continues to acknowledge these changes in the overlap of the art world and the personal world, changing the definition of a museum in 2019. ICOM's definition used to focus a museum's value as predominantly expressed through collections and curation. In September of 2019, a new definition shifted the focus of value from the artifacts themselves to how the artifacts democratize dialogue about the past and present.⁶⁸ The definition distances museums from commodification and connoisseurship saying:

Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people.

Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing.⁶⁹

This definition concretely extends the necessity of museums as activists through community engagement. For the life and afterlife of an object, a museum isn't in charge of assigning value, a museum instead functions as a space for objects to live another life through scholarship, visitor connections, and deriving collective memory. Allowing objects to have subjective value beyond what curators and museum professionals assign helps to open cultural capital of museum collections to a larger population. This co-creation of value calls upon recognizing the spatial context in assigning an object's purpose.⁷⁰ Gaston Bachelard uses the metaphor of a fossil to express how value evolves through service: "For every form retains life, and a fossil is not merely a being that once lived, but one that is still alive, asleep in its form."⁷¹ Applying this sentiment to museum collections shows that their purpose is less about storage and more about visual representations of concepts beyond itself like evolution, geography, conflict, love, or family. These are concepts reflected in every human life, not just those of the rich or privileged so it makes sense that access to those object representations should happen with equity in mind.

However, just 'allowing' others to have access or intellectual flexibility during exhibitions doesn't truly unyoke the problematic institutional power structures in the museum world. The movement to Decolonize Museums suggests that "It's not just about inviting indigenous and other marginalized people into the museum to help the institution improve its exhibitions; it's an overhauling the entire system" so that marginalized people can be a part of the "emotional and intellectual labor" with respect and power.⁷²

Scholars, conferences, foundations, museum alliances, and museums themselves who work toward this cause of overhauling systemic problems have addressed many issues that originated and evolved since collections of the wealthy became public museums and libraries. Intentional acquisition practices to represent a larger range of artists is part of the effort. For example, to address the fact that "only 4% of the 95,000 artworks in the [Baltimore Museum of Art's] permanent collection were created by women," the museum committed to only acquiring works by female-identifying artists in 2020.⁷³

Paid internships and educational fellowships for museum programs are also a method used to increase opportunities for people who cannot afford to work for free to learn career skills in the museum field, a field notorious for unpaid internships in expensive cities. The Phillips Collection issued a report in 2015 about the skewed demographics in museum leadership positions. To engage with this statistic, they created an internship model that not only pays their interns but also crafts experiences for them based on their departmental interests. The Phillips also provides mentors and interdepartmental networking opportunities for such employees. During the first cycle of this practice in fall of 2018, “the Phillips received a four hundred percent increase in the number of applications from the previous cycle.”⁷⁴

Offering low-cost or free programming and admissions to tourist and community participants opens access to museum experiences for a wider range of ages and socio-economic statuses. In 2015, Madison’s Children Museum stopped requiring any documentation for Access memberships (discounted memberships for families in low income households and children with special needs). In the following 2017-2018 fiscal year, an 84% increase in Access member visits and a 35% increase in all member visits was recorded. Decreasing barriers through the most obvious avenue, financial, was followed by institutional efforts to make spaces baby-friendly, to increase the variety of senior programming, to offer sensory-friendly times for children with autism, and to open up internships for teenage children in the area. This marked the Madison Children’s Museum’s push for not just access but for a cultural shift of inclusive visitor standards.⁷⁵

Linking the mission of a museum to curation is a crucial, often overlooked step in museum programming. Curatorial departments often function as separate entities from programming, education, and membership. This is a flaw. Curators, the people deciding what gets displayed and how, are at the first line of duty in how participants consume the museum. In *Claim, Consume, Curate: Placing Value on Functional Art*, curatorial decisions are based in audience engagement rather than connoisseurship. “The Interactive Station” guides participants to interact through “Making STUFF” and “Touching STUFF.” To make ‘stuff’, participants are prompted with paper guides (fig. 6.2) to sketch and share a story about a

formative functional object from their life. When completed, participants can hang their sketch narratives on the community art board. Emoji pushpins allow participants to express connections with another sketch. This process of dialogue gives a reason to return and creates community interaction around themes of the exhibition without necessarily needing a lot of people to be there at the same time. The activity can be adapted as an anchor for gallery tours and other programming like maker time, workshops, and discussion panels.

