San Antonio Museum of Art: Addressing the Needs of Cultural Consumers in the 21st Century

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San Antonio Museum of Art: Addressing the Needs of Cultural Consumers in the 21st Century

An Internship Report

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of New Orleans in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Arts Administration

by

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Abstract

In January of 2012, I began an internship with the San Antonio Museum of Art. At the time, the Education Department was engrossed in an audience research study, designed to strengthen the Museum’s understanding of its constituents. This study was my entry-point into the organization and where all my efforts were focused over the course of my internship. This paper includes: an organizational summary; an account of my internship experiences; a SWOT analysis; a review of industry best practices; and recommendations based on observations acquired over the course of my internship.
Introduction

Early in the course of my internship at the San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA), I was introduced to the work of Dr. John Falk, Sea Grant Professor of Free-Choice Learning at Oregon State University. His book, *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience* (2009), encourages museums to place visitors at the center of all they do. This call to action, urging museums to slough off postures of the past century, is echoed in the Institute of Museum and Library Services’s (IMLS) *Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills* initiative. In the 20th century museums were regarded as pinnacles of academic learnedness, whereby communication flowed only in one direction (i.e. outward). In the 21st century, however, museums are working to relax their “ivory tower” image through the incorporation of a number of trends. Audience responses and feedback are no longer merely to be tolerated, but encouraged.

Shifts in society have necessitated shifts in thinking on the part of museums as to how they maintain relevance by meeting the needs of current cultural consumers. Thanks to human ingenuity, innovation, and technologic advancement people have more leisure time than in centuries past; however, more options for expending that leisure time also exist. Falk points out, “In contrast with life in the twentieth century, where the boundaries between work and leisure were firmly drawn, in the Knowledge Age of the early twenty-first century, work, consumption, learning and leisure are all tightly interwoven.”¹ If museums are to continue to attract audiences in this fast-paced, information-rich, post-internet age, they must listen and respond to the current and ever-changing needs and wants of the cultural consumers in their communities. They must strive to become as Falk says “visitor centered.”

Inspired by Falk’s research, SAMA requested a grant through IMLS’s *Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills* initiative to execute an audience research study and to use that information to inform the creation of an interpretive plan. Such research and planning demonstrates a keen awareness of the role of museums in the 21st century. SAMA’s commitment to continuous self-improvement and two-way communication with its community serve as a positive model for other museums to emulate and are discussed at length throughout this report.
CHAPTER ONE

Overview of the Institution

History

The San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA) is a young institution. SAMA was founded in a way that differentiates it from many other museums. It does not owe its existence to the last will and testament of a wealthy benefactor, but rather to a dedicated group of community activists. In 1925, the San Antonio Museum Association received its charter to establish the city’s first public museum. With the help of several community partners (including the San Antonio Conservation Society, the San Antonio Scientific Society, and the San Antonio Art League) the Association founded the Witte Museum in 1926. In addition to displaying the natural history collection of H.P. Attwater, in its formative years the Witte served as the city’s de-facto art museum, displaying works of art owned by its co-founder, the San Antonio Art League.\(^2\) The dual-purpose nature of the Witte went unchallenged for nearly forty-four years until the arrival of a new director, Jack McGregor, in 1970. Former director of the De Young Museum in San Francisco, McGregor modernized museum protocols and advocated for the opening of a facility dedicated strictly to the visual arts.\(^3\) McGregor suggested the shuttered Lone Star Brewery complex as a potential site and garnered support from trustees such as Nancy Negley Wellin, who spearheaded a $12 million capital campaign. Despite parting ways with the Witte in 1979, McGregor remained involved in the project as a consultant. In March of 1981, SAMA opened to the public. The San Antonio Museum Association continued to operate both

facilities under its umbrella until 1993.⁴ In June of 1994, the charter of the San Antonio Museum Association was officially dissolved and with it any vestiges of the relationship that had once united the Witte and SAMA. Today the two operate with separate and unique missions. The Witte focuses on promoting “lifelong learning through innovative exhibitions, programs, and collections in natural history, science, and South Texas heritage.”⁵ SAMA’s mission is:

“to collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret significant works of art representing a broad range of history and world cultures. In accordance with the highest professional standards, the Museum holds these collections for the benefit of the community and future generations. It is SAMA’s responsibility to educate and engage diverse audiences, provide transformational experiences, strengthen our shared understanding of humanity and encourage a sense of wonder and discovery.”⁶

**Facility/Collection**

SAMA is situated on the San Antonio River, just a few minutes’ drive north of downtown. The Cambridge Seven Associates, a Boston-based architectural firm, was responsible for executing the design that transformed the dilapidated former brewery into a state of the art museum and an innovative and award-winning example of adaptive re-use.⁷ The Museum boasts two towers (an East and West). The East and West towers are connected on the ground level and on the fourth floor by a glass enclosed sky-bridge. Movement between the two towers on the second and third floors is impossible.

Since acquiring the historic Brewery campus, the facilities have been in an almost constant state of renovation—part of a tireless effort to keep pace with the Museum’s ever-

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⁴ Texas State Historical Association “SAMA” http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/kls01
⁷ Texas State Historical Association “SAMA” http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/kls01
expanding collections, which span five millennia. The West tower displays art of the Ancient Mediterranean World (first floor), Asian art (second and third floors), Oceanic and Islamic art (fourth floor). The East tower displays Latin American art (first and second floors), Contemporary art (second floor), American art (third floor) and European art (fourth floor mezzanine).

The 1980’s and 1990’s brought with them a huge influx of donated objects from such generous collectors as: Robert K. Winn; former Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller; Gilbert M. Denman Jr.; and Walter and Lenora Brown. In an effort to accommodate the massive 1985 donations of Robert K. Winn and the former Vice President, SAMA opened the 30,000 square-foot Nelson A. Rockefeller Center of Latin American Art in 1998. The wing displays art of the Pre-Columbian, Spanish Colonial, Folk and Modern Latin American periods. In 2005, the Museum celebrated another 15,000 square foot expansion. Overnight, the Lenora and Walter Brown Asian Art Wing transformed SAMA into the largest museum for Asian art in the Southern United States. The collection includes more than 500 artworks, with Chinese ceramics comprising the heaviest concentration of objects.

In 1991, the Museum also added the Cowden Gallery—a 7,000 square foot space to accommodate changing exhibitions. Shortly thereafter, in 1994, the Luby Courtyard and Beretta Hops House were inaugurated to accommodate the Museum’s educational offerings and family activities. In 2009, further changes to the grounds were realized with the opening of the Gloria Galt Riverwalk Landing. The Landing offers tourists another means of accessing SAMA. Requiring a complex system of locks in order to move passengers north up the San Antonio
River, the “Museum Reach” expansion will eventually connect not just museums with the famous downtown Riverwalk, but also the missions, another popular tourist attraction.\(^8\)

**Organization/Staff Structure**

The configuration of buildings and galleries is not the only component of the Museum to witness drastic changes. SAMA has had seven directors over its short thirty year history.\(^9\) The longest period held by any one of SAMA’s directors is a short five years. This rate of turn-over is atypical of such top-level museum positions. In July of 2011, SAMA welcomed a new director, Dr. Katherine Luber. In just a short period of time, Dr. Luber has garnered significant press for the accomplishments she has achieved thus far; however, only time will tell whether or not she will usher in an era that provides not just strong leadership but longevity.\(^10\) Two other higher level positions recently filled are that of the Marketing Director and Development Director. Both Cary Marriott, Director of Marketing; and Kimberly Britton, Director of Development joined the Museum after my internship began in January of 2012.

