

MUSE

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beyond the vitrine,
across the street and
with the security guard

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Museum Futures is a transdisciplinary journal and platform for research on the dynamic ways a museum can perform.

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Cover by Angela Jennings. Image from the Treasures from the Metropolitan Museum of Art Zine (p. 5-6), Marble statue of the so-called Apollo Lykeios and found paper, 2014



Note: The following selections included in this issue of Museum Futures are excerpts. For the full article visit museumfutures.org

May 2016

Dear Reader,

While the conception of the museum is ever evolving, it still ricochets between a sacred place for preserving artifacts from the past, and a future-leaning civic space where new meaning and knowledge is produced. As an editorial team we were interested in exploring the peripheries of the museum and to consider how practices pioneered by those outside its thresholds could inform its future.

We asked contributors to look toward the overlooked and varied spaces of museums: the street next to the museum, the entrance and lobby, the coat room or bathroom. We asked contributors to question what museums could and should be: a hub, a school, a memory holder, an architectural experiment. We also asked contributors to consider the people that interpret and maintain museums: the art handler, "outside specialist", café worker, security guard, conservator, visitor, curator and educator.

During the winter and spring of 2016 we received a range of artworks, writings, and speculations. We were struck by the ways contributors flexibly responded to old and often brittle infrastructures and systems through exploring pedagogical, political and spatial possibilities. It's important to note that the selections included here are excerpts from longer expositions. We encourage you to visit museumfutures.org to browse the articles in full, and to lend your voice.

Finally, we hope you'll share your ideas for what museums can and should be. Send us a #yourmuseumfuture

Love,

Kate, Pablo and Chris

power, privilege + idealisms

In conversation with
Kerry Downey, transcript
by **Christopher Kennedy**

Chris: I wonder if you could talk about your relationship to museums, and how you got started as an educator at the MoMA.

Kerry: I was working at a nursing home and was asked to take an older woman named Eve, who was in a wheelchair, around to cultural sites in New York City. The family encouraged me to take her to places that I was also interested in, to make it mutually beneficial. So we went to MoMA and the MET a lot. I worked with her for six years and we went to museums that I didn't even know I was interested in before like the Museum of the City of NY. We would travel from the Upper East Side to the Brooklyn Museum using Access-a-Ride. We were very committed.

In trying to develop conversations with her at museums, inadvertently this meant I was trying to make museums accessible, both physically and socially. I was having to articulate my passion why we were there, what we were looking at. I have been developing affective labor

skills around art since I was in high school -- I worked one summer at a Senior Center. This long term caregiving deepened my patience and gave me space to hone in on my own passion for talking about art and using art as a model of being with others. MoMA hired me based on some of these experiences. I think I got really lucky because I had no museum experience, never studied education, and had very little teaching practice. But I think they recognized that I have some qualities that are innate and hard to teach, skills I've inherited or absorbed having grown up with parents as teachers.

Chris: Can you talk about social practice – its relationship to your work, and experience with the community partnerships program at the MoMA?

Kerry: Social practice has had a huge influence on my community partnership work, particularly my conversations with artists and curators who are also educators and interested in these overlaps: Douglas Paulson, Hatuey Ramos-Rermin, Elizabeth Hamby, Natasha Marie Llorens, Shellyne Rodriguez, Caroline Woolard, Robert Sember, Cassie Thornton, and my collaborative work with Flux Factory and Action Club. A few of us were discussing "Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship," a book by Claire Bishop that investigates socially engaged practices, questioning the emancipatory claims of participatory art. I found and still find this book to a be useful guide to the laying out

the myriad problems involved in community-based collaborations. I have come to have a more complex understanding of the entangled relationships between aesthetics, ethics, and institutions. I've also come to believe that there are no artificial hells. Instead, what you have is a continuum of spaces that do and do not feel safe to experiment and try out ideas, spaces where you can and cannot make room to challenge difficult topics like structural oppression or insecurity. Sometimes these spaces contain both, and are in a kind of tension. Perhaps this is a major difference between making art through MoMA with vulnerable populations and creating situations as an artist. There are different stakes and certainly very different relationships to power. I look for ways to build trust, acknowledge difference, and create space for listening and play. At the same time, I'm not believing in my ability to emancipate others, this is very dangerous thinking that undermines the work and reinvests in hierarchical relations, a performance of my privilege. I'm simultaneously disinvesting in idealisms -- I try to be very realistic about what is possible.

Most importantly, something that social practice has taught me is to try to keep the questions or problems close. What is it that am I doing when I develop art projects with "underserved" communities? What does it mean that I'm a white person visiting so many communities of color? What does it mean that I'm a middle-class, liberal arts-educated white queer going to a East New York's

transitional housing program for trans-folks? What skills, forms of care, forms of attention can I offer than are genuinely desired or needed? At its best, art offers extraordinary flexibility to bend around needs, desires, materials, different forms of time and space, etc. I work to bend the shape of art, education, and "MoMA" to be able to offer something of myself to a group of people. What "Artificial Hells" and social practice at large continues to make me wonder, is how can this work create space for radical pleasure that's not an empty container for impossible longings. I believe in the value of generating hope, but it's a thing that has to come from within a process that is collaborative and shared.

I have learned that the bottom line of what it is that I'm doing is 1. sharing MoMA's resources (art supplies, the collection, the classrooms) and 2. Sharing myself (my time, skills, passions, and experience). 3. Creating social and artistic experiences that make space for sharing ideas and acknowledging difference. I've learned is not to pretend I'm part of a community; a community partnership is with a community- but does MoMA or do I get to be part of that community? I don't know. Maybe. Sometimes. Over time? If at the end of the partnership when people hear "The Museum of Modern Art," if they feel slightly warmer towards the idea of a museum, that's great. But I'm not proselytizing museums and I'm not proselytizing MoMA or modern art. If anything, I can get down with being an ambassador for art. [...]

why dance in the museum?