This is reflective of the shift toward participatory museums, the movement’s leading scholar, Nina Simon, saying that “Supporting participation means trusting visitors’ abilities as creators, remixers, and redistributors of content...They open up new ways for diverse people to express themselves and engage with institutional practice.”⁷⁶ On the other side of the Interactive Station, “Touching STUFF” provides tactile intrigue though objects available for touching like a spoon with etching and a woven overcoat. These tactile experiences offer a reason for viewers to sit down and spend more time in the space, further reflecting on how one object can have many different purposes and lives.



Figure 6.2. Interactive Station Card to for sketching formative objects and for community responses. Created for *Claim, Consume, Curate* by the author (2019).

Museum period rooms have been a longstanding tradition in decorative art displays with a variety of pros and cons. Displaying functional objects in the context of how they were once used gives valuable historical insight and can be immersive. The photograph of *American Period Room* from the Brooklyn Museum gives clarity of how immersion can offer a sort of ‘gestalt’ feel of interior design using period-appropriate objects. Cohesion of the objects is aided through locating labels away from individual pieces. The feeling of a home instead of a museum is also established through wallpaper, dressed windows, carpet, and a fireplace. Furniture displayed on the floor instead of pedestals deepens the grounded-ness, the homeliness of the space. However, this kind of display also shows functional art in a separate way than fine art is shown, further suggesting the otherness and lack of belonging of functional art in fine arts. Access points of contextualization provided through labels and other engagement are also sacrificed in favor of immersion.

The Minneapolis Institute of Art uses period rooms in a new way, allowing functional art to be immersed in historical contexts while eliciting professional and community dialogue in a way expected by fine art curations. The exhibition series called *Living Rooms: The Period Room Initiative* “is reinvigorating its period rooms for today’s visitors, placing the past in dialogue with the present, while simultaneously broadening the conversation to include other histories—of marginalized people, of the senses, and even of time itself.”⁷⁷ Notable in the picture of *Life at the Edge of Empire* are various non-traditional checkpoints of short-text access points to deepen understanding not only of objects but also of their cultural and chronological implications. This does break immersion since living spaces do not typically include such contextualization. However, immersion is still attempted through dressed windows, wood floors, and arrangement of furniture on the floor as it would have been used in that time.

Claim, Consume, Curate draws upon this extension of what a period room can be. Functional art creates multiple expressive vignettes all in one gallery to contemplate the changes of modern identity, belonging, and memory. The objects act as fine art in their ability to give narrative in their curated

contexts, showing how the intention of a space molds value not only of objects, but of people and their cultures.



Figure 6.3. Brooklyn Museum, *American Period Room* (1984-current). Photograph by the Brooklyn Museum, 2015.



Figure 6.4. Minneapolis Institute of Art, *Life at the Edge of Empire: North America, c. 1760-1812; The Charleston Drawing and Dining Rooms* as part of the Living Room Project (2019-2020). Photograph by Minneapolis Institute of Art.

In 2004, the Milwaukee Art Museum and the Chipstone Foundation collaborated to create the exhibition *Slipware Traditions*. This exhibition demonstrated the functional and aesthetic similarities and differences between slip-decorated pots from China, Korea, Germany, Italy, Britain, and America.⁷⁸ The different techniques speak a unifying “artistic language” while giving space for cultural specificity. Like *Living Rooms* at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, immersive cultural context is given as the serving pots, cups, saucers, and spoons are organized as they would be when served. Also like *Living Rooms*, objects were given high artistic value through labels, wall text, and programming, implying the belonging of functional items as fine art. Objects were curated as intentionally designed, culturally expressive, and personally relevant. Its cause for formation, rather than its mere existence is the salient characteristic.

Claim, Consume, Curate's museum vignette “Warmth: Coffee and Tea Across Cultures” draws upon this intersection of historicism and fine art. Like *Slipware Traditions*, “Warmth” compares traditions of gathering and traditions of visual expression between modern cultures. A Japanese-style, Ethiopian, and American set are organized as they would be used but displayed on podia instead of a dining table. Corresponding text allows visitors to visually explore how design and construction connects to cultural practice, and to their own practices of building community. The narratives behind the objects define their meaning, and their function acts as just one piece of that story.

