

**Museum of Fine Arts Houston
A Place for All People & Gateway to Art
Evaluation of Community Partnerships & Museum
Learning
A Wallace Foundation Project**



July 2008

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Introduction

In 1993, the Museum of Fine Arts-Houston (MFAH) greatly expanded their community programs and partnerships with *A Place for All People*, an initiative funded in large part by the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds¹. Over the next five years, MFAH staff worked with community partners to develop a series of innovative programs and exhibitions that interpreted the permanent collection for a variety of audiences. Existing community partnerships were strengthened and new collaborations formed. In 1999 the museum received a second grant from the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds, supporting a four-year continuation of *A Place for All People*, which enabled the museum staff to refine their efforts to reach audiences beyond the museum's walls and implement the lessons learned during the first phase. As part of this community-wide initiative, the MFAH embarked on an ambitious evaluation of *A Place for All People*. The evaluation focused on two aspects of the program: 1) the nature of the community collaborations that are at the heart of this initiative and 2) the nature of the museum learning experience for audiences across various programs. That 2003 study can be found on the MFAH website at: <http://www.mfah.org/wallace/home.asp>.

In early 2004 the MFAH received another grant from The Wallace Foundation to extend their innovative work with the community with *Gateway to Art/De Puertas al Arte*, an initiative focusing on building adult audiences and Latin American art. The evaluation for *Gateway* centered on the two main areas explored in the 2003 *A Place for All People* project: the effect of museum partnerships with community organizations and the nature of visitor learning across a broad range of education programs. As the museum staff further explored their work with community partners and with audiences, they realized that missing from the evaluation process was an investigation into motivations, learning, and interests of one other key group, the museum educators themselves. Consequently the learning dimensions developed for visitors were adapted in a survey for museum practitioners and staff at the MFAH and two other

¹ In 1999 the foundation changed its name to the Wallace-Reader Digest Funds and in 200x to The Wallace Foundation.



museums, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Cincinnati Art Museum participated in the survey.

This report, then, presents three components of the project evaluation for *Gateway/De Puertas* carried out between 2004 and 2008: 1) community partnerships for audience building 2) visitor learning across MFAH programs and 3) a preliminary study of the motivations and learning art museum educators.

The 2003 *A Place for All People* report identified seven factors for success in community partnerships. In developing this report, the authors were reminded of those factors and their continued importance, relevance, and applicability to community partnerships and to learning in museums. To introduce the 2008 report, we list those factors here.

- Genuine commitment by the entire MFAH board and staff to audience building and community outreach *and learning*
- Searching for ways to connect real works of art and the museum with the daily life of its audiences
- Flexibility from the funder, within the museum, and among the partners to make adjustments to programs, budgets, and staff
- Willingness to take risks and fail, a safe environment for experimentation
- The need for ongoing communication, networking, and training
- A reasonable definition of success and learning to see success in small things
- Understanding the role that time plays in solidifying collaborative ventures and in *learning*

Part 1: Community Initiative: Building Audiences

Methodology

A series of focus groups and face-to-face interviews with community and school partners and museum staff comprised the methodology of this part of the study. Participants were asked to describe their role in the partnership; to describe benefits of the partnership; to identify obstacles and challenges to the partnership; and to reflect on the ways in which the partnership has changed and evolved over the years. Researchers conducted focus groups with representatives of community organizations and schools, contract teachers for museum programs, faculty at the MFAH's Glassell School of Art Junior School, and museum staff, in June 2006 (referred to as the 2006 phase of the study) and again in October 2007 (referred to as the 2008 phase of the



study). See Appendix A for the focus group protocols for both the mid-point and final rounds of focus groups.

Description of Sample

In the 2006 study, three focus groups consisted of a total of twenty-three people: 1) five MFAH education program staff; 2) eight Glassell Junior School instructors; and 3) ten representatives from partner organizations – libraries, parks, a children’s, and schools.

For the 2008 round, thirty-four people participated in seven focus groups and four one-on-one interviews. This expansion involved a wider range of MFAH staff as the scope of *Gateway/De Puertas* involved more departments in the museum. Six of the seven focus groups and all four of the interviews were conducted with MFAH staff. Staff focus groups consisted of four people from Library/Archives, three from publications and website, five from marketing, membership, and public relations, four from development, 4 from curatorial, and ten from education. The four individual interviews were with the MFAH director, education director, and two curators. The one community focus group consisted of four representatives from Latino community organizations in Houston.

Perception of Partnership & Community Initiative

As was the case with the community partnership study in 2003, there was some variability in the ways that stakeholders in the 2006 data set thought about the nature and extent of the partnership. However, there appeared to be slightly less variability, three years later. In many cases similar vocabulary was used to describe the focus of the partnership and several themes emerged across all three 2006 focus groups, although stakeholders still described it in terms of their specific role within the MFAH partnership. These themes were: 1) making the museum more approachable; and 2) creating opportunities that fill a community need.

The terms “reaching out” and “making museum more approachable” were frequently used to describe the nature of the partnership. It is a case of the museum going out to audiences as well as drawing them into the museum as indicated by the following quotes:

It’s multi-faceted, it reaches different groups...we go out into the community but also part of the program where the community comes into the museum.

It makes the museum approachable

It’s reaching people in a way to give a broad introduction to art.

Another theme was that of “opportunity.” The partnership provides audiences with opportunities that fill a need and are unique as illustrated by the following comments:

It brings books to life; they [children in summer art camps] read books then have an opportunity to do art that relates to the books.

These programs bridge a gap in society. The museum is so open to extending itself to people who may not feel they belong here or are familiar with exposure to fine art.



With this partnership we give them an opportunity to experience the museum. For many it's the first time here (museum).

Teachers don't get professional development in art that they need. Through this partnership they feel they are getting something they need.

We try to reach groups that might not have come to the museum otherwise

The 2007 focus groups and interviews asked museum staff to think more broadly about the nature of community as it related to this initiative. This topic prompted much discussion and the responses to questions about the nature of the partnership were even more varied than responses in earlier studies. For some MFAH staff the question about community caused them to think broadly, describing a community as “different voices together,” “as many constituencies as possible,” “people who share a belief system or culture,” and “anyone who calls themselves a community.” Other staff members defined the term in more specific ways such as by culture (the Latino community) and by affiliation with a partnering organization (libraries, neighborhood centers, schools). Some museum staff defined the term by geographic region, as in “a community is where you live.” While other staff asserted that community was not determined by where one resided.

A few people talked about the way the term, community, was used and often misused. Some people said it was often used in too vague a way to be meaningful. On the other hand, another person felt that, in the museum, there was an attempt to segment audiences or communities too much, like a traditional marketing approach, consequently losing sight of the civic role of a community. Several people felt that the singular form of the word, community, was meaningless, while the plural form, communities, had more potential to be useful. Others said the term was overused and sometimes misused to the point of becoming a weapon and, consequently, should be avoided. In many cases, staff used the terms community/communities and audiences interchangeably.

One theme that emerged in these discussions was the way the concept of community or communities had shifted over the life of this last Wallace Foundation grant cycle. Some members of the education department perceived that initially they thought about communities or audiences in “very traditional ways” as in by geography, culture, or ethnic tradition.

Now it's more about like-minded people getting together and we are seeing the Museum as part of the community rather than the Museum doing things for the community.

The one Latino community group found this question impossible to address. They were not all familiar with the term “Gateway to Art.” This response is understandable since they represented many of the targeted communities and did not have the benefit of knowing that the Museum’s work with them was the result of a larger project. This also reflects that the Museum could have done more to promote the overall project in communications with the partners.



In the 2008 study, participants were asked to reflect on their role during the Wallace initiative. The MFAH staff responses clustered around three themes: 1) Providing support; 2) Doing what is normally done; and 3) Role was unclear.

All of the MFAH staff, except the curators, saw their role as one of support for the exhibitions developed by the curators and the support for the programs that related to the exhibitions. As one group expressed it:

We are a service-oriented department. We implement what they (curators or educators) produce. We try to have input on ways to do what they want. (Library/Archives)

Curators were more likely to describe their role in the project as doing what they normally do. Many curators acknowledged that the initiative allowed them to do their work with more resources, such as providing more Latino art exhibitions, and to “create a new context for what we already do.” The following quotations illustrate responses in this category:

For us it was just another thing added in. It was promoting like we do other things in the museum but this had a Hispanic tie-in. ((Marketing/Membership)

I was able to do more shows I wanted to do anyway. (Curatorial)

A few MFAH staff responses fell into the “Unclear” category, indicating that their role may have shifted during the project or they somehow felt left out of the process. The following quotes provide some insight into ways staff expressed these feelings:

I'm not really familiar with the term Gateway to Art so much. I made presentations early on to Wallace but not much after that. (Curatorial)

It wasn't fully clear to me what my role was. (Marketing/Membership)

I don't feel connected to this project because I didn't start it and it was so centered on education, both in terms of reporting and communication with Wallace. (Development)

I don't really know, to be honest, other than to try to maintain a curatorial integrity to everything we did in the department. (Curatorial)

Understandably, when the one Latino community focus group was asked to reflect on their role in the project, they found it difficult to answer. Many people in this group said they were unsure of their role or even how to answer the question. Several times, the group referred to Angela, the Education staff member who was the Latino community liaison. They felt that her connection to the Latino community was the face of the museum and they appreciated her efforts to recognize them. This question also elicited some concerns about the relationship between large organizations, like the MFAH, and their own smaller cultural organizations. The following quotes provide some insight into the ways they responded to this question.

Our first relationship with the museum was through Angela, then I saw a lot of opportunities to do things. You gave us the honor to have our groups here in the museum.



I come from background of working with larger white arts groups and I think the smaller arts groups feel threatened by partnering with larger groups, but it's only beneficial to us.

In past if you are a small arts organization and you are part of a partnership with a big organization, they take your mailing list and then they control it and they take credit and they use your name. That's been the past. I think it's different in this museum.

Benefits of the Initiative

2006 Study – Benefits of the Partnership

Roughly the same categories of benefits emerged from the 2006 data as from the 2003 series of focus groups. Participants in this phase of the study were eager to provide explanations and examples of the ways the partnership with the MFAH benefited people, communities, professional staff, and organizations. Three main patterns of benefits from the partnerships with the museum emerged from the data:

- 1) Provides repeated, unique, mutually-rewarding, and meaningful experiences for partners, their audiences, and the museum staff;
- 2) Stimulates community awareness, pride, self-confidence, and supports the partner organization in a variety of ways;
- 3) Changes the perceptions and attitudes - of target audiences towards the museum, of partners towards their audiences and the museum, and of museum staff towards partners and the audiences.

1. Meaningful Experiences

All focus group participants provided examples of ways that the partnership has evolved over time resulting in continuous experiences in the arts that are important to people. For example, community partners mentioned that the professional development opportunities were interesting and effective. Many community partners saw that the continued presence of the museum helped their staff understand the importance of art in people's lives. In addition, they cited examples of ways that the partnership programs enriched the lives of children and families. They frequently reported that their audiences expected and eagerly anticipated the programs each year. Museum teachers felt their biggest personal reward was in seeing children and parents become engaged and excited about art and the museum. Many museum teachers are also artists and they mentioned that working with the community stimulated their personal creativity. MFAH education staff felt a major benefit of the long-term community partnership was that they made better decisions about programs. The synergy created by the partnership allowed them to create richer and more meaningful experiences for audiences. The following quotes illustrate this theme:

We have to go to so many professional development sessions and I usually feel like "I've heard this all before" but not the museum professional development. I'm engaged, I'm learning things and get free stuff and get professional development credit.

We see big benefits with our staff and with the kids – our staff were first shy of art, they didn't have any experiences with art before and that shyness filters down to the kids. This program



shows them that they can do art, the fear is taken out, the staff are more apt to put in more art programs now.

Parents get lots of ideas, they find that art can enrich their lives, also the idea of getting together and making art and home, a bonding experience, spending time together.

It seems like many kids don't really know how to play and the art camps give them that opportunity. For some kids this is their summer vacation

Because we have developed the relationship we have a program every year and it's become important to the people who come to it.

The support of the museum staff is very helpful, the freedom they set up for people they hire, they give support and give us confidence to do what we do best.

I benefit a lot just being at the museum, exposed to art, it keeps my creativity going, keeps me focused.

I love watching the creative process when people realize they can produce art without being judged, when they excel in art it gives them confidence.

It inspires you as an artist. Every time I'm completely inspired by the kids, the beauty of life and wonder and innocence of the world and keeps you upbeat.

The relationship with the community enables us to make programming decisions we probably couldn't do if we didn't have that history there.

We don't have to be the salesman in that, like in other situations we have to convince people from other organizations that we have valid things to offer. Here we can just sit down at the table and say, what are we going to do and skip that first half of the conversation which is kind of nice.

A lot of these are the same teachers from 16 years ago when it started, some are teachers who have taken over from a teacher who has attended the program and these teachers wind up being great campaigners for our program. They are out there telling teachers they work with, talking about the program with teachers from other schools. They are really partnering with us in helping us promote this program and show that it's really a valuable program for their kids.

2. Pride & Confidence

Another category of benefit is one that affects both the communities and, by association, individual participants. Many community partners mentioned that they saw children's self-confidence increase and were able to provide specific examples of how that manifested. As children and parents increase in confidence it translates to a larger sense of pride in the local community. The success of the MFAH programs has begun to translate into spin-off programs that the community partners design and implement themselves, primarily because the museum programs are so popular with audiences that people demand more access to the programs.

Children build self-confidence when they change "I can't" to "I can."



We see lots of evidence of self-confidence (in the mural project) and pride in the community. At first the community centers were shy about doing art outside – they worried about graffiti damage but in 9 years we've never had vandalism on any murals. When kids grow up they come back to the community center to see their mural

It builds pride in the community, it deters negative behavior, it continues to spread into other part so their lives. Younger siblings see their older siblings doing the mural program and they can't wait until they are old enough to do theirs.

It's one of the most enriching programs, the kids look forward to it. They know they will be responsible for a piece.

Art (education) is slighted in schools and it is a benefit for us to bring them the museum and art

This program introduced art to our staff, after art camp some branches are doing art now on their own, one library found a volunteer to run a camp like the museum's. We are doing more art programming ourselves

Because of art camp we added an after school craft program and the kids liked it, but we wanted it to be more than just crafts so we changed it to after school art classes, it always fills, sometimes we had to add a second one.

3. Perception & Attitudes

Partners and museum staff acknowledged that everyone involved ends up shifting perception about art and museums and audiences, to some degree. Like art museums, libraries also struggle with community perception that libraries are not relevant and the partnership helps to shift public perception of both types of organizations. Museum staff appreciate that the partnership makes their work easier in many respects, grounds their program decisions in the reality of the community needs, and is definitely worth the extra time it takes to build and maintain long-term, trusting relationships. The following quotes provide some insight into the ways stakeholders expressed this theme:

It helps us! We are also trying to change our image - we are more than boring dusty books - it's something you wouldn't expect from a library

A great benefit is that they discover the museum isn't just a stale old place with dusty paintings on the wall, it isn't stuffy.

More people visit because they made a connection with the museum through these programs, it puts a face on the museum.

An obvious benefit is that when you partner you have a built in audience. You don't have to do the ground work of advertising or knocking on doors just to get an audience. But then you also have the tie-in. Say you are partnering with another arts organization, you get to find new ways to interpret the artwork at the museum.

Other people benefit also but from our point of view we feel like we are being effective basing decisions on their input.



This is just a great partnership with the museum it leads to us getting additional partners, especially grants want to know our partnerships and the museum gives us credibility. (all community partners nod and agree enthusiastically)

2008 Study – Benefits of the Partnership

Since the focus groups and interviews for this study were primarily MFAH staff, the patterns that emerged were slightly different than the earlier 2006 study which focused more community partners.

Three main themes relating to benefits of the initiative emerged from the MFAH staff focus group and interview data:

- 1) Increased internal museum communication and feeling of connectedness to other departments;
- 2) Personal learning opportunities and freedom to experiment;
- 3) Expanded what the museum offered and perceptions about art & museums.

1. Communication & Connection

While there were a few people who felt differently, many staff members appreciated the opportunity to have some say in the work related to this grant. Many people felt that the process caused much healthy cross-pollination of ideas and approaches because this project involved more departments working together than previous initiatives. A few quotes relating to this theme are as follows:

I see myself in the broader picture of the museum and see commonalities across departments. We thought about our work in broader parameters.

I felt a part of the process, was part of the planning, and Beth was very flexible and responsive to our issues.

Through this project we connected to other libraries and forged professional networks.

This project has been harder to implement than any of the others but it has had the biggest impact on the museum.

It helped us, as a department, send the message that we need cohesive communication. Going forward, the more we can unify the flow of information, the more the museum will benefit. The more we can achieve a common level of communication, the better. The Wallace project put this at the forefront.

It forces everyone to work together to look at a program to see how the different aspects feed into it. Where if it's not under a cohesive program we all do our own thing.

This was probably the only project in the museum that ever brought together that many departments.

This helped us see how other parts of the museum worked.



2. Learning & Experimentation

Many staff members identified opportunities to learn and experiment as benefits of this initiative. They reported learning about audiences and art and that learning often translated to a feeling of freedom to try new approaches as evidenced by the sample of quotes below:

Personally, I learned a lot about art and artists I didn't know about.

I learned – about Latino art, about audiences, about digital platforms, software, tech stuff, about international libraries – a lot!

It's been experimental, in some areas we had great success, in some areas we were less happy with the results but this is a process. You don't do it and it's over. We are at the beginning of something.

This process encourages creativity in programming.

Like the Starbucks Nights – at this point I don't know how we did it but we created something, somehow, something that was missing.

I went to the monthly meetings and I learned something about activities I didn't know were under the Wallace umbrella.

It was instructive to see how many exhibitions and programs were reaching out to the Hispanic community.

3. Expansion & Growth

Many staff members felt that the Wallace initiative caused expansion and growth in a variety of areas including expansion in collections and available web content, growth and change in perception of each other and of audiences, and a change in the public's and professional community's perception of the MFAH. The following quotes illustrate ways that the staff thought about expansion and growth:

I think it's given us all a heightened sensitivity for immigrants.

This raised our awareness and made us think more broadly about how to reach out to different communities.

I think it made the museum not so exclusive.

The public perception of the museum has changed from earlier views of us as an exclusive club. Now it's more that we are big institution with diverse programs trying to do the right thing. And some people are more generous in praising our efforts than that.

It forced us to think differently about what we did, our role, and gave us new opportunities for interactions with the public.

We got more Latino art up, more exposure for those artists.

The grant helps us focus, makes us think about the collection differently.



Participants in the Latino community focus group were rather reserved in their praise of the initiative. Many people felt that attitudes had changes, both attitudes of Latinos towards the MFAH and attitudes of the MFAH towards the Latino community. They were clear, however, to indicate that they thought these initial small steps would only yield larger benefits if the initiative continued and more people were brought on to connect to the Latino community. Several quotes reflect this issue:

The attitude today is more responsive than it has ever been. It hasn't been easy because many people (in the Latino community) have been very skeptical. Angela has done a great job!

I'd like to echo that. There was no communication with the museum before and, to a degree, there still isn't. You can pretty much say the same thing in other US cities. But there is that feeling that things have changed here in many ways, at least in attitude.

Challenges

2006 & 2008 Study – Challenges

Roughly the same categories of benefits emerged from the 2006 and the 2008 study as from the 2003 series of focus groups. Community partners and MFAH staff in both rounds were asked to reflect on the inevitable challenges that accompany such an ambitious and long-term initiative. Three themes emerged during these discussions across both rounds of focus groups:

- 1) Communication
- 2) Price of Success-Meeting Increased Expectations
- 3) Making Difficult Choices

1. Communication Challenges

In every evaluation of partnerships that we have conducted, communication is always cited as a major challenge. For the community partners there are occasional miscommunications that seem to be more internal to their own organization than museum-related. For example, in 2006 some of the library partners noted that they were informed quite late as to the date of the museum summer camps and had already scheduled the spaces needed for the camps. Further discussion in the 2006 focus group revealed that the communication glitch occurred in the central library administration because the library administration needed to raise additional money to run the camps at branches and that funding was delayed. Other communication issues involved children who do not know the behavioral expectations of a museum visit, especially when many staff at community organizations also do not have museum experience. Focus group participants realize that constant communication is the only way to address glitches as they come up. Everyone said they were comfortable approaching each other to address concerns and challenges.

MFAH staff, in the 2008 study, frequently raised communication and planning issues and how break-downs in these areas contributed to their feeling excluded from the process or unclear about their individual roles in the project. It is interesting to note that many of the challenges in communication are offset by other staff in their description of benefits. It is not unusual for some people or departments to feel left out in small or large ways when a wide-scope, seemingly



amorphous project is implemented. It is also possible that some of the issues illustrated in the quotes below are reflective of general feelings of disconnectedness in the museum and are not specifically caused by this grant project.

We don't have a choice over when, how, who, or what, (regarding scheduling summer camps). It's a higher up decision. We are told, this is your exhibition or this is your date. We got a two week notice for the art camp this year and we had a full schedule of activities and had to bump a paid performer from the auditorium, where art camp has to happen and now she's going to perform out in the library and we paid a lot for that performer. Exhibitions, well we know about those well in advance so that's not so much of a problem. We'd like a bit more flexibility in the art camp scheduling. (Community Partner)

Usually it's the first time for kids in the museum. They don't know what to do, how to act at the museum, like the security guard intimidates them, they feel they can't be themselves. Maybe there could be role play, or some kind of room at school where things are at their height and they could role play being at the museum, they can learn how to visit a museum. (Community Partner)

The key is to communicate with the site to be sure that we are doing what they expect and to be certain the teacher is providing quality classes and is still enthusiastic. (MFAH Staff)

The museum is in a very busy time – it's probably the busiest exhibition schedule ever. It would have been nice if this project had been seen by departments not participating in the grant programs as a real priority of the institution. I think it was a priority for departments that had Wallace projects, but for other departments it was more of a burden than a priority. (MFAH Staff)

There was also a feeling of competing projects going on. Even though the projects should have dovetailed somewhat, they didn't. Maybe if we looked at how they all worked together we could figure out how to make everybody happy. The feeling of competition became almost burdensome. It wasn't a lot of fun on my end when we were involved because we had to figure out how we were going to make this happen in a way that was more demanding than feeling a part of the project. (MFAH Staff)

I don't feel like any of concerns we voiced were ignored. I think they were acted on to the best of their ability. Perhaps the only disappointment is that we have built out (the website) a lot but I don't think we planned for ongoing translation. I think the content we had in Spanish has expired so now we are back to English. I wish there was some long term planned budget to do a second language on the website. (MFAH Staff)

I think our participation was always welcome. We always had enough to report on at these monthly status meetings. It's not that we want to drive this grant but I think there is an advantage to getting our input upfront. In the grant there were lots of provisions "this will be on the website" and we'll never say we won't do it, but might be good to have a chance to help think about better ways to do it. (MFAH Staff)

In previous Wallace grants, it was on people's radar. It was something they thought about, maybe even in subtle ways bringing people together. My perception is so skewed now but it almost seems this grant subtly brought departments apart. When people were reminded of it there was some frustration, like, "why isn't it on my radar?" It didn't feel as museum-wide as it could have been or should have been. (MFAH Staff)



2. Price of Success-Meeting Increased Expectations

Success comes with a cost. As the community partner programs have become successful the demand has also increased. In some cases this results in larger groups, reduced personal attention, and logistical problems. As the project continued into the final years, the issue of insufficient classroom space emerged as crucial for the MFAH staff. In 2007 the museum experienced its busiest year ever with a huge exhibition schedule and related programs. Consequently many staff felt stretched quite thin. In addition, the project established some services, such as website and label text Spanish translation. No provisions were made to continue this practice yet the expectations remain. The following quotes from staff at community organizations and at the MFAH articulate the specific challenges caused by great success:

We have experienced growing pains, our enrollment increases and the kids want to learn more about art. So far the museum has been able to accommodate us but our numbers are growing. There is no way for us to anticipate our numbers and now with the Katrina kids it's increased more. We are OK for now but I worry. How do we expand without watering down the program and losing quality? Like one time when we brought 60 students and while it was good to be able to include more children I noticed that they all don't get the same level of individual attention they do when we bring 30. (Community Partner)

We have the same issues. We have one artist and have to limit our camps to 30 children. We used to do 25 and pushed it up 5 children. Sometimes that's a problem. The bus only seats 55 and parents and siblings have to follow in a car. But I don't want to water down the program either. Art camps are so popular that parents start calling the museum in May asking who (which branches) are having art camp. We don't really advertise. (Community Partner)

That's right we only put up one small sign a few weeks before the camp and I think that's the only sign we put up in the library that anyone reads. And there must be some sort of communication among parents out there because those camps fill up in a day or two after the sign goes up. (Community Partner)

As I've seen the programs expand, it has brought on more challenge and more work for everyone. It's worth doing though. We try things, add components to programs, and it has enhanced it a lot but it's sometimes chaotic. I feel lots of camaraderie as far as getting the work done. There are always some bumps and squeaks but we work it out. When you create a partnership you have to have commitment from both sides to make it work. (Community Partner)

It would be nice to clone the museum staff – we want more staff to work with us. Some museum staff have been so busy they haven't been able to get to us to install the art exhibition. (Community Partner)

We need a larger studio...and more storage space, the class space is so limited, sometimes we have to carry bowls of water from other areas into the classroom. (MFAH Staff)

I would be happy to have a staff person because it was more work than I knew it would be, but I did get priority with Wallace interns for two summers, but it still ongoing for me. I still have cataloguing to do. (MFAH Staff)

At times we could have used more help from curatorial but they were putting on 100's of exhibitions and projects and this wasn't always at the top of their priority. The grant did promise to increase the (library) collections so much each year but no funds were set up for that. However,



Beth was able to find us some resources to do that. We did have Spanish speakers in our department but to have a real translator to help with the web pages, etc., would have been helpful. (MFAH Staff)

Translation is hard, it's a skill. Just because you can speak it doesn't mean you can translate it. (MFAH Staff)

It might be nice to have a translator part of the process of developing tag lines and titles from the beginning. (MFAH Staff)

When I came on board we were focusing on the Metropolitan exhibition and we discussed if we were going to invite the Spanish language community to come to the show and the discussion turned to - will there be people at the front desk who can speak Spanish and can people buy tickets over the phone in Spanish. We first hired six people to work the lobby desk for the Met exhibition; half were Spanish speaking. We would always schedule a Spanish speaker at the desk. Unfortunately it's a challenge to have that as a component for \$7/hour with that schedule. We lose a lot of people and they are difficult to replace. (MFAH Staff)

We had a challenging time hiring bilingual artists who could work well with families and children in teaching art. It's well-paid and a very prestigious job for local artists. Finding people who are willing and able to do what we need, have flexible schedules, and are bilingual has been very difficult. Then they get hired away. (MFAH Staff)

3. Making Difficult Choices

Success can have another downside. Increasing programs and audiences means that expectations are increased and audiences count on the same level and quality of programs to continue year after year. Not only can this situation “burn-out” staff, it can stymie program change and innovation. In the 2006 round of focus groups, some museum educators felt they had to be exceptionally watchful of falling into a maintenance pattern with programs. At the same time, they articulated strategies that they used to mediate this problem including freshening a program without drastically changing or eliminating it or seeing a program through the eyes of a new staff member or intern. Some staff found that an occasional cut-back in funds which resulted in a cut-back of programs was beneficial. This forced them to trim programs or partnerships that were no longer effective and to re-focus their efforts. Some staff members have found that reading theory, literature, and even going back for advanced degrees has helped to keep them intellectually fresh.

The difficult choices, emerging in the 2008 study, had more to do with how to negotiate between competing priorities, how to allocate limited resources. With the increase of audience expectations came a substantial increase in the staff work load. Most departments felt the need for additional support staff. Similarly, increasing the diversity of museum audiences means that extra resources must be given to advertising to those audiences, yet the budget cannot sustain the additional needs. Echoing the 2006 issue of how to keep integrity in programs, some staff were concerned that the more social aspects of some programs in the last half of the grant project translated to a superficial experience with the museum. The following quotes from MFAH staff reflect these struggles:



You have finally gotten good at it so you don't have to spend lots of time with the details of start-up programs, but the down side is that it can become rote, stale, if not careful.

The negative is you wind up getting into the pattern when you have the programs developed, you are working with an audience and in some cases the audience gets larger and larger, and what happens we no longer are educators, we play the role of administrators. We wind up scheduling, gathering materials, and it turns into this sort of formula. We are no longer critically looking at the way the material is being presented or our approach to how we are teaching or how we are going about doing things.

The danger is that you are not necessarily practicing the best art education you can and doing justice to the works of art and functioning the way a museum like ours, with our reputation should. I think they look to us because they see us as on the cutting edge of art education so I think in everything we do we need to think if we are doing it the best way we can.

New people have come on and responsibilities have shifted around so although the programs might not be new they are new to the people who have taken them over at different times. Everyone refreshes them with their own ideas, which is good. But once you you've had the program for a while I think it can become that way (formulaic) because it doesn't present the same challenges as a new program every year and you want to add to what you are doing with the program your were handed but it's not always at the top of your list in many cases.

When we cut back to the programs we have now, it gave us an opportunity to step back and look and say "Are we doing these programs in the very best way?" "Is there a way we can approach this differently?" For example, can we implement a format change to a workshop or work with different age groups?

There needed to be a level of saying that this grant is just as important as another (non-grant) exhibition. That would have been more helpful if I could say, "No I have a Wallace grant deadline." The curators would say, "That's a grant it could wait, I have an opening in two weeks." It's tough, exhibitions have deadlines, grants have ending dates and can often be extended.

It's not just about getting people through the door and counting bodies. It's about really getting through to another level.

I don't really know the details of how this has worked, I know they've done a lot of parties for the Latino community, but I don't know what people get out of those parties. I know they come and dance marenghi, maybe they do (get something out of it) but we (curatorial) haven't been part of that process. So I can't say anything beyond that.

I'm not sure "exposure" means anything, maybe those efforts were too superficial.

It's one thing to have education staff on board for a grant like this. It's another to have the curatorial dept responsible for getting art on the wall for this, because education can't do their job if there isn't buy-in from the curatorial staff. A lot of times, just from the outside looking in, it felt like the education staff felt like they were between a rock and a hard place – like, "we have to do this program but don't have any art to interpret." A lot of times they had to be creative and invent things.

This project has raised several dilemmas. For example, it's difficult to decide where to place advertising money. Do we spend it on the English-speaking audience, our largest audience, or on



the Spanish-speaking audience, our next largest audience but still considerably smaller than the English-speakers. We can't do both. How do we figure out how to make those decisions?

Future Directions

Future Directions – 2006 Study

Over the years of establishing partnerships and building audiences the initiative has evolved and matured resulting in both benefits and continued challenges. Many long-term museum staff described a maturing process whereby they moved from trying anything and everything in terms of programs to settling, focusing, deepening programs. Staff and community partners see the working relationship as much more than just providing a program or knowing who to call. For the museum staff, the process of working with community partners over the years has enriched their own practice and expanded the reach of the museum. Some community partners saw little change in the partnership over time as their program has changed very little. These partners like it that way as younger children wait eagerly to be old enough to participate in future years. Other community partners sense that they increase their expectations over time as they become aware of more ways they can bring meaningful arts experiences to their audiences. Still other community partners note that the museum partnership has become part of the life of their organization. The following quotes illustrate these themes:

When I started managing the outreach programs I think it needed to be condensed. It was almost like a bad child throwing a tantrum, all over the place without any real focus. The best thing for the outreach programs over the years has been paring them down.

When the project started the museum education staff and partners were very ambitious. We all wanted to do everything and every time a new exhibition came around was a chance to something with somebody new. I think we have settled a bit, in that we have started to fine tune which collaborations are the most meaningful, which ones are just filling time or are left over because someone had a relationship with someone long gone. I also think we've gotten a chance to understand ourselves a bit better. We don't have to be all things to all people because when you present yourself that way it can be overwhelming

In the beginning it seemed we would do anything we needed to do to reach an audience and fulfill the expectations they thought they needed. I think it is different now. I think the content across the board is higher quality.

The partnership is pretty much the same as when we started but now we have good documentation.

Our expectations have changed, I think. It's wonderful the first time but we have a tendency to ask, how can it be better? It's not that the next programs are let-downs at all but I think we keep having higher expectations because we know more about what is possible now.

The partnership has evolved. It's become more of a real partnership. We integrate museum activities into other programs. First it was just a program – it came and went – now when we plan displays we consider the museum program and try to connect to it.



In all cases the partnership means we know people there and they know education staff and there is some sort of exchange, they can come here, they get a special program here or we go there in various forms.

The key to that too is that the partnerships are more than just relationships, it's more than us being able to contact our partners and know who to call, it's also knowing that we can have an open conversation with them and ask them to brainstorm with us ways we can develop more meaningful partnerships.

Future Directions – 2008 Study

A number of patterns emerged from the 2008 study related to future directions: 1) Continue on the same path; 2) Expand upon current efforts and planning processes; and 3) Research.

1. Continue the Same Path

A number of MFAH staff felt that the museum should build on current work, strengthening the connection to the target audiences. Some departments that typically support exhibition and programs see their role and continuing to provide support and hope that they have opportunities for program development in the future. The Latino community partners focus group said they wanted “more Angelas – sufficient personnel to do it right.”

2. Expand Efforts

Two broad themes emerged in within the category of expansion of efforts: 1) expanding internal planning and collaboration; and 2) expanding external reach. Departments other than curatorial and education suggested that they be brought into planning and strategy sessions earlier in the process. The initial efforts towards cross-departmental collaboration in this grant project planted the seed in the staff and they want to expand collaboration across departments. Other expansion suggestions related to ways the MFAH might connect outside of the museum. For example, library staff members were interested in exploring ways that target audiences could be involved with the library. Curators suggested enhancing the film section on the website and to deepen the museum’s relationship to Latino museums, both in the US and Central/South America. The Latino community focus group suggested that the museum increase its profile in the community by having board and staff members regularly visit and support smaller Latino cultural organizations.

3. Research

A number of staff members made thoughtful suggestions about areas that need more research and exploration. Several people were curious about Spanish/English translation efforts. While they questioned if there was a museum-wide commitment to continue translations, they also wondered if the museum knew enough about the importance and usefulness of Spanish/English translations in exhibitions, programs, and print/web materials. Staff members were also interested in finding out similarities and differences between English and Spanish-speaking audiences to better serve both audiences. Another research question posed by staff related to better understanding stages of audience development, particularly how a visitor who first connects with the museum on a purely social level (such as Starbucks Evenings) might develop into one who attends other more substantive programs, views exhibitions on their own, and/or



becomes a member of the MFAH. What percent turnover from social to member, they wondered, is reasonable to expect?

Conclusions – Community Initiative: Building Audiences

Through initiatives funded by The Wallace Foundation, A Place for All People and Gateway to Art, the MFAH made a continued and strong commitment to attract and hold targeted audiences. Their hard work and determination has paid off. The partnerships that have remained intact over the years are vibrant and the communities feel a strong connection to the MFAH. Success brings both benefits and challenges for all stakeholders in the partnerships. Museum staff recognized the challenges early on and many developed excellent strategies to address concerns.

As staff members reflected on this initiative, the general perception was that they helped make the museum more approachable for a broader audience and they created a range of opportunities that addressed needs in the community. Certainly no one feels that they accomplished everything they intended but MFAH staff members are cognizant that seemingly small splashes can lead to a larger ripple-effect. Community partners and museum staff in the 2006 round felt that the initiative facilitated mutually-rewarding and meaningful experiences for partners, audiences, and museum staff, it stimulated community awareness and pride, and helped to change the attitudes of target audiences towards the museum. In the 2008 round, museum staff identified benefits of increased communication across museum departments and feeling a part of a larger experience, opportunities to learn and experiment, and an expansion of what the museum offers and well as adjusting perceptions about art and museums.

With any initiative of this caliber and scope, there are many challenges. The most frequently mentioned challenge in any human endeavor with any complexity is communication. No one feels that communication processes, frequency, or quality is ever enough. So it is no surprise that this theme emerged from the conversations with MFAH staff, most strongly, and community partners, to a smaller extent, in both the 2006 and 2008 evaluations. Interestingly, staff, in the 2008 evaluation, felt the initiative increased inter-museum and cross-departmental communication, contributing to their feeling more connected to the larger mission of the museum. These two findings may, at first, appear contradictory. Yet one explanation may be that the initiative did increase the opportunities for a different kind of communication – more inter-departmental – and those opportunities both enhanced communication and perhaps caused staff to realize that they needed and wanted more opportunities to work outside of their departmental silos.

When a comprehensive initiative such as A Place for All People: Gateway to Art achieves the degree of success that this one has, then museum professionals have the added challenge of figuring out how to live with that success. This initiative created increased expectations among the community partners, specifically, and museum visitors, in general. As the number of exhibitions and programs increased, the staff felt pushed to the edge. Their efforts to continually meet demands are heroic and largely successful. However, it takes its toll on the staff. As this phase of the grant project winds down, museum practitioners are taking a look at where they can conserve energy and resources while still meeting the needs and interests of audiences. It



will be important for administrative staff to not only support their efforts but to encourage them to review their practice and find ways to streamline the public offerings. Another place where this issue played out was in the use of Spanish translation of both gallery labels and website text. The grant funding enabled the MFAH to establish this precedent, yet as the project winds down staff members were unsure how to maintain this expectation and desired guidance from the administration.

A final challenge raised in this study revolved around a series of difficult choices that an initiative of this kind presents to staff. Many dilemmas revolved around issues of resource allocation – both human and fiscal. The increased work load and commitment to address the needs of a wider audience left many staff members feeling somewhat confused about how to accomplish the tasks before them with limited personnel and limited advertising budgets.

The other category of difficult choices has to do with programming choices. In an effort to attract and engage different audiences, the MFAH experimented with a range of programs, such as the Starbucks Nights and allowing smaller Latino cultural organizations to hold receptions and meetings at the museum. The response from the communities was enthusiastic. However, many museum staff members questioned the appropriateness of this step. These events were primarily social and intentionally light on intellectual or aesthetic content. Some staff questioned the propriety of this approach. This finding represents a common dilemma among museum professionals across the county. They frequently ask, “Are our programs and exhibitions intellectually rigorous or do we become a social meeting place?” Our experience is that this is a non-issue for visitors. Clearly most people visit the museum or attend a program as a leisure activity and their clear intention is to enjoy themselves. Some people are less comfortable in museums, these visitors often fear what a consultant to the MFAH interpretive planning process, David Carr, described as flunking the museum. Consequently, the more social experiences are a less-threatening entry point for these types of visitors. The question is whether or not this approach eventually results in people becoming more willing to engage on a more intellectual and aesthetic level with the museum and, if so, how many social experiences does it take for that transformation to occur?

Clear patterns emerged when staff reflected on the next steps. Many staff members felt it was important to continue on the same path, reviewing what was most successful and maintaining a commitment to the audiences and community partners. Tangential to the idea of maintaining was the idea of expanding current practice. Staff easily envisioned where they could take the ideas and experiences from this project. Some thought of expanding collections, resources, and programs while others focused on expanding and improving cross-departmental planning processes. Finally, an encouraging theme related to future directions that emerged centered on the need for more visitor research. Many staff members began to phrase research questions, such as wanting to better understand if and how visitors transform from a social motivation to a learning motivation. We suggest that the administration take advantage of this interest and encourage conversation around a museum-wide visitor research agenda. Collect all the areas of interest related to research, prioritize them, and develop an action plan to seek these answers over time.



Part 2: Museum Learning

Methodology

The earlier *A Place for All People* research study (2003) enabled the researcher and MFAH staff to further refine the learning dimensions and create a shorter survey form that could be distributed to a large sample of visitors across program areas. The original 18 learning and social dimensions were reduced to the following seven dimensions:

1. *I found out something new.*
2. *I thought about something I already knew in a new way.*
3. *I looked more carefully and more thoughtfully at art.*
4. *I talked about art to other people attending this program.*
5. *I related art to my personal interests, life experience, or background.*
6. *This program made me want to learn more about art.*
7. *I felt a sense of awe or wonderment about art.*

All the written survey instruments that the MFAH education program managers used to evaluate the programs were reviewed and revised in 2004. It was decided that all of the programs selected for assessment under this project would use the same format on the front page making several word changes as appropriate for each audience segment. (See Appendix B for the master survey.) Program managers could add any questions on the reverse of the page that they wanted for a specific program. Also on the reverse of the surveys at the very bottom of the page was a space to indicate willingness to participate in a follow-up survey administered via the internet (See Appendix B for Longitudinal Web-Survey).

For the program year 2005-2006 a sampling system was developed for each of the selected education programs, providing MFAH education staff with a target number of surveys to collect for each program. MFAH education staff members were responsible for distributing and collecting the surveys. In most cases the target sample size was met or exceeded. (See Appendix C for the 2006 sampling system matrix.)

For the program year 2007-2008 a different sampling system was developed to assess the Gateway to Art initiative. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons within and outside the control of MFAH staff, most target sample sizes were not met. (See Appendix D for the 2008 sampling matrix.) However, the programs that were sampled provided some useful in-depth information.

Description of Sample

2005-2006 Survey Sample

During the program year 2005-2006, a total of 3683 surveys were collected from participants in the five program areas (n=3279) and general visitors (n=414) who did not participate in any education program during their visit to the MFAH. (See Chart 1 below for the breakout of individual program areas.) The low percentage of docent surveys is understandable as this program has a lower total possible population and the representation of 130 docent surveys is an excellent return. The moderate-sized general visitor sample was collected in order to compare the findings to program results. The large total sample size is unprecedented in art museum studies and allows researchers to analyze the data from a variety of viewpoints. The



data is presented from an overall viewpoint first with a look at demographics for the total combined sample and across program areas as well as findings on the learning dimensions.

Of the 3683 total respondents to the 05-06 survey, 753 people agreed to be part of the longitudinal study and provided email contact information. The same survey they completed at the museum was posted on Web Surveyor accessible through a link in the email. Our intent was to determine if degrees of learning changed over 3-7 months after their participation in an education program or museum visit. Of the 753 people who were sent an email, 304 people clicked on the survey link but 195 actually completed and submitted the survey. This response level of 10% of the population of people willing to participate in the longitudinal study is excellent. Chart 1 below illustrates the distribution of surveys collected at the museum across sample segments. Chart 2 illustrates the percentage of longitudinal surveys submitted via the web survey across program areas. As might be expected, those people participating in an adult or teacher program were more likely to return the web-based longitudinal survey.

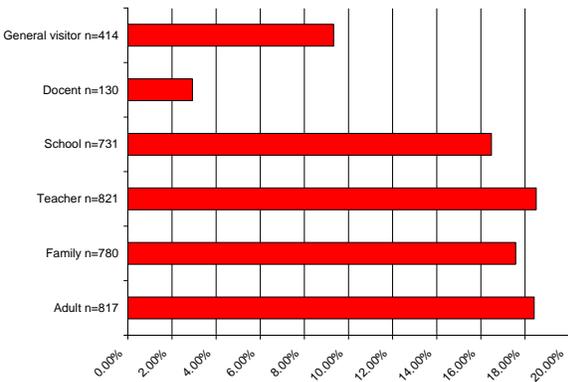


Chart 1: Percentage of visitor surveys (05-06) by program area

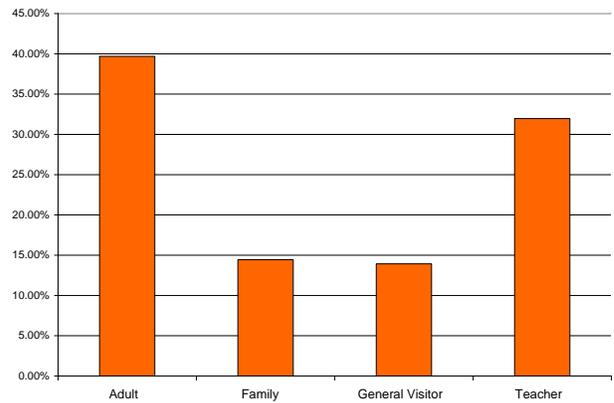


Chart 2: Percentage of returned longitudinal survey by program area (05-06)

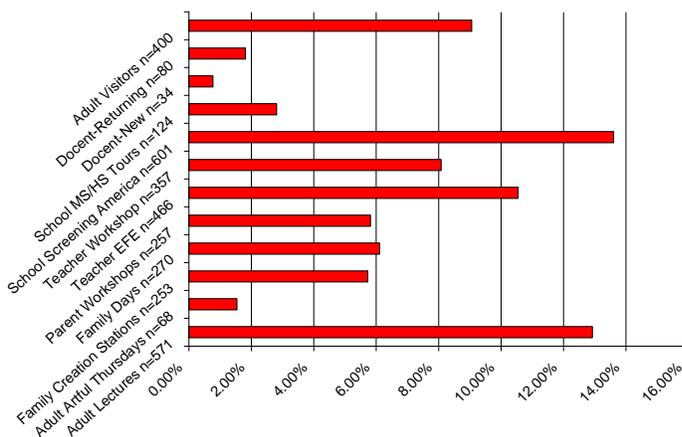


Chart 3: Percentage of visitor surveys (05-06) by program type

Chart 3 illustrates the distribution of completed 2005-2006 surveys across program types of people at the museum. Each program area selected specific program types to be assessed in this study. This list does not represent the total number of program types presented by the education department. It is only a sub-sample of programs for this study. The longitudinal survey data set was not cross-tabulated by program type as the sample size was too small to allow for that level of analysis.



Gender: The total 2005-2006 sample was made up primarily of females. In some program samples there was a much higher percentage of females (Teacher, Family, Docent, and the Longitudinal sample) while other program samples had a more even distribution of gender (School and General Visitor). See Table 1 below for a specific report of this distribution.

Table 1: Percentage of males and females by program area (05-06)

	Overall Sample	Teacher	Adult	Family	Docent	School	General Visitor	Longitudinal Sample
Male	29%	12%	30%	20%	10%	51%	46%	10%
Female	71%	88%	70%	80%	90%	49%	54%	90%

Age: Chart 4 below provides details on the age distribution of the samples. There are 13 children ages 10-19 that show up in the Teacher program sample, this is probably a case of data entry error or could be due to the fact that teachers were invited to bring students to the Basquiat Evenings for Educators program and perhaps some students filled out surveys. The presence of 15 people age 20-59 in the school program sample may be a case of teachers completing the surveys with the school students or a case of data entry error. Regardless, these outliers are so small that with a sample size this large, they do not skew the data to any significant degree.

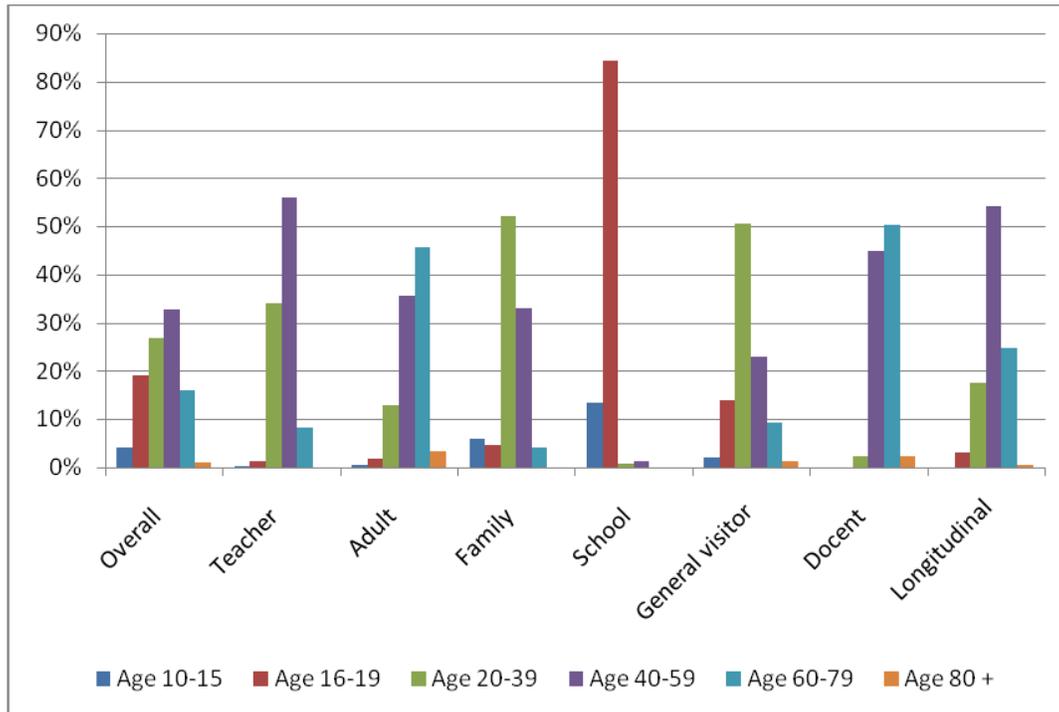


Chart 4: Percentage of age distribution by program area (05-06)

Residence: Table 2 below provides details on the distribution of the 05-06 sample according to whether or not they live in the greater Houston area. School students were not asked this question because they were all from the Houston area. The vast majority of people in the program area samples are local whereas the distribution in the general visitor sample, while largely from Houston, is representative of more out-of-towners as might be expected in the general visitor population.

Table 2: Percentage of residence in the Houston area by program area (05-06)

	Overall	Teacher	Adult	Family	General visitor	Docent	Longitudinal
Yes	90%	92%	96%	89%	73%	99%	89%
No	10%	8%	4%	11%	27%	1%	11%

Chart 5 below provides details on the distribution of the 05-06 sample according to how far they live from the MFAH. School students were not asked this question. As might be expected almost half of the overall sample lives within 15 miles of the museum. However, there are some variations by program. The majority of people attending adult programs live close to the museum while the teacher program draws a roughly equal percentage of people from the larger 45-mile radius from the museum.

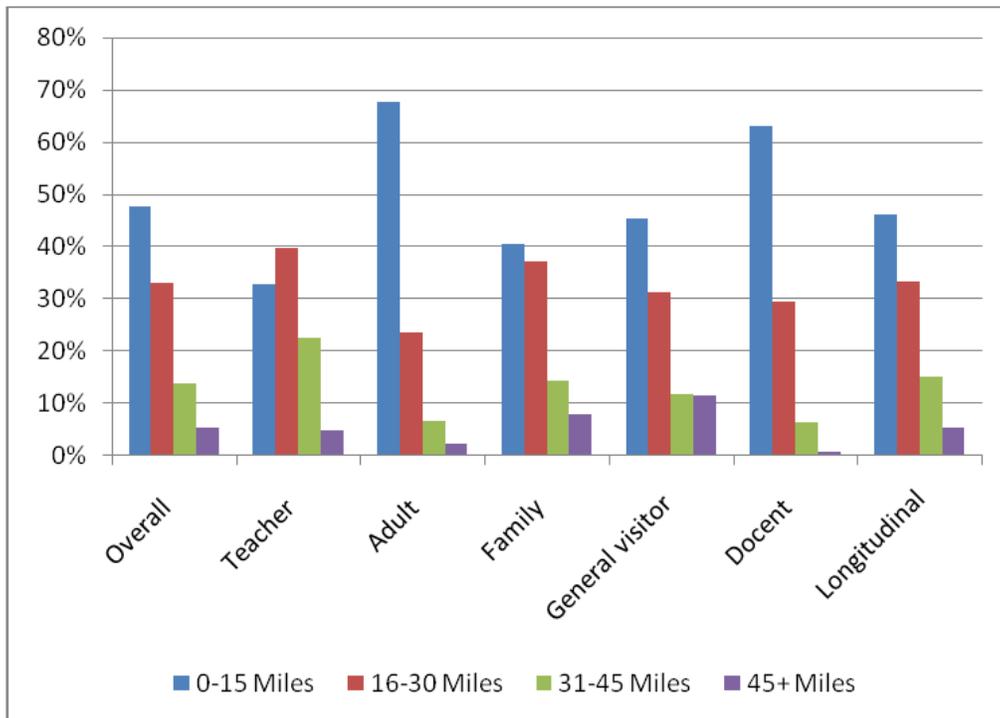


Chart 5: Percentage of distance from the museum by program area (05-06)



MFAH Visitation Patterns: Chart 6 below provides details on the distribution of the 05-06 sample according to how often they visited the MFAH over the past 12 months. School students were not asked this question. As might be expected, docents reported visiting the museum the most followed by the adult program participants and the longitudinal sample, many of whom were adult program participants. Over half of the general visitor sample visited the MFAH between one and six times that year. This finding may or may not be representative of the larger sample.

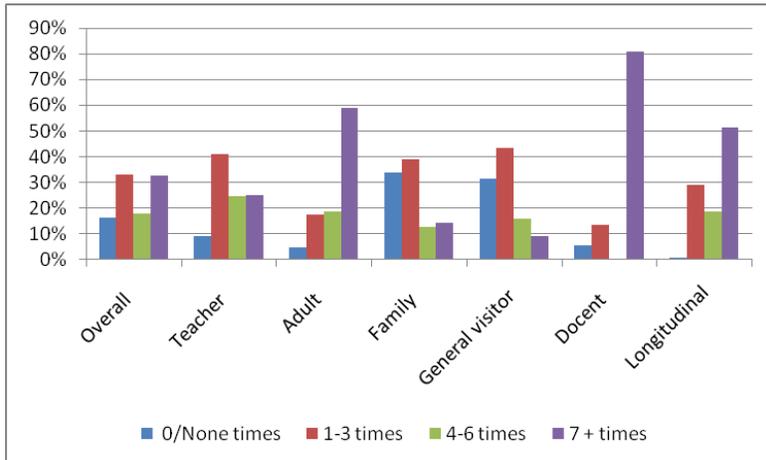


Chart 6: Percentage of visits to the MFAH over the past 12 months (05-06)

It is possible that general visitors who agreed to complete the survey during their visit did so because they have more interest in the museum. However, almost a third of the general visitors were visiting for the first time when they completed the survey. Just over half of the longitudinal sample indicated visiting the MFAH seven or more times which is not representative of the larger overall sample. It is likely that people willing to complete the online survey felt more connected with the museum.

MFAH Membership: Table 3 below provides details on the distribution of the 05-06 sample according to members in the MFAH. School students were not asked this question. As might be expected a majority of docents and adult program participants are museum members and the reverse is the case for the general visitor. The distribution of members and non-members is roughly the same for both teacher and family program participants. The longitudinal sample is fairly evenly divided.

Table 3: Percentage of MFAH members (05-06)

	Overall	Teacher	Adult	Family	General visitor	Docent	Longitudinal
Yes	42%	31%	68%	31%	11%	76%	52%
No	58%	69%	32%	69%	89%	24%	48%

2007-2008 Survey Sample

During the program year 2007-2008, a total of 427 surveys were collected from participants in three program areas, illustrated in Chart 7 below. Most of these surveys (51%) were collected from participants in the Parent Workshops; 16% from middle and high school students in the multi-visit program; 13% from Adult Sketching; 10% from the Art of Observation for medical school students; 6% from students at the Glassell Nehemiah Center, 3% from the Oiticica Workshop, and 1% from Speakers Bureau, Summer Mural Program, and Glassell School Art Project Grad, combined.

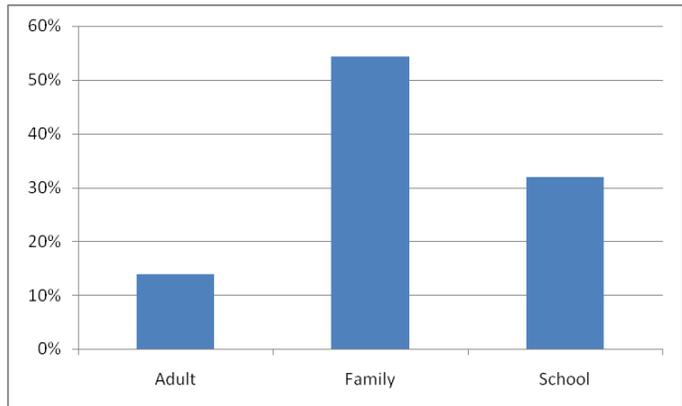


Chart 7: Percentage of visitor surveys (07-08) by program area

Of this sample 116 visitors provided their email address, agreeing to participate in the longitudinal web survey. Of that group only ten people clicked the link and five of those did not finish the survey. This represents 2% of the total sample. In comparison, the longitudinal web survey response rate for the 2005-2006 survey sample was 5%. Because that total sample was much larger than the 2007-2008 sample, those results were usable. The results for the 2007-2008 web survey were too small to be reported in any meaningful way.

Gender: Similar to the 2005-2006 sample three-quarters of the total sample were female. This was due, primarily to the high percentage of surveys from Parent Workshop participants, and female caregivers most frequently completed the surveys. Table 4 provides the breakdown of gender across program area

	Family	School	Adult
Male	7%	52%	19%
Female	93%	48%	81%

Table 4: Gender distribution by program area (07-08)

Age: Because the 2007-2008 sample was so small and primarily concentrated on the Parent Workshops, it is not surprising that the majority of the sample were in the 20-39 age range. Chart 8 illustrates the age distribution by program area.

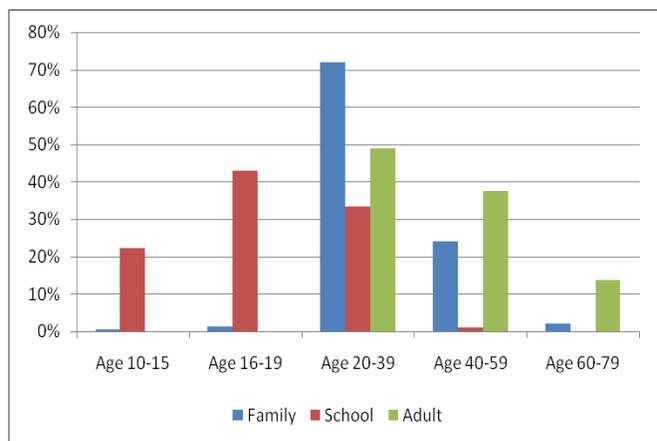


Chart 8: Percentage of age distribution by program area (07-08)



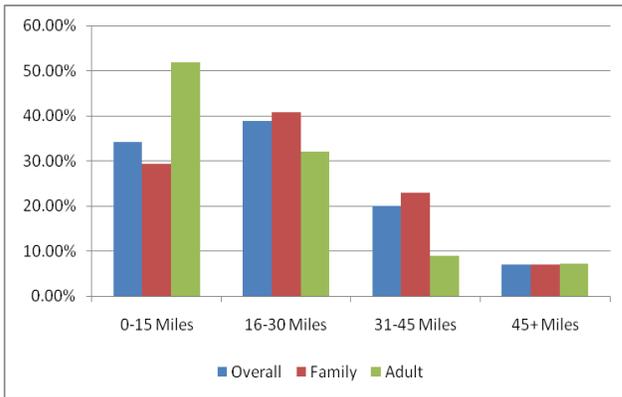


Chart 9: Percentage of distance from the museum by program area (07-08)

visited the MFAH that year. Again, this finding is not surprising as the majority of the sample, the Parent Workshop participants, were new to the museum experience. More of the adult program sample were frequent MFAH visitors, as expected. (See chart 10.) Most of the Family program sample (94%) indicated that they were not MFAH members while the Adult Program sample was more evenly divided with 66% non-members and 34% members. School students were not asked this question

Residence: Similar to the 05-06 sample, most of the 07-08 sample (87%) indicated that they were from the Houston area. Unsurprisingly, most people in the sample live within 30 miles of the museum. The slightly larger representation of family/Parent Workshop participants reflects that they were transported to the museum by the MFAH. (See chart 9) School students were not asked this question.

Most of the 2007-2008 sample had not

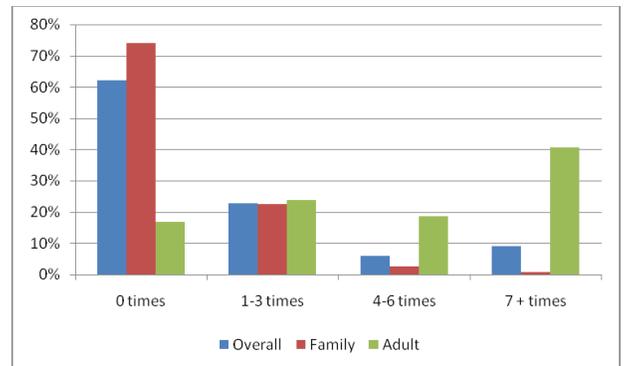


Chart 10: Percentage of visits to the MFAH over the past 12 months (07-08)



Learning in the MFAH

Learning By Program – 2005-2006 Sample

In the 2005-2006 sample, the strongest finding confirmed professional wisdom – that voluntary participation in an education program results in higher self-report of learning on all dimensions than the reported learning of general visitors who do not participate in education programs. (See chart 11.)

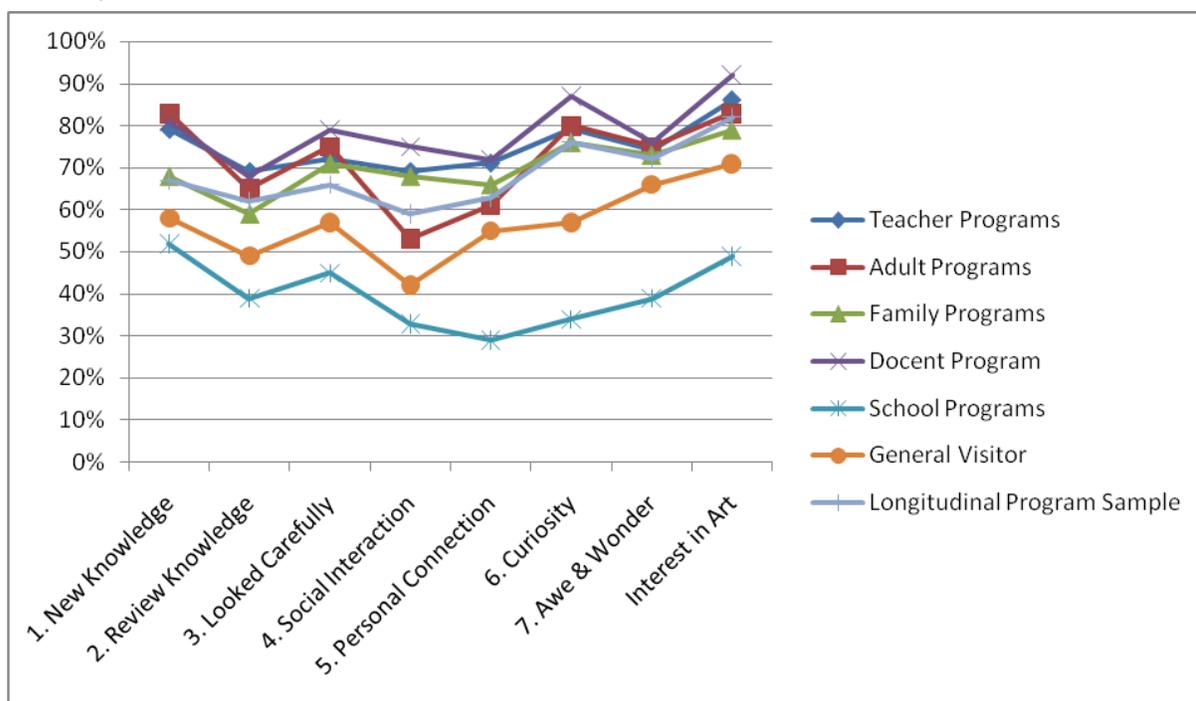


Chart 11: Percentage of people who rated their learning high (score of 7 or 8) across all learning dimensions (05-06)

When we look at the average learning ratings for the other program areas in the 05-06 sample, adult, teacher, docent, and family programs, leaving the school programs out of this average for the moment – because they are so different from these four program areas – several interesting results emerge. In Chart 12, the four remaining program areas are averaged because their differences were not statistically significant. The program ratings are then compared to the longitudinal sample to see how learning ratings changed over time. Interestingly, the differences are very slight. The only statistically significant difference between the museum-based survey sample and the longitudinal sample is in dimension #1 - Learned something new. This means that we can consider the learning for the museum-based post-program survey sample and the longitudinal web-based survey sample essentially the same. The one exception on the first learning dimension is probably due to the fact that when at the museum for a program, people may be more likely to feel they learned something new immediately after the program, than several months after the experience. This is a curious finding, however, because the written

examples that the longitudinal web-survey sample provided about visitor learning were, for the most part, specific, detailed, and rich.

In any case, it is safe to say that three to nine months after the museum program experience, people retain their learning on the learning dimensions equal to or very close to the levels they rated themselves immediately after their museum program experience. Even more interesting, the general visitor sample tend to rate their learning significantly lower on all dimensions than do participants in the four education programs areas (without school programs) yet they rate their interest in art almost as high as program participants. This is the most convincing data that education programs are successful in transforming interest into actual learning across all the dimensions.

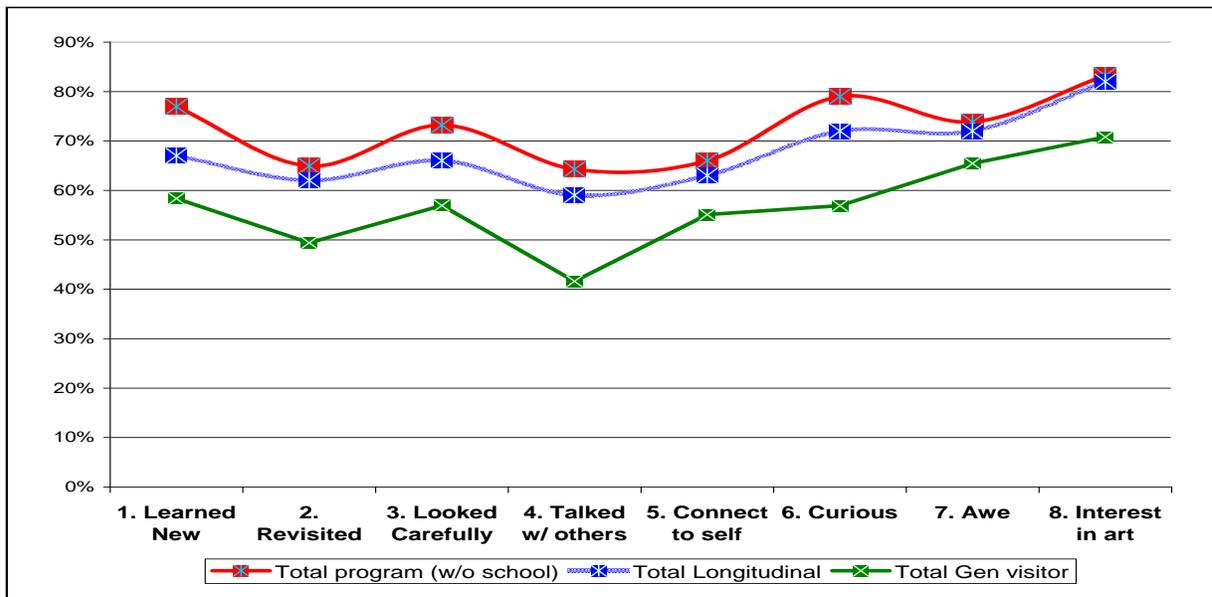


Chart 12: Comparison of people who rated their learning high (score of 7 or 8) across all learning dimensions by program area (without school programs), longitudinal sample, and general visitors (05-06)

Comparison to the 2007-2008 Sample

The 2007-2008 sample only concentrated on three program areas, Family, School, and Adult. While it was much smaller than the 05-06 sample, there were some encouraging findings. All three program areas rated learning higher in the 07-08 sample than in the 05-06 sample. (See Chart 13.) The differences in learning in the Adult Program samples were not significant and the 07-08 adult sample was so small, it is not appropriate to draw any conclusions from that data.

Significant Differences in Family Program Learning

The Family Programs sample scored significantly higher in 07-08 on the dimension of “Learning new knowledge.” This sample was comprised primarily of Parent Workshop participants and the



nature of that program is to teach parents how to make art at home with their children. The focus for the art-making activities is works of art in the MFAH's collection and exhibitions. The survey finding is further supported by the comments that parents included on their surveys. An emerging pattern from the parent comments centered around the value of the experience as one that was relaxing. The parents clearly saw how doing arts together could benefit them individually and as a family. A selection of these comments is included below:

Me gusto mucho por que boy a poder enseñar a mis hijos y convivir con ellos y es muy interesante. [I liked it very much because I will be able to teach my children and bond with them, it is very interesting.]

Es primera vez que hago esto y me encanto mucho y me impresiono. Gracias espero qe sigan a delante y enseñen a personas que lo sepan va larar. [This is the first time I do this and I loved it, it impressed me. Thank you, I hope you continue with this and teach people to learn to value this.]

Me gustaria que la siguiente vez esten los niños en la clase. [I would like next time for children to be in the class.]

Fue una clase muy especial involucrarte, con mas familias. [It was a very special class, to be involved with other families.]

Me gusto mucho la clase porque aprendi algo que no sabia. [I really liked this class because I learned something I did not know.]

Me interes por que tengo un niño que te interesa mucho pintar y necesito. Que lo apoyen. [It was of interest to me because I have a son who is interested in painting and he needs support.]

Para mi como madre y una de casa es muy importante aprender porque asi yo puedo enseñar a mis hijos el arte que es muy bonito gracias. [To me, as mother and homemaker, it is very important to learn because this way I can teach my children that art is very nice, thank you.]

Me gusto porque podemos desarrollar mucho nuestra imaginacion y es muy bueno. [I liked it because we were able to develop our imagination and this is good.]

Me gusto mucho nunca he tenido informacion sobre este taller no se dibujar tampoco pero trate de hacerlo. [I liked it very much, I never had any information on this workshop. I don't know how to draw, but I tried.]

Me gustaria aprender mas a pintar pero no tengo el medio para hacerlo. Me parece relajante este taller. [I would like to learn how to paint more, but I do not have the means to do so. This workshop seems very relaxing.]

El arte siempre me a gustado pero no e tenido la oportunidad de aprender. Pero me gustaria tener oportunidad de aprender. [I have always liked the arts, but I haven't had the opportunity to learn about them. But I would like to have the opportunity to do so.]

Esta muy bien aprender con materiales que son facil de conseguir y hacer arte con cosas sencillas. [It is great to learn with materials that are easy to get and make art with simple items.]



Realmente me intereso mas conocer acerca del arte por que a traves de el reflejamos nuestros sentimientos y asi mismo despertamos mais capacidades. [I am truly interested in knowing more about art because through it, we reflect our feelings and we awake more abilities.]

El poder de hacer algo con nuestras manos nos ayoda a poder visualizar la naturaleza de nuestro gran poder de como gueremose que nuestros hijos algan adelante en so vida diaria y sean unas personas con convicion, esperanza, moral, y victoria en so vida.

[The power to be able to make something with our hands helps us visualize the nature of our own power of wanting our children to succeed in their everyday life and be people with conviction, hope, morals, and victory in their life.]

Me gustariol aprnder mas sobre esto tener msa conocimientos para poder obtener una superacion Personal y tambren creo due me puede servir para poder expresar sentremientos due talvez no encontramos, Aparte due creo due puede servire para relajarnos y tener sentidos mas centrados. [I would like to know more about this and have more knowledge to obtain personal enhancement and it could also help me express feelings that sometimes we cannot find. I also think it can help us to relax and feel more centered.]

Significant Differences in School Program Learning

The most significant differences between the 05-06 and 07-08 samples occurred in the School Program area. While students in the 05-06 sample reported some learning, they did so at a significantly lower rate than did adults, teachers, docents, or families. The MFAH School Programs Manager and researcher have identified several reasons that the students in this earlier sample might have rated learning lower. First, school students have little or no choice in deciding to visit the museum and participate in the program than do participants in the other program areas. Teachers and museum staff make decisions about what program to attend, when to participate, and what to do while at the museum. Consequently students' motivation to learn is lower and it resulted in a fairly low rate of reported learning. Second, students in the 05-06 sample rated their interest in art significantly lower than other 05-06 program participants. Research in museum learning has repeatedly pointed to the strong relationship between interest, free-choice, prior knowledge, and learning (Falk & Dierking, 2000; Falk & Adelman, 2003; Falk & Storksdieck, 2005). This study further supports that research.

Yet there is more to the findings for the school programs because the self-rating of learning varies depending on which program students are attending. The middle & high school museum tour participants tend to rate their learning higher across all but one of the learning dimensions (#5 – relate to personal experience & interest), than do participants of the Screening America film program. This was a curious finding at first but, upon closer inspection, the MFAH School Student Programs Manager and researcher were able to identify several reasons for this difference between programs in the 05-06 sample. Students sometimes do not think that watching movies is a learning experience, at least, not a typical school-type learning experience and therefore may not recognize their experience as traditional learning. In addition, teachers who choose to bring students to Screening America are, for the most part, history and civics/government teachers who want to bring history alive for the students through this program. Another point is that the structure of the film program is such that most of the time in the program is spent watching the film with a relatively short amount of time to discuss and solidify learning. This step is primarily left up to the teachers when they return to the classroom. Chances are that if we surveyed students who had sufficient reflection time either at the



museum by MFAH staff or with their teachers in the classroom they would rate their learning much higher. Finally, students in school tours have more interaction with other people, such as docents and teachers and each other, and thus have repeated opportunities to explore, massage, and digest information and experiences.

The 05-06 results for school programs prompted the MFAH to focus the 07-08 school program sample on students participating in the multiple visit program. Our hypothesis posited that students who visit the museum several times over a school year as part of an in-depth program with museum and classroom components should report higher reported learning than students in one-shot museum experiences. This assumption was supported by the 07-08 data as illustrated in Chart 13. Students in the multiple-visit school program (07-08 in red) rated their learning and interest in art significantly higher than elementary and middle school students (05-06 in blue) involved in regular one-shot school tours and film programs.

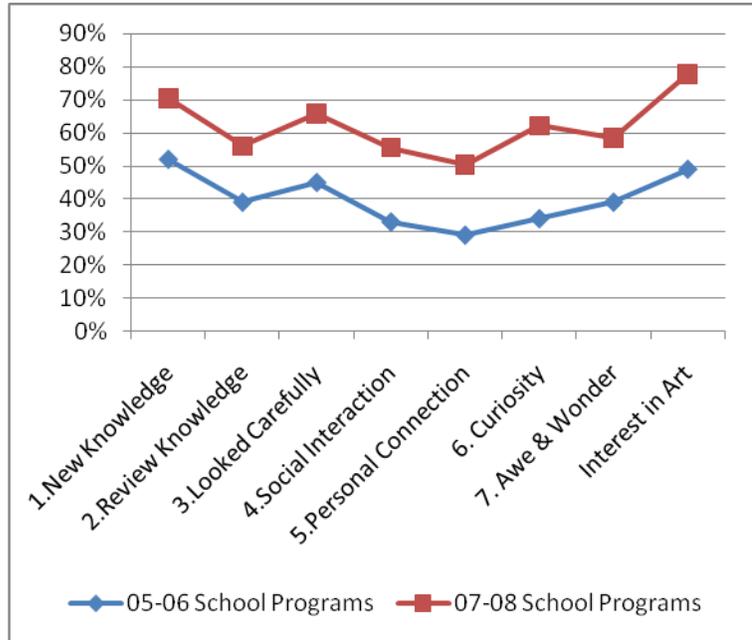


Chart 13: Comparison of 05-06 and 07-08 school program learning

This is an important finding as very little research supports professional wisdom – that multiple experiences are more meaningful than one-shot experiences (Adams & Luke, 2004; Witmer, Luke, Adams, 2000).

Effect of Time on Museum Learning: 05-06 Longitudinal Web Survey Results

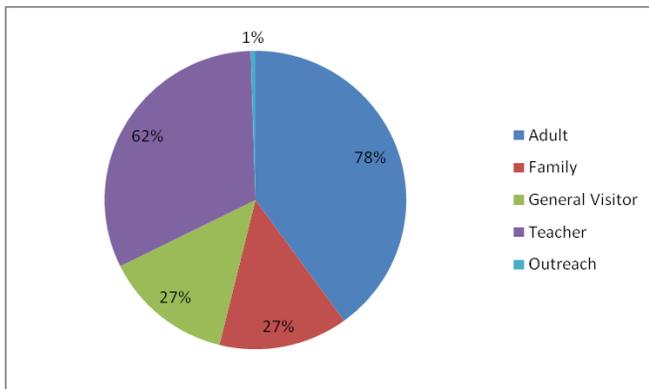


Chart 14: Responses by Program Area for 05-06 longitudinal web survey

The written survey method administered at the end of a museum program experience did not ask people to provide some explanation as to why they rated specific learning dimensions the way they did. However, the web-based longitudinal survey did ask people to describe how specific learning happened for them. (See Chart 14 for breakdown of number of written stories on the 05-06 web survey by program area; school students were not asked to participate in the longitudinal



survey as they were under age 18.) This researcher was amazed at the degree to which people were willing to tell their stories in the web survey. Very few writing boxes were left blank and the comments were overwhelmingly articulate, thoughtful, and touching. Many responses were poetic. One person in this survey said that every visit to the museum gave her “goose bumps.” The richness of the web survey quotes gave the researcher goose bumps. There is no doubt that the MFAH provides people with deeply meaningful, life-enhancing experiences.

A small selection of quotes from the web-based survey is provided below, divided by program area for each learning dimension. It was extremely difficult to select so few quotes, therefore, a larger selection of quotes is included in Appendix E. We urge you to read all of the quotes and get your own goose bumps.

1. I found out something new.

Adult Programs

I am not a fan of modern art but these lectures gave me greater understanding of these artists concept and presentation through this art form

I learned how difficult it is to use color effectively.

I knew nothing of Havel's work and was very excited about his style and methods--to see ordinary men's shirts express the human condition in such a clean simple manner was refreshing

Colors in paintings changed with the invention of oil paints in tubes. That in turn affected all of Paris society and art.

My rusty Tex-Mex Spanish acquired several new artistic terms as a result of the lectures I attended in Spanish. It made for a very stimulating, challenging hour in which every neuron of mine was paying attention!

Family Programs

I learned that when you sketch a picture, you don't keep your eyes on the drawing paper. You keep your eyes on the object you're sketching.

I learned how incredibly time-consuming Japanese Gardening is! Also, I learned how to integrate art and books during the story times.

We had no idea how quilts are made or the myriad design choices involved!

We learned about gold leaf paintings. I had no idea how they were made, and would not have gotten the information had we not had the tour. Also, we learned how to simply draw what you see, while looking at artwork in one of the halls.

I learned the different forms of art and I learned how to view and appreciate art from different angles. I also learned about art history (Japan block print, for example...). Through art projects at MFA, I was able to learn more about my kids' talent.

Teacher Programs

I've learned so much, I don't know where to start. How about the comparison of the Gees Bend Quilts to Bauhaus paintings? Or ways to integrate other curriculums while teaching Art?



I learned new printmaking techniques which I brought back to school to implement. More importantly, I was able to reach the part of myself that thirsts for knowledge outside of my current experience. I was reinvigorated with every show to read more, draw more, reinvent my curriculum... and a hundred other intangible gifts.

Last year's Corcoran exhibit caused me to develop a separate American Art lesson that I probably wouldn't have normally done. Part of the reason is that my students have access to the work we are talking about.

The museum programs have offered many creative ways to enrich the way I interact with art and the way art affects me. I try to pass these ideas on to my students because I know it's good when I can observe their wonder, learning and confidence building

General Visitors

Utilizing a variety of techniques such as the posterization technique with an icon or dissecting a copied photograph to help explain dimension and math.

I was exposed to Basquiat and interesting young artist. I also found another use for collars at the shirt color art exhibit.

Even though different cultures can be completely opposite, there are ALWAYS certain ties as humans, with emotions and trials and tribulations that will always unite us as one and provide a way for us to like and love each other.

Lived in the south all my life and never even heard of Gees Bend before

2. I thought about something I already knew in a new way.

Adult Programs

Japanese gardening—I have always admired it and thought it beautiful, but had no idea the amount of maintenance required.

Latin American acquisitions, Modern Dance in the Joseph Havel sculptures, Gracco Sacco's stark sculptures invoking life's problems. They all bend my mind to look at life and the news differently.

It had never occurred to me that international politics might play a part in art theft.

I always liked arranging the way curtains fall but the traveling exhibit I visited for my class made me think of it as maybe actual art and not just organizing.

I've never liked Astor Piazzola's tango music; now I understand there is much more to tango than just the music.

Family Programs

I knew about colorful scrapbooking paper, but I never thought to make a paper quilt with these materials.

I knew that ancient cultures made masks of gold, but until we sat and drew them I didn't notice how beautiful they were or how much detail they put into them.

I knew art was beautiful, and a representation of life, but sometimes I think we see things as a whole. When looking at the (death cart?) my children pointed out to me all the differences in it, every wheel had something different from the next, and they had to point it out for me to see it. I saw the cart, and that one wheel was missing, they pointed out the faces, and described the torment on the faces, or if they were missing eye sockets, or noses.... So I learned to look a little closer, and not to take something at face value.



The idea of presenting simple questions to children when talking about art--then allowing them to do most of the talking about what they see.

Teacher Programs

I already knew about encouraging students to use verbs, nouns, and adjectives...its just that your ideas encourage presenting this in a different way.

Gees Bend Quilts workshop motivated me to educate my little ones about the stories in the quilts while they worked on their art quilts.

The Latin American Seminar greatly increased my knowledge of contemporary Latin American Artists and their contributions. I believe it helped me to be more sensitive to the needs of my students (especially Hispanics), in terms of making them aware of that part of their rich heritage.

I knew my lessons were more technically oriented and I have seen the value in setting things up so that the lesson facilitates the children to take ownership of the lesson, to find excitement in what they are learning, and to use their creativity.

General Visitors

The Jack Yates Photography exhibit helped me look at my old neighborhood in a different light! There were street signs that I used to pass by everyday, that I never really thought had any purpose.

that not only can artist use small medium items, such as wood or metal, to make prints but an entire wooden floor as well.

I saw sculpture in another way it really opened my eyes to what sculpture is really about.

3. I looked more carefully and more thoughtfully at art.

Adult Programs

I look at paintings more carefully. I study a few works at the museum rather than try to see everything

At a reception for a new exhibition, one must quickly look at the pictures, so one has only a sketchy memory of images. I have always returned at least once, and often several times, to view the paintings more carefully. Attending the lectures has contributed to an appreciation of the details than I might otherwise have lacked.

I have always been seduced by color but now I will be even more aware of the use of small bits of color in a painting.

I spent more time and gave more thought to American landscapes as a result of a lecture.

Family Programs

I look at patterns more, I see my son draw pictures of leaves more.

I think what art does for me, and I think for my kids, most of all, is to provide us with the medium to express our feelings, our wishes, dreams, desires, and thoughts and to free us of the everyday worries and stresses of life.



Since I am an art historian, perhaps my response is unfair because I am always thinking about art! It is second nature. However, the children's art studio (Creation Station) often prompts me to re-think materials in a new way.

Both my 8 yr. old daughter and I both enjoyed reading about various gold artifacts and info. My 6 yr. old son just enjoyed looking at them.

Teacher Programs

Don't just look at a painting. I now hear and smell what is happening in the painting.

I'll give students greater freedom to think and give opinions about art work by masters and students in class. They can verbalize their thoughts easier as I give my own opinions and questions before them.

I tend to zip past most landscapes unless they are very specific to the historical era I am teaching, but there is a lot to learn from landscapes of an earlier period-like the painting of Niagara Falls.

I believe that I think more deeply of the influences that led artists (or craftsmen) to create what they have created. For example, location, materials, politics and culture all play a role in the creation of art.

General Visitors

I remember one time coming to the museum and I was staring at a beautiful work of art not noticing that the artist had started to paint a picture in the beginning but painted over it with another painting. I did not notice this until the second time I visited the museum.

Instead of just concentrating on technique, I look more carefully at why certain elements were used and what they're supposed to represent.

I studied the composition of the photos as well as the subject

Instead of how normally I would just look at the pieces of art work fast it made me want to take an extra minute to really examine the little details I could have overlooked.

4. I talked about art to other people as a result of attending this program.

Adult Programs

I share my visits to the museum with family and friends, and often bring them to an exhibit they might not otherwise have seen. I am hopeful that when I am no longer here, this experience will lead them to become more active in the museum.

I usually go home and tell the family what the talk was about whether they want to know or not! I also like bringing a friend to attend with me. The refreshments time afterwards is also a good place to meet and talk with people about the art.

I am an accountant that has no formal training in any of the arts. I love to describe what I have learned in the Friday afternoon lectures to my wife and grown children. They are amazed!

I have had nerve to talk about art to an artist in our neighborhood (Montrose)and influenced him to attend MFAH lectures.



Family Programs

I like to go the museum with other people, you can compare points of view

I made a point to tell the other moms I know to take their kids and check the programs out. My daughter would not stop talking about all the things she saw there.

I've talked with others about art for years, but this program made me talk to others about the value of this particular program.

I enjoyed talking about some the art we saw with my own children. It was interesting to listen to their interpretations and views.

Teacher Programs

I was always very excited to talk to the other teachers in my district wide department as well as teachers on my home campus. Many ideas were shared interdepartmentally regarding using art history to demonstrate or support historical concepts.

In discussion with other adults I am able to offer a broadened viewpoint of what art is, not just the beautiful realistic sculptures of Michaelangelo, or the quiet beauty of Mona Lisa, but rather, introduce them to the many forms and avenues that artistic expression has to offer.

When all the art teachers get together.... we TALK and each of us sees ART from their unique perspective... getting together provides multiple view-points and it's exciting just to "Listen" to so many Diverse ideas!!

I feel better informed about the art and am able to talk to other teachers and students about art shows in town. For a show they did not think they would like- I may give them a different perspective of it and encourage them to see it.

Between some of the activities and the lunch break, I met several new people and talked about her teaching experiences.

General Visitors

I have several friends who I suggest exhibits to and vice versa.

I'm always talking about art, but I'll throw in what I've heard and discuss it with people i know.

I ended up asking a few people about their opinions on the Gee's Bend exhibit. Mostly I wanted to know if they thought that the quilts were worthy of being called "art."

5. I related art to my personal interests, life experience, or background.

Adult Programs

I spent a good week reading about Goethe after attending lectures on the "Grand Tour".

I am a leatherworker and woodworker and art has a great deal to do with design. I have looked to H.C. Weternann for inspiration. Nineteenth century art gives us costume clues for dressing in historical reenactments.

I try to make our food presentations a little more artistic.



My knowledge of music is greater than that of art. As I learn more at the museum I can related the time periods of art to what I know about music.

I have advanced degrees in English and love to read 19th century British novels but only since attending MFAH lectures have I related the fiction to art and started attending art lectures at Rice University.

Although I did not attend a lecture on this, per se, our entire family got a renewed sense of our Texas heritage in the flags exhibit and refer back to that joint experience quite frequently.

Family Programs

I am more encouraged to try small art projects, knowing that they do not have to be perfect to be lovely.

I realized that I wanted to see more art that depicted my sorts of experiences. I am a thirty year old African American MBA graduate who lives in Houston but whose siblings were raised in Africa. I decided that my factors are so uniquely mine that perhaps the best way to represent myself in art would be to make my own! My husband and I have purchased a very nice digital camera, and we plan to use it to capture moments that define our nature and tell our stories.

I already do this, but my daughter really connected with the fact that she wears masks for dress up and that ancient peoples wore them too.

Teacher Programs

I traveled to DC and Philadelphia this summer and plan on creating "visit journals for both the National Gallery of Art, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, so that when my family visit them they can have a more meaningful experience. I spent an entire day at each, and wrote ideas and collected lots of free pamphlets for art.

I am recognizing more of what I do for leisure and enjoyment as a form of artistic expression - whether it be designing my gardens, painting, sculptures, or working on the photo movie stories that I make on my computer.

I am inspired by what I have learned and by what I see at the museum. I am motivated to more deeply explore creative expression and new approaches to teaching and motivating students to appreciate art and to more confidently participate in artistic expression.

I create beaded jewelry, and went through the various exhibits in the African and Pre-Columbian exhibits looking for new ideas. I also teach beading to students, and will use these ideas to inspire them.

General Visitors

In designing jewelry I look at the ancient African examples...

A friend of mine took an art history class in college and told me that a recent movement in art was to highlight the canvas and paint as the art itself rather than try to "hide" the fact that it is paint on canvas. He told me this after my visit to MFAH, and when I considered some of the modern art I saw, it made sense.

During Gee's bend, I watch the accompanying film that explained the story behind the design and basic history of the quilts. After years of sitting under 'neath my grandmother watching her spend hours with those quilts, I never had the good sense to ask her what they meant. I have the memories of the quilts to enjoy that tradition.



6. This program made me want to learn more about art.

Adult Programs

The mythology captured in many paintings was eye-opening and the lectures aided in the understanding of the paintings themselves. It has made me want to know more about Greek mythology.

I can't think of one lecture after which I didn't come home and do some kind of online research to learn more.

I have come home and looked up individual artists on the internet after attending a program... or I have tried different techniques inspired by things I've seen at the MFAH.

The more I learn the more I want to learn. I mark my calendar the minute I receive your mailings.

As a result of attending the Friday lectures, my wife and I have signed up for several Rice University art history lectures.

I have learned so much from the Friday afternoon lectures and find that I seek out art museums and exhibitions in other places as I travel. I also find reading about art in the general media or reading novels with an art-based theme are very appealing to me now.

Family Programs

Now that I know my kids possess talents in art, I encourage them to explore further. My 10yrs old is now creating his own Manga book filled with stories and cartoon characters. My 9yrs old is compiling his own art sketches. I will submit them to Glassell school of art for a chance to win scholarship in their art programs.

We look forward to going to the museum, where before we never thought about it

We checked out a book on sculpture and modeling to learn together

My daughter was excited to see different art work from some artists they she had done reports on in school.

Teacher Programs

It made me love what I do for a living and helped me see how art can help everyone.

I always want to learn more personally and to include in my classes professionally

The programs often prompt me to do further research.

Every time I participate in one of these programs, I come away energized and also aware of how much more there is to learn and how much fun that's going to be!

The evening workshop (two years ago) that focused on the Cullen Sculpture Garden motivated me to read about the garden, its history, and the collection. I have since conducted three tours of the sculpture garden with my students.

General Visitors

They've motivated me to learn more about how art plays an important role in my life and in society, the styles, and the importance of expressing oneself.



I was so motivated by my MFAH experiences that I became a member and look forward to each program I attend.

The main exhibit at one museum, "white flesh sliding through the fine mist of sensuality" had some German writing on it that I copied down in an attempt to have it translated later since none of the museum workers knew German.

7. I felt a sense of awe or wonderment about art.

Adult Programs

Art represents creativity to me and I am in awe of those whose talents allow them to express themselves in this way. Perhaps this is because I have no talent at all in this way. I am particularly awed with ancient art forms, as they give us an idea of what the world was like 500-1000 years ago. Without that talent, we would not know. That art also informs me about what current artists may copy from the ancients. I must admit that I have little taste for modern abstract art. I find it difficult to see beauty and meaning in it. Perhaps lectures at the MFA would help me change my views, but I find much of it ugly and/or shocking.

The Courbet Exhibit gave me a new appreciation for landscape art and a sense of excitement and understanding of God's creation.

The gold flip flop shoes the king wears in the African gold collection are my hands down favorite piece. I would have enjoyed my students seeing the shoes when CCISD visited the MFAH. I was able to attend this year by a mishap in someone else's schedule. The flip flops when I was growing up were a status of being "poor". Now, if you don't have them, you might be considered fashion poor. The king has these heavy clodded golden shoes that keep drawing me back to visit again and again.

Already was in awe and wonder - just increased awareness of the process

Do you know the sense of glee when you get some insight into what an artist must have been trying to express. The ability of the lecturer to pass on that little bit of insight is what brings the audience back. I think I have expressed that sense of glee with my attendance of the Bach lectures because those lectures come most readily to my mind.

Gee's Bend Quilt, Eyes of ??, Tango, Havel, etc. All have left me in awe. Just to veiw their visions by their expressions to me is amazing.

Family Programs

Every day, I am touched by the beauty of nature and the deep desire to express what I see and feel into some type of art form. Having the talent to express one's feelings through art is truly a gift.

every single time we enter the doors

I was in awe of how much more special it made my daughter's trip to the museum. I already love art and history. I love that the programs made her feel excited about it too.

Art is the soul. It is raw, truthful, mournful, joyous, triumphant, loving and so many more things. I find that this is what my mind and soul need for "food" not TV, Movies, or popular music.

My awe and wonder really had to do with watching my 5 year old spend TWO HOURS in the GEE BEND exhibit drawing the quilts in utter concentration and silence. She was totally absorbed and self-motivated. That's pretty powerful!



The time/energy that goes into a work, I can sense that, It gives me goesbumps.

Teacher Programs

My ultimate goal is to inspire my students. One of my greatest moments was when I brought my students to the MOMA show and after assuring them that these works were the "real" originals, watching the hair on their arms match mine and listen to the astounded silence, then the sound of 24 kids talking at once. That was awe inspiring!!!!

To stand in the modern art show year before last has left indelible images in my mind. Even writing this I am choked up t think of the work I was able to see. I never knew there was a dog in Picasso's "Three Musicians".

Every time I come down to the MFAH, I leave with that feeling of awe about art. Just recently, I spent the last week of July with a teacher's program that was combined with Glassel and I was overwhelmed with how fabulous 5 full days of learning about art could be. Victoria took us on a tour that was the very best ever!!! She had us look really fast, then had us go back and really take the time to look at the artwork. I loved it so much that I revisited each art piece again in the evening, just to soak it all up.

The works are so fantastic. Nothing can compare to seeing them in real life.

Moved almost to tears at the Gee's Bend show, among others.

General Visitors

I love how the human mind works and it amazes me to think that a person could have so much imagination and express themselves.

I remember walking through a blue lighted tunnel that was really cool and it kind of excited me in awe and wonder.

Specifically, I remember looking at Frederick Edwin Church's Niagara from the Corcoran Gallery exhibition and feeling a sense of awe at the size of the painting and a sense of excitement at finally viewing a piece of art that I had studied in school.

the Jean Michel Basquiat exhibit absolutely blew me away

I could have spent hours in front of Pollock's No. 6, it was just so riveting, so deep, so sad.



Practitioner Study on Visitor Learning

During the course of the community partnership study in 2005-2006, the researcher and MFAH Education Director identified an area that warranted further study: exploration into the motivations, ideas, and interests of art museum educators. We recognized the tendency to focus evaluation efforts on audiences and partners, ignoring issues in the professional museum education staff. Consequently a study of professional practice and self-assessment was implemented in 2006-2007. To increase the reliability of this study we included the education departments of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and the Cincinnati Art Museum (CAM). Museum educators in all three museums completed a practitioner survey and assessed a selection of education programs. (See Appendix F the survey protocols.) The program assessment is closely aligned with the learning dimensions in the visitor learning study.²

Description of Practitioner Sample

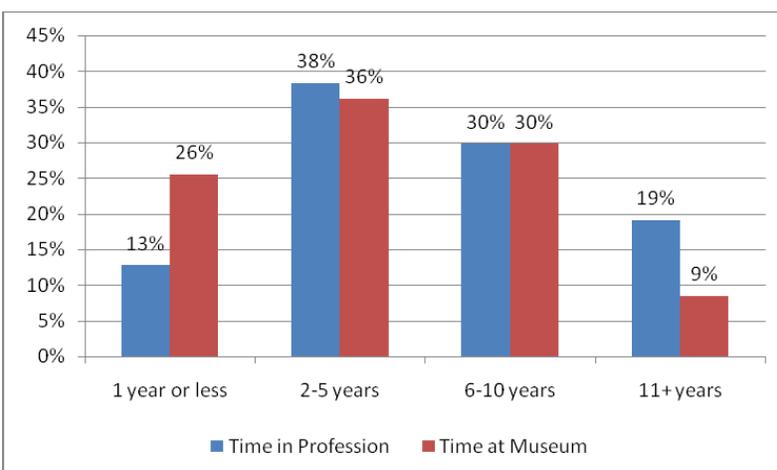


Chart 15: Number of years in the museum profession & at the specific museum

The survey was administered via the Internet and 47 practitioners responded; nineteen from the MFAH, seventeen from LACMA, eleven from CAM. Just over half of the practitioner sample had five years or less in the museum education profession and almost two-thirds of the sample were fairly new at their museum. (See Chart 15.)

Important Professional Issues for Practitioners

Practitioners were asked to select from a list of issues, those that they considered most important for their program area. Practitioners could also add other issues on the survey. The staff then ranked up to two issues as “extremely important.” The most frequently selected issue (66%) was “Infusing my programs with the best practices in teaching and learning,” followed by “Becoming more familiar with the best practices in teaching & learning in the arts” (47%). (See Chart 16.) Museum educators across the profession constantly ask how they can create better programs. Interestingly, we have found little discussion in the wider professional field on what actually constitutes “best practice,” this is clearly an interesting area for further research. There were no differences in these findings when analyzed by the type of

² The authors of this study and the MFAH education department extend a special thank you to our colleagues at LACMA and CAM, and to the education curators at those institutions in 2006, Toby Tannenbaum and Ted Lind respectively.

program a practitioner manages, number of years in the museum profession or at the specific museum.

Refining the content of programs (40%) was rated the third most important issue for museum educators, followed closely by “Logistics of running programs” (38%). The last choice that practitioners had was “Learning more about the exhibitions/collections at my museum” and it was rated important by 23% of museum educators. The final four categories emerged from the “other” category where practitioners could write in their own issues. These issues were clustered as “Communication & Collaboration – Building internal & external support” (19%), “Audiences – understanding, getting feedback from, expanding, marketing to, meeting needs of” (17%), “Specific program issues – being a liaison between docent, museum, schools; training and evaluation of docents, developing online resources” (10%), and “Professional Development – Learn from colleagues, mentoring, time to research, reflect, and write, building professional networks” (9%). That these four categories show up in the strength they do suggests that these findings may signify a larger trend. If these categories were part of the initial issues list, more educators might have rated them as more important than the choices provided.

Curiously, mid-career museum educators tended to rate “Learning more about the exhibitions/collections at my museum” lower than newer or more seasoned practitioners. This finding is based on a small sample but raises many questions as to why this finding emerged. Are mid-career professionals too busy climbing the career ladder to feel that the programs they run do not afford them time for their own learning? Is there a real or perceived disconnect between the skills required to conceive interpretive programs and those necessary to implement them? Is content development less onerous than dealing with all the logistics? How do mid-career people look at the balance of their work and which areas require the greatest attention? Another issue to explore is the level of knowledge of art and art history that mid-career professionals actually have. How are art museum educators trained and what is their knowledge of and comfort level with art and art history? Is low rating more a symptom of burn-out or do mid-career professionals feel they have a sufficient command of the exhibitions and collections at their museum, seeing other issues as more prevalent? It is understandable why newer practitioners rate the importance of learning about the art in their museums. That seasoned practitioners rate that issue high, likely reflects the way in which they function within the museum. Education directors and senior managers work more closely with the museum director and curators, in an environment in which knowing about collections and exhibitions in particular, and about art history in general, confers authority and can enhance influence and power.



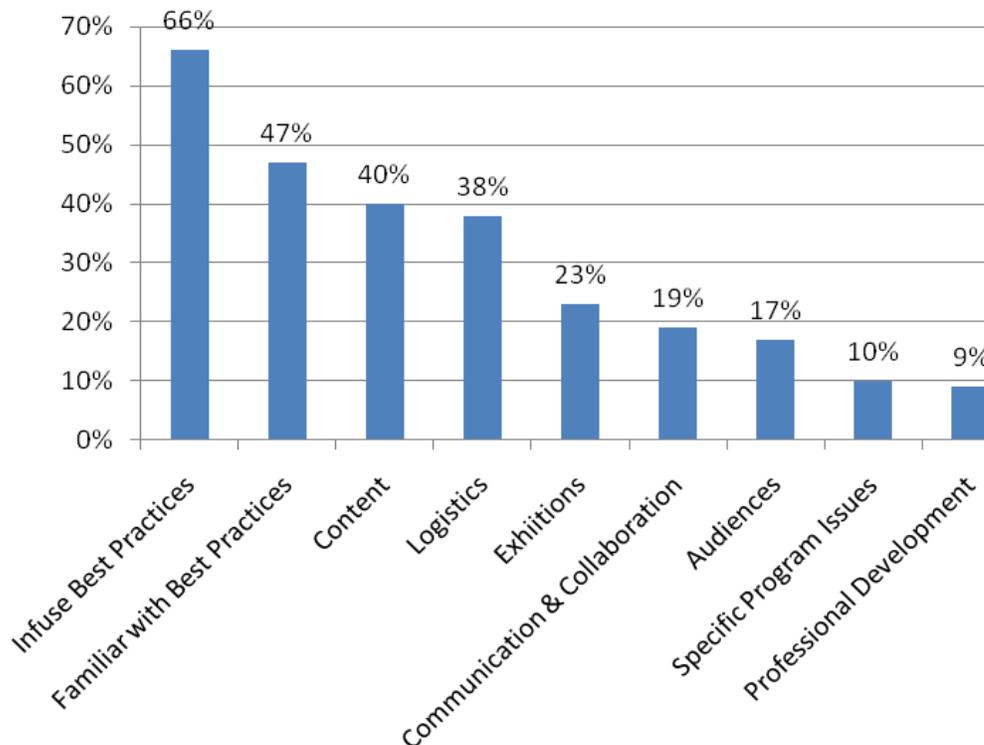


Chart 16: Ranking of “extremely important” issues for museum educators from most to least

Competencies, Concerns, and Joys

Practitioners were asked to describe what they considered their areas of competencies, the professional concerns, and what brought them the most joy in their profession. Practitioners responded to open-ended questions with written responses that were coded into categories.

Competencies

The most frequently cited category of competencies was organizational skills. Almost two-thirds of practitioners made some mention of their skills in organizing, planning, implementation, prioritizing, and task-juggling. These are can-do people and proud of their skills. The next most frequently cited category was networking and social skills. Practitioners perceive themselves as good communicators and advocates. They are good at trouble-shooting, they perceive that they work well with people (internal & external), and are skillful at building collaborations.

A little over one-third of the practitioners cited their teaching and facilitating skills, connecting with audiences, knowing audiences, evaluating & needs assessment. Just over one-fifth felt they were good at creative thinking. It is highly possible that this distribution of responses could change dramatically if practitioners had these categories in a list to choose from.

Concerns

The most frequently cited concern was that of keeping focus (when all is in chaos around you). Practitioners cite problems such as too many administrative tasks, not enough connection with content or audience, no opportunity to think bigger/out-of-the-box, lost in details, getting



sidetracked, overload, too much to do and too little time, understaffed, burnout, keeping fresh not formulaic, staying up-to-date on current trends.

Over 20% of practitioners cited concerns in the category of visitor/audience experience. They expressed concern that they needed to stay community/audience focused rather than be marketing driven, reflecting tensions between the growth of attendance vs. quality of program, meeting needs of specialized audiences, trying to do too much, meet too many needs, focusing too much on one audience (e.g., members), charging too much for programs and losing audiences because of it, getting too close to regular visitors and losing professional distance; providing meaningful experiences, quality of program (specifically, tours). Clearly many practitioners feel overwhelmed and seem unable to address the problem strategically on a department-wide or museum-wide level.

Joys

Almost half of the practitioners noted that their greatest professional joy comes from witnessing the effect of their work on audiences, reinforcing the belief that what they do changes and enriches the lives of the visitors. It is what gets them up in the morning and keeps them working despite the concerns articulated above. The next most frequently cited category of professional joy was in facilitating and teaching. Museum education staff members appreciate that they have something to share and find pleasure in doing so.

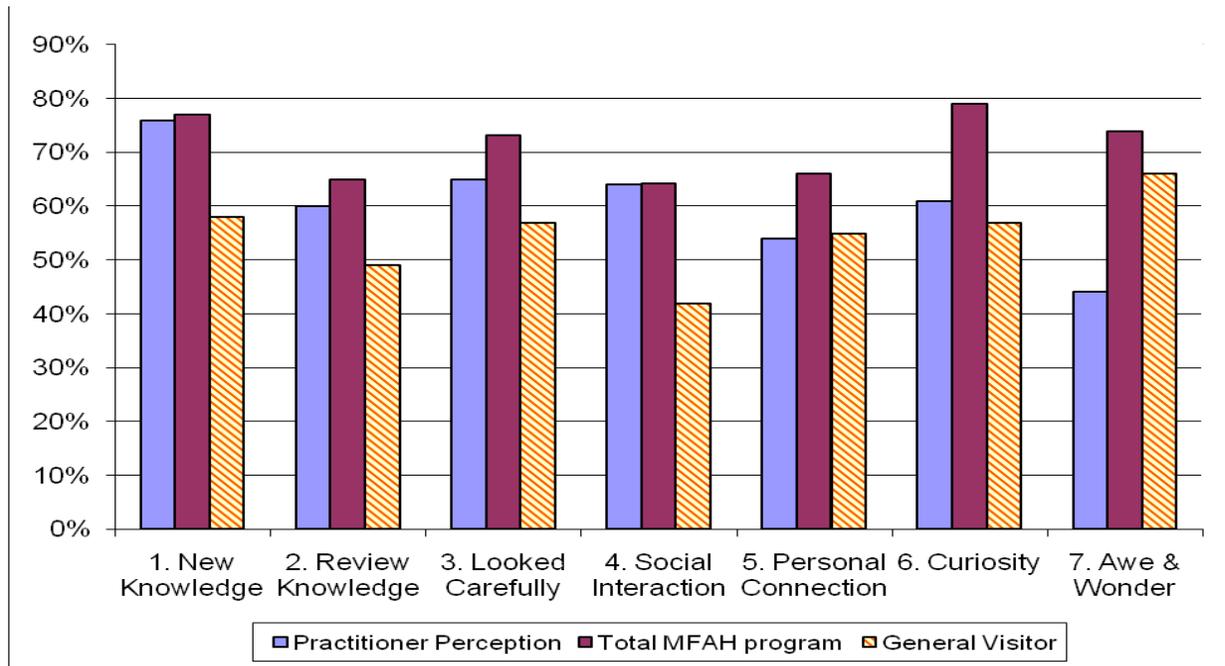


Chart 17: Comparison of learning dimension ranking by practitioner perception, MFAH program participants, and MFAH general visitor samples

How Practitioners Perceive Visitor Learning

Practitioners were asked to rate the degree to which they perceived their visitors benefitted from participation in their program area. This data was compared to the MFAH 2005-2006 ratings of learning dimensions by MFAH program participants and non-program general visitors. (See Chart 17.) Practitioner's perception of visitor learning aligned well with visitor's actual report of learning on four of the seven dimensions: new knowledge, review prior knowledge, careful looking, and social interaction. They underestimated three of the learning dimensions; personal connection, curiosity, and awe and wonder.

Differences across variables of program type, length of time in profession and at the museum were calculated using a weighted mean. The percentages in Chart 17 were calculated as a percent of people who rated the dimensions as high – 7 or 8. There were no significant differences across the three participating museums.

Family program practitioners tended to rate the third learning dimension, "Look carefully," lower than practitioners in other program types. This is interesting because most MFAH family visitors (71%) rated this dimension high. In the MFAH the studio space for Family Programs is located away from the galleries, and the gallery component for family programs are led by docents or involve self-guided materials. It may be that family program practitioners do not observe families "looking carefully" in the same way that they can observe other learning. This finding should be used in discussions with family programs staff to encourage them to spend time in the galleries, to observe their audiences

Practitioners who have been in the field 6-10 years (mid-career) rated "New knowledge" lower than novices (1 year or less), early career (2-5 years) and senior career (11+ years). On the other hand, senior career practitioners tend to perceive that visitors learn more than other career levels. One possible explanation is that more mid-career practitioners may struggle with resolving the difference between their dreams/visions for what the museum experience could be and the reality of what it is. Senior people may have had more experience observing, seeing more program cycles to completion, and may have a more nuanced understanding and open ideas of what visitors learn.

The only dimension to show any difference by years in the museum was "Awe & Wonder". Again the mid and senior museum practitioners took opposite views; mid-museum practitioners tended to rate this dimension lower than other categories of length of time in the museum, while senior-museum practitioners tended to rate this learning dimension higher than those in the museum for shorter periods of time. Also, programs tend not to be designed to produce "awe and wonder" so mid-career people are not planning or designing for it.



What Professional Dimensions Constitute a Successful Program

Practitioners were asked to rate how important specific professional dimensions were in their program. The intent of this task was to see if the data might suggest characteristics of successful programs. The two most highly rated professional dimensions were “This program type allows me to provide experiences that are unique to the museum, something visitors could not get anywhere else” and “I am very proud of this program type and that my professional reputation is linked to it.” The next most highly rated professional dimension was “This program type challenges me to learn more about the collections and exhibitions at my museum and to

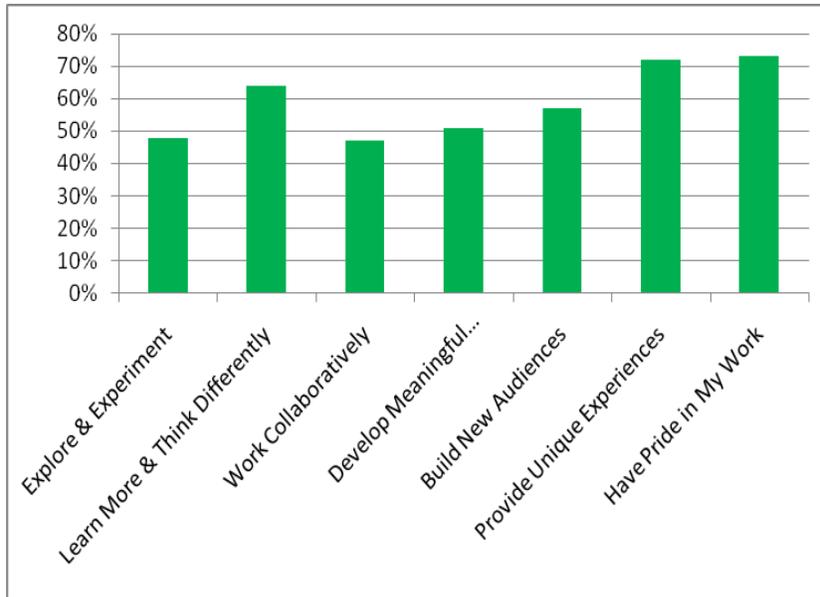


Chart 18: Rating of professional dimensions

think about the art in new ways.” Chart 18 illustrates how practitioners rated the professional dimensions.

Practitioners who manage Docent programs tended to rate professional dimensions #11 (Develop meaningful partnerships) and #12 (Builds new audiences) lower than any other program area. Undoubtedly that is an accurate assessment of docent programs in general. They tend to be rather insular and homogenous. But does it have to be that way? Are there ways we can re-think the docent program? Are

there ways to both engage in meaningful partnerships with people in the community which would result in diversifying the docent program with new audiences?

Senior-career practitioners tend to rate #8 (Experiment with state-of-the-art theories/strategies) higher than other career groups. Perhaps they have the freedom and/or confidence to engage in more experimentation, having gained a level of seniority and autonomy that other practitioners may not have. Mid-career practitioners tend to rate professional dimension # 9 (Learn more about collections/exhibitions in new ways) low while senior-careers rate it higher than other career groups.

Conclusions & Recommendations: Visitor Learning in the Museum

The studies that make up the research effort for *A Place for All People* and *Gateway to Art* yielded a range of interesting and valuable information. Yet, because it is such a large study, it can be difficult for the reader to pull out the salient findings. In this section we have briefly outlined what emerged, for us, as the key lessons learned. Then we provide our recommendations based on those findings.

Key Lessons

Museum Programs Matter: The data from the 2005-2006 and 2007-2008 surveys together with the 2005-2006 longitudinal data create a powerful and compelling case for the value of museum education programming in solidifying and deepening visitor learning. While this is stating the obvious, the art museum field has not had such a large study conducted over time to fully document not only that museum education programs enrich visitor learning but contributes to the knowledge in the field of *what* they learn.

Time is an Important Factor in Visitor Learning: Learning is a non-linear often tangled process that occurs over time. Understandings often “snap” into place at the oddest moments and usually days, weeks, months, and years later. Typically visitor research is conducted at the museum site, immediately after the program or exhibition. Visitors have had no chance to digest the experience and make those unpredictable connections. This study provided a picture of learning immediately after the museum program or visit and months after that visit. This longitudinal data is powerful. Visitors were articulate about the benefits of their experience to a degree not possible when completing a written survey or even when interviewing them at the end of their visit.

School Students are Different than Other Visitors: When analyzing the data from this study, we get a clearer picture of the ways in which students differ from other program participants and general visitors. Students in single visit tours and film programs rated their learning quite low across all dimensions. While students in multiple visit programs rated their learning equal to visitors in other programs. This study did not seek answers to why these differences emerged but clearly there is an important difference between these two types of programs. The question is whether or not the difference is more one of time-on-task or something in the nature of how the experiences are structured. Certainly Catterall's (1998) ground-breaking longitudinal study of the effect of sustained arts instruction on children's test scores supports the findings in this study that repetition is important. However, his study track children over several years, while the contact with the MFAH multiple visit is several hours.

Museum Educators are an Audience: The practitioner study revealed the issues, concerns, and joys of museum educators from three museums in the US. The issues of most concern to these educators were how to infuse their programs with best practices in teaching and learning in the arts and becoming more familiar and keeping up to date with those practices. The next most salient issues were to refine the content of their programs and deal with the logistics of those programs. Fairly low on the list of importance was learning more about the exhibitions and collections at their museums. Other issues emerged that related to how to better communicate



and collaborate with colleagues in the museum as well as the larger community, reaching and understanding different audiences, a variety of issues related to their specific program area, and professional development. There were differences in ways that new, mid- and senior-career level practitioners rated these issues particularly in rating the importance of learning about the exhibition and collections. This study did not look for why these differences might occur however, the findings may reflect a larger debate in the art museum field relating to whether museum educators need grounding in content or pedagogy. The answer is probably that practitioners need grounding in both yet this is clearly easier said than done.

Museum educators reflected most often that their competencies lay in their organization skills of program planning, implementation, prioritizing, and task-juggling, as well as their networking and social skills, seeing themselves as good communicators, advocates for the arts and their programs, trouble-shooters, and good intra-museum and community collaborators. Teaching and facilitating was listed as a competency by some educators and a few people noted competencies in the categories of creative thinking, ability to take unique perspectives, knowledge of art education and art history content, and writing skills. Here again, we see the issue of content knowledge emerge. When educators rated the importance of learning more about exhibitions and collections rather low, it was not clear if they felt they already knew an adequate amount about the art or they did not perceive that having the content knowledge was important. That this list of competencies emerged from open-ended comments, suggests that many of these museum educators may not see the acquisition of art historical and pedagogical knowledge as highly important and that mid-career educators are particularly more inclined to think this way.

Primary concerns for educators were how to keep focused on the big picture while dealing with the realities of too much administrative work, not enough connection with the audience, getting lost in details, and general overload. Many practitioners worried about how to find and keep proper funding, as well as how much influence funders have over the program. Most practitioners reported their greatest joy was witnessing the effect their programs had on audiences. They felt their work made a positive difference in the lives of people and they loved seeing the effect, the excitement in visitors when having a meaningful, memorable, and delightful experience.

We Are Not Our Visitors: The way we figure out the world is to constantly rely on our own experience and translate, extrapolate, and make connections between our prior experience and what is currently before us. However, the tendency of museum professionals is to assume that our experience in the museum and with art is similar to that of the general visitors. Studies show time and again that this is not the case, yet it is difficult for museum practitioners to not use their own, museum-seasoned, experience as a stand-in for the visitor. The practitioner study articulated this problem with great clarity when museum educators rated their perceptions of what visitors took away from their museum experience. While educators' ratings of the learning dimensions were similar to what the MFAH visitors rated on four of the seven dimensions, the dimensions that educators rated low and visitors rated high suggests that there is some disconnect between visitors and how practitioners see those visitors. Educators, for the most part, did not rate personal connection, awe and wonder, and curiosity very high while visitors rated those three dimensions among the highest. This finding raises more questions than it



answers. Practitioners reflected that one of the greatest joys in their profession is seeing the effect of their programs on visitors, yet this seems at odds with their rating of visitor learning especially in light of the fact that they did not feel curiosity, awe and wonder, and personal connection were an important part of that learning experience. Perhaps this discrepancy occurs because educators do not design programs to elicit personal connections, awe and wonder, and curiosity. Those responses arise out of the characteristics and personalities of the individual visitors, and from the museum environment itself. Staff who work at a museum may view the galleries and displays of art as a given of their work environment, part of their every-day experience. For visitors, the museum may be a more special place, very different from their daily lives, and thus more likely to engender awe, wonder, curiosity and personal connections.

Survey Instrument is Effective: Despite the fact that written surveys are the most frequently used method of evaluation by museum practitioners, written surveys are the most difficult to create. In this study we had the luxury of several years to develop, test, and refine the survey. While no survey is ever perfect, this instrument has proven itself reliable and robust in a variety of settings and museums.

Survey Instrument has Wide Application: Interest by the larger museum field in the methodology is increasing. The instrument has been adapted for use in the newly installed permanent collection exhibition, Fossil Mysteries, at the San Diego Natural History Museum, for a summative study at the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park to assess visitor learning in interactive galleries, for a study at the Speed Art Museum on interactive components in the *David Macaulay* exhibition, for interpretive planning at the Columbus Museum of Art, and for a department-wide assessment of visitor learning in education programs at the National Gallery of Canada. MFAH staff and this researcher have presented study findings and led Issues Forum discussions at the annual conference of the National Art Education Association in 2006, 2007, and 2008 and at the American Association of Museums Conference in 2008. The MFAH has generously shared the instrument and the previous studies with the professional field. As a result, this researcher has seen an increase in formal presentations and informal conversations across the field about this approach to visitor research. Slowly museum practitioners are moving from a focus on trying to find out about how satisfied visitors are with their program experience, to thinking deeply about how visitors benefit from participation in museum programs. It is a subtle but meaningful shift from the practitioner point of view to the visitor point of view.

Recommendations for Future Practice

The findings in this study have strong implications for how the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, can continue to refine the visitor experience and grow in professional competency. Suggestions based on the key findings are as follows:

Reflect on Ways Data can Serve as a Diagnostic Tool for Practitioners: While the study made clear that programs significantly increase visitor learning, we found that practitioners often struggled with how to use the findings in their practice. It was never the intention that a successful program would rate high on all dimensions. For example, it makes sense that families rate their social learning experience higher than that of gaining new knowledge. While they certainly learn content at a family program, their motivation for the family outing at a



museum is to see and do things *together*. Yet, museum educators often feel that an evaluation of a program is the same thing as an evaluation of the individual museum educator. This may be a reason why education program surveys across the country constantly ask visitors about their satisfaction with the program. These surveys rarely, if ever, seek information on how visitors feel they benefit from the museum experience. Perhaps this is why the MFAH educators had trouble using the learning dimensions as a diagnostic tool for their practice. If educators are looking for simple satisfaction ratings then the more nuanced findings from learning dimensions might be perplexing. We suggest that museum educators discuss this issue and think strategically about how these findings can influence practice. Clearly we need to move beyond the question of “Am I doing a good job?” to questions that better elicit the visitor’s perspective and agenda.

This is clearly a place for strong leadership by senior people, particularly the education director and head curator. The project worked as well as it did at the MFAH because the leadership had the ability to look at the big picture and sought to focus this study on the larger issues of visitor learning – by how visitors themselves perceived that they benefitted from their museum experience – rather than the traditional silo approach of looking just at individual programs in terms of visitor satisfaction. By positioning itself in the museum as advocates for visitor learning, the education department then must address the question of how that positioning enables the department to make decisions about what it does and does not do for audiences? For example, when educators showed concern that their programs were rated by visitors as higher in social interaction than in acquiring new knowledge – interpreted by staff as not “educational enough” – there needed to be a process through which those findings can be synthesized. What is the role of marketing in supporting or even providing experiences that are considered more “introductory?”

Develop an Ongoing Plan for Assessing Visitor Learning: Conducting this evaluation did require time and attention from already busy educators and it required leadership and commitment on the part of the education director who was able to take the larger view of learning across all programs. When visitor research was not a high priority for program managers, the distribution of surveys suffered. Before developing a plan for assessing visitor learning it will be important to have a series of discussions about the value of such studies, especially if these studies seek information from the visitor’s perspective rather than the museum educator’s perspective. If the staff come to a consensus that visitor research is valuable and understand how to use the data diagnostically, then the stage is set for creating a long-term plan for collecting data. Certainly, one can collect too much data too often. Educators need to think strategically about what they want to know and from whom they want to know it. Every program does not need evaluating every year. Create a schedule where you rotate the evaluation process through all programs over several years, using a shared data base similar to the one set up for this study.

Explore Ways to Study Visitor Learning Over Time: Since we know that some visitor learning can only be assessed after a passage of time, it is important to consider ways that some longitudinal data can be collected on all programs. Certainly the web survey format yielded valuable data but the starting sample size must be quite large to assure that enough web surveys are returned.



Revisit Learning Expectations and Teaching Strategies for School Programs: While multiple visit school programs result in learning levels similar to that of other program participants, the single-visit programs appear less effective. Education staff could contribute not only to their own practice but to the larger professional field if they take on this issue as a research agenda. Consider what is reasonable to expect from single-visit experiences and how the single-visit can be restructured to optimize student learning. Incorporate more on-site reflection with students rather than rely solely on teachers conducting post-visit discussions back at school. This is not happening for the most part and it clearly has an effect on student learning.

Determine Professional Development Needs for Educators: Professional development for museum educators is largely random and opportunistic. Another contribution that the MFAH could make to the larger field is to explore the professional development needs for educators, as well as come to consensus about what issues and competencies are most important. If professional development is important to the museum then opportunities will be planned, strategic, and tailored to the needs of the practitioner. In particular, research the different ways that practitioners at the new-, mid-, and senior-career level perceive their practice and the visitor. Address questions such as, does are mid-career practitioners looking to see if audiences are learning what they, the practitioners want them to learn? Does their view of what learning is for visitors become more limited because of their role in designing programs to convey specific ideas or skills?

Share Study Results with MFAH Staff: During the collection of data for this study, MFAH staff outside the Education Department continually expressed interest in the results from this study. We strongly recommend that this report be shared openly with the staff and that the education department set up formal discussion sessions to explore implications of the results.

Contribute to the Larger Professional Field: The development of the learning dimensions and the rigorous testing of the instrument have already evidenced wide appeal to a variety of museums. MFAH has established a reputation for thinking critically and deeply about visitor learning and has generously shared the instrument and the study findings with the museum field. Practitioners all over the US and Canada have found the dimensions and the instrument valuable. We believe this is an important contribution to the field that should be continued.

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Appendix A: Focus Group Protocols - June 2006 & October 2007



MFAH Focus Group Protocol
Wallace 2 – Mid-Point Summative Study - June 2006

Community Partners

Introductions

Who are you? What do you do? How long and in what way have you been involved in the MFAH partnership?

1. Imagine for a moment that a new colleague heard about this partnership with the MFAH. How would you describe it to them?
2. What are the benefits to participating in this partnership? For you personally and professionally and for your patrons/students? Why does it matter?
3. Partnerships are complex, multi-layered, time-consuming endeavors. Even the best ones have obstacles and lessons are learned in the process that could inform future efforts. What would you do differently if you could do it again? What lessons have you learned that you want to pass on? How comfortable are you in expressing these issues or concerns with the museum?
4. For those who have been involved in the partnership with the MFAH for more than 5 or more years, talk about how the partnership as changed and evolved over time.

Museum/School Staff & Program Artists/Instructors

Introductions

Who are you? What do you do? How long and in what way have you been involved in the MFAH partnership?

1. Imagine for a moment that a new colleague heard about this partnership with the MFAH. How would you describe it to them?
2. What are the benefits to participating in this partnership? For you personally and professionally and for your audiences? Why does this partnership matter?
3. Partnerships are complex, multi-layered, time-consuming endeavors. Even the best ones have obstacles and lessons are learned in the process that could inform future efforts. What would you do differently if you could do it again? What lessons have you learned that you want to pass on? How comfortable are you in expressing these issues or concerns with the museum?
4. For those who have been involved in this Wallace community partnership initiative for more than 5 or more years, talk about how the partnership as changed and evolved over time.



MFAH Focus Group Protocol
Wallace 2 – Final Summative Study - October 2007

Community Partners

Introductions & purpose of the study

Who are you? What do you do? How long have you been in your present position?

5. The MFAH has a long-term commitment to creating and nurturing community partnerships. The term, “community,” means different things to different people. In the context of your organization, how would you define community?
6. In what ways did your organization partner with the MFAH? How would you like to partner with the MFAH in the future?
7. What are the benefits to participating in a partnership with MFAH? For you personally and professionally and for your patrons/students?
8. Museum-wide community initiatives are complex, multi-layered, time-consuming endeavors. Even the best ones have obstacles and lessons are learned in the process that could inform future efforts. What would you do differently if you could do it again? What lessons have you learned that you want to pass on? How comfortable are you in expressing these issues or concerns with the museum?

Museum Staff & Program Instructors

Introductions & purpose of the study

Who are you? What do you do? How long have you been in your present position at the MFAH?

1. The MFAH has a long-term commitment to creating and nurturing community partnerships. The term, “community,” means different things to different people. In the context of your department and your role in this museum, how would you define community?
2. What do you see as the role of your department in this partnership? What role would you like your department to play in the next museum-wide community initiative?
3. What are the benefits to participating in a museum-wide community initiative? For your department, the museum and for your audiences?
4. Museum-wide community initiatives are complex, multi-layered, time-consuming endeavors. Even the best ones have obstacles and lessons are learned in the process that could inform future efforts. What would you do differently if you could do it again? What lessons have you learned that you want to pass on? How comfortable are you in expressing these issues or concerns with the museum?



Appendix B: Master Survey & Longitudinal Web-Survey



MFAH The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

Please take a moment to fill out the following evaluation. Your comments and suggestions help enhance the programs we offer and help us to plan future programs. Thank you for your time and your feedback.

Circle the number for each statement that best applies to <i>your experience</i> at the museum <i>today</i> .	1 =		8 =						Not Applicable	
	Not at all		Very Much							
	-									
1. I found out something new.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	
2. I thought about something I already knew in a new way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	
3. I looked more carefully and more thoughtfully at art.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	
4. I talked about art to other people attending this program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	
5. I related art to my personal interests, life experience, or background.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	
6. This program made me want to learn more about art.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	
7. I felt a sense of awe or wonderment about art.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	
8. How would you rate your interest in art?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	

Please give us some information about you:

Gender: (Check one) Male Female

Age of the person completing survey: (Check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> Age 10-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 16-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 20-39	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 40-59	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 60-79	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 80+
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Do you live in the greater Houston area? (Check one) YES NO

If YES, what distance, ***in miles*** do you live from the MFAH? (Check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> 0-15 miles	<input type="checkbox"/> 16-30 miles	<input type="checkbox"/> 31-45 miles	<input type="checkbox"/> 45+ miles
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How many times have you visited the MFAH in the last 12 months? (Check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> 0/None	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 times	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 times	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 + times
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Are you a member of MFAH? (Check one) YES NO

How did you find out about the program today? (Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Someone told or invited me	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper or magazine	<input type="checkbox"/> Television or radio	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum staff or brochure	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum website	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
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More on the back →→→

Please use this space for additional comments:

We might want to contact you in 3-6 months in order to better understand what this museum experience meant to you. Please indicate your willingness to help us with this research.

Yes – I am willing to participate in this phase of your visitor study! (Please print)

Name: _____ Email: _____

No, I prefer not to be contacted later.

Notice: Personal contact information will be used for the purposes of this study only. Information will not be passed on to any *other department in the museum or entity outside of the museum*. (Must be 18 years or older to participate.)

Web Survey Email Message

Subject: Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Visitor Research

Earlier this year you attended the **Museum of Fine Arts, Houston** and you completed a visitor studies survey about your experience. On that survey you agreed to participate in the longitudinal phase of this visitor research and provided your email address.

If you are still willing to participate in this last phase of the study, please click on the link below, or paste the address in your browser, to access the on-line survey. You must be 18 or over to complete this survey.

MFAH *The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston*

Thinking about your experience(s) at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, this past year, how has that experience inspired you, made you think, and/or prompted you to do something?

<i>Click</i> the number for each statement that best applies to how the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, supports the following experiences:	1 = Not at all	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 = Very Much	Not Applicable
1. I learn something new.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Please provide an example of something new you learned as a result of the MFAH experience.									
2. I think about things I already knew in a new way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Please provide an example of something you already knew and thought about differently as a result of the MFAH experience.									
3. I look more carefully and more thoughtfully at art.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Please provide an example of how you look more carefully and thoughtfully as a result of the MFAH experience.									
4. I talk about art to other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Please provide an example how you talk with others as a result of the MFAH experience.									
5. I relate art to my personal interests, life experience, or background.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Please provide an example of how you relate your personal interests, life experience, or background to art as a result of the MFAH experience.									



6. I want to learn more about art.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Please provide an example of how you want to learn more about art as a result of the MFAH experience.									
7. I feel a sense of awe or wonderment about art.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Please provide an example of how you felt a sense of awe and wonder as a result of the MFAH experience.									

	Very Low	-	-	-	-	-	-	Very High	N/A
I would rate my overall interest in art as:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A

Please give us some information about you:

Gender: (Check one) Male Female

Age of the person completing survey: (Check one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 18-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 20-39	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 40-59	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 60-79	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 80+
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Do you live in the greater Houston area? (Check one) YES NO

If YES, what distance, **in miles** do you live from the MFAH? (Check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> 0-15 miles	<input type="checkbox"/> 16-30 miles	<input type="checkbox"/> 31-45 miles	<input type="checkbox"/> 45+ miles
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How many times have you visited the MFAH in the last 12 months? (Check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> 0/None	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 times	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 times	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 + times
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Are you a member of MFAH? (Check one) YES NO

Check the type of program that you attend most often at the MFAH [*Rhea, make this a forced choice – one answer*]

- Adult tours or lectures Teacher workshops or Evenings for Educators Family programs: Creation Station or Family Days
- School tour or other program for students
- Have never attended a program at MFAH

Thank you very much for helping the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, make your museum experience even more satisfying.



Appendix C: 2005-2006 Sampling Matrix



Wallace Survey Evaluation

All program areas will collect the surveys; 2 programs types each area from June 1, 2005, to June 30, 2006:

Selected Program	Form	Sample	Population Est. Based on 2003/2004	Minimum Sample Size
School				
1. Middle/High School Tours	Abbreviated	All participants of 10 selected programs each middle/high between September 1 and Dec 30, 2005	Need data on middle/HS	125
2. Screening America	Abbreviated	All participants of 12 selected programs between June 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006	35 programs 50/program	500
Teacher				
1. EFE	Full	All participants All programs June 1, 2005 – May 31, 2006	5 programs 250/program	All
2. Teacher Workshops	Full	All participants All programs June 1, 2005 – May 31, 2006	25 programs 50/program	All
Docent				
1. New Docents	Full	All participants June 1, 2005 – May 31, 2006	Need data on new docents	All
2. Returning Docents	Full	All participants June 1, 2005 – May 31, 2006	Need data on ret. docents	All
Family				
1. Creation Station	Full	All participating family representatives (1 per family) All programs June 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006	80 programs 55/program	All
2. Family Days	Full	All participating family representatives (1 per family) of 4 programs from June 1, 2005 – May 31, 2006	7 programs 700/program	2800
Adult				
1. Lectures	Full	All participants of 20 programs between June 1, 2005 – May 31, 2006	Need data	4,000
2. Artful Thursdays	Full	All participants of 6 programs between June 1, 2005 – May 31, 2006	12 programs 180/program	800



Programs that typically distribute written evaluations to all participants at all programs will continue to do. ILLI researchers will randomly select a sub-sample from the total number of surveys.

For programs that need to select a certain number of programs to sample, choose those that are closest to the focus of the Wallace project – Modern & Contemporary art or Latin American art.

Back Page (except school programs)

Open-ended question: Beth needs to have “quotable quotes” from visitors for reports during the year. She has requested that you all save a little bit of space for an open-ended response of your choosing. It can request a specific example from one of the questions on the front, such as, “Give an example of something new you found out today or something that reminded you of something already known.” Or very general, such as “Please share any additional comments about your experience here today.” These prompts should invite responses richer and deeper than “loved it/hated it” kinds of responses.

Program managers/coordinators will read through these open-ended responses and highlight and flag those that are to be entered into the computer analysis software. Be discriminatory. Select those quotes that are more articulate and best represent different ways that visitors respond. Out of 50 surveys, for example, you might only flag 2-3 quotes.

You may add any additional questions that pertain specifically to your program.

You do not have to add any additional questions other than the open-ended prompt for quotable quotes.

There are ancillary demographics for each program available for you to choose from that staff indicated that they wanted to have for specific programs.

If you do plan to add questions specific to your programs your goal is to ask questions that help you make your program better. Here are some points to keep in mind as you select these questions:

- Review past surveys and identify those questions that have, historically, yielded the most helpful data. What have you changed in your practice that was based on these responses? Did you change because you counted and analyzed responses identifying trends or because a few responses validated your perspective or intention?
- Why do you want certain information? Don't ask questions if you already know the answer or if you aren't going to change something anyway. Ask questions over which you have some control, some ability to make related changes.

You may want to include additional questions to test some ideas about content or format of programs. E.g., “We are considering a new format for.... What do you think?” or “If we were to do a program on _____ could you recommend someone to present?” These types of questions might not remain on the back page all year but provide you with a quick sense of how some new ideas might fly.

If you do want to keep some questions for the whole year and have them analyzed by Survey Pro you will have to be consistent in the question and think carefully about what you need from that question. For example, you might be planning to make a change in a program in January that you hope will encourage families to go into the galleries more. You will develop a question that finds out how much families go into the galleries and start collecting baseline data now. Then when the change is implemented in January you can see if the responses change accordingly.

Appendix D: 2007-2008 Sampling Matrix



2007-2008 Gateway to Art Sampling Matrix

Total Estimated Attendance	% to be sampled	# requested to be sampled	Actual amount of data collected	WALLACE EVALUATION - JAN. - DEC. 2007
200	66%	132	0	Artful Thursdays
275	59%	162	0	Artist Talk (2)
125	75%	94	0	Artist Roundtable
125	75%	94	0	Conversation with Leirner
300	56%	168	0	Creation Station
375	51%	191	0	Evenings for Educators
175	69%	121	0	Lunchtime Tours/Explore the MFAH
180	68%	122	219	Parent Workshops
40	100%	40	0	LA Teachers
250	61%	153	0	Panel Discussion
50	100%	50	0	Parangoles Workshop
125	75%	94	0	Performance: Rios
250	61%	153	0	SJ Festival Authors
250	61%	153	0	SJ Festival Kickoff
250	61%	153	0	SJ Festival Public Event
255	60%	153	57	Sketching in the Galleries
100	80%	80	0	Spotlight Tours
30	100%	30	0	Summer Seminar
70	84%	59	0	Teacher Workshops
40	100%	40	0	Warren Fellows
	0%	0	67	School Multi-visit
	0%	0	24	Glassell Nehemiah Center
	0%	0	2	Speaker's Bureau
	0%	0	12	Oticia Workshop
	0%	0	44	Art of Observation
	0%	0	2	Other
3465		2240	427	

Appendix E: Extended Quotes from Web-Survey



1. I found out something new.

Adult Programs

I am not a fan of modern art but these lectures gave me greater understanding of these artists concept and presentation through this art form

I have learned to appreciate new forms of art that I did not understand before.

How to see ART more intensely and at a different level, learned about shadow and light, depth, color.

I learned how difficult it is to use color effectively.

How one's surroundings play a great deal in the art work produced (Basquiat).

Mostly in depth appreciation of the artist, the subject matter and the artist's conception.

Had a better idea of the use of color and light, especially in contemporary painting. Do not need to look for understanding always.

In attending the Friday afternoon and Thursday evening lecture series, I have learned how to view art differently. By knowing something of the life and times of the artist, I understand their motivation better. (ex. The Judgment of Paris lecture was particularly insightful in my better understanding of the beginnings of impressionism.)

I was surprised to learn about other aspects of Michaelangelo's life, especially his accumulation of wealth. While he was a great artist, this gave insight into more of his person and his intellect.

I had known nothing about the art of Central Asia until an MFAH lecture.

I knew nothing of Havel's work and was very excited about his style and methods--to see ordinary men's shirts express the human condition in such a clean simple manner was refreshing

Mostly by looking at the art it moved me to look at myself. I will say that this is how I typically use and respond to art, in the largest sense (literature, dance, music). It is always personal.

That oil paint wasn't really predominant until 1532. That there are two forms of fresco painting. That nudes of religious figures might have had prurient attraction even to the audience of their days.

many correlations between the romanticism in opera and the landscape paintings of Thomas Cole

I enjoyed learning a brief history of Rome (and the movies it inspired) from the professor. It was especially good since I visited Rome the next week.

As a result of attending the lecture series, I learned more about Gauguin. Specifically, his seemingly being two different artists. reflected in his Impressionist works and his Tahitian works. I went to see his works at the Kimball as a direct result of the MFAH lecture.

Colors in paintings changed with the invention of oil paints in tubes. That in turn affected all of Paris society and art.

Artists are influenced by each other. I learned more about different styles of painting especially Impressionism.

In the series of lectures on The Splendor of Ruins, I learned not only the names of the painters and viewed some of their work, but the inclusion of ancient architecture in the setting of a landscape painting and how this influenced French painting in this era were interesting to me, because I had not encountered [knowingly]this style.

Tango in Argentina is more than just a form of dance. It is actually an entire culture that resembles courtship rituals of the 18th century french elite and Civil war era Southern courtships.

I learned about the life of the Hungarian artist Rippl-Ronai, whose work I had seen for the first time on a trip to Budapest several years ago. There is almost no material about him available in English, so I was thrilled to see the MFAH painting by him and to hear a lecture about him.

While attending the Gee's Bend/Starbuck's event, I learned more about the women who created the beautiful quilts.



I knew nothing about Gee's bend and the designs apply to the collages I am trying to do with photographs.

I know quite a bit about the art content of the lectures, and was most intrigued by the Opera related content. Will probably go to the Museum AND Opera more often

My rusty Tex-Mex Spanish acquired several new artistic terms as a result of the lectures I attended in Spanish. It made for a very stimulating, challenging hour in which every neuron of mine was paying attention!

i learned how history and art history are very closely related

I had no idea about art theft whatsoever. My friends had to drag me and it was one of the most interesting films.

Family Programs

I learned that nature has a pattern called Fibonacci numbers. That nature has these patterns everywhere, in a snail's shell, in tree branches, in flower petals, etc. An example of a series starts like this: 1,1,2,3,5,8,13,21,34,55, etc

I learned to paint with sponges cut into shapes.

I learned that when you sketch a picture, you don't keep your eyes on the drawing paper. You keep your eyes on the object you're sketching.

We learned that the Aztecs made adornments out of gold and other beautiful objects.

I learned new ways to mix colors.

Indian dances all tell stories

I learned how incredibly time-consuming Japanese Gardening is! Also, I learned how to integrate art and books during the story times.

The importance of symbols and symbolism in art. The program encouraged you to really study a piece of art and try to see the deeper meaning. For instance, why did the artist choose certain symbols and what do they mean.

We had no idea how quilts are made or the myriad design choices involved!

I've opened up my sense of touch, moving stones of all sizes in a creek bed near my house.

I learned more inspiration to paint again...

We learned about gold leaf paintings. I had no idea how they were made, and would not have gotten the information had we not had the tour. Also, we learned how to simply draw what you see, while looking at artwork in one of the halls. We learned much more than these two, but these stand out for me. I really enjoyed having the museum teachers show us moms ideas on what we could do with the kids at home with paper sculpture.

you can learn different cultures, different point of view.

I learned the different forms of art and I learned how to view and appreciate art from different angles. I also learned about art history (Japan block print, for example...). Through art projects at MFA, I was able to learn more about my kids' talent.

Teacher Programs

I've learned so much, I don't know where to start. How about the comparison of the Gees Bend Quilts to Bauhaus paintings? Or ways to integrate other curriculums while teaching Art?

Attending the Educator's Nights brought new sparks into my existing lessons. I do not teach from the book, I am a teacher. By the information at the Educator Nights presented in such a manner, I am able to pick and choose to tailor the information for my usage to transfer to my students. This allows me to match up the resources I have already with the resources I can use from the Kinder Resource Center. I am very excited about the new website you have as well. I am eager to present this by laptops to my students when they return.



How to relate art to the student. After taking my students to the Thornton Dial Exhibition we made the recycled cowboys from found objects.

I learned how to be creative with ordinary materials like saran wrap and foil.

I learned about the new website that the MFA has for teachers.

I learned about the new online lesson plans offered by the MFAH, although I've had a hard time locating them online since the presentation.

I learned new printmaking techniques which I brought back to school to implement. More importantly, I was able to reach the part of myself that thirsts for knowledge outside of my current experience. I was reinvigorated with every show to read more, draw more, reinvent my curriculum... and a hundred other intangible gifts.

Combining/including music and art in my 11th grade US History classes

How to create a block of sculpture material for my students, and which tools to use in shaping it.

I learned new ideas & techniques for clay and painting, establishing "museum at school" on our campus, how to be well prepared for a field trip to MFAH.

I learned about a possible teaching strategy-pairing visual images with verse to compare and contrast. I'm used to pairing one or the other with facts!

Perspective and art integration in the regular curriculum.

I learned lots of new ways to teach the same ole thing... for instance... using small mini-booklets to TEACH the elements & principals of design...each student doing a selected element ..then another student his element in everyone else's mini-booklets.

I enjoyed and learned from the activity set up at the beginning of the Gees Bend exhibit. I plan on incorporating the use of crepe paper tape and illustration board "quilt" squares into my classroom

I learned additional strategies for blending art with other areas of the curriculum, and I enjoyed hands-on techniques for painting and sculpture..

Last year's Corcoran exhibit caused me to develop a separate American Art lesson that I probably wouldn't have normally done. Part of the reason is that my students have access to the work we are talking about.

I learned that I could teach "value" in a way that almost all the children in my second grade class could feel success. I learned a very good lesson combining literature, drama and mask making. Again I enjoyed using the big art posters, learning the very special and helpful tips to get special needs students to engage in the art by making and using different kinds of view finders, and acting tips after reading a story. Most of all the age appropriate mask making activities that were addressed for each grade K-4th using the same visuals from the museum collection and literary sources. In an America exhibit using different American music selections to create a mood when examining a painting and using a story game where each viewer takes turns to crate a story about a painting. The museum programs have offered many creative ways to enrich the way I interact with art and the way art affects me. I try to pass these ideas on to my student because I know it's good when I can observe their wonder, learning and confidence building

Drawing, shadowing, lesson plans that will help my students in Spanish/Geography/History classes.

Some of the African artwork used what I considered to be commonplace items and I encouraged my students to experiment.

I learned that there are consistencies across cultures in their creation and use of baskets; how the image of the cowboy evolved over decades, and that the Houston economy has moved from supplying resources to supplying services. I also learned that the Houston area has a very limited opportunity for graduate work in art history.

I discovered the wonderful art of Thornton Dial - I believe he is amazing and opened my avenues of thinking- he has very little education, yet has deep thinking views of events going on in the nation and world, and expresses those in his art.

A better understanding of the Hudson River School



I had never known exactly difference in fresco secco and fresco buono (sp.). I learned a lot but particularly remember the change in color schemes after the rejection of the Academy by the Impressionist. Had really not paid attention to or learned about the great use of browns, red, and yellows with small amounts of color and need to explore that more.

Basquiat - prior to the exhibit of his work and attending the program focused on his work; I knew nothing about him; Workshops: painting - a simple blending tech to teach my students

The connection between art and language practice.

I learned just how interesting the programs are.

General Visitors

Utilizing a variety of techniques such as the posterization technique w/an icon or dissecting a copied photograph to help explain dimension and math.

I was exposed to Basquiat and interesting young artist. I also found another use for collars at the shirt color art exhibit.

I learned that the museum had its own theatre; which popular films are viewed.

I learned about more about indigenous societies like their clothing, beliefs, and artwork

Even though different cultures can be completely opposite, there are ALWAYS certain ties as humans, with emotions and trials and tribulations that will always unite us as one and provide a way for us to like and love each other.

Exposed to numerous new artists and styles (lots from the baroque docent tours, also Argentinian photography using glass etched with vapors, if I remember correctly

At the quilt showing I learned about the African American women from that small AI area and how the quilts came to be.

I learned that the King Ranch operates in several countries

Some of the Colombian gold pieces look contemporary. Never realized the extent of them adorning themselves.

Alexander Calder's mobile of balance and movement illustrates the combination of shapes and sizes, height and length within a calculated area projects a sculpture of complete harmony.

I learned that jewelry can also be consider a very significant and interesting art piece whatever it may be.

Lived in the south all my life and never even heard of Gees Bend before

2. I thought about something I already knew in a new way.

Adult Programs

The programs made me think, but I wasn't challenged as much as I would have liked.

Sketching modern art is different than classical drawing

The recent exhibit of busts from Roman history complemented my own reading of Cicero and Pliny as well as other Roman histories. Having an artist's interpretation about a figure from that era enhances my reading of words on a page.

I knew something about the Hudson River school but only in a vague way. The lectures provided a more precise idea about the school as well as the artists who were part of that American experience

I now feel quilting does not have to be so exact , it can flow .

I spend more time looking at art I have seen before and I get to know it better.

Japanese gardening--I have always admired it and thought it beautiful, but had no idea the amount of maintenance required.



My opinion of Basquiat was changed as I closely examined his pieces with a newly informed eye which gave me greater understanding of his purpose

That there is a conformity even in new/non-conformist artistic movements.

AFTER SEEING THE GEE'S BEND EXHIBIT, I THOUGHT DIFFERENTLY ABOUT QUILTING TECHNIQUES.

Latin American acquisitions, Modern Dance in the Joseph Havel sculptures, Gracco Sacco's stark sculptures invoking life's problems. They all bend my mind to look at life and the news differently.

I reconsidered the relationship between Andy Warhol and Basquiat.

I have used watercolors before but having the opportunity to work in the style of Xul Solar and be inspired by his work caused me to try new techniques.

I knew artists sometimes plan and pre-sketch their work but was not aware of how involved the whole process is.

It had never occurred to me that international politics might play a part in art theft.

Knew that landscape painting was to depict certain scenes from nature, but learned that it could be combined with other "messages" the artists wished to convey, i.e. connections to antiquity.

I never really thought about how the use of color evolved throughout history.

Viewing the Gee's Bend Quilts and quilters - functionality is only one part of the quilt. With the Basquiat show, the thought behind the works - what themes run through an artist's works, how child hood remains with us in our work.

I always liked arranging the way curtains fall but the traveling exhibit I visited for my class made me think of it as maybe actual art and not just organizing.

Symbolic objects in paintings...now I have more understanding.

New take on art of certain periods since I studied art history years ago.

I had listened to the Beethoven piano sonatas almost as background music until the MFAH lectures.

As a result of attending the MFAH lecture program, I realized even more what a profound impact art has as a medium of not only beauty, but also how it can be used to as a social commentary medium to incite and invoke change.

Paintings as reflections of daily life--the concept took on new meaning for different characters from stories I teach. Now, I include artwork representative of the writers' era.

Never thought about art and opera in such a connected and interrelated way. Was most interesting!

I was very familiar with DeVinci code but the lecture made me gain new insight

I had assumed all color was created equal. But now I know that different media inspired development of different colors and textures of colors.

Learn about the "human condition" and all of it's attendant problems as seen thru art & artists....begin to "see" with fresh eyes thru exposure at what I am exposed to at MFA., makes me want to know more

Usually I know nothing...however I did enjoy the new quilt exhibit - even though I saw the first one

I've never liked Astor Piazzola's tango music; now I understand there is much more to tango than just the music.

I thought I knew a lot about the Impressionist era, but the Ross King lecture on "The Judgment of Paris" put the academic side of that period of time in a different perspective for me--and I learned even more after reading his book.

I knew about painting and I knew about some artists that we saw but after sketching, I learned about light, about techniques and about styles



A couple of painters were not my very favorites, yet I could look at them with different eyes and understood them better.

I now enjoy visiting the museums much more. I am planning an art trip to Italy.

Family Programs

I wouldn't say that the programs inspired something new - I would say that they reinforced my love of the museum setting, of art, and of the museum experience.

I knew about colorful scrapbooking paper, but I never thought to make a paper quilt with these materials.

I was amazed at how encompassing art really is. It is such a broad field and includes so many forms and so much history. Great exploration experience for all of us.

I had always mixed my colors a certain way that I had been taught, but the instructor introduced a new technique to me.

in a new way because of the stage of my life and life experiences...I just moved back from San Francisco and returned to the MFA where I spent most of my time when I was a student in Houston 10 years ago..

I knew that Black women in the South had some sewing skill, but when I saw the Gee's Bend quilt exhibit, I considered that Black women without opportunities might have used quilting the same way African griots did

I knew that ancient cultures made masks of gold, but until we sat and drew them I didn't notice how beautiful they were or how much detail they put into them.

Contemporary art is lost on me but trying to sketch it made me at least appreciate color more

It's possible to make some amazing things with pipe cleaners

I knew art was beautiful, and a representation of life, but sometimes I think we see things as a whole. When looking at the (death cart?) my children pointed out to me all the differences in it, every wheel had something different from the next, and they had to point it out for me to see it. I saw the cart, and that one wheel was missing, they pointed out the faces, and described the torment on the faces, or if they were missing eye sockets, or noses.... So i learned to look a little closer, and not to take something at face value.

Rather than thinking of something new, the programs reinforced my tendency to think about art.

The idea of presenting simple questions to children when talking about art--then allowing them to do most of the talking about what they see.

I seemed to routinely be spurred to see things in a different way when discussing various art. Discussions how the artist went about the artistic process ... motivations for renovating one artistic style into a new genre.

On my way to the creative station I passed through the tunnel of light. It helped me remember the power of light as illusion/illumination.

I never knew how beautiful glass can be. The different colors and shapes was so new to me

Teacher Programs

I was able to understand and criticize art in a better way.

I began to think more about how the pieces and parts of "found object" sculptures represent the culture and time in which they are created. This added depth to the ideas I have for upcoming projects/units and, as a result, infused more of the "historical"

I took part in a printmaking hands-on activity during the summer. I do printmaking with students but have never tried using the materials (Createx monotype ink) that we used. I thoroughly enjoyed the whole thing and was inspired to come up with new ideas to use both at school and in my studio.

One presenter at the conference shared ways of using thinking maps to analyze artworks. I was familiar with the more basic methods, but hadn't used some of the more advanced ones. Since the presentation, I have often used this technique with pre-service teachers.



Thru the exhibit on Basquait, who I had previously known very little about, I have come to recognize graffiti as something other than something that 'messes up walls' to a valid artistic expression (but it still shouldn't destroy other people's property)

I already knew about encouraging students to use verbs, nouns, and adjectives...its just that your ideas encourage presenting this in a different way.

I really enjoy the lectures that are part of the Evenings for Educators - they refresh my memory and give me new information.

I knew that Modernism had world-wide influence, but until the Inverted Utopia Exhibit I very few examples that I used.

I had considerable knowledge about painting and clay. However I want new ideas to accomplish objectives in Katy ISD Elementary Art. It's exciting to learn from the artists who share cutting edge plans and ideas to trigger my own creative juices.

Recycling as art and other lessons you may use using recycled materials.

Presentation of literature/music in conjunction with pieces of art to represent an era (e.g. Victorian)

The repetition of the "modest" pose of the Greek torso in the foyer of the Beck building in later paintings and sculptures. I was unaware of the missing parts and how they were the same pose seen in depictions of other Venus images as well as Eve.

Painting workshop - ways to organize a painting class and assignments

The whole collection at Bayou Bend. Each time I go I learn so much more, the history and depth is remarkable.

Gees Bend Quilts workshop motivated me to educate my little ones about the stories in the quilts while they worked on their art quilts.

Incense burners as ritual objects took on new meaning.

I know how to work in clay, but didn't realize how easy it is to make a mandrell.

Before I entered the program I had generated my own opinions about the works of art. Discussing works of art with others allowed me to think about the works differently.

A fresh approach on pointalism, and landscapes.

Seeing how artists incorporate everyday things into a collaged piece of art like the dolls, and miscellaneous items in the young black artist series.

The Latin American Seminar greatly increased my knowledge of contemporary Latin American Artists and their contributions. I believe it helped me to be more sensitive to the needs of my students (especially Hispanics), in terms of making them aware of that part of their rich heritage.

I knew my lessons were more technically oriented and I have seen the value in setting things up so that the lesson facilitates the children to take ownership of the lesson, to find excitement in what they are learning, and to use their creativity.

How to incorporate writing and math while looking at paintings.

I did not care for Recycled or found object art, but gained a new appreciation for it.

Seeing the folk art through the lens of "fine art".

General Visitors

The Jack Yates Photography exhibit helped me look at my old neighborhood in a different light! There were street signs that I used to pass by everyday, that I never really thought had any purpose.

that not only can artist use small medium items, such as wood or metal, to make prints but an entire wooden floor as well.



The Joseph Havel exhibit made me think a bit about forcing myself to see the potential in objects that I would never normally think of to use in art. For example, the way Havel stacked the shirt collars created a column that seemed delicate, and shirt collage

The use of abstract art and it's ability to illustrate an array of meanings to different individuals. It's all about perception.

all the modern pieces you wouldn't normally think of as art.

I know the sculptor artist Havel but did not know of all the media he worked in

I knew that the King Ranch was a family operation, but that fact was driven home when viewing the photos of the family working & relaxing on the ranch

The modern art installations upstairs were quite novel although the artist used some everyday objects. His ideas to me were quite "out of the box".

Every exhibit brings knew insight into the work of the artist. The museum provides curators and written information about the life and style of the artist. This information helps in understanding the context, reasoning, and system involved in the work.

I saw sculpture in another way it really opened my eyes to what sculpture is really about.

I knew I liked that genre, but did not realize how much

the art is very important to develop a mental health because when you show your emotions you feel better

3. I looked more carefully and more thoughtfully at art.

Adult Programs

It has shown me how to look at pictures in more detail, and what to look for.

it help me to look at an object 3 dimensionally angles, position, shading, layering, and depth.

How to look at certain paintings, what to look for, how to compare with other paintings of the same époque.

I look at paintings more carefully. I study a few works at the museum rather than try to see everything

I now look at an ART piece for some time and from different angles before I purchase and/or hang it. I seem to have a greater sense of a pleasing design in home decor and dressing. Mostly, I gained a greater appreciation of what my daughter does as a working artist.

At a reception for a new exhibition, one must quickly look at the pictures, so one has only a sketchy memory of images. I have always returned at least once, and often several times, to view the paintings more carefully. Attending the lectures has contributed to an appreciation of the details than I might otherwise have lacked.

I appreciate detail and perspective more fully.

The later works of Picasso were never anything I gave much attention to. That has changed with a new understanding of his concepts.

After attending the lecture, it was helpful to understand the artist more, and potentially what motivated him to do the art and sculpture that he did. For example, I can't imagine painting the "Last Judgment" in the Sistine Chapel, especially to stay the course and finish it.

my ability to concentrate and be quiet was enhanced

after the lecture i went back to the original painting and was able to get a more indepth perception of the painters intention

The lecture on the Rembrandt painting made me look much more thoroughly at the way the model was posed and at the lace worn by the subject to appreciate it's complexity. It is very possible to look at a painting and think it is pretty and move on. With new information, the length of time used to view a piece of art increases along with the depth of appreciation.



Mark Seliger's photos in the lower level of the Law building; seeing the same photo over and over with different familiar characters gave the seen such a different flavor. Mohammed Ali and Michael Fox was the most touching image. Scenes of the King Ranch taken by a fashion photographer and a fashion model shows to complimentary points of view. Treasures from Olana opened up the Hudson River school to us. It was more tedious scenery to me before but it really came to life to us. Lack of time prevented us from stopping by Olana on a recent trip.

Having the da Vinci "Lady with the Ermine" explained provided many new outlooks into that work and others of the period.

Learned to look at contemporary art in its historical context - to see that non-representational art has meaning in a different way than traditional art.

I don't think I will ever appreciate Kandinsky, but I look at Turell (sp) and Flavin in a whole new light (pardon the pun).

Because I know more of what to look for and at!

I look for the bird in Jesus' hand. I look for the arrows when looking at Saint Sebastian.

I have always been seduced by color but now I will be even more aware of the use of small bits of color in a painting.

Features of very familiar works of art can be drawn to our attention that enhance our appreciation.

I looked at the Courbet paintings with a new eye after the lecture on Courbet: *The Figure in the Landscape*.

The Courbet exhibit is not my favorite, however, I realized I found the seascapes Beautiful.

I spent more time and gave more thought to American landscapes as a result of a lecture.

I look more carefully and thoughtfully now at contemporary art. I am profoundly and proudly an Old World Masters art lover. But, I have gained a greater sense of appreciation for contemporary art.

I pay more attention to how paintings are composed and rendered.

Having studied art very little to this point in life, I was enchanted to browse the collection afterward, noticing all the icons (animals, etc.) she had mentioned in her lecture...icons which spoke VOLUMES to the artist's contemporaries but are largely lost on us.

Now when I examine artwork, I am inclined to ask more questions -- when did the artist make the piece, under what conditions and so on. In other words, my inquiry digs deeper into both content and context.

I learned how to take in the painting from different perspectives, different angles, different distances, look closer at the details surrounding the main subject rather than focusing only on some aspects of them.

The lecture on intimacy in paintings related the interaction between the subjects and the painting's observer instead of only between the subjects in the paintings.

I now look at ART from a normal distance to get the feel of the work, then go up close to analyze the techniques and then from a distance to enjoy the play of light and dark or shadow.

I think some of the symbolism used in the art are interesting things to note--?can't remember them now!, but things like? to represent the Virgin Mary, etc.etc.

the art of basquiat and also thomton dial made me look more closely at the black american experience

Family Programs

Looking at something as an overall shape instead of looking at it as an accumulation of parts.

I look at patterns more, I see my son draw pictures of leaves more.

because I had never have this possibility in my country, you only could see the artist in a book, because is not important the art in my country



I think what art does for me, and I think for my kids, most of all, is to provide us with the medium to express our feelings, our wishes, dreams, desires, and thoughts and to free us of the everyday's worries and stresses of life.

*The Basquiat show helped me to see street art in a different way
the quilts and the stories of the women who created them keep me thinking how amazing*

There were details I would have not known to analyze, such as why an artist used a certain style, brush strokes, colors, shapes, materials etc. Very interesting. It amazes me how people live up a museum that otherwise would not be appreciated to the same degree. The MFAH has that very important piece that some of the other local museums don't have as much of (wonderful docents and teachers).

I liked seeing the Native American wedding vase with two drinking holes -it made me think that not all parts of sculpture are prompted by whimsy, some of the prettiest art is actually functional, too.

the sculpture garden is refreshing and different every time I see it- never quite the same.

Since I am an art historian, perhaps my response is unfair because I am always thinking about art! It is second nature. However, the children's art studio (Creation Station) often prompts me to re-think materials in a new way.

Creating a serene and lovely home is a way to incorporate art in daily life. I am using the idea of the Japanese garden as a living landscape in my own home.

I now look more closely at the details, choice of colors, style of painting.

Both my 8 yr. old daughter and I both enjoyed reading about various gold artifacts and info. My 6 yr. old son just enjoyed looking at them.