Grace Hwang

This question has two readings: the first, does dance belong in the collection of a museum? (And, as such, can it be owned, preserved and archived in the manner of objects?) and the second, give reasons for choreographing and performing in the museum as a site.

The first is a trending question for museums – as dance is moving from auxiliary programming to commissioned work such as Miguel Gutierrez' latest *Age & Beauty Part I*¹ for the Whitney Biennial and choreography-based exhibitions such as *Table of Contents* with Siobhan Davies Dance at the ICA London. The MoMA recently acquired time-based works and invited dance² and performance artists to respond to the exhibition in *Performing Histories: Live Artworks Examining the Past*³, and collaborated with choreographer Boris Charmatz to produce the program, *Musee de la danse: Three Collective Gestures*⁴. The Hammer Museum in Los Angeles recently had an installation of Trisha Brown's *Floor of the Forest* as part of Trisha Brown Dance Company: *The Retrospective Project*⁵, and upcoming at the Walker Art Center, a mini-festival called *Composing Forward: The Art of Steve Paxton*⁶.

Perhaps the embedded question is, what are the

intentions of a museum to collect and present ephemeral, time-based work? On whose terms will dance be preserved and archived? And what exactly is it that is being collected – a score? the rights to perform the work? To illustrate, *Trio A*, an important work of modern dance history by Yvonne Rainer, is entrusted to the body archive of 5 dancers trained by Rainer as the only ones who are officially allowed to teach it. [...]

What a museum might do is to continue to play a part in supporting works of dance by presenting, hosting and commissioning works, and then leaving the performance in the care of the artist or a committed community. The museum could provide space for rehearsal or research, as in the case of Andrea Geyer's residency at MoMA, resulting in a commissioned video installation, *Three Chants Modern* – which examines the museum as an institution of time and then uses movement and video to question its form, authority and structure⁷. [...]

1. "Miguel Gutierrez." Whitney Museum of American Art April 2014.

2. "Table of Contents." ICA London. Jan. 2014

3. "Exhibitions." MoMA. Sept. 2012.

4. "Exhibitions." MoMA. Oct. 2013.

5. Mizota, Sharon. "Trisha Brown: Dance in the Museum, Artbound, KCET. May 2014.

6. "Walker Art Center." *Composing Forward: The Art of Steve Paxton*.

7. Geyer, Andrea. "Three Chants Modern." *Three Chants Modern*. June 2014.

In the site of the Museum where movement (of people and of objects) is highly regulated by a strict code of what is permitted and what is not permitted by owners and artwork contracts, by architecture and curatorial decisions, through guided tours and art history -- I am asking, can dance rupture existing systems and reveal what is possible? Can it shake habits and open doors? [...]

Score (for the body, relational)

Lean. Support.

*after docents. an action remembered from
teaching from an art object.*

*also, a movement score for duet or group body. slight
leans and weight shifts. who supports and bears the weight?*

*var. after Emily Goble. If a museum is a place where objects
go to die, then the task of museums is to reanimate decaying,*

lifeless objects.

var. after Tori and Jabari. Positions between partners.

Score (for the body and space)

Lead and Follow.

*after docents. when leading school groups through the
galleries. when informing, interpreting and making meaning
from objects.*

var. leadingfollowing after Lepecki quoting Erin Manning

*var. contrast to instrumentalize, as one could in a position
of authority and power*

var. unfollow or deny

var. mislead

var. in a canon

var. slowly, methodically, in unison

Score (for the space)

Place and Replace.

*after security guards assigned to a Starred Post. as in, an
art
object whose contract requires the continuous line of sight of
a guard; guard can only be free to move when being replaced
by another.*

*var. Starred Posts are situated so that movement is limited to
a single spot*

*var. Starred Posts are situated so as to impose continuous
movement*

memorandum on museums of curiosity + wonder

Richard Pell

I am the founder of a small museum that focuses on the intentional, hereditary changes that human beings have made to the living world. Everything from the domestication of dogs more than 10,000 years ago, to the present moment of synthetic biology. The Center for PostNatural History exists so that people can wrap their heads around this idea and discover some questions that don't have easy answers. I don't know what those questions are, that is up to the visitor. And I certainly don't expect that they will find any answers while perusing our museum. We are just the first stop on the journey; a signpost at the entrance to your very own rabbit hole. The point of visiting our museum it is to leave a little hungrier than you arrived. It is a concept that shares some common ancestry with the first museum in the United States.

Charles Willson Peale's American Museum was founded in 1786 as the first public institution in the United States to consider the general public as a valid audience for the cultivation of wonder and curiosity. It brought together fine art and natural history such that the visitor was, "led always from familiar objects

toward the unfamiliar... into the mysteries of life". One of Peale's foundational specimens was the first complete skeleton of a mastodon to be exhibited anywhere in the world. The mind-blowing nature of this creature, at the time, cannot be overstated. So little was understood about this prehistoric wonder, that it was exhibited simply as "The Great Incognitum" or The Great Unknown¹. When was the last time you visited a science museum and were shown something so new and incredible that science was at a loss for words to describe it? And yet, isn't this is the experience that we want to have? To arrive at the bleeding edge of what is knowable and gaze over the edge into the unknown and ask a question without feeling dumb.

Recently I was invited to put a few words together about the role that museums play in regards to curiosity and found myself struggling to clarify the difference between two concepts that in the past I have used virtually interchangeably². For years I've blurred or ignored the distinction between wonder and curiosity. I often champion them both as a bedrock goal, in contrast to more

traditional, quantitatively focused assessments that are measured by knowledge acquisition or learning outcomes. However, when I tried to split the difference between wonder and curiosity, I realized these are two very different characters. In fact, if "Wonder" and "Curiosity" were people, they would have issues with one another.