CONCLUSION

What Happens to a Thing When it Can't be Seen?:

How storage amplifies messages of object value

The home, the store, and the museum all need a location to store objects not in use. This is another life that objects have. There are three branches of value that identify why a thing without immediate use would be stored. These include personal value, financial value, and cultural value.⁷⁹ The purpose of “Storing Stuff” as a section within *Claim, Consume, Curate: Placing Value on Functional Art* is to demonstrate how the conditioned value of an object also determines its storage life. The resources used for different conservation needs—personal, financial, and cultural—extends the conversation about how place influences the conditioning of object value. Don Williams, senior conservator of the Smithsonian Institution’s Center for Materials Research, claims that each object owner in all different places must “follow a path of [their] choosing as well as understand the consequences of the decisions [they] make.”⁸⁰

In the home, precious photos, documents, clothing, and dishes are stored in wooden trunks, plastic bins, and metal filing cabinets. Fire-safe lock boxes keep objects safe from leaks, animals, bugs, accidents, and disaster. In “Storing Stuff,” two examples of home storage contrast accessibility of a drawer organizer for daily-use flatware with the durability of a wooden box holding special occasion silverware. The latter is also notably special since it was a wedding gift on loan for the exhibition (and the drawer organizer would most likely not be used as such a special gift). This contrast examines how even within the home, values of similar functional items are differentiated. How the owner copes with their different kinds of attachments, uses, and economics in the long and short term is all part of the life of that object.



Figure 7.1. Reed & Barton, Storage Box and Silverware Collection (1982). Image courtesy of Mark and Debra Sheets, 2020.

Commercial settings have less need for long-term storage since inventory is meant to move. Big businesses and boutiques alike utilize inventory tactics revolving around product size, security, and safety. Packaging is product tested for durability and efficiency by suppliers. In touring the Kohler Plant in Kohler, Wisconsin, the author was shown how the company uses machines to calibrate the amount of jostling, dropping, and weight-bearing a packaged product can handle. The tour guide also discussed that simple graphic design cohesion from their trucks to their packaging has been key to their branding and is an important part of the experience of interacting with a quality-made, securely packaged product.⁸¹ Strategies for packaging help this company to work with consistency nationally and internationally. *Claim, Consume, Curate* imitates this side of business by displaying packaged, bulk flatware in a branded cardboard box. The dissonance of seeing such packaging individualized on a museum podium instead of

en masse at the store gives a fresh perspective on the multifaceted technique of packaging for shipping ease, brand recognition, and quick, manageable display.

To get the perspective of smaller operations, an interview with an Ozaukee County Wisconsin jeweler and business owner was conducted by the author. The owner said that the delicacy and size of inventory for any product in any business must be addressed to protect its economic value. This is what protects the business, from apples to generators to jewelry.⁸² Economic value does not exclude personal or cultural value, rather, a business relies on personal or cultural value to supplement its primary concern: financial value. Like many small, non-chain jewelry stores across the United States, the interviewed jeweler focuses on alphabetized abbreviations to store inventory ordered from outside of the store and kept in the back safe. The safe's space is classified by material (diamond, gold, leather) and piece (necklace, ring, watch). To organize the more variable products brought in by customers for repair, objects are organized by customer last name. The intricacy of this system is reflective of the intricate and fragile product at the jewelry store. While the security of the products is an echo of the larger business, the how and why for a small, community storefront expresses key differentiations.

Branding is also different for this jewelry shop due to the different scale of business. The interviewee mentioned that the best and most successful brand awareness comes from word of mouth and, more recently, consistent customer reviews online. He noted that, to provide consistency in the store's brand, their collection of products uses a thoughtful display in-house. The owner and his managers who are educated in business are particular about streamlined simplicity. This is reflected in their transparent glass vitrines topped lightly only by other jewelry and mobile tablets only present for immediate information tracking. Lighting is key not only in the store ceilings but also in the vitrines. More powerful but still soft lighting is used for the outdoor storefront entrance and window displays. Window displays have a clean color scheme of about two to four colors with seasonal displays focused on nature (like snow, pine, tulips, or colored leaves). This exemplifies that what they sell is not kitsch or cartoonish, it is simple, natural, and sophisticated. The owner and his managers participate in professional development

regarding products, distributors, and insurance to help them provide what they make look so simple and easy; quality products, accessible help, and a memorable experience for their community.⁸³

Museum professionals are regimented conservators governed by institutional norms and requirements to maintain material quality and longevity of an object. Organization of objects by material and by the needs of the institution could mean that some ceramics are stored by accession number, some by theme, or some by art movement. Typically, storing items with like materials allows for efficiency of space and efficiency of expensive storage materials. The category of ‘archival’ or ‘museum-grade’ for object-labeling pens, mat board, storage tissue, cushioning foam, reinforced boxes, shipping crates, display tape, and other object interactors provide scientifically sound methods for organizing, labeling, and storing. The fact that many institutions have entire departments devoted to object handling, preservation, and restoration speaks volumes about the projected value an accessioned object contains. Furthermore, to loan an object, formal paperwork must be exchanged as well as information about insurance, temperature controls, and emergency protocols. While versions of this can happen in commercial and home settings as well, these formalities are a notable museum standard.