While day to day management of the Museum is placed in the capable hands of Dr. Katherine Luber, sixty trustees (thirty-seven Voting Trustees, four Life-time Trustees, fourteen Advisory Trustees, two National Trustees, and three Honorary Trustees) determine its course for the future by approving budgets, major acquisitions, etc. The Museum’s over 25,000 objects are cared for by a small but dedicated group of registrars, preparators, and four curators including David Rubin, Contemporary Art; Jessica Powers, Art of the Ancient World; Marion Oettinger,

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\(^8\) Appendix A- San Antonio Museum of Art- Visitor Guide  
\(^9\)Texas State Historical Association “SAMA” http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/kl01  
Latin American art; and John Johnston, Asian art. The Education Department, including a large number of volunteer docents, is responsible for implementing over 200 programs each year. The Development/Membership Department raises the funds necessary for the Museum to fulfill its mission and oversees the needs of its over 2,000 members. The Marketing Department communicates with the public. The Facilities Department maintains the Museum’s buildings and grounds with a revolving staff of security and housekeeping.

**Budget**

Internal Museum budgets were not made available to me as an intern; however, according to SAMA’s self-published 2010-2011 Annual Report total expenses rose to $6,330,481 in 2011, over $5,859,232 in 2010. Of those expenses, eighty-three percent went toward “Museum Program Activities,” with no further breakdown given. Under such a vague sub-heading, almost anything can be categorized as a “Museum Program” cost. Broadly speaking, salary costs of curators who envision exhibitions; preparators who hang works of art; educators who create educational opportunities surrounding objects; publicists who market exhibitions; and even the guards who provide security could all fall into this category. Not just salaries, but every supply cost incurred by each of those employees along the way could be creatively nestled under the term “Museum Program Activities” expense.

Total revenue was also up to $8,010,882 in 2011, over $6,284,559 in 2010. Of its over $8 million, three percent came from museum admissions, five percent from rental income, and fifty-two percent from private contributions. Again, no further breakdown is given for this fifty-two

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percent. While over fifty percent of revenue coming from private sources is positive, buried within that number are museum membership dues.\(^\text{12}\) Dues collected from individual supporters provide a more accurate measure of community support as opposed to private foundations or donors, whose funding priorities can oscillate.

**Educational and Special Programming**

As mentioned earlier, SAMA’s Education Department is responsible for implementing over 200 educational programs a year. These programs are extremely diverse including: films, lectures, gallery talks, concerts, workshops, and special events. Many of these are offered on Tuesday evenings when large numbers flock to the Museum between 4 p.m. – 9 p.m. in order to take advantage of free admission sponsored by H-E-B, a prolific supermarket chain located throughout Texas and Mexico. Perhaps the Museum’s most popular regular program, “Sketching in SAMA’s Galleries” takes place on these evenings from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Other programs are offered during the Museum’s extended hours on Fridays and Saturdays (the Museum stays open until 9 p.m. on both evenings). These extended hours have allowed SAMA to build audiences, most notably the much coveted young professionals. Every second Friday from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. the Museum hosts “pARTy” (formerly “Scene at SAMA”) in collaboration with local radio station KRTU Jazz 91.7. Every “pARTy” features live music and cocktails inspired by an exhibition on view in the galleries.

The Museum has also cultivated a partnership with Run Wild Sports and Synergy Studios. At 6 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month, the Museum teams up with these fitness organizations to host “Run with SAMA”, which takes place along the “Museum Reach” section of San Antonio’s historic Riverwalk. In addition to free admission, participating runners receive ten percent off in the SAMA gift shop and café.

SAMA is not just interested in those old enough to run. They also have tours specially designed for those just learning to crawl. For babies zero to eighteen months and their caregivers, “Art Crawls” take place on the second Thursday of the month from 10 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. Parents are invited to take a guided tour with their babies in strollers or front-carrying baby carriers. “Art Crawl” tour content is geared toward the adult members of the group, with selections made based on visual stimulus for babies. Each tour ends with playtime and refreshments. Also, SAMA hosts “Playdates” on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. for parents and children ages two to four. Toddlers experience stories, gallery activities, hands-on-art, and music.