The two clearly spend a lot of time together, hence the confusion. And they look quite alike on the surface perhaps they are siblings? If so, I suspect Wonder is the older of the two. Wonder generally describes the emotional experience of encountering something truly unexpected and amazing. Wonder is associated with a childlike way of thinking. Wonder yearns for richly novel experience and when she finds it, doesn't want it to end. Wonder is an ecstatic state of completeness. It requires no further information. There are things Wonder would rather not know. In fact, if Wonder had her way, we probably wouldn't be having this conversation.

The Bible is littered with "wondrous" miracles, from

selfigniting shrubbery to extraordinarily efficient lamp oil. The Wonder that they inspire is an entirely appropriate response to the experience of encountering an omniscient God. In this sense, Wonder is a complete experience. The architecture of cathedrals and temples does nothing if not inspire wonder. Its function in part, is to chase away any doubts about who is in charge. It is cathartic rather than cerebral. From Day One, the Biblical God advises his two initial followers to steer clear of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Children raised in the Christian tradition who ask too many questions are provided with the cautionary tale of the "Doubting Thomas".

Curiosity, on the other hand, does have some doubts. Cautious skepticism may be what separates Curiosity from Wonder. Curiosity always wants to know more and is willing to risk disappointment to achieve this end. While Wonder has its eyes respectfully closed, Curiosity is peaking. Wonder was perfectly happy to visit the Emerald City and behold The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, while Curiosity pulled back the curtain



Ribless Mouse Embryo produced by Dr. Moises Mallo's lab in Oeiras, Portugal

revealing the truth. It is worth noting that the character who exposed the fraudulent wizard was neither Dorothy, nor any of her anthropomorphic companions, but rather her tiny dog Toto.³

Curiosity and Wonder also have something in common. The unexpected is what propels them. But, Wonder wants to hold onto the experience: "Don't ruin it" while Curiosity takes the risky next step by asking, "Why is it that way?" Curiosity thinks that Wonder is naive. Wonder thinks that Curiosity is a buzzkill.

I think they actually

need each other. Without an appreciation for Wonder, Curiosity IS a buzzkill. Left to its own devices, Curiosity would conduct an autopsy on the family cat just to find out how it works (pun intended). And without Curiosity, Wonder would still be staring up at the stars, satisfied that it is the center of the universe. [...]

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1. Sellers, Charles Coleman. Mr. Peale's Museum: Charles Willson Peale and the First Popular Museum of Natural Science and Art. New York: Norton, 1980.
 2. Pell, Richard W. "Can sites cultivate curiosity?" University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh. December 10th, 2015. Panel Discussion.
 3. Baum, L. Frank, and Michael Hague. The Wizard of Oz. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982.

in search of social relevance

Constantin Greiner

Anyone who has kept a close eye on museum work over the last few years will have seen many institutions having great difficulty carrying out to the full all the duties expected of them. Fortunately, there are still some dazzling examples of those who have indeed succeeded in bringing us impressive work but, sadly, these remain the exception. We cannot be beguiled by new and repeated reports of record visitor numbers. Only a handful of museums and galleries achieve these records and fill their spaces with a broad audience. Attendance is falling year after year.

For many of the medium to large museums it seems that

the gap between the inward-facing areas of work (research and training) and outward-facing tasks (communication and entertainment) is becoming too great. Fulfillment of the ever-increasing demands in just one of these fields alone presents many museums with significant challenges (especially in view of the current resourcing environment). Fundamental differences between the various beneficiaries and target groups mean that the demands behind every area of work also differ.

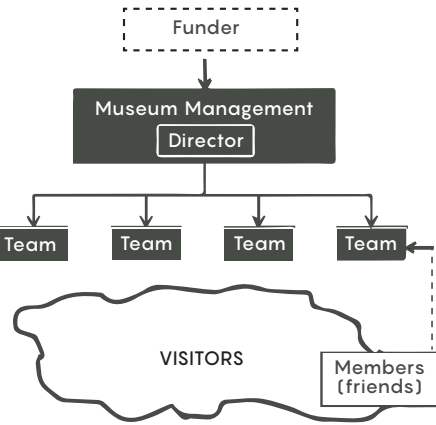
There are some astonishing examples of 'succès d'estime' whereby some institutions really consolidate their position in society but this happens all too

rarely. As a result, the municipal museums lose not only visitors but, above all, their social relevance. And it is now the middle-classes who barely ever make their way to a museum for they see the contents as not of any contemporary relevance and the 'visitor experience' as boring. As long as this section of the public stays away, it is actually irrelevant whether this criticism is accurate or whether it is simply a matter of prejudice. [...]

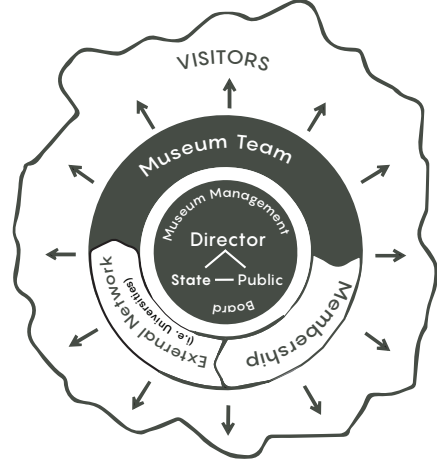
In contrast to a German museum model passed down

organisation's activities and is the final operational authority. In addition to the director are representatives from both the funding body and the museum management community. The funding representatives ensure that the museum is financed in a way that corresponds to its objectives and also share responsibility for ensuring that the activities of the management team are oriented towards the agreed objectives. The representatives of the community are more firmly tasked with a

Current Organizational Structure



Model for Future Org. Structure



over the years, an open and participative institutional organisation is characterised by a museum management comprising not solely its director but an enriched leadership involving others. In the model underpinning this arrangement, the Director is positioned at the centre of the organisation. He, or she, leads and takes responsibility for the

shared, shaping role such as bringing in new ideas. A shared responsibility also lies with them, in particular that of ensuring additional resource and support from beyond the museum's immediate environment. A special feature of this participative institutional organisation is that task completion is not organised

within the museum according to a hierarchy. It's more about supporters who are bound up in the museum's 'cosmos' and who lend their own support to the fulfillment of tasks. As well as the now obligatory 'Friends of' group, this 'cosmos' also comprises a network of interested parties and this includes universities, tourism associations, municipal marketing offices and so on. Museum staff play a coordinating role which also includes quality assurance. They bring together aspects of various tasks, namely those which are not directly worked on in the museum itself, to form a whole and to ensure a level of performance suited to a museum.