An example of museum storage in *Claim, Consume, Curate* shows a custom-made storage box for a series of similar pieces—spoons and ladles—stored together in an industry-standard Gaylord Archival box. The foam suspension assures that utensils will not touch. It also provides strong access points for museum employees to handle objects with the heaviest portion first and a clear path of movement out of the box. The box edges are secured with metal hinges for longevity and the cardboard used is ‘archival quality’ meaning it is acid-free or acid-neutral.

While brand labeling is not important to this kind of package exterior, accession numbers are extremely important in understanding what is encased in the box. Shelving units usually have the labels for box numbers below where the box is stored. An object inside the box have their individual accession number somewhere on its body. Art pieces in museum collections are shipped using fine art movers and

shipping containers. Condition reports are filed before items leave, when they arrive, and when they are sent back. This documentation protects the story of the life of each object.

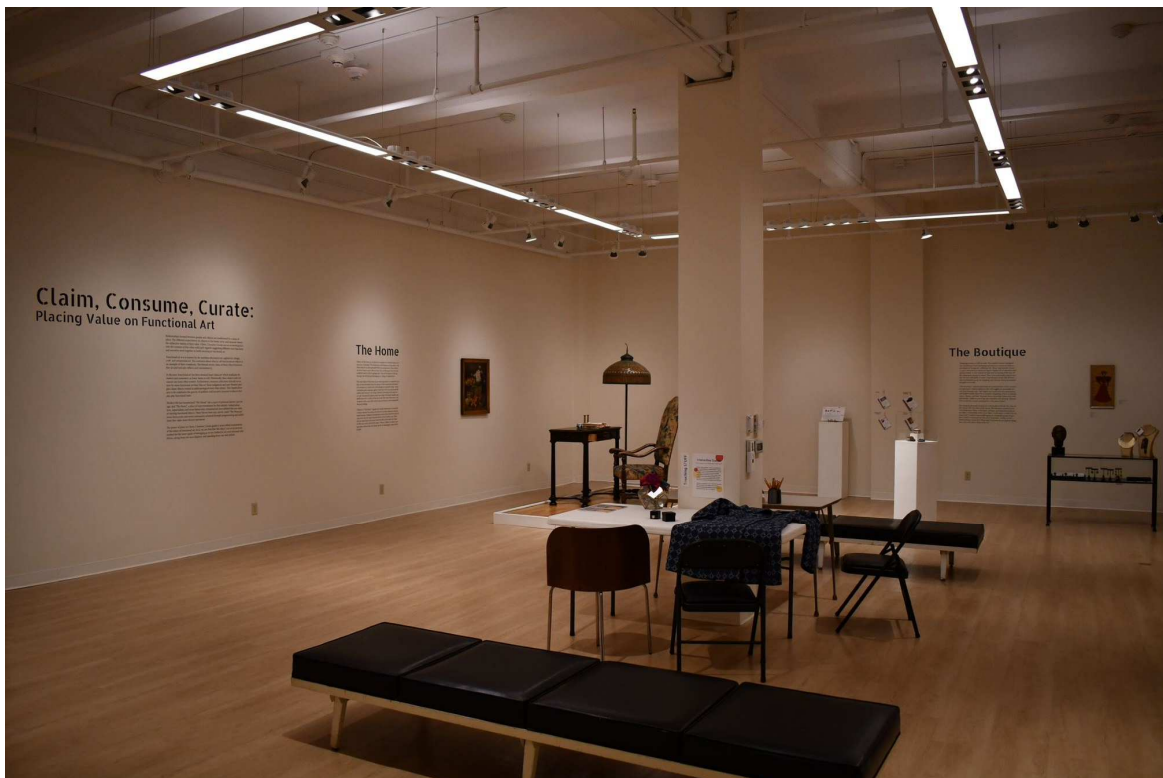


Figure 7.2. Gaylord Archival, Storage Box for Spoon Collection. Photograph courtesy of the UWM Art Collection, 2019.