In addition to welcoming babies, physical fitness buffs, and “pARTiers”, SAMA also provides opportunities for those attempting to find peace. For those who see the Museum as an opportune place for quiet and reflection, SAMA offers “Meditation in the Japanese Gallery” from 10:15 a.m. – 11 a.m. every Saturday morning.\(^\text{13}\)

\(^\text{13}\) Appendix B- San Antonio Museum of Art- Calendar of Events
CHAPTER TWO

Account of the Internship

Building Audiences in the 21st Century Museum through the Creation of a Visitor-Centered Interpretive Program: a SAMA grant for the Institute for Museum and Library Services

In 2011, SAMA received a large grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) as part of the organization’s Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills initiative. The goal of this initiative is: “to support museums and public libraries in envisioning and defining their roles as institutions of learning in the 21st century.”¹⁴ IMLS differentiates the values of the 20th century and the 21st century and clearly demonstrates its expectations for the evolution of libraries and museums with the following chart¹⁵:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20th CENTURY MUSEUM/LIBRARY</th>
<th>21st CENTURY MUSEUM/LIBRARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Primarily content-driven</td>
<td>• Combination of audience-and content-driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mostly tangible objects (art, books)</td>
<td>• Combination of tangible and digital objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• One-way information (institution presents information to audiences)</td>
<td>• Multi-directional (co-created experiences involving institution, audiences, and others)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on presentation and display</td>
<td>• Focus on audience engagement and experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/21stCenturySkills.pdf Page 1
http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/21stCenturySkills.pdf Page 7
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasis on enhancing knowledge</th>
<th>Emphasis on enhancing knowledge and 21st century skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acts independently</td>
<td>Acts in highly collaborative partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Located in community (operates independently)</td>
<td>Embedded in community (aligned with and acts as a leader on community needs/issues)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcomes assumed, implied (content knowledge and skills like critical thinking tend to be byproducts of programming)</td>
<td>Learning outcomes purposeful (content knowledge and 21st century skills like critical thinking are visible, intentional outcomes of audience experiences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution leads content development (content tightly edited and controlled)</td>
<td>Content co-created among diverse partners and audiences; accessible in multiple ways</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SAMA’s $80,000+ grant, *Building Audiences in the 21st Century Museum through the Creation of a Visitor-Centered Interpretive Program*, called for an intensive four-pronged audience research study of both visitors and non-visitors. Data collected over the course of the study would in turn inform the creation of SAMA’s first visitor-centered, comprehensive interpretive plan (discussed in more detail under the Best Practices section of this paper). My entire eight-month internship was dedicated to this grant funded project.
Statement of Need (the Why)

SAMA received the IMLS grant by identifying a crucial issue among museums aspiring to 21\textsuperscript{st} century relevance: that of changing demographics among museum-goers. Despite not providing IMLS any details as to how the results of its audience study would be shared, SAMA’s proposal asserts that its research could serve as a blueprint for other institutions to imitate. SAMA stresses how two key features of San Antonio’s demographic and geographic landscape make the Museum’s ask a worthy investment not just in SAMA’s future, but also for the future of all cultural institutions. These features include San Antonio’s status as a “majority-minority” city and the absence of geographic obstacles preventing indefinite outward expansion. In its statement of need, SAMA writes:

“SAMA is not unique in recognizing the need to adapt and refine the way it relates to patrons—and, perhaps equally importantly – non-visitors. However, there are aspects of San Antonio that are unique; and these distinctions have implications well beyond our own city. For example, San Antonio is a ‘majority-minority’ city with a predominant and growing culturally-rich Latino population which demographers predict will be the case in multiple cities in America, perhaps as early as 2020. Additionally, San Antonio has taken advantage of its large land area to develop neighborhoods and communities far from the city center. While not all cities have the luxury of being able to spread ‘out’ instead of ‘up,’ many metropolitan areas’ transportation, educational, growth policies have often led to the unfortunate byproduct of ‘urban sprawl’ that contributes to a growing population of citizens increasingly removed from the traditional ‘cultural heart’ that is typically located in the center of the cities’ urban core.”\textsuperscript{16}

Those who would accuse San Antonio of succumbing to urban sprawl may have a compelling argument. Stretching across 467 square miles, San Antonio is the seventh largest
U.S. city with 1.3 million residents as of 2010. In an article published by *Forbes* in April of 2012, San Antonio was ranked the ninth fastest growing city in America. The article also predicted San Antonio will witness a 2.1% population increase between the years 2011-2016, providing further impetus for its expansion in all directions.