This broader management works to the objective of varied ideas and multilayered influences being taken into consideration when shaping the programme.

But in order that the museum's capacity to act remains safe, it is essential that the management focuses its ideas and adopts a shared agenda. The tasks, roles and responsibilities are also determined here.

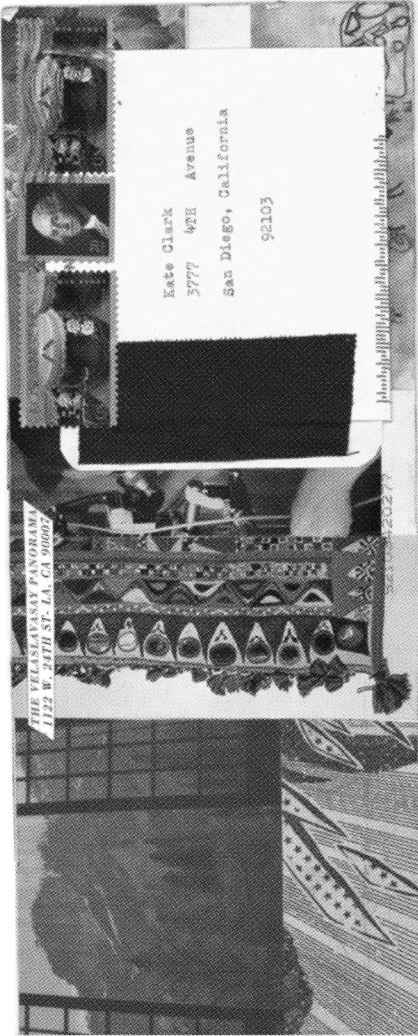
Involving a broader range of people in the management process will, in the most natural of ways, bring to 'new target groups' a greater currency and relevance to the museums' area of interest. Narrow, blinkered approaches to the business itself will be enriched and refreshed by new ways of looking at things from the outside. With a window of opportunity like this, the self-image of museums would certainly change from being a cultural 'archive' to a 'platform' for cultural experiences. Social relevance comes with the participation of society within that platform. [...]

panoramic inquiries

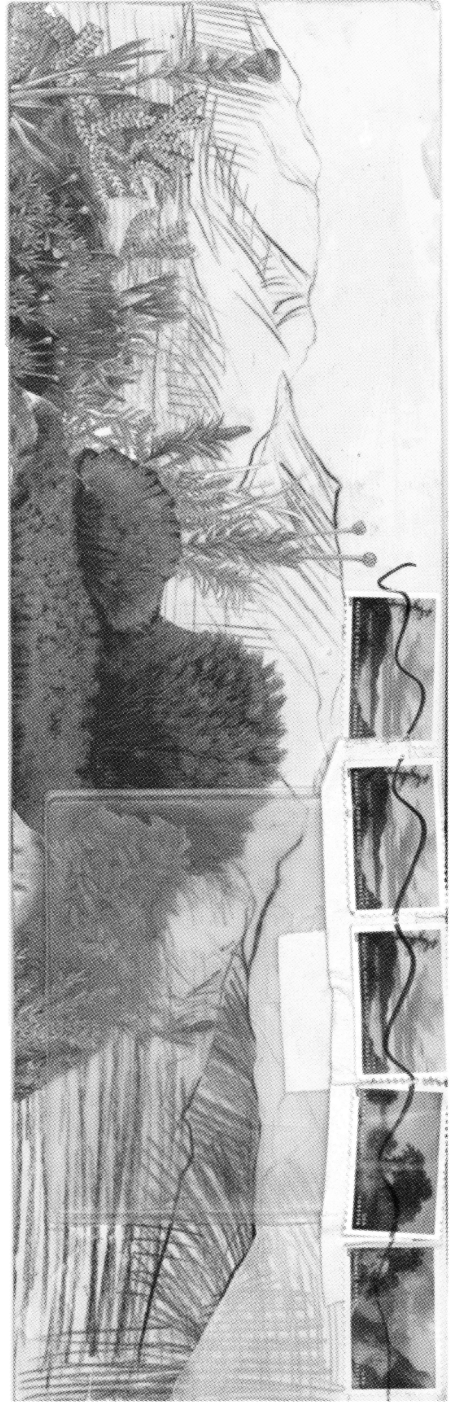
Sara Velas and Kate Clark

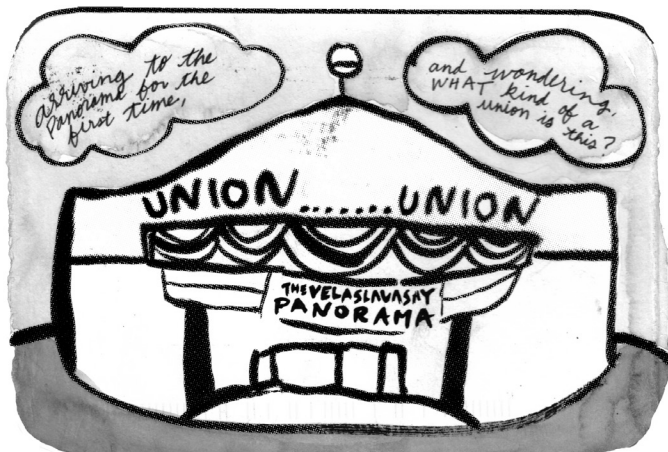
These postcards are a series of exchanges between Sara Velas, the founder of the Velaslavasay Panorama, and Kate Clark, artist and Museum Futures co-editor.