What is it about the many lives of a functional art object that creates such a complexity of meaning? The examination of spatial contexts, identity, belonging, and memory provide ongoing conversations about how a person's relationship with a thing becomes apparent and evolves simultaneously. The fact that a spoon can be stored in such different ways depending on its context shows the different values ascribed by different modes of display. The storage of any artwork helps to imbue it with even more narrative connected to its form and function. This narrative is defined by the relationship between the object and its human interactor that together navigate an inner quest for meaning and belonging with an outward, tangible world in which this quest is visually represented.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EXHIBITION FOR REFERENCE

ENTRANCE





Claim, Consume, Curate: Placing Value on Functional Art

Relationships formed between people and objects are conditioned by a sense of place. The different expectations for objects in the home, store, and museum shows the subjective nature of their value. *Claim, Consume, Curate* acts as an investigation into the creation of this value with each vignette suggesting different ways that form and narrative work together to build meaning in functional art.

Functional art is a so known by the monikers decorative art, applied art, design, craft, and ornamental art. The confusion about what to call functional art objects is an example of their complexity. The liminal artistic status of these objects between fine art and tool also reflects such inconsistency.

In the past, functional art has been deemed lower status art which implicates its makers and consumers as lower status as well. Historically, these makers and consumers are more often women. Furthermore, museum collections typically accession far more functional art than "fine art" from indigenous and non-Western peoples, these objects treated as anthropological more than artistic. This classification acts to de-emphasize the gravity of aesthetic and narrative purpose in objects that also play functional roles.

Modern life has transformed "The Home" into a space of personal identity and refuge and "The Store," a place of experimentation for that identity. Industrialization, imperialism, and more democratic consumerism have defined this new style of owning functional objects. These factors have also, slowly made "The Museum" more democratic and more community-oriented through programming and exhibitions that value more diverse narratives.

The power of place in *Claim, Consume, Curate* guides a more robust examination of the status of functional art. In it, we can find that the object acts as an outward symbol for the inner quest of belonging as we are clothed in our own personal exhibition, eating from our own displays, and spending from our own beliefs.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EXHIBITION FOR REFERENCE

THE HOME





PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EXHIBITION FOR REFERENCE

THE BOUTIQUE





The Boutique

Shopping has always been a part of life. The ways in which we shop, however, have changed over time. In the past, shopping was often a social activity, a chance to see and be seen. Today, shopping is often a solitary activity, a chance to find something that is unique and special. The ways in which we shop have changed, but the desire to find something that is unique and special remains the same.

Small text panels on the left wall provide additional information about the items on display.



The Boutique

Shopping has always been a part of life. The ways in which we shop, however, have changed over time. In the past, shopping was often a social activity, a chance to see and be seen. Today, shopping is often a solitary activity, a chance to find something that is unique and special. The ways in which we shop have changed, but the desire to find something that is unique and special remains the same.

Small text panels on the left wall provide additional information about the items on display.

1976. The objects were produced in a manner that allows for a complete imagining of how a material and feels. Encased items necessitate interaction with tags as price tags give narrative and 'pricing' information a visual continuation of the stores brand.