In 2005, Texas became the fourth state to reach majority-minority status. With the exception of Hawaii whose majority is comprised of Asian-Americans, California, New Mexico and Texas have all tipped demographically toward a Hispanic majority. In an article written for *Express-News* by Tracy Hamilton in May of 2012, Hamilton dubs the majority-minority issue an “old hat” for Texans. Her article points to a milestone reached for the first time in U.S. history—specifically the birth of more non-white babies than white babies in 2011, a marker that was surpassed in Texas twenty-two years earlier in 1989. According to the 2010 U.S. census, the city of San Antonio is 63.2% Hispanic.

As a sizeable generation of white baby-boomers passes the age of fertility, this trend is expected to accelerate, causing demographers to speculate that the bulk of U.S. cities will become “majority-minority” by the year 2052. As awareness builds around this issue, an opportunity exists to get ahead of the curve with focused attention into the dynamics of such cities—an opportunity SAMA is quick to capitalize on in framing its ask.

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17 City of San Antonio- www.sanantonio.gov/planning/GIS/demo_info.asp
Project Design (the How)

In order to identify ways that SAMA can respond to changing audience demographics and needs, SAMA engaged the Institute for Learning Innovation (ILI), a nonprofit consulting firm dedicated to helping centers of free choice learning maximize the experience of their constituents. This massive undertaking was broken down into four distinct components, each carefully designed in order for SAMA to gain a better understanding of current visitors and non-visitors.

1.) The *Non-Visitor* portion of the study sought to answer the following questions:
   - Who does NOT visit the museum, and WHY NOT?
   - What is the public’s awareness of and perceptions towards SAMA?
   - What else do they do in their leisure time?

   In an effort to answer these questions, ILI convened eight focus groups with San Antonio citizens. It also sent representatives from SAMA to other cultural resources throughout the city (the Alamo, public libraries, monthly art walk, etc.) to recruit non-visitors to share their feelings and opinions about SAMA. Participation was incentivized with a drawing for a free ipad. The target for this portion of the project was 100-150 participants.

2.) The *Audience* portion of the project sought to answer the following questions:
   - Who is currently visiting SAMA and why?
   - What is their experience like—what do they see/do? What do they enjoy most/least?
   - What are their perceptions of SAMA?

   In an effort to answer these questions, exit interviews with museum guests were conducted by volunteers using ipads in the Museum lobby. Strict protocols existed for the collection of data and are discussed in more detail below.

3.) The *Outcome* portion of the study sought to answer the following questions:
   - What do visitors value about their museum experience?
   - How do visitors benefit from their visit?
In an effort to answer these questions, several strategies for data collection were developed, then subsequently abandoned. ILI originally planned to administer surveys themselves on site. After witnessing low attendance first-hand, however, ILI eventually redesigned their original protocol, opting instead to recruit participants for the outcomes survey directly from participants in the audience survey. Participants who completed the audience survey would be invited to take another on-line based survey, participation in which was incentivized with a $10 Amazon gift-card.

4.) The *Experience* portion of the study sought to answer the following questions:
   - What do visitors do while at SAMA?
   - How long do they spend?
   - Which galleries do they visit?
   - At what level do they engage?\(^{23}\)

In an effort to answer these questions, ILI consultants trained SAMA volunteers to conduct timing and tracking surveys with visitors who consented to be followed for the duration of their visit. Participation was incentivized by offering free admission for the visit in which timing and tracking data was collected, plus one additional visit. Timing and tracking is discussed in more detail below.