Drawing on the illustrious history of the great panorama paintings of the 18th and 19th centuries, The Velaslavasay Panorama is an exhibition hall, theatre and garden dedicated to the production and presentation of unusual visual experiences, including those of the 360-degree variety. Located in a former tile layers union meeting hall, The Velaslavasay Panorama can be found in University Park in the West Adams Historic District of Los Angeles.

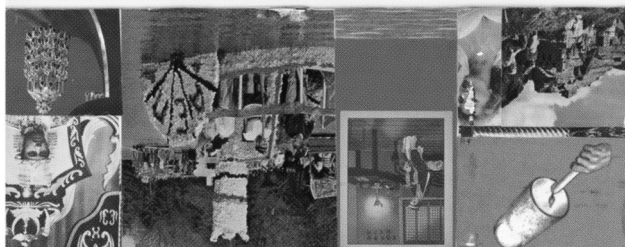
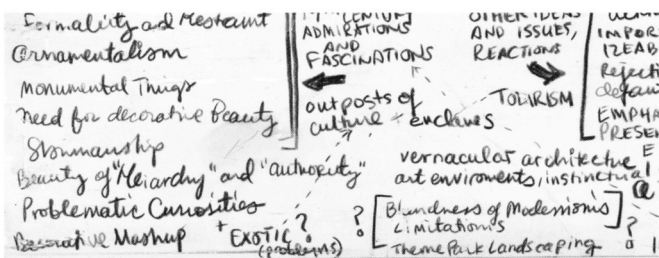


Sara Velas





Kate Clark

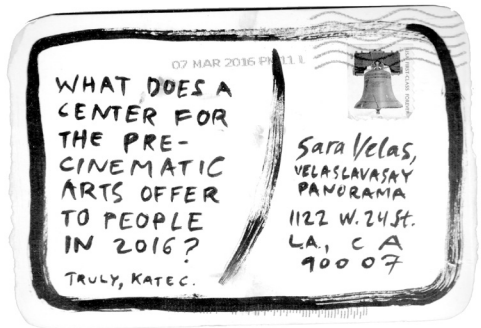


Sara Velas

Interweavings with people and places
in nooks and crannies.

What does a center for the pre-cinematic
arts offer to people in 2016? – K.C.

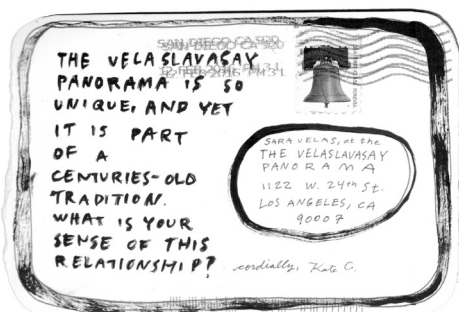
These things and entertainments –
“popular before the invention of film” –
can still hold interest & intrigue yet shift, of
course, in the present day. Of course many
want to draw a line between the medium and
the message. But the medium/message are
always intertwined, yet these two things are
not always the same in a different context
and time period. An 18th century German
novella can hold significance for an
American reader of today but this
“meaning” or resonance is very different
now in 2016 than when it was written in
1774. And yet, not really. But yes, quite
different, but still connected. Or not. Maybe
the translation has changed everything
anyways. Again the textbook answer: the
traditional aspect of things offers contrast to
the attention span and media of today.
Actually, more often this is a manipulation
or reframing of things perceived as
traditional. Doing things with a very tactile
nature and sensibility. Sensation, immersion
and emotion dependent on physical
experience in the world around us. It’s
possible a lot of this stems from a yearning
for tradition and cultural anchors. “Pre-
cinematic” is merely one layer in this
project. Sometimes, this reference point is
the shorthand for those inquiring about
“What exactly is really going on
here?” The Velaslavasay Panorama has
taken on its own character, personality and
navigational course – this is what steers the
ship as much as anything. I’ve more
recently stopped myself from saying “Pre-
Cinematic” (instead saying art forms
popular before the invention of cinema)
since this type of linear framing of B.C.
(Before Cinema) and A.D. (After Digital)
makes things very hierarchical. Why must
everything be “leading up” to the moving
image? Implying evolution that everything
is always higher upwards stronger better
improved. But a lot of times, its simply
change. Exchanging one thing for another.



realm, the well I draw from is deep and murky –
something I don’t actually want to pin down in a
few succinct phrases. An essence which sustains
the core ideas and general thrust of things. A
philosophical opposition to explaining or dictating
an experience. Hoping to simply create the
experience and offer it, allowing for different
interpretations and the added experience one
comes to it on. A few times, I suppose I’ve not been
the ideal interviewee because folks would ask me
“Now that you’ve done this, what would you like
to have happen?” Getting at a higher pinpointed
truth or “secret meaning.” My genuine answer is
that I want to keep working on it, tending to it and
aligning its growth - similar to a garden ((and also
literally a garden)). Our small Velaslavasay team of
collaborators enjoy working together very much
and, though spread thin through logistics, pulled in
multiple directions of obligation with and extremely
limited resources, much like a happy ship of folks
travelling the seas together on a strange small
rickety boat hoping for new discoveries and created
experiences.

Arriving to the Panorama for the first time, and wondering, what kind of a union is this?
 The Velaslavasay Panorama is so unique, and yet it is part of a centuries-old tradition. What is your sense of this relationship? - K.C.

The Velaslavasay Panorama exists to create something immersive - in one instance specifically through the panoramic medium (i.e. the 19th century Robert Barker definition of a panorama) - but also generally through every aspect of what is being presented and created. All details matter, nothing is neutral (whether intentional or mistaken). The objects left out (or put away) when visitors come to visit. The tone of voice and experience of receiving a ticket at the front desk. Typography, printed materials and correspondence. The flavors presented and the sense of light. Smells and the activities beyond the fence or on the street. In a sense, assisting the visitor into playing out a miniature moment of theatre, though they didn't always realize that is what might be happening. In the early days, on Hollywood Boulevard, I was most often the person greeting the visitors. The ambiguity of the place created a different or unknown set of expectations. *There was a pizza sign. There was music playing. There was a sense of dirty abandon on that section of Hollywood Boulevard.* Confused tourists, mislead by early 2000's web postings of "a motel on Hollywood Boulevard," encountered a series of discount stores, Armenian grocers. Though having its roots in an 18th/19th century medium, a present day application shifts to a different context. Blah blah blah. Velaslavasay a meditation on tourism and semi-embrace of anti-authoritarian-non-high-art. That's an old story, though, that tension between high-and-low art. Exquisite art often happens unintentionally. Intentional art isn't always exquisite. Sometimes people asked me "well, its art, though, isn't it?" It sounds a bit extreme writing this out, but there's a layer of using nostalgia as a medium, playing with historical memory and the invention of something that isn't there. That's in part the illusion, the desire to exist between something that is real and something that is beyond real and something that would never or could never exist or those moments when truth is stranger than fiction. Visions in the world that are too strangely beautiful or existentially uncanny to feel as if they've been pulled from cinema. In this



Maybe that bird couldn't run very fast but boy did she have beautiful feathers. Extinct! So the new variety is fast fast fast, but blandish brown feathers. Aside from the predating of cinema, a huge component of the things which fit under the umbrella of the Velaslavasay offer a meditation on illusion, and the spots in between a suspension of dis-belief and full awareness of the suspension and playing along with the act. Sometimes, mistakes are made - both intentionally and unintentionally - which fulfill these criteria. Entertainments and art forms that are focused very much on illusion. Sometimes, this is cinema too. But film, moving image, video, movies, TV, etc. - there's so very much of it now in many varieties. Drawing people's attention to the early days of cinema and before can sometimes remind us of when these early moving pictures really felt magical. Cinema now a days can certainly feel magical, but its less connected to technology. No, I take that back. There are many recently made tools that can be used to make films more magical. Its impossible to imagine an alternate universe where film was never invented, but it would be interesting to see where things would be now a days with art and entertainment. Contemplating what could have been - is that what we're creating and presenting? (Maybe that's a part of why I'm so obsessed with North Korea as a comparison of North and South like alternate universes. I realize that's a problematic statement) And yet some of the project's significance is heavily dependent on a psychically whispered conversation with the history and development of cinema. Its reference point is (in part) a world where cinema exists and has deeply impacted us and more specifically Los Angeles - the showcase city which developed itself as a backdrop, both physically and conceptually, historically and in the present day.

Museum Mixtape is a video-album in which up-and-coming rappers perform improvised freestyle rhymes as live critiques of museums in the southeast United States. The piece aims to create a playful connection between hip-hop narratives and institutional art spaces, reflecting on the current state of cultural economies, institutional community engagement and emerging subcultural forms and their intersections.



letras museum mixtape

Juan Obando

Absolute: Ackland Art Museum, Chapel Hill, NC

Alright, rise and grind y'all
Welcome to Chapel Hill, North Carolina
We're at the Ackland Art Museum
We're actually here at the Contemporary Art department
I'm gonna give you a quick walkthrough

Look, my name's Abs
You talk about the best, you gotta mention me
I snuck into the back of the museum
I skipped the fee
Contemporary means it pretty new, essentially

Some of this Art isn't very understandable
Here's a painting of a naked woman, with some animals
I mean, let's move on
What we got next, man?
This looks like Charles Manson with a sex change

I know these artists are on their grind, like the X-Games
but this painting here stinks like sweat stains
It annoys me like road blocks, so I gotta move on
I won't stop
And this next joint is so hot
It probably writes rhymes, it's a robot!
It looks like it does everything but roll pot
I blow guap, my lifestyle's exciting
Google Images has way better lightning

Picasso Baby, it's art eh way Abs raps
and this next joint is cool because it's "abstract"
But this next joint, I say it's objective
It's clearly childbirth from the baby's perspective

Maybe I'm wrong, I know it's not a Monet
You thought it was just us? Well, here's the big homie
Look, if I made this you all probably laugh
This dude looks like Shrek on a body cast

Where's the exit at? Am I warm or cold?
I've seen better artwork from a 4-year old
But this next joint? I'm kinda loving this
You could put it in your room and it will hide your ugliness

An MC with a Hammer and you ain't touching this
I'm balling, but this is too expensive rug to get
If I was wealthy, I would put it on my dad's floor
but this the type of rug you pay a hundred stacks for

A master of my craft, I'm no apprentice
The game needs me like this devil needs a dentist
I'm just playing
I really kinda truly, though
would probably would put this big thing in my studio
I'm just playing
I say these things to get a laugh
And I can see the picture when I'm stepping back
I had fun and I think they saved the best for last
but time is money so I gotta hit the exit fast

museum as folk

Jamel Williams

Growing up, I recall visiting 3 museums: The Brooklyn Children's Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Natural History. For each one I remember boarding the yellow school bus and racing to the back to sit with the cool kids. Visiting Museums was something I was excited about but only happened occasionally via school field trips, as I now realize our teachers who all lived in Long Island Suburbs probably wanted to provide us the experience and knowledge of other worlds outside of our own. Of course it was always a fun time, but I never grasped the essence of what type of experience museums provide for the people, or maybe I just didn't understand what it provided for my people.

One of my recent struggles has been pretending to be museum cultured but actually not having the same experience and exposure as my peers. Museums were not readily available to me in my neighborhood growing up. One would tell me that at my current age and ability, I have the opportunity to explore different museums and become well versed in the experiences that I've missed out on. My response to that person would be, I've had no choice but to try to expose myself to museums however, my ability to understand them, absorb the information and be inspired by the artifacts is disabled.