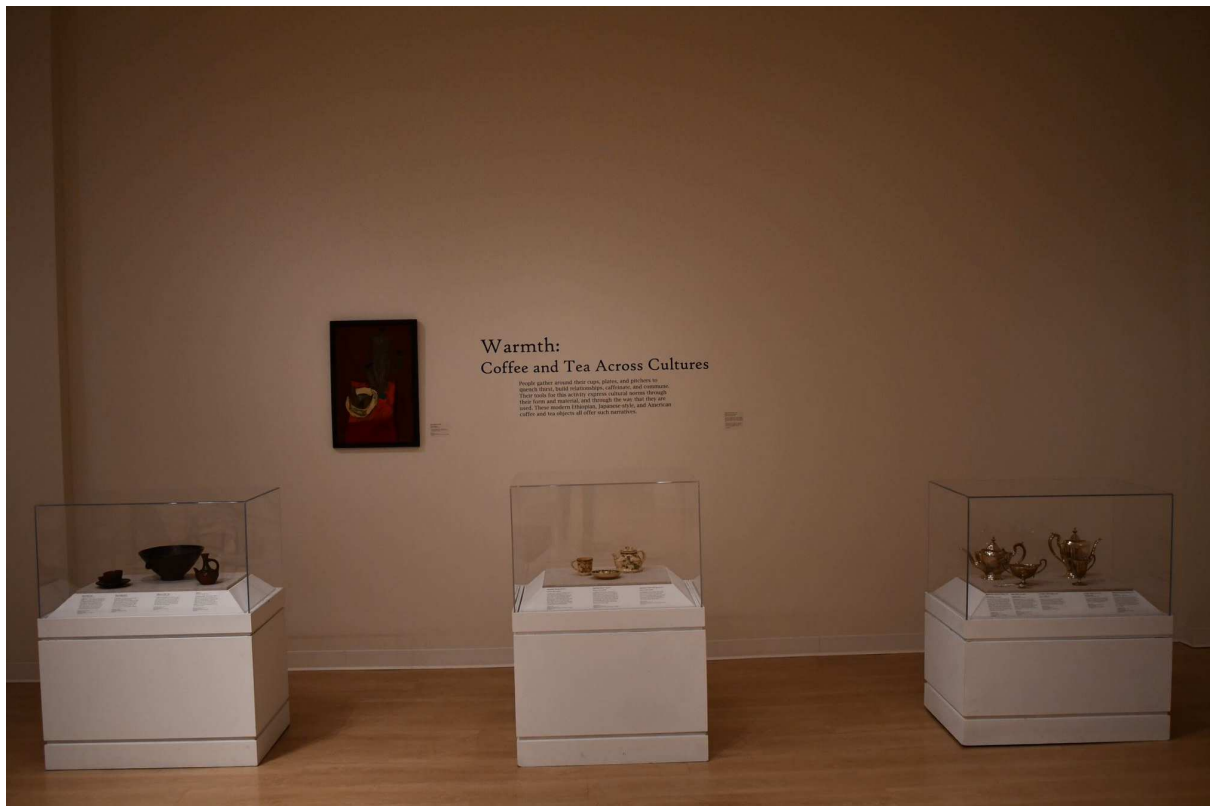
personal connection with products blends the value of the value of the buyer. The business-oriented curators a flow of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to focus relationship with a new object could mean. Could it fix an could it express belonging to a desirable group of people communicates that one is beautiful, worthy of love, being, cared-for? What kind of person do you believe shops that drives them to do so?



PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EXHIBITION FOR REFERENCE

THE MUSEUM

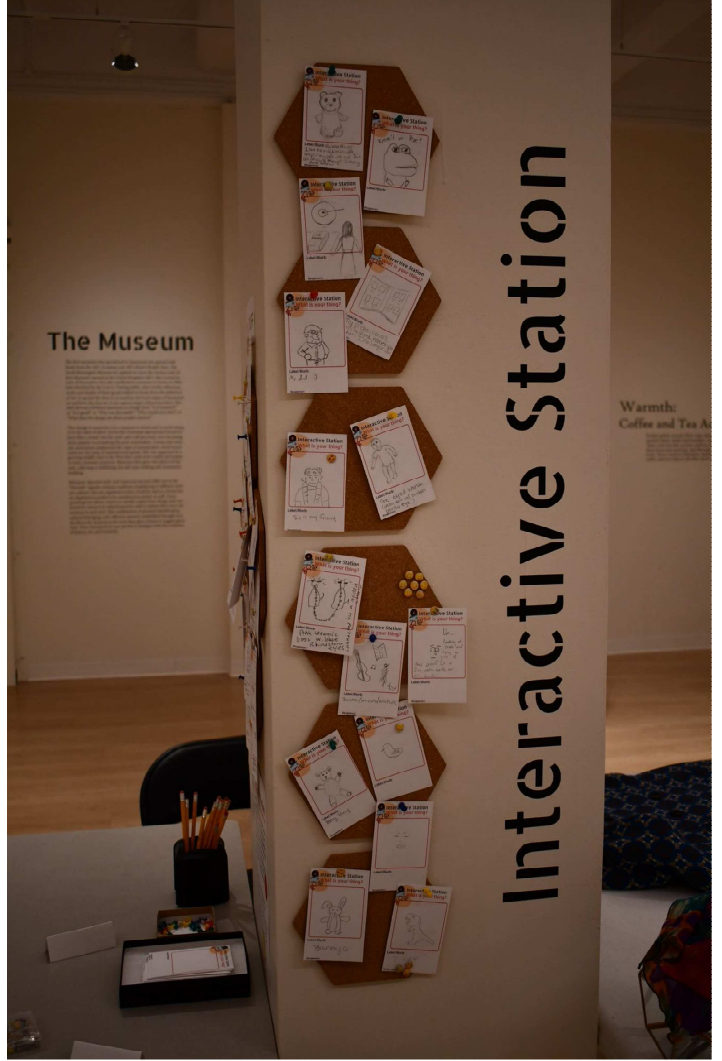




PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EXHIBITION FOR REFERENCE

INTERACTIVE STATION





EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

THE HOME

Jacobean-style Arm Chair, 19th c, Unknown Company (English), Woven Textile and Carved Wood, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Joseph and Ilma Uihlein, 1983.005.09

Floor Lamp, Arts and Crafts Movement, Tiffany Company (American, 1837-present), Leaded Glass and Bronze, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Joseph and Ilma Uihlein, 1983.005.60

Walnut Chest Stand, 19th c, Unknown Artist (Italian); Carved, treated, and assembled walnut; Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Joseph and Ilma Uihlein, 1983.005.01b

The Middle Kingdom; A survey of the geography, government, education, social life, arts, religion, &c., of The Chinese Empire and Its Inhabitants, 1848, Author S. Wells Williams (American, 1812-1884, b. New York), Wiley & Putnam Publishing Company (London, 1841-1848), Printed Book, Collection Classification: Rare Book, UWM Special Collections, Bequest of Charles P. Daly, DS709 .W72 1848b

George III Coffee Spoon, 1788, Thomas Wallis (British, 1758-1820, b. Great Britain), Cast Silver, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian, 1991.003.10a

Wine Cup, 1700, Unknown Artist (Ming Dynasty), Glazed Ceramic, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian, 1987.018.09

George III Candlesticks, 1780, Thomas Wallis (British, 1758-1820, b. Great Britain)), Brass, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian, 1991.003.38.01-02

Still life (with flower, fruit, basket and glass), n.d., Anonymous Artist, Oil on Canvas, Collection Classification: Painting, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Carl W. Moebius, 1986.012.02

THE BOUTIQUE

Conifer Earrings, n.d., unknown artist, Gold, Enamel, and Pearl, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.37a-b

Teardrop Earrings, n.d., unknown artist, Pressed Gold and Amethyst, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.38a-b

Loop Earrings, n.d., unknown artist, Filigree Gold and Agate, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.34a-b

Snow Earrings, 12th-14th c., unknown artist, Filigree Gold, Amethyst, Turquoise, and Pearl, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.35a-b

Tube-drop Earring, 12th-14th c, unknown artist, Pressed Gold, Amethyst, Turquoise, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.36a-b

Saint Theodore Ring, 18th c., Greek, unknown artist, Cast and Stamped Gold, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.42

Colored Saint Theodore Ring, 18th c., unknown artist, Champlevé Enamel and Gold, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.43

Chime Necklace, 1974, American, Metal, Wood, and Stone, Joan Miller, Collection Classification: Adornment, UWM Art Collection, Gift of the artist, Graduate 1974, 1974.333

Kina Shell Necklace, n.d., Papua New Guinea, Kina Shell and Woven Fiber, unknown artist, Collection Classification: Adornment, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Eugene and Inez Gilbert, 2011.024.01

Brooch, n.d., Champlevé Enamel and Gold, unknown artist, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.41

Scalloped-edge Pendant, n.d., Gold and Amethyst, unknown artist, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.39

Green-jeweled Pendant, n.d., Gold with Green Jewels, unknown artist, Collection Classification: Jewelry, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Charles Bolles Rogers, 1986.002.40

Habesha Kemis with Tilet Pattern, n.d., Ethiopian/Tigre/Amhara Tribe, Hand woven cotton, Collection Classification: Clothing—Outerwear, unknown artist, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk, 1989.039.21a

Netela Shawl with Tilet Pattern, n.d., Ethiopian/Tigre/Amhara Tribe, Hand woven cotton, Collection Classification: Clothing—Outerwear, unknown artist, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk, 1989.039.21b

Habesha Kemis, n.d., Ethiopian/Tigre Tribe, Hand woven cotton, Collection Classification: Clothing—Outerwear, unknown artist, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk, 1989.039.22a