**Consultants (the Who)**

Identified as a partner in the IMLS grant from its inception, ILI was contracted by SAMA to shepherd the project. SAMA recruited the volunteer labor for data collection, but left data analysis to the un-biased, third party experts at ILI. Based in Edgewater, Maryland, ILI was chosen for several reasons. First, SAMA staffers were initially inspired to write the IMLS grant

\(^{23}\)Appendix D- Key Questions Addressed by Study
after having become familiar with *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience*, written by John Falk, a founder of ILI (whose work is discussed at greater length in the Best Practices section of this paper). Second, ILI offered to donate part of its fees as in-kind support. Finally, a non-profit itself, ILI’s mission, “to study, support and advocate for free-choice learning – learning that fulfills the lifelong human quest for knowledge, understanding and personal fulfillment”24 aligned with SAMA’s institutional mission, as well as the goals of the IMLS’s *Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills* initiative, which states:

“All libraries and museums—and the people they serve—stand to benefit from becoming more intentional and purposeful about accommodating the lifelong learning needs of people in the 21st century, and doing this work collaboratively in alignment with community needs.”25

Sadly, before the project was complete ILI abruptly closed its doors, leaving SAMA to scramble for a replacement consulting firm. This unexpected dissolution of the contract between SAMA and ILI was announced unceremoniously with a letter, a copy of which is included in this paper as Appendix E.26 Audience Focus later took over ILI’s work on the project.

**Data Collection Training**

On January 25, 2012, my internship at SAMA officially began with training conducted by Sharisse Butler, ILI Senior Research Associate, via a conference call. Though Sharisse’s contributions to SAMA’s audience study focused primarily on the surveys collected with patrons

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24 ILI, Mission and Vision- http://www.ilionet.org/display/About/Mission+and+Vision  
26 Appendix E- ILI Letter to SAMA
exiting the Museum, she began with a brief overview of the project as a whole. This explanation was essential in putting the survey work in context relative to the overall research design. Her description made clear how and why each of the four components was necessary and how each contributed to the bigger picture.

Sharisse explained the purpose and value of the information collected through the administering of surveys and provided detailed guidance on how to go about approaching potential recruits, what to expect, and in what manner survey questions were to be presented. First and foremost, policies were put in place to prevent personal biases of data collector (conscious or unconscious) from skewing data. For instance, approaching only the person nearest the data collector in group situations prevented he/she from choosing the person who appeared more approachable or out-spoken.

At all times, we were instructed to project impartiality. We were coached to ask questions without expression or inflection, which could be construed as leading. The survey was written to be entirely scripted from beginning to end. It included not just questions but the transitions between different sets of questions. Again, all guess-work was removed from the equation for the data collector. The survey itself was conducted using iForm, an ipad app which allowed survey administrators to upload each survey immediately upon completion.

For the purposes of our training, we went through each survey question with a hard-copy included at the end of this paper as Appendix F. The majority of the survey questions were physiographic in nature, including one which asked visitors to examine a set of five laminated sheets, each containing four pictures with corresponding statements (twenty total) and to choose

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27 Appendix F- Audience Study Questionnaire
the one which matched their motivations for visiting the Museum most closely (see Falk’s “Visitor Identities” under Best Practices). The final five questions of the survey contained the survey’s demographic questions. After training was concluded, a document was circulated (Appendix G), which included a sample “script”, other instructions, explanations, things to expect, and answers to frequently asked questions.

On February 2, 2012, more training ensued when ILI consultants: Jessica Luke, Vice President Senior Research Associates; Steve Yalowitz, Vice President Research Associates and Interns; and Sharisse Bulter traveled to SAMA for a site visit. This visit served multiple purposes. First, ILI convened focus groups at the Museum in both English and Spanish. Second, ILI assessed the progress of data collection up to this point, which began in November of 2011. And third, ILI trained a new cadre of volunteers to begin conducting timing and tracking surveys. Fourth and finally, the visit served as an awakening that the collection of outcomes study data would need to be re-tooled. Originally ILI planned to have their staff administer these surveys to patrons directly, recruiting visitors as they left the Museum. However, after witnessing the unpredictable nature of foot-traffic at SAMA, it became clear that resources would not allow for ILI to complete that portion of the project in-house. Sadly, this portion of the study never really coalesced.