Presently, I try to attend museums when I can. I don't attend as many as I probably should because I am intimidated and overwhelmed by the material. At this point it would be helpful to learn how to interact with the pieces and information the museums offer but presently, we still have no "beginner" museums in my community. Ethnic communities are currently going through what everyone likes to call gentrification. Generally there is a change in scenery, more housing developments, more stores that have replaced age-old mom and pop shops.

Does the absence of museums in ethnic communities relate to identity issues? I watch my younger brothers as they grow and realize that though I complain about not having local access to museums throughout my years of enculturation, they are really in a more troubling place. The schools they attend don't have the funding to frequent museum trips, and the communities are more detached from culture. All they have left are the community parks to play sports. While sports are important to children for their physical ability, what about their intellectual ability to understand who they are and where they come from? Parents have the capacity to teach culture and tradition but with no museums in the community, they have no incentive to do so

because they are slowly losing the history themselves.

Based on the idea that museums are numerically more present than Mc. Donald's and Starbucks combined¹, there should be a plethora of museums to choose from as I travel my streets. We have few positive outlets in our neighborhoods that empower us to learn more and develop, to have the capability to stretch beyond our communities to understand the cultures of others. In a nutshell, we never were given the opportunity to dialogue with our own heritage and culture so how can we know how to dialogue with others? Part of the responsibility of a museum in my opinion is to serve as a remote replica of the essence of a group's

culture and experience. Without museums in our own community we cannot properly voyage these replicas of the world.

With culture and history absent in the home, in the schools, in the communities, what institution is left? For my children, I am relying on museums of the future to help me educate them on the culture that I've never fully grasped. I'm relying on museums to be the folk storyteller who sat fireside and entertained people with stories of the past. I am relying on museums to tell the stories grandparents and great grandparents belt out when they reminisce on how life used to be.

¹[Ingraham, C.](#) (June 13, 2014). Washington Post.

treasures from the metropolitan museum of art

Angela Jennings

The Metropolitan Museum of Art was founded in 1870 in New York, NY. It's the largest art museum in the United States with the permanent collection containing more than two million works from around the world. Throughout the Met's 144 years of existence it's been the museum guard who's been entrusted with the extensive

responsibility of sustaining safety for the people, galleries and the art. Guards spend pronounced time upon the museum floors during which relations are formed interweaving through people, galleries and artworks leading to forms of conscious rising. Guards experience the complex duality of balancing the circumstance of being placed on the bottom of the

wage and social spectrum within the institutional museum structure while given the fundamental authority of guardians.

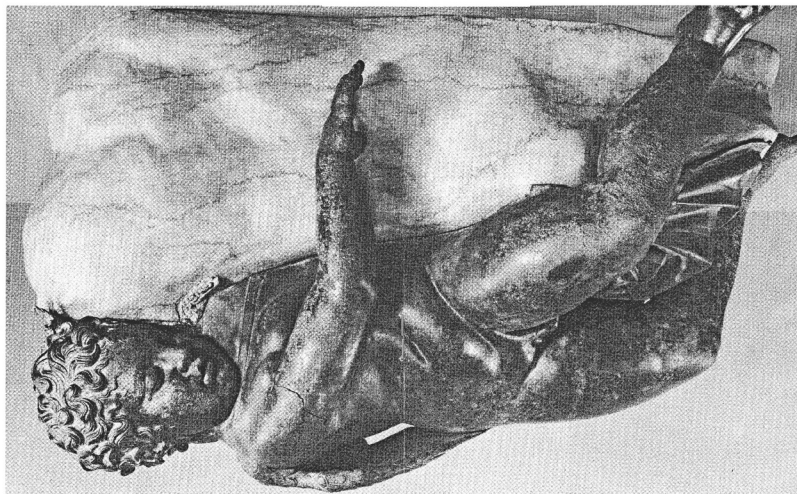
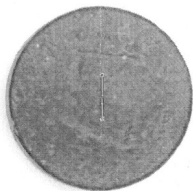
The guards' position at the Met requires one to be quietly aware at all times, this requires continued physical and mental strength. A few of the duties include reporting to one's assigned section and post, standing, surveying, directing and informing visitors and staff, communicating with the dispatch office, and memorizing the museum's layout, specific artworks, events and shows. Despite the numerous appointed tasks, the job functions largely in states of monotony.

In most cases guards spend the majority of the day standing on their feet, in their own minds without interruption; a type of cerebral numbing zone. Many counteract this zone through sketching or writing on small pads of paper, completing crossword

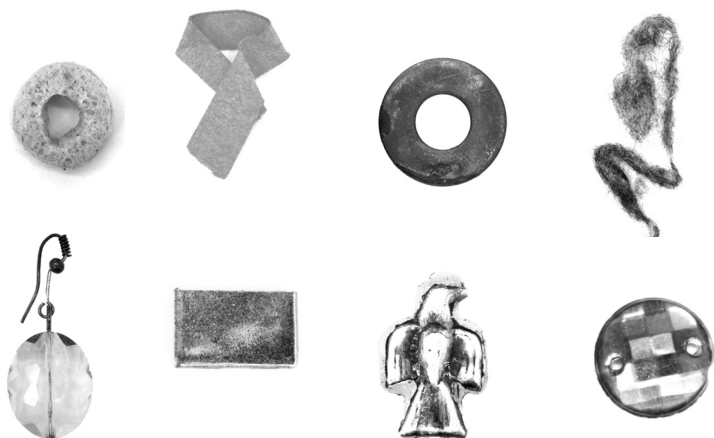
puzzles, and even learning new languages through the use of small flashcards hidden in their hands. There are also those who seek to memorize every art piece and detail found within specific galleries.

Some guards speed up the presence of time by activating the rule of "no backpacks on backs" as a strict mission, keeping their eyes and bodies alert and approach every visitor breaking the rule. Yet, there are others that let this rule slide and tend to focus their eyes on the figures and faces of the visitors, and either discuss their thoughts with team members or keep their views to themselves. And there are those who pass the time keeping their spirits high by singing songs within.