Netela Shawl, n.d., Ethiopian/Tigre Tribe, Hand woven cotton, Collection Classification: Clothing—Outerwear, unknown artist, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk, 1989.039.22b

Britannia Ware Serving Spoon, 1840, American, Hall, Elton, & Co., Silver, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. And Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian, 1991.003.43a

Corinthian Pattern Sterling Spoon, 1900, American, George W. Shiebler & Co., Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. And Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian, 1991.003.44a-b

George III Coffee Spoon, 1788, English, Cast Silver, Thomas Wallis, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. And Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian, 1991.003.10c-d

Capodi Monterounded Box, 1880, Italian, Whiteware and china paint with metal rim, unknown artist, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. Edward P. Strothman, 1985.035.03

Covered Rouge Box, 1796-1820, Chinese, Powder Blue Porcelain, unknown artist, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. And Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian, 1987.018.03

Pentagonal Covered Box, 1596-1666, Japanese, Glazed Porcelain, Nonomura Ninsei, Collection
Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. And Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian,
1987.018.28

Head of a Dancer, 1959, American, Cast Bronze, George Goundie, Collection Classification: Sculpture,
UWM Art Collection, Gift of Joseph Frieber, 1993.006.01

Patent Applied for No. 31, 1890-1901, American, Lithograph, Crystal Fashion Plate Co., Collection
Classification: Print Media, UWM Art Collection, 2010.026

Patent Applied for No. 33, 1890-1901, American, Lithograph, Crystal Fashion Plate Co., Collection
Classification: Print Media, UWM Art Collection, 2010.028

Patent Applied for No. 41, 1890-1901, American, Lithograph, Crystal Fashion Plate Co., Collection
Classification: Print Media, UWM Art Collection, 2010.028

THE MUSEUM

Grey Coffee Pot, 1951, American, Oil on Canvas, Herbert Katzman, Collection Classification: Painting,
UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. And Mrs. Marvin Fishman, 1981.024.27

Corinthian Pattern Sterling Spoon, 1900, American, Electroplated Silver, George W. Shiebler & Co,
Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V.
Krikorian, 1991.003.44a-b

Hepplewhite-Engraved Sterling Teapot, 1930, American, Electroplated Silver, Reed & Barton, Collection
Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian,
1991.003.50b

Hepplewhite-Engraved Sterling Coffeepot, 1930, American, Electroplated Silver, Reed & Barton,
Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V.
Krikorian, 1991.003.50a

Sugar Bowl, 1930, American, Sterling Silver, Dominick and Haff, Collection Classification: Decorative
Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian, 1991.003.50c

Creamer Pitcher, 1930, American, Sterling Silver, Dominick and Haff, Collection Classification:
Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian, 1991.003.50d

Japonisme Teapot with Lid, mid-late 19th century, Japanese, Glazed Ceramic, Kinkozan Company,
Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V.
Krikorian, 1987.018.34

Japonisme Saucer, mid-late 19th century, Japanese, Glazed Ceramic, Kinkozan Company, Collection
Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian,
1987.065.33

Japonisme Teacup, mid-late 19th century, Japanese, Glazed Ceramic, Kinkozan Company, Collection
Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Krikorian,
1987.018.32

Jebena (Coffee Pot), Late 19th c., Ethiopian, Earthenware, Unknown Artist, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk, 1989.012.11

Saucer, Late 19th c., Ethiopian, Earthenware, Unknown Artist, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk, 1989.012.02

Sini (Coffee Cup), Late 19th c., Ethiopian, Earthenware, Unknown Artist, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk, 1989.012.01

Gan (Cooling Bowl), Late 19th c., Ethiopian, Earthenware, Unknown Artist, Collection Classification: Decorative Arts, UWM Art Collection, Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk, 1988.008.15

STORING STUFF

Wedding Silverware and Box, 1982, American, Wooden Box with Felt Lining, Reed and Barton, Private Collection (loan)

Drawer Organizer, 2019, China, Bamboo, Threshold Brand, Private Collection (loan)

Packaged Arkita Flatware Set, 2019, China; Cardboard Box, Plastic Ties, Stainless Steel; Threshold Brand, Private Collection (loan)

Loose Teagan Flatware, 2019, China, Stainless Steel, Room Essentials, Private Collection (loan)

Gaylord Archival Box 1, USA, Cardboard, Metal, and Foam, Gaylord Archival, UWM Art Collection

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