The morning began with a status update meeting with Sharisse Bulter; Katie Erickson, SAMA Director of Education; and two docents immersed in the data collection process since November 2011. These two docents (along with a third docent who quickly abandoned work on the project) had committed to three, two-hour shifts a month. With just two volunteers only 77

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28 Appendix G- Audience Survey Protocol
surveys had been collected. Given our ultimate goal was the collection of 600-800 surveys, it seemed an impossible number to attain.

In spite of this reaction, Sharisse clarified why this number was not necessarily bad news. She explained the need for data to be as unbiased as possible. Our schedules should reflect a variety of times not just those during which heavy traffic was expected. In varying our days/times, we would be ensuring that the most accurate representation of the Museum’s visitors was represented—*all* visitors, not just those drawn during hours of free admission and/or other programs that attract crowds. Quality of data was more important than strictly reaching a quota and ultimately would benefit the Museum most in the long-run. From then on I understood that not all shifts would yield the same number of surveys. During this meeting, Sharisse also shared some highlights from the seventy-seven surveys collected up to that point, which included four survey participants having identified Spanish as the primary language spoken in their home; twenty-eight having been first time visitors, and thirty-one having said they had first heard about the Museum through word of mouth.

Later the same day, I received my introduction to the experience study from Steve Yalowitz, an expert on the subject of timing and tracking. As the name implies, timing and tracking involves recording all of the movements of a museum patron over the course of a visit using a stopwatch. It builds on the work of early pioneers such as Robinson (1928) and Melton (1935), who were some of the first to try to identify patterns in museum visitor behavior. Melton is best known for identifying a right-turn bias in visitors. Early data on audience behavior was observed by studying carpet for signs of wear to determine which areas were most heavily trafficked. Today, apps for smart phones and other complex technologies have been designed to
track the movements of visitors inside museums. Investment in these technologies, however, can be astronomically expensive, which is why SAMA opted for paper and pencil methods of data collection instead. Examples of timing and tracking survey sheets can be found as Appendix H.

Including myself, Steve trained six volunteers and three SAMA staffers to conduct timing and tracking surveys. For SAMA’s study, volunteers recorded *everything*, including: whether or not a patron sat when in a particular gallery; whether or not a patron engaged with group members/where; and to what level a patron engaged with gallery content (not just works of art, but text panels). Patrons’ movements were tracked literally to the second.

**Daily Responsibilities**

After my training was completed, I settled into a routine with each day bearing close resemblance to the day before. As my internship duties took place exclusively within the public areas of the Museum, I had very limited interaction with the Museum’s professional staff. I signed in daily with security and coordinated with maintenance staff to set-up the table and chairs needed to administer the exit surveys. Aside from that, I exercised almost complete autonomy during my time at SAMA. As is typically the case in many non-profit organizations, SAMA staff was extremely hands-off with the project not for lack of interest, but rather because of competing priorities and crises that needed managing on a daily basis.

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29 Yalowitz & Bronnenkant, “Timing and Tracking: Unlocking Visitor Behavior”
http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10645570902769134
30 Appendix H: Timing and Tracking Survey Sheets
With regard to the tasks at hand this was not an unreasonable posture to take. The tasks were tedious and easy to accomplish after overcoming the initial uneasiness associated with approaching unsuspecting museum visitors. This, however, proved an early challenge for the project as the majority of those who trained quickly abandoned work on the project. One of the three women I trained with to conduct exit surveys dropped out before conducting a single interview. During training, she expressed discomfort with asking participants the sensitive demographic questions at the end of the survey (including highest level of education completed, race/ethnicity, and household income), ultimately withdrawing because of it. Timing and tracking was further hampered by a lack of volunteers who were willing to approach total strangers to ask if they would agree to be