Throughout my duration of working as a security guard at the Met, I too attempted the majority of these strategies. Yet, most days the numbing zone took full effect. It was during this time that



Centerfold from the Treasures from the Metropolitan Museum of Art Zine, Sleeping Eros and found pill, 2014



I started to observe not only the people and art, but the small lost remnants of being left behind on the gallery floors. While on duty I began to take on the role of an archaeologist, this duty gave me more to contemplate.

Towards the end of my first month on the job I saw the first relic; it was located on the floor in the middle of gallery 169 – Art of the Later Roman Empire: Third Century A.D. The Met describes this gallery as demonstrating changes in social and artistic trends that emerged during the later imperial period. Displayed in the gallery are marble sarcophagi, which replaced traditions of cremation and attest to a shift in culture. As I picked the relic up off of the floor its form became apparent, it spoke to that of the human figure. The relic, composed of two main features including a red round bead and an elongated jade-like bead, attached together with yellow string suggested the form of a head and torso. In this moment of finding a

continuum of embodiment arose, encompassing the absent bodies that once rested in their sarcophagi, the figurative jewel, its previous owner, the visitors and myself. For the next 5 months I continued to search and scan the museum floors and collect relics, which I now sincerely think of as treasures.

I collected over 100 treasures from the museum, most of which are just a few centimeters wide including sequins, washers, beads, dust, earrings, buttons, and objects that are too abstract to be given names other than what seems to be their material makeup. I developed a cataloging system to preserve the order and safety of the objects by placing them into plastic bags that were then labeled according to the week from which the treasures were found.

Currently I'm in the process of developing a photo book entitled Treasures from The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The treasures will be photographed digitally referencing the photographic

strategies applied by the Met. Each object will receive its own page and will be ordered by implementing the cataloging system I developed based on chronology. Some of the treasures have also been digitized. With the prevalent practices of 3D scanning and photo digitalization of artworks across the world, it made sense to incorporate this process into the collection. The creation of 3d scans, also permits the ability to digitally print replicas of the treasures made from bioplastic using a 3D printer.

Through these gestures I intend to preserve and present the treasures in the most pristine way. These small artifacts of human existence found within the Met attest to the histories formed between life, art and the institution. The collection illuminates sets of constructed hierarchical functions within the museum, including the social standing and significance given to security guards along with the material relationships found between the treasures and the Met's permanent collection.

the pain of the summer venice tourist

Paloma Checa-Gismero

Researchers believe that the fast rise of the sea surface temperature is partly a result of a process known as the 'urban heat island effect'; where regions experiencing rapid industrial and urban expansion produce vast amounts of heat, making the area warmer than its surroundings. The city where I am at is sinking, and enthusiasts say that an art biennial will help keep it afloat.

Upon disclosure of my ticket I cross the turnstile. I am here to report back on art in national pavilions. I pass under a shade promising of a temporary freshness that will soon die. It is the evening of summer, and I have been in this city for sixteen hours; coffee helps. I tried to leave the Bureaucrat back in California, with her ways, goals, and units. My body arrived here walking,

and walking I shall be for the rest of the day. In my bag: map, pad, pen and wallet. Hours before I marched, a boat brought me to this land, and before that there were planes, and cars, and trolleys. Where was I. Flying. I sat over deserts, oceans, islands, and towering snowed peaks. Walking, I was one more head amongst a million of cruise-ship dwellers. Seeking authenticity I

wandered out of the light, and found myself in the familiarity of affordable wine. I drank, I slept, and then I woke and I walked again towards this turnstile in the shade. Today I am the tourist who travels to wander through images that the Bureaucrat had long ago described. This is the isle of icons and surfaces; where artworks' decay is praised. Icons come and dip their toes in stinky rising waters, pictures have bathed themselves in its shores for centuries. And some of those images were sometimes called prostitutes. Now they are all kept locked up in houses and loading docks. My job is to check that they're enclosed in tight narrative jackets.

There are multiple houses of which I can now just remember five. I smile to the warm breeze. To my right is the house of Germany. The house of Germany is a hopeful factory of unlike subjectivities, the most constructivist of all. A factory of gold, of images, of documents, and of ways of resistance. Four artists reflect on images, their reproducibility, labor, and economy, announced the Bureaucrat. Olaf Nicolai, Tobias Zielony, Hito Steyerl, Jasmina Metwally and Philip Rizk propose four production models: the printing unit, the motion capture studio, the workshop, and the rooftop; they speak as well of the shadowed secret micro economies that envelope national central banks. [...]

Houses are set in a garden. North is the house of England, the worst of all pavilions. The most

evident, proudly self-standing joke at the gate: a tubular colossal yellow penis spoils the snakey dances inside. It's sad, as these dances are classic feathers where cast legs peep in and out of mahogany dressers. And I like their modernist arrangements too, yes I do, but they just retell the old tale of objects standing solid in a gallery. Monumental Sarah Lucas --but yellow and expensive; yes. Pebbles from the garden where these buildings are fill my shoes, cracking through my sweaty feet. My stomach, filled with air, roars. I sit, it is not even noon. The same artworks work differently in different settings, and I remember reading that climate change has global and site-specific effects for lagoons across the globe. That hikes in temperature and sea levels are expected everywhere, but that the particular geological features of each site, the composition of its watershed, and its human uses, all of them will ultimately condition the extent and character of the impact that this global environmental crisis will have in each lagoon-- and then I wonder on the environmental impact of these houses in this lagoon. Here I am sitting twenty metres from the water, behind bushes, grabbing a cheese sandwich and a soda from the cafeteria next to me. A white cube, with a growing line of hungry art people longing for a break. All of them like me, sighing wandering in between houses, walking and stopping, and walking again. We are so very much inside the city but yet so very alien to it. [...]