Teacher Programs

Don't just look at a painting. I now hear and smell what is happening in the painting.

To look for the details the artist drew and how they pertain to the entire piece. Looking at details also leaves a space for personal interpretations.

I was able to better interpret and analyze art.

Looked more closely at the work of Basquiat. Despite being familiar with his work, I gained quite a bit of new understanding about what was behind his work and his motivations.

I now like to think about the artist more and what motivated his or her work. The history of it and the process.

I was aware of Jean-Michel Basquiat's work, but I hadn't really considered it seriously on its own merit until the exhibit.

A docent walked us thru some artworks and really EXPLAINED their significance in a very HIP or Modern way. got me thinking in a whole new perspective.

My eyes were opened to things that I had overlooked before.

I'll give students greater freedom to think and give opinions about art work by masters and students in class. They can verbalize their thoughts easier as I give my own opinions and questions before them.

I tend to zip past most landscapes unless they are very specific to the historical era I am teaching, but there is a lot to learn from landscapes of an earlier period-like the painting of Niagara Falls.

I am not a great fan of abstract art, or certain art periods, and they may still not be my favorites, but you have given me a better appreciation of them.

I am looking more at depictions of Mary and her sadness as a result of Lou Palermo's pointing this out to my AP History of Art students.

The portraits, wow, so much to think about and easy to get students to begin reading the portraits not just looking at the image.

I wonder about what motivated and/or inspired the artist.



When we went to the Pre-Columbian gallery I got a chance to see two vases that I had not considered in the past. The unique colors and subject matter gave me some ideas for my kids to pursue in class.

I believe that I think more deeply of the influences that led artists (or craftsmen) to create what they have created. For example, location, materials, politics and culture all play a role in the creation of art.

Allowing the work to become a personal part of my life and sharing this with students.

It made me rethink Pablo Picasso's "Guernica" and the reason(s) he painted it.

I look for ways of comparing one painting to another, in ways I never had before. trying to find ways to draw children in to really look at a painting.

I look at the things around me and I realize that things that I may consider to be trash can be used by others to create art.

I see many more details when I look at paintings now.

Because the docent was so knowledgeable about the artist and the time period, including the political and social climate, it made me realize how influential the aspects can be to an artists' work. It makes sense, but I never really made the connection so strongly before my evening with educators.

General Visitors

I appreciate shapes, texture, subject matter, color, mood, patterns so much more. Basquiat's artwork moved me so much because he had causes and/or intelligent thought provoking meanings to his child-like art.

After learning more about creative processes, realize the more broad spectrum which is really art. Argentinian Photography and how it was related to politics (Dirty War ...) ... Understand that those who facilitate and market art serve a very useful purpose (Singular Multiples ...)

I cannot remember the artist, but it was on the main level of the museum and it reminded me of Jackson Pollock...I felt that I looked at the art more meticulously.

I remember one time coming to the museum and I was staring at a beautiful work of art not noticing that the artist had started to paint a picture in the beginning but painted over it with another painting. I did not notice this until the second time I visited the museum.

Instead of just concentrating on technique, I look more carefully at why certain elements were used and what they're supposed to represent.

I studied the composition of the photos as well as the subject

Definitely knowing the back story, symbolism or the artist's motivation helps you to see the art differently.

Instead of how normally I would just look at the pieces of art work fast it made me want to take an extra minute to really examine the little details I could have overlooked.

Looking at the sculptured busts made me examine the work more closely because it was so fine yet I knew it had been done so long ago.

After walking through certain exhibits with the headphone sets, I have taken more time to dissect the pieces of work for deeper meaning before moving on and give the artist their proper respect and acknowledgement of their work.

4. I talked about art to other people as a result of attending this program.

Adult Programs

My boyfriend and I definitely discuss cultural outings.

I discussed the meaning of Basquiat (sp?) paintings with others

I share my visits to the museum with family and friends, and often bring them to an exhibit they might not otherwise have seen. I am hopeful that when I am no longer here, this experience will lead them to become more active in the museum.



After almost every lecture I talk with others who attend the lectures about how we use the knowledge we have gained

I belong to an Arts Group at church and have a better understanding of the Italian Renaissance. The group took an art tour of Southern Italy and am able to discuss their experience; although, not having been on the trip. The talk on Fra Angelico was particularly helpful.

My friend and I enjoyed much conversation on art, what we liked and didn't, and why after attending the lecture. I've also encouraged others to do so as you get more out of what you see.

I usually go home and tell the family what the talk was about whether they want to know or not! I also like bringing a friend to attend with me. The refreshments time afterwards is also a good place to meet and talk with people about the art.

I discussed what we had learned with two friends who also attended the class.

I just used the term "tonal" painting (as opposed to "chromatic" in a discussion with a friend at the HSPVA show at the Jung Center.

I was raving about the lecture to friends and suggesting they come to the next one as it was so interesting

I know we were excited about Olana talking to my sister in law who lives in that region. It provides lots of material for my wife and I to talk about since we attend everything together. My good friend at work was an art major and I always try to share

I talk to friends at work and my husband and I talk about what we see and how it relates to other works or other arts.

I stayed for the social following the program and enjoyed discussion

I discuss some of the areas of the picture or work that demonstrate a certain technique or use of color and light to enhance the work.

I rarely attend MFAH programs alone, so Discussions on the drive home are part of the whole program experience. Your providing refreshments after programs also encourages discussion on-the-spot.

We attend with friends and discuss the program afterwards.

Feel able to talk with people I meet when I travel as well as friends who have been interested in art longer than I have. I am "catching up".

I am an accountant that has no formal training in any of the arts. I love to describe what I have learned in the Friday afternoon lectures to my wife and grown children. They are amazed!

My husband and I always discuss what the lecture covered and I have a few friends who listen with interest--and a lot who aren't interested in knowing more than they already think they know.

I have had nerve to talk about art to an artist in our neighborhood (Montrose) and influenced him to attend MFAH lectures.

I am a former art teacher. I always talk over the art program with my husband after it is over. I tell other friends and teachers how they have inspired me.

My book group joined as members and we go to as many exhibits, films as possible

Oh!!! We have Great meetings of the mind. And the sharing that accrues is so enlightening. Offering renewed views on various topics.

I've enjoyed meeting people at the receptions & discussing the art.

Of course I can now talk with more knowledge of the subject, which gives me more confidence in what I am saying and less fear of saying things that are too obvious or maybe even inappropriate.

My husband is not an art appreciator, so I have had an exchange with him and watched him understand art a bit more.

I now have a new set of art friends to visit with



I share with my husband who is bed bound and does not usually attend the lectures. Also, share with lady friend

I engage other people about art now even more than I did before. Everything from dialoguing on an anniversary cruise to exchanging ideas about the Mona Lisa and The Last Supper at the Bible bookstore.

In some ways, it has inhibited me b/c I really really know that there is so much more to learn and I don't want to show off my ignorance. However, I do feel comfortable disputing putdowns of modern art.

Family Programs

I like to go the museum with other people, you can compare points of view

Attending MFA programs gives us the confidence to say that we belong to a very elite group of Houstonians who appreciate, support and embrace culture and art. Being a member of MFA reminds us to reach out to other art programs, and explore all art venues

I tell people about the opportunities the museum has to offer for children

the basquiat exhibit was something I was able to talk to with a lot of people

I mention it at social events and with my family and friends.

I decided to include art as a subject in my homeschool curriculum this year after taking my children on several trips to the MFAH. I bought them several books that featured paintings, and we practiced guessing how the painters included their own feelings

I made a point to tell the other moms I know to take their kids and check the programs out. My daughter would not stop talking about all the things she saw there.

My daughter wanted to know more about modeling with clay

I also took my nephew, and we always talk about art together, I try to encourage him to open himself to the possibilities, and he does.

I've talked with others about art for years, but this program made me talk to others about the value of this particular program.

I go straight from the MFAH to school pick-up. I'm always feeling radiant after the museum, enlightened and fulfilled, and people ask why, and... so.

When I attend Creation Station with my children, this always prompts me to talk about art with my children.

I share specific examples of programs and how they have enhanced our lives when I talk with friends. Often this is in response to their question "Why is the MFAH your favorite Houston museum?"

I enjoyed talking about some the art we saw with my own children. It was interesting to listen to their interpretations and views.

I've talked with a number of other parents about creation station and what a great program it is. Also, have talked with a number of people about the twombly exhibit and his interpretation of the battle scenes.

always good to have fresh stuff to talk about , and encourage others to attend the show. Look what I made with my own hands you can do it too

Teacher Programs

I was always very excited to talk to the other teachers in my district wide department as well as teachers on my home campus. Many ideas were shared interdepartmentally regarding using art history to demonstrate or support historical concepts.

I bring my husband and various friends along to the museum when I have the opportunity. Going to the shows together gives us a common ground to talk about the exhibits and such questions as "What is art?", "Is that art?" among others.

I always enjoyed art and talk about it with people that share my interest in it.



In discussion with other adults I am able to offer a broadened viewpoint of what art is, not just the beautiful realistic sculptures of Michaelangelo, or the quiet beauty of Mona Lisa, but rather, introduce them to the many forms and avenues that artistic expression has to offer.

I studied for my art certification and just shared more about what my students were doing. My passion became a bit obvious.

I talk to my fellow art teachers, my wife, my students, my children; anyone who may have an interest in art about my experiences at the MFAH.

When all the art teachers get together.... we TALK and each of us sees ART from their unique perspective... getting together provides multiple view-points and it's exciting just to "Listen" to so many Diverse ideas!!

I talked with an art teacher at school who had attended the same workshop on a different day; I talked about the images on the CD to the AP US History teacher and how she could use them, and I am talking now (school just started) about some of the images.

As a literacy specialist, I frequently speak to my colleagues (educators) about how much art can contribute to instruction

I feel better informed about the art and am able to talk to other teachers and students about art shows in town. For a show they did not think they would like- I may give them a different perspective of it and encourage them to see it.

Opportunity to connect with other art educators is valued immensely. There is a chance to gain new ideas that WORK in the classroom.

I shared what I found with the Spanish teacher on my campus.

Upon returning to my classroom after viewing a particular exhibition, we usually discussed the exhibition with students and/or colleagues, I especially loved the multimedia show on the large screen.

I went back to school and told my co-workers about the programs that the museum offered to Educators and if they were looking for lesson plans and supplemental materials, they could notify the museum and get connected.

I have a young African-Asian American friend who is very interested in art, but is not one of my students. I couldn't wait to tell her about the Gees Bend Quilts and to take her down to see them. I find myself trying to show her many different artists.

I came back to my class and discussed the art with my class and with the other teachers that attended the program with me

I've discussed with several peer teachers ideas about incorporating art into our literature units.

I constantly rave about MFAH and their education department!

Between some of the activities and the lunch break, I met several new people and talked about her teaching experiences.

General Visitors

I had never really been to a museum of fine art (although I have been to art galleries in Savannah). With the experience of MFAH, I can now say that I've seen a pollock, a pointalistic painting, a surrealist painting, greek and roman sculptures, etc.,

Actually me and my best friend go to the museum and discuss topics after we leave. We usually go on thursdays, because we're college students and can't afford a membership!

I have several friends who I suggest exhibits to and vice versa.

i'm always talking about art, but i'll throw in what i've heard and discuss it with people i know.

I ended up asking a few people about their opinions on the Gee's Bend exhibit. Mostly I wanted to know if they thought that the quilts were worthy of being called "art."

I talk to others about the different things I saw when I attended MFAH, and what I got out of them.

I brought my visiting family members to the MFAH this summer

well, now I am actually able to discuss and know what I'm talking about.



I usually like to go with a friend to the museum and we talk about the exhibits we see but it was good to bring my children and expose them to the art and talk with them about it.

My boyfriend went with me and he was never really interested in art but since he went there now we talk about art and artist a lot more now.

My wife, my children, and I have constant discussions on the subject. However, we now incorporate MFAH in the museums we discuss

Several times we have had group discussions after.

5. I related art to my personal interests, life experience, or background.

Adult Programs

I spent a good week reading about Goethe after attending lectures on the "Grand Tour".

have taken a painting class at the Art League

In the 1970s, a visit to the museum on Sunday afternoon to stand in front of the Impressionist paintings [always my favorites] created a sense of calm and serenity in the midst of the chaotic professional life I led. I minored in history and philosophy at college and have always been interested in reading. My leisure reading remains solidly in these two subjects. As a major in French, my visits to the MFA served as an 'appetizer' so that when I first visited Paris, my trip to the Louvre was greatly enriched. Now, the first thing I want to do when I travel to any city is visit their museum. Art has taken its place alongside history, philosophy, and language in my 'must haves' for my life.

I am adopting drawing as a new creative activity.

I've always enjoyed painting and had to put it aside through out my career. I have now been able to paint again, including the attending art classes. It's a motivation to see what can be done.

I enjoy arts and crafts, I make more time for the enjoyment of my leisure time

I have a master of liberal arts degree with a strong emphasis on art--I have a daughter who is a painter--and I am returning this year as a second year docent for the kids

I AM NOT AN ARTIST, BUT I AM A QUILTER AND GAIN EXPERIENCE FROM EACH MFAH PROGRAM.

I have always enjoyed art and I dabble in painting. It has made me want to seek formal training.

I am a leatherworker and woodworker and art has a great deal to do with design. I have looked to H.C. Weternann for inspiration. Nineteenth century art gives us costume clues for dressing in historical reenactments.

life is art. art is what makes life worth living.

See art in the graffiti around town.

Having an MA in history, I was very motivated to sign up for Art History classes b/c I knew enough to be both curious and aware that there was a lot that I didn't know. Also, after deciding to quit being a workaholic, I felt the need to nurture my own interests, something that I had neglected while satisfying an employer. As a result of my being interested in art, my husband has also developed an interest. Some of our trips, both domestic and foreign, have been initiated out of desire to see such and such special exhibition. The Glassel classes and Friday lectures have also brought me into contact with other women who share this interest. As I am not from Houston, the MFAH programs helped me end a social isolation brought on by telecommuting to my Atlanta employer for two years.

I now look at an ART piece for some time and from different angles before I purchase and/or hang it. I seem to have a greater sense of a pleasing design in home decor and dressing. Mostly, I gained a greater appreciation of what my daughter does as a working artist.



My degrees are in history, so I'm always interested in the time frame in which works of art were created.

I try to make our food presentations a little more artistic.

My knowledge of music is greater than that of art. As I learn more at the museum I can related the time periods of art to what I know about music.

I've been able to use art to convey emotions

Since starting to attend these lectures, I have added to my own collection, and I have become more particular about the kind of art I collect. Wherever I travel on business or vacation, I always try visit the local art museum and local galleries.

All my life I have worked in the arts (theater)...I like to see how all the arts meld.

At one time, the only art that I appreciated (or understood) was "cowboy art." In 1976, I went to Europe on business and visited the Prado and the Louvre. That woke me up, I have pursued knowledge of art ever since.

Does a video in an exhibit count? If so then the video with the first Gee's Bend show reminded me of my grandmother's quilting, for warmth, not for show.

I hope to one day see my work on the wall at this museum and be able to say that I was inspired to reach this level because of a class I took here.

We have spent a great deal of time in London, Paris, Rome, Barcelona, Madrid and we have enjoyed being part of the MFAH's growth.

I attempt often to bring in the personal with my teaching. The students themselves enjoy listening to an event I have attended and how we can use the information in the classroom to work on new or current projects. My own artwork is highly personal and almost always has a strong family current within the works. I share this with my students and plan on sharing about the sketching classes. I hope to have some of my families sign up for the event. I also created a Hyde MFAH group. This is an event I plan about every month and families meet with me and we scavenger the MFAH for eye treasures. The students and parents amaze me while we visit. I thrive off of the growth I see before me.

I visit the museum nearly every week and attend lectures perhaps a dozen times a year. I write about art, especially reviews of art books. So everything I can learn about art is grist for the mill and helps make connections.

I have advanced degrees in English and love to read 19th century British novels but only since attending MFAH lectures have I related the fiction to art and started attending art lectures at Rice University.

My personal interest in art has been not only to appreciate it, but to be educated about it. I not only have purchased The Annotated Mona Lisa for myself...but, I now find myself giving it as a gift.

As I SLOWLY learn about Modern art, I appreciate more how it reflects the time I grew up and how I too have changed.

I am a former art teacher and artist. The programs motivate me to do more of my own painting.

Although I did not attend a lecture on this per se, our entire family got a renewed sense of our Texas heritage in the flags exhibit and refer back to that joint experience quite frequently

whenever I travel, I try to visit museums and the lectures make it more meaningful

I am exploring digital photography as a student at New York Institute of Photography. So it is easy for me to relate to most of the programs, such as the recent talk about photography by John Szarkowski (not sure of spelling). His discussion about photography as a career was helpful as I explore my own career interests and opportunities.

One of the many things it did was made me look at normal objects as possible subjects for drawing/painting.

Almost every cultural experience I have is enriched by the knowledge of art. Ballet is better because I have seen and learned about Degas' paintings; theater is interesting because of the artists who have designed sets and costumes; travel is fascinating because of the history paintings that I've seen and the knowledge of art and architecture I now have.



I am very interested in the relationship between genetics, behavioral biology and the human ability to express one's emotional self in an artistic manner.

I am amazed at the photography exhibits. I am a photographer but they make me realize how much more I could try.

well, I'm also a writer, so information I learn in lectures/shows gets developed into poems

I always liked being surrounded by beautiful things, but now also the knowledge of several lesser know aspects, or the perspective that I have been given on certain Masters or their Works give me more motivation to look for more.

Incorporating art into our home decor.

Family Programs

I am more encouraged to try small art projects, knowing that they do not have to be perfect to be lovely.

Being a part of MFA enriches our daily life and makes us appreciate the raw beauty of nature and gives us a healthy balance in life. My kids play too much computer games and the new age of technology tends to pull the youth generation from the basic foundation of art and natural beauty.

I think it helped bring art back into our lives. There are artists on both sides of our family, but my husband and I never developed any advanced skills. The teacher's positive feedback towards the kids work was very encouraging to them and me. We have one artist who's already left home for college (unfortunately not majoring in art, but he'll certainly use his skills), and I'm hoping to keep exposing my younger children to develop their talents as well. I know we will go to the MFAH to give them that exposure to art and hopefully keep taking classes. In addition, seeing the ancient sculptures in the museum helped bring our history studies to life.

I realized that I wanted to see more art that depicted my sorts of experiences. I am a thirty year old African American MBA graduate who lives in Houston but whose siblings were raised in Africa. I decided that my factors are so uniquely mine that perhaps the best way to represent myself in art would be to make my own! My husband and I have purchased a very nice digital camera, and we plan to use it to capture moments that define our nature and tell our stories.

I already do this, but my daughter really connected with the fact that she wears masks for dress up and that ancient peoples wore them too.

comparing the quilting I'm familiar with to that of Gee's Bend quilters

Art is already pretty important to me. This class made me more likely to copy a piece of art in order to see it more clearly.

I was raised by a person whom watches TV all the time, and believes everything on it. As sweet as she is, and well intended, I had to look to the world for culture, and I found that I needed to try and understand what so many scholars saw in "ART". So I have opened my mind, and seek it for inner knowledge, so I too can understand. I am a beginner, but at least I am open to it, and know it comes with time. I reach for more for my children, like we all do.

I already have some background/education in art, so this program enhanced the preexisting interest.

I'm a writer. Art is like writing with a different vocabulary.

I often attend MFAH programs with my children in tow. This prompts me to talk to them about my work in art history.

I am an Art History undergrad. The programs renew, refresh, challenge and expand my education. I believe every time you go to the museum, the images stay with you and are applied to all facets of your life. This may be a future art project, discussion on history, or even re-decorating your home. Everything learned in art is multi-dimensional.

I'm already an arts professional (opera and theatre)-but going to the MFAH helps me to keep the visual arts integrated in my work, and stimulates me to expand my visual reference points. It's an essential part of my life as an artist!

Teacher Programs



I traveled to DC and Philadelphia this summer and plan on creating "visit journals for both the National Gallery of Art, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, so that when my family visit them they can have a more meaningful experience. I spent an entire day at each, and wrote ideas and collected lots of free pamphlets for art. My entire family is getting together for Christmas in DC and I plan on getting everyone (kids to grandparents) to make one and then take them to the National Gallery. I'll leave plenty of blank space for journaling, drawings and photographs. What a beautiful treasure to have of what will be a wonderful occasion.

I am a world traveler and love to study about cultures of the past. The tours and programs have given me many connections of what I know to what the museum has to offer.

Coming to the MFAH is always a inspiring outing. It's highly motivating, especially in times of self doubt in one's abilities, to come down to see what other artists before you have created and discovered. Coming to the MFAH "gets you over the hump" sometimes in a creative way.

I teach art. I make art. I read about art. I look at art. I am a member of a variety of arts organizations. Attending programs at the MFAH relates to everything I do.

My life has always been enriched by my pleasure for any art experience

I am recognizing more of what I do for leisure and enjoyment as a form of artistic expression - whether it be designing my gardens, painting, sculptures, or working on the photo movie stories that I make on my computer.

It has just become a part of my everyday life. I even brought art into a Sunday school lesson, to encourage other adults to express themselves (very cool) more openly.

I paint and exhibit my work locally. The King Ranch Exhibit inspired me to plan some related work.

Learning more about artists and their work allows me to keep my love for the arts alive during my busy years of long hours on the job that consumes energy and time. I sometimes wonder how my life will be without children and their artwork to give me such great satisfaction after retirement. The museum keeps my interest high and even reminds me that there will be more wonderful things in art for me to experience later in life.

I have little formal education in art history but my goal is to use art extensively in my history class to help all students understand the time period.

I like the PowerPoints at the beginning and I test myself on identifying the works!

King Ranch photos - how I build compositions whether photos or paintings; Basquiat - comparing my life experiences to his

I am inspired by what I have learned and by what I see at the museum. I am motivated to more deeply explore creative expression and new approaches to teaching and motivating students to appreciate art and to more confidently participate in artistic expression.

Being a Montessori teacher who also teaches art, my whole curriculum revolves around the experiences that I encounter in the world of art in which MFAH plays a vital role.

Every trip to the museum is a personal growth experience for me and I have been teaching elementary school art for 8 years. I loved Jim Loves work and the humor in it, art is fun!

In the Community Bridge program we had in-depth opportunities in the studio. How I miss that time to work myself! The afternoons in the studio were wonderful.

I have been motivated to paint after every exhibit.

I create beaded jewelry, and went through the various exhibits in the African and Pre-Columbian exhibits looking for new ideas. I also teach beading to students, and will use these ideas to inspire them.

The artist we were looking at was Basquiat who portrayed his background and personal interests in his artwork. I tried to see how my experiences related to his interests, reflected in his artwork. I believe you always bring your personal feelings and experiences to a work of art no matter the artist.

Having been trained in the arts, the frequent trips to the museum enable me to understand more clearly the personal expression evident and life that is shared through the viewing of the art works.

The class made me realize that I was doing pretty well on my own.

I like to tell students the history of a piece of art and why someone did the art. Then look at the piece and see if we can see what the artist might have felt.

I go to the museum as much as I can. And when I am not there I look for art all around me... when I walk outside and go to work.

My own artwork is influenced (and my artist within smiles) when i am enriched with master works. I am touched by the humanity (or lack of)in artwork that i see.

As a result of the program, I used the art project to help my class create their own art with everyday objects

When my creative mind is engaged all areas of my life are enhanced. I'm a happier better person for having art in my life.

I've not been trained formally in art but have learned much through repeated visits to the MFAH. I especially like hearing how artists and art teachers view the works.

I consistently try to implement some aspect of what I've learned at a MFAH workshop as a classroom activity.

General Visitors

In designing jewelry I look at the ancient African examples...

I love history and I see as art as a portal to an era and generation and its way of thinking.

Now I am looking for art expressions like classes and activities ex. I have an old table and put on top a work that we did on our art class

Although I have frequented a number of museums, it has not been a not high on my list of interests until retirement. This has opened up a new avenue for in-depth exposure.

I love to draw, color, act, sing...anything that can be an extension of my inner person. Art is a wonderful way for any individual-even if they are not so talented to express themselves. Provide release from everyday life.

A friend of mine took an art history class in college and told me that a recent movement in art was to highlight the canvas and paint as the art itself rather than try to "hide" the fact that it is paint on canvas. He told me this after my visit to MFAH, and when I considered some of the modern art I saw, it made sense.

During Gee's bend, I watch the accompanying film that explained the story behind the design and basic history of the quilts. After years of sitting under 'neath my grandmother watching her spend hours with those quilts, I never had the good sense to ask her what they meant. I have the memories of the quilts to enjoy that tradition.

It is important to me to be with my son so I find teaching him and his peers about Art keeps me in tune to their thoughts, feelings, logic, etc. Since I am a Latina, a 4th generation Texan, I believe my understanding and education of Latinos and Latin America translate in my teaching and learning of Art - I have a lot of passion! &LFI am very grateful that the MFAH has taken an interest in Latino art and hope that you continue on that trek.

6. This program made me want to learn more about art.

Adult Programs

The mythology captured in many paintings was eye-opening and the lectures aided in the understanding of the paintings themselves. It has made me want to know more about Greek mythology.

I can't get enough. I wish there were more programs through MFAH

I have read several biographies about artists or paintings and have collected several more paintings for my home.



I would like to learn more about composition in a piece of art

I now attend the museum at least 3 times a month.

I felt I understood the art of Basquet (wrong spelling) much better after seeing the film. Just looking at the mailer for his art would not have inspired me to see more of it particularly. It was great art!

Every time I am engaged with the arts, I want to learn more.

I can't think of one lecture after which I didn't come home and do some kind of online research to learn more.

whenever I have a chance I always check back in the web more details of some facts that were mention in the lecture

I have come home and looked up individual artists on the internet after attending a program... or I have tried different techniques inspired by things I've seen at the MFAH.

I have checked out several books from the library

After a MFAH program, I usually resolve to spend more time in the galleries.

Usually motivated to look again at the pertinent art and see what the lecturer was illuminating in his/her talk.

Every lecture I attend demonstrates just how little I know and how much more there is to learn.

I am now buying more art books, and art supplies I intend to take more class too.

I took Art History classes and bought reference books so I could find out more about things that caught my attention.

THERE IS SO MUCH FOR ME TO LEARN, BUT I ALWAYS COME HOME FULL OF INSPIRATION.

I can't recall the name of the artist of Native American subjects that sailed around the American West on the steamer Yellowstone, but I want to learn more about him besides what Larry McMurdy has to say. I like to read about seventeenth century Holland

the more i learn the more i want to learn. i mark my calendar the minute i receive your mailings.

I read up on Basquiat.

For one, Basquit has intrigued my mind. So young, so much in front of him, so much lost and so much of his work saved. Content a tad strong for my teaching audience, but I enjoyed being absorbed in his work.

I have bought books by some of the lecturers.

