

Making Museums Matter

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~~Making Museums Matter is an important read for museum professionals and students of museum and library science studies. I learned a lot about museum history, major shifts in museum development and theories for collaboration between museums and libraries.~~

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~~The average museum visitor in the UK is female, between 45 and 74 years old, comes from an upper socio-economic background, and is more likely to be Caucasian than Black, Asian or any other ethnic minority.~~

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~~MAKING MUSEUMS MATTER: FROM ADVOCACY TO ACTION Museums connect people with artifacts and ideas that present diverse perspectives. Whatever challenges our country and communities mayMAM face, museums will continue to play a vital role through the interpretation of different cultures, the facilitation~~

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~~MAKING MUSEUMS MATTER: By Stephen E. Weil. Washington Carr, David 2001-07-01 00:00:00 ent institutions, and sometimes for different reasons in the same institution. Robert Martin, recently said that after arriving as director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, he discovered that the rich array of museum profesThe challenge of writing a single sentence sionals, unlike the professional librarians bearing relevance and truth for all kinds in his experience, have relatively few ...~~

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~~In this volume of 29 essays, Weil's overarching concern is that museums be able to "earn their keep"—that they make themselves matter—in an environment of potentially shrinking resources. Also included in this collection are reflections on the special qualities of art museums, an investigation into the relationship of current copyright law to the visual arts, a detailed consideration of how the museums and legal system of the United States have coped with the problem of Nazi-era art, and a series of delightfully provocative training exercises for those anticipating entry into the museum field.~~

~~Weil has long been considered one of the museum community's most insightful commentators. In this volume of 29 essays, his overarching concern is that museums be able to 'earn their keep' in an environment of potentially shrinking resources.~~

~~In his third book for the Smithsonian Institution, where he is with the Center for Education and Museum Studies, Weil argues that museums are not and should not be mysteries, but rationally organized institutions directed toward articulable purposes. He explains how museums can be examined in their entirety and assessed for their overall quality in a demonstrably objective way. An index, apparently, is not required. Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR~~

~~The concept of an encyclopedic museum was born of the Enlightenment, a manifestation of society's growing belief that the spread of knowledge and the promotion of intellectual inquiry were crucial to human development and the future of a rational society. But in recent years, museums have been under attack, with critics arguing that they are little more than relics and promoters of imperialism. Could it be that the encyclopedic museum has outlived its usefulness? With Museums Matter, James Cuno, president and director of the Art Institute of Chicago, replies with a resounding "No!" He takes us on a brief tour of the modern museum, from the creation of the British Museum—the archetypal encyclopedic collection—to the present, when major museums host millions of visitors annually and play a major role in the cultural lives of their cities. Along the way, Cuno acknowledges the legitimate questions about the role of museums in nation-building and imperialism, but he argues strenuously that even a truly national museum like the Louvre can't help but open visitors' eyes and minds to the wide diversity of world cultures and the stunning art that is our common heritage. Engaging with thinkers such as Edward Said and Martha Nussbaum, and drawing on examples from the politics of India to the destruction of the Bramayan Buddhas to the history of trade and travel, Cuno makes a case for the encyclopedic museum as a truly cosmopolitan institution, promoting tolerance, understanding, and a shared sense of history—values that are essential in our ever more globalized age. Powerful, passionate, and to the point, Museums Matter is the product of a lifetime of working in and thinking about museums; no museumgoer should miss it.~~

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~~Alexander brings to life the stories of twelve ambitious leaders from the United States and Europe who helped shape the future of the museum world.~~

~~Reinventing the Museum presents iconic essays from the 20th century and the latest thinking of the 21st century on ideology, public engagement, and new frameworks. Its 44 seminal articles and selected bibliography guide students through nearly a century of museum thought and theory.~~

~~In 1979, Edward P. Alexander's Museums in Motion was hailed as a much-needed addition to the museum literature. In combining the history of museums since the eighteenth century with a detailed examination of the function of museums and museum workers in modern society, it served as an essential resource for those seeking to enter to the museum profession and for established professionals looking for an expanded understanding of their own discipline. Now, Mary Alexander has produced a newly revised edition of the classic text, bringing it the twenty-first century with coverage of emerging trends, resources, and challenges. New material also includes a discussion of the children's museum as a distinct type of institution and an exploration of the role computers play in both outreach and traditional in-person visits.~~

~~A Place That Matters Yet unearths the little-known story of Johannesburg's MuseumAfrica, a South African history museum that embodies one of the most dynamic and fraught stories of colonialism and postcolonialism, its life spanning the eras before, during, and after apartheid. Sara Byala, in examining this story, sheds new light not only on racism and its institutionalization in South Africa but also on the problems facing any museum that is charged with navigating colonial history from a postcolonial perspective. Drawing on thirty years of personal letters and public writings by museum founder John Gubbins, Byala paints a picture of a uniquely progressive colonist, focusing on his philosophical notion of "three-dimensional thinking," which aimed to transcend binaries and thus—quite explicitly—racism. Unfortunately, Gubbins died within weeks of the museum's opening, and his hopes would go unrealized as the museum fell in line with emergent apartheid politics. Following the museum through this transformation and on to its 1994 reconfiguration as a post-apartheid institution, Byala showcases it as a rich—and problematic—archive of both material culture and the ideas that surround that culture, arguing for its continued importance in the establishment of a unified South Africa.~~

~~"We live in a museum age," writes Steven Conn in Do Museums Still Need Objects? And indeed, at the turn of the twenty-first century, more people are visiting museums than ever before. There are now over 17,500 accredited museums in the United States, averaging approximately 865 million visits a year, more than two million visits a day. New museums have proliferated across the cultural landscape even as older ones have undergone transformational additions: from the Museum of Modern Art and the Morgan in New York to the High in Atlanta and the Getty in Los Angeles. If the golden age of museum-building came a century ago, when the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Field Museum of Natural History, and others were created, then it is fair to say that in the last generation we have witnessed a second golden age. By closely observing the cultural, intellectual, and political roles that museums play in contemporary society, while also delving deeply into their institutional histories, historian Steven Conn demonstrates that museums are no longer seen simply as houses for collections of objects. Conn ranges across a wide variety of museum types—from art and anthropology to science and commercial museums—asking questions about the relationship between museums and knowledge, about the connection between culture and politics, about the role of museums in representing non-Western societies, and about public institutions and the changing nature of their constituencies. Elegantly written and deeply researched, Do Museums Still Need Objects? is essential reading for historians, museum professionals, and those who love to visit museums.~~

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