Read more, conscious of what is happening in other museums in the world

As a result of attending the Friday lectures, my wife and I have signed up for several Rice University art history lectures.

Well, I'm glad you ask me that ? Before, the lecture on Titian, I made a point to look up a biography of his life... so I could better follow the lecture have a greater sense of personal investment in learning.

Absolutely true. I have now read several books related to this exhibition and to the artists and the historical context of the exhibition.

I anxiously tear open the mailing is receive from MFA....in anticipation that something being offered will tickle my fancy!

It is an ongoing process. I would be lost without access to the lecture series

Earlier this year, for instance, the museum's exhibition of the diverse range of works by the late Jean Basquiat nudged me into an exploration of what I used to call graffiti. I had never regarded that style of expression as meaningful to my way of thinking

Signed up for art history with David Bauer this semester



With each lecture and event I feel as if new channels of awareness has been provided. And creates a new void to be filled.

It makes me want to go more to the museum and learn about the artists

We signed up for the Rice course on the great picture galleries of Europe and plan to see one next year for real.

I have learned so much from the Friday afternoon lectures and find that I seek out art museums and exhibitions in other places as I travel. I also find reading about art in the general media or reading novels with an art-based theme are very appealing to me now.

I look for lectures at all museums I visit, and I am constantly reading articles on the web and at the library. Also, friends I have made at these lectures are always providing other outlets and things to do concerning art, in several formats.

Buying and reading more books.

I have compulsively been reading art history and exhibiton catalogs. It has also spurred some trips to see exhibitions in other cities such as the Gauguin one held ealier this year at the Kimbell in Ft. Worth. Also, we are planning on going back to Atlanta either this fall or winter to see the High Musuem's Louvre Atlanta.

Family Programs

I read about Leonardo Da Vince and Michealangelo. Two very different people, with extreme talent.

I am considering taking art classes, if I can find affordable classes that I can attend on days or evenings when I am not working.

Now that I know my kids possess talents in art, I encourage them to explore further. My 10yrs old is now creating his own Manga book filled with stories and cartoon characters. My 9yrs old is compiling his own art sketches. I will submit them to Glassell school of art for a chance to win scholarship in their art programs.

By attending the Chinese New Year function

we look forward to going to the museum, where before we never thought about it

As an artist, there is always more to learn and new ideas to explore.

Having someone give more information about a type of art or to give attention to a particular artist or style definitely gave us inspiration. I have said this already, but it really is the people working there that have inspired us.

I am constantly buying books at Barnes and Noble and Half Price Books about art now. I like the series that includes the book "What makes a Rembrandt a Rembrandt?" I catch my husband reading my art books in the bathroom. :)

It has made my daughter very interested in art and history.

We checked out a book on sculpture and modeling to learn together

Absolutely! You can never know it all, and I can't wait to be filled with references that I once knew nothing about. I think Magrit was my entry into the art world. His marriage picture with the burlap sacks over both bride and groom, and the picture is from the back. Very thought provoking! I still love that picture, and see it in many movies and shows.

I always like to learn more about a subject that interests me. This program was well-presented and worth pursuing further.

I learned about Courbet's painting style before I saw it. When I make ornaments or look at photographs, I see paintings differently afterward.

Each time I come, I learn more and appreciate art more fully. That is life enhancing.

The program was interesting and with interest comes a desire to know more. We watch programs on TV, check internet sites, and read books.

My daughter was excited to see different art work from some artists they she had done reports on in school.



Teacher Programs

I wish I could visit everyday and become best friends with the curators for behind the scene information and access. Also, I am hoping to develop powerpoint slide shows for my AP classes and it's always a good idea to know what I'm talking about. I'm very limited for time, and I'm nervous about getting this done and carving out research time.

It made me love what I do for a living and helped me see how art can help everyone.

Some shows demonstrated to me how weak I was in a particular area and that I really needed to broaden the scope of my knowledge.

The MFAH is probably the only place in Houston where you can access the variety of styles and information about art history and have a first hand experience with them. The interconnected-ness of art always seems to motivate me to learn more than what I expected and to find out things that I didn't necessarily come down to the museum to find out. I always go home with more information (and more questions) about what I came down there to see. Good art should make you ask more questions than it delivers definite answers.

Learning more about art, and artists, is natural to me, so the programs at the MFAH helps to satisfy that need that I have to learn more about different forms of art and artistic expression. I have come to appreciate more forms of artistic expression thru the programs, the lectures given, and docent led tours help me to delve deeper into understanding of the artist's intent or situation which influenced his/her work. This is all very interesting and exciting to me.

The three different Learning Through the Arts programs influenced me the most. It helped me bring art into my classrooms when I taught other subjects, but it also encouraged my desire to become an art teacher.

I always want to learn more personally and to include in my classes professionally

The programs often prompt me to do further research.

listening to the opening speakers (years ago) I was so motivated to learn as much as possible about All the diversity of African Art, 50 countries ...39 languages and nearly 37 religions...WOW besides the awesome art and sculptures!

It makes me want to take some Art History classes

The thrill of new ideas for art stimulates me to always listen, apply, and search for more wonderful things in the creative world which is so comfortable and beneficial for me. I can trust that my great need for explorations and creating will be fulfilled

Every time I participate in one of these programs, I come away energized and also aware of how much more there is to learn and how much fun that's going to be!

My experience made me want to participate in more evenings like the one I experienced during evening for educators.

Sometimes I am motivated to look up a particular artist on the net and find out more about them.

I want to be able to digest it and find its influence in my own art and to help my students use it as a springboard for theirs

When I retire I am going to take advantage of the Friday lectures and maybe become a volunteer at the museum.

The museum opens our eyes, as art educators in particular. I wish we could take our students more often. I need to come more often, too!

Every time I go to the museum I want to go more.

I want to get my doctorate in Art History, one day.

I never tire of finding out how others create art. It's the universal language, as they say, and I decided, after this trip, to create a "motto" or "slogan" for my classes and art club: "ART: The First Line of Communication. I think it's rather catchy.

The program definitely makes me want to explore works of art more deeply because there is so much more to a work of art than what is on the surface.

Attending programs makes me curious, keeps me wanting to come back for more, Learning is fun and provokes thought. It keeps me loving art and the study of it and reminds me of how much I still do not know.

I would like to learn more about bronze casting.

Since I learn something new each time I attend a new exhibit, workshop, or educators' evening, I realize that there is so much I still need and want to learn.

I would like to take more of the same classes because the classes renew my spirit, which helps me be a better teacher and person. I look forward to my MFAH classes.

I always come away from the museum wanting to rush home to make something.

I wanted to learn more about self taught artists and I did some research on that subject

Many times after MFAH contact I am inspired to do more research on an artist or subject.

i want to try to accumulate a group of surrealist artworks appropriate to middle schoolers to accompany our study of a fantasy novel.

I have started a collection of books on art.

The evening workshop (two years ago) that focused on the Cullen Sculpture Garden motivated me to read about the garden, its history, and the collection. I have since conducted three tours of the sculpture garden with my students.

The exhibits on western art inspired me to learn more about Remington's work.

General Visitors

So many different ideas. You can make a million compositions of the same idea and they all come out entirely different. Art is wonderful.

Viewing the photos inspired me to spend more time composing the photos I take

Wanted to know more about how certain art was made.

The desire to learn cultural habitats, values, expressions of pain , sorrow, peace and happiness as other nations endure motivate me to keep coming back to the museum.

I love to learn about art since one day i would like to work at an art museum. I love to learn about art.

Well just visiting the museum has inspired me many times to further my study of art.

Every time I see a new exhibit I realize how much I still have to learn about art.

They've motivated me to learn more about how art plays an important role in my life and in society, the styles, and the importance of expressing oneself.

After my second time visiting with my girlfriend I realized how much I really enjoyed art and wanted to learn more about it.

I was so motivated by my MFAH experiences that I became a member and look forward to each program I attend.

I use to look at what was on the main floor when I was younger and zone out through the rest of the field trips, but now I look at all of the various styles of art and am so amazed.



The main exhibit at one museum, "white flesh sliding through the fine mist of sensuality" had some German writing on it that I copied down in an attempt to have it translated later since none of the museum workers knew German.

7. I felt a sense of awe or wonderment about art.

Adult Programs

have always enjoyed the wonder and awe of the human spirit and talent which transfers that inspired mind to a meaningful artistic medium which emotionally touches and/or enlightens others. (And to think it started with hieroglyphs!)

Art represents creativity to me and I am in awe of those whose talents allow them to express themselves in this way. Perhaps this is because I have no talent at all in this way. I am particularly awed with ancient art forms, as they give us an idea of what the world was like 500-1000 years ago. Without that talent, we would not know. That art also informs me about what current artists may copy from the ancients. I must admit that I have little taste for modern abstract art. I find it difficult to see beauty and meaning in it. Perhaps lectures at the MFA would help me change my views, but I find much of it ugly and/or shocking.

Just to be able to wonder at the transformation from eye to canvas

The lectures on the Hudson River School and the American experience were a great eye opener for me. I would also have to include some of the lectures on modern art in this category

The Courbet Exhibit gave me a new appreciation for landscape art and a sense of excitement and understanding of God's creation.

The biggest component is seeing, listening and/or reading about other artists that are an inspiration.

I still think about the Gees Bend Quilt exhibit, the lives of the ladies and what they accomplished is awe inspiring. I look forward to buying the postal stamps when they come out later this month.

the current sculpture exhibit - I love the imagination and the engineering.

The Adachi (wrong spelling again) gardens through the seasons was a perfect example of this.

how the mastery of the laying on of paint produces such beauty -- and the use of color to capture it

I've felt this way for years, so this particular program didn't initiate my sense of awe or wonderment, but continued it.

I AM ALWAYS IN AWE OF THE DETAILS IN ARTIST'S IMAGINATION.

I thoroughly enjoy the impressionists. Lectures helped me begin to understand the progression from teachers to students to other artists. The quality and uniqueness of the work of various artists does create a sense of awe in the viewer.

No question about it. Some things I see and say I could do that. I just haven't. It's nothing but bedsprings and shovels and squirrel skins and paint. But most of the rest, I am just astounded at.

Looking at the artistry in the Gee's Bend quilts.

For the Roman Bust exhibiton, it was amazing to see such ancient skill and artistry. Although I have been to Rome, Pompei, and Athens and seen , that was when I was 21 and didn't have the sense to realize how skilled the ancients were.

There isn't anything that can be compared to seeing a work of art in person. Photographs or online exhibits are not the same. Programs take an exhibit further with hands-on personal involvement. Actually standing close to the textures and vivid colors of a work or trying to capture something similar in a personal exercise deepens one's appreciation in a new way.

The da Vinci "Lady with an Ermine" was worth looking at for a long time. Exquisite!

Some of the most "awesome" art I have seen has been at our own museum, i.e. Courbet's "A Gust of Wind". I loved it when it first was on view, and now in the current exhibition it stands out as the best painting, in my opinion.

pre-Columbian art. Their mastery of their craft with what we call "primitive tools".



I'm interested on the personal voyage that the artist took to arrive at the artwork

Any time I see something that I cannot do, I am in awe - painting, drawing, sculpture, dancing, etc.

The gold flip flop shoes the king wears in the African gold collection are my hands down favorite piece. I would have enjoyed my students seeing the shoes when CCISD visited the MFAH. I was able to attend this year by a mishap in someone else's schedule. The flip flops when I was growing up were a status of being "poor". Now, if you don't have them, you might be considered fashion poor. The king has these heavy clodded golden shoes that keep drawing me back to visit again and again.

Already was in awe and wonder - just increased awareness of the process

I rate this as very high on the 1-8 scale. And yet, something very important to me is that the Friday afternoon lectures put art into its broader context and therefore demystify it somewhat. That is a counterforce to "awe."

I have been attending lecturs for many years, they feed my need for something beautiful in my day

I had never paid much attention of the American landscape painters, but MFAH lectures (and some at Rice) led me to sense some of the awe the painters felt both in the U.S. northeast and the west, where we spend our summers and now marvel at the Rockies as never before.

I always feel a sense of awe and wonder when I am draw into the serene beauty of the Impressionists works.

The Noguchi lecture on space and sculpture educated a person on the background for creating the pieces. Later, I went to the Noguchi exhibit at the Japanese American musuem in Los Angeles. There, I had a better appreciation for the exhibit and the intent of the work.

I was moved by the lecture "Starry Nights, Sunny Days: Van Gogh in Provence." Van Gogh was always searching to portray his subjects with emotionally charged color. He did this despite his affliction with epilepsy.

Awe and wonder as a result of the program? Don't know. But I do know that some great pictures shock and delight me.

Thanks to the lectures I have attended, I approach each canvas and sculpture with more of a sense of "what is trying to be communicated" not just consciously form the aritst...but UNconsciously.

It is an overwhelming experience that we are so lucky to have access to these presentations.

MFAH photography curator Anne Wilkes Tucker delivered a brilliant discussion of the history of photography using slides from the museum's photography collection. The presentation affirmed for me why Ms. Tucker is -- as Time magazine has called her -- the nation's premier photography curator. Her insights and anecdotes brought the images and the photograhers who made the images back to life. Wow!

Was amazed at the skill required to make colors

My favorite exhibit of all time was the first quilts of Gee's Bend exhibit

There was a lecture that explained how a painting was removed from its wooden backing, conserved and rehung on canvas. That was amazing, but not as amazing as some of the techniques I've learned about that help the artist portray a 3-dimensional picture on a 2- dimensional surface. That seems miraculous to me!

Do you know the sense of glee when you get some insight into what an artist must have been trying to express. The ability of the lecturer to pass on that little bit of insight is what brings the audience back. I think I have expressed that sense of glee with my attendance of the Bach lectures because those lectures come most readily to my mind.

Almost every lecturer makes me feel that way. I greatly appreciate the level of scholarship these presenters have.

Gee's Bend Quilt, Eyes of ??, Tango, Havel, etc. All have left me in awe. Just to veiw their visions by their expressions to me is amazing.

this is a hard question since it assumes an aristotelian idea re art--sometimes I can believe in the wonder; other times I only see social constructions.



It is great to see how hard an artist has to work mentally and in technique to conceive an artwork

I already had that, otherwise I would not have chosen to attend the lecture. I cannot say that the lecture inspired me to feel a sense of awe, but certainly increased that sense.

Family Programs

We have numerous quilts in our family, including one made of old jeans. It was exciting to see quilts of various types displayed.

Every day, I am touched by the beauty of nature and the deep desire to express what I see and feel into some type of art form. Having the talent to express one's feelings through art is truly a gift.

The impressionists made me feel this way

every single time we enter the doors

open space...big rooms...hardwood floor...lighting...natural lighting...music...sketchers...quiet people...

There is a lot more to appreciate if you can be taught what is "behind" a type of art. The reasons the artist does a certain thing or what the artist is trying to achieve. That brings so much more appreciation. Often in all kinds of museums, there is just a plaque with a name and date or some kind of label, but nothing more to educate the viewer. That is why docents are so valuable.

I was in awe of how much more special it made my daughter's trip to the museum. I already love art and history. I love that the programs made her feel excited about it too.

Art is the soul. It is raw, truthful, mournful, joyous, triumphant, loving and so many more things. I find that this is what my mind and soul need for "food" not TV, Movies, or popular music.

Again, this continued and enhanced preexisting knowledge and interest.

Your Friday pm lectures are always inspiring. Music in the galleries also changes the nature of looking.

Listening to John Szarkowski speak with such passion and verve and his lifetime of photography instilled in me a sense of awe.

The work involved in Japanese gardens.

The large print made by carving an image into a hardwood floor was impressive.

My awe and wonder really had to do with watching my 5 year old spend TWO HOURS in the GEE BEND exhibit drawing the quilts in utter concentration and silence. She was totally absorbed and self-motivated. That's pretty powerful!

The time/energy that goes into a work, I can sense that, It gives me goesbumps.

Teacher Programs

Are you kidding?! For me it's a no-brainer. I recently met Julian Schnabel and you'd have thought I went mental. I was so much cooler for any and all previous "star" meetings. My ultimate goal is to inspire my students. One of my greatest moments was when I brought my students to the MOMA show and after assuring them that these works were the "real" originals, watching the hair on their arms match mine and listen to the astounded silence, then the sound of 24 kids talking at once. That was awe inspiring!!!!

By seeing Art from around the world and many different cultures, it made me realize how many common place things we use in our everyday lives can become art.

To stand in the modern art show year before last has left indelible images in my mind. Even writing this I am choked up t think of the work I was able to see. I never knew there was a dog in Picasso's "Three Musicians".



Coming to the MFAH is frequently an emotional experience for me. Seeing other art makes an instant connection to what is inside of all of us to some extent.

What can I say . . . How can I not feel a sense of awe and wonder when in the presence of a place that allows me to see the actual works of art and provides me with knowledgeable people to help me learn more.

It isn't new. I am suprised and jelaous of the unendig capacity for creation

Thornton Dial's exhibit (the program rescheduled due to Hurricane Rita) was truly amazing to me. I was truly in awe of this man, virtually no education, to hear him speak one could be tempted to think he was illiterate and possibly not too intelligent simply because his language skills were not very refined,yet the depth of his expression in his art of world events truly were amazing to me. And then, how he utilized essentially 'trash' that he had found to create his art, incorporating all of the basic artistic elements without having had education to teach and develop them, is amazing. Truly a natural artist and one I had sadly not heard of before but am so glad that I do know of him now. I think he's a true genius in his own right.

Every time I come down to the MFAH, I leave with that feeling of awe about art. Just recently, I spent the last week of July with a teacher's program that was combined with Glassel and I was overwhelmed with how fabulous 5 full days of learning about art could be. Victoria took us on a tour that was the very best ever!!! She had us look really fast, then had us go back and really take the time to look at the artwork. I loved it so much that I revisited each artpiece again in the evening, just to soak it all up.

Sometimes just having the time and opportunity to stop and really look at something can give you permission to see the talant and wonder in a peice of art.

I couldn't look at Church's painting of Horseshoe Fall's enough.

I was totally amaized to see an exhibit of thousands & thousands of shirt labels..but they cast shadows and created an entirely NEW kind of art sculpture!

Learning the fascinating and endless variety of ways that others are inspired and challenged to continue their journey in art nurtures my great need to create and grow as an artist, as a teacher and as an individual who so must have creative outlet.

I have never had the opportunity to stand so closely in front of works of art in a closed museum-that felt very special, very exclusive. It made me really focus on the art itself, with no distractions, which led to a much deeper appreciation for some of the works.

The "inspiring American genius" exhibit offered several pieces that had me taken aback

The works are so fantastic. Nothing can compare to seeing them in real life.

I loved one time recently when we actually heard Marzio, but can't remember when; was an opening of a show.

Peter Marzio(sp?)when he talked about how art changed his life! Nothing yet tops that. We teachers sure need to hear this message. He has done so much for Houston and Art.

Thorton Dial - amazed at how the textures and found objects were constructed and captivated one's imagination and all with out formal art training

Ever since childhood. Books and museums lead me to where I am today. Creative!

Gee's Bend amazes me. I am struck by how beautiful this functional art is and the natural talent the quilters have.

The art touches my heart. It makes me want to look at it again and again.

Is this anything like "shock and awe" (smile) I always feel a sense of connectedness to my fellow artists, no matter what era in which they were active.

Art is a gift given to the world by the artist. Someone said, " God gives us gifts, when we use them we give those gifts to the world." True, the talents of all these incredible artists in one place at one time is a blessing. Small towns do not have the benefit of what the MFAH can offer its members.

I LOVE the sculpture in the Cullen Sculpture garden!!!!



I am amazed that so many educators are not taking advantage of the wonderful opportunities offered by the MFAH and the power of art to engage and motivate students to learn.

to see the simplicity and the complexity each work shows

I don't really feel a sense of awe. I wondered if I could make a sculpture with my first and second grades that was inspired by Soto Impermeable Amarillo.

Monet & Diego Rivera were awe-inspiring; as was Edward James Olmos' show about Latinos-wish that exhibit had been recorded.

I enjoyed the Japanese artist that gave the block printing workshop. I appreciated the prints in the museum so much more after hearing him speak.

ALWAYS INSPIRED! WE are indeed fortunate to have such a facility at our backdoor!

I felt awe when I heard the story of the Gee's Bend Quilters. Also after looking at the African gold, the Central American and Asian collection. I am attracted to art made by so called "primitive" cultures.

Gego is very exciting - I felt like I was in another world.

The ability of art to communicate a new thought or feeling about nature or other cultures always inspires and awes me.

Creative genius always inspires me.

Moved almost to tears at the Gee's Bend show, among others.

I ponder the variety of talents possessed by the men and women who produce art.

I was awed at the richness of the materials shown in the exhibits found in ancient Japanese culture.

No one particular program, but, as a whole, my museum experiences provide a recurring immersion that intensifies all of the senses.

I was thoroughly in awe of our European collection when I first attended a training session by Beth B. Schneider (four years ago). I hope she continues to provide more training sessions and I have often requested the Docent Office about this! The Inverted Eutopia exhibition, the Impressionists exhibition and the Corcoran exhibition have also left an awe inspiring impact.

General Visitors

Everytime I go to the museum I learn more and feel a sense of enlightenment

It's great to see art, some of it is so interesting and so well done.

The accomplishments of primitive inhabitants in their survival carved vessels, tools, and molded houses, containers and wove fabrics...

I love how the human mind works and it amazes me to think that a person could have so much imagination and express themselves.

I remember walkign through a blue lighted tunnel that was really cool and it kind of excited me in awe and wonder.

Specifically, I remember looking at Frederick Edwin Church's Niagara from the Corcoran Gallery exhibition and feeling a sense of awe at the size of the painting and a sense of excitement at finally viewing a piece of art that I had studied in school.

I felt a sense of awe in some of the paintings which had a three dimensional like effect, and the energy, history, and depth these works of art contained.



the jean michel basquiat exhibit absolutely blew me away

I was totally in awe of the photos taken by both the professional and the amateur

I never knew wht one could do qith collars or windows (Basquat).

I believe that your photography exhibits provide a sense of awe and wonder.

I could have spent hours in front of Pollock's No. 6, it was just so riveting, so deep, so sad.

I adore the Expressionism, Post Expressionism, Cubism, Surreal, Pop Art collections but I have to say when Basquiat came through - I was blown out of the water. That will stay with me for life. I trust the MFAH is working to acquire, whether by permanent loan or outright purchase, at least one of his master works.



Appendix F: Museum Professional Study Protocols



Museum Education Professional Survey

Museum: MFAH LACMA CAM

How many years, TOTAL, have you been in the museum education profession? (Check one)

- 1 year or less 2-3 years 4-5 years 6-10 years
 11-15 years 16-20 years Over 20 years

How many years have you worked at your CURRENT MUSEUM?
 (Check one)

- 1 year or less 2-3 years 4-5 years 6-10 years
 11-15 years 16-20 years Over 20 years

In what PROGRAM AREA do you currently work? (Check all that apply)

- School Teacher Family Docent Adult Youth
 Outreach Other _____

How many years have you managed programs in your CURRENT PROGRAM AREA? (Check one)

- 1 year or less 2-3 years 4-5 years 6-10 years
 11-15 years 16-20 years Over 20 years

Of the following issues select no more than 2 as very important to you right now, including any issues or tasks you add; no limit on ranking of remaining issues.

What issues/tasks are uppermost in your mind as it regards your current program area?			
Logistics of running my programs	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Refining the content of my programs	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Learning more about the exhibitions/collections at my museum	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Becoming more familiar with the best practices in teaching & learning in the arts	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Infusing my programs with the best practices in teaching & learning in the arts	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Other:	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important



Other:	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Other:	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Other:	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important

1. Competencies: What do you consider your greatest competencies or professional strengths as a museum educator? (e.g., program planning, program organization/implementation, networking, conceptualizing, teaching, advocacy, or others)

2. Concerns: What are your concerns about your practice? What are your fears about how your practice could possibly get side-tracked or off course?

3. Joys: What is the greatest joy in your practice?

Program Quality Self-Assessment Instrument

Museum: MFAH LACMA CAM

Program Area:

School Teacher Family Docent Adult Outreach

Name of Program Type _____

e.g. Lectures & Symposia, Performances, Family Days, Creation Station, Adult Sketching, Docent Training, Teacher workshops, Internships, School Tours

Attach official description of program (e.g., publication for public in brochure, flyer, website)

[Rhea – this will present some difficulties online. Perhaps this prompt should be in the email asking them to mail the materials or scan and email them. What do you think?]

Program staff member completing this form

Name: _____ Title: _____

- Acknowledging that individual programs vary in quality and popularity with audiences, step back and think about the program type as a whole.
- Consider all of the individual programs within this program type and implemented during the program year - July 05 – June 06 (e.g., all Family Day events; all docent training events).
- Based on your observations, conversations, and knowledge of your audiences, answer the questions below in terms-of the effect **most programs** of this type have on **most participants**. (Select N/A (Not Applicable) if the program type does not attempt to instill a particular item in the following list.)

Ways Program Participants Benefit from the Program Experience

Circle the number for each statement that best applies to the degree to which this program type provides PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS with opportunities to:	1 = 8 =		Not Applicable
	Not at all 	Very Much 	
Learn something new about art	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8	N/A



Give an example of how you know this happens:									
Think about something they already knew in a new or different way	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how you know this happens:									
Look more carefully and thoughtfully at art	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how you know this happens:									
Engage in discussion about art with other visitors and/or museum staff	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how you know this happens:									
Relate the art to their interests, experiences, or background	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how you know this happens:									
Spark curiosity to want to learn more about art	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how you know this happens:									
Instill a sense of awe or wonderment about art	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how you know this happens:									

Personal/Professional Criteria for a Quality/Meaningful Program

Considering this program type, <i>Circle</i> the number for each statement that best reflects your agreement, as the MUSEUM PRACTITIONER , with the statement.	1 = Strongly DISAGREE 	8 = Strongly AGREE 	Not Applicable						
This program type challenges me to explore and experiment with state-of-the-art teaching/learning theories and/or strategies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how this happens for you:									
This program type challenges me to learn more about the collections and exhibitions at my museum and to think about the art in new ways.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how this happens for you:									
This program type provides me the opportunity work more effectively with colleagues in the education department and throughout the museum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how this happens for you:									
This program type develops meaningful partnerships with community organizations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how this happens for you:									
This program type builds new audiences for the museum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how this happens for you:									
This program type allows me to provide experiences that are unique to the museum, something visitors could not get anywhere else.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A



Give an example of how this happens for you:									
I am very proud of this program type and that my professional reputation is linked to it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of what you are proudest of:									

ADDITIONAL Qualities of a Meaningful Program

Add any other criteria for a meaningful museum education program that you use to determine your effectiveness. Be as specific as possible and provide examples of what you mean.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how this happens for you:									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how this happens for you:									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A
Give an example of how this happens for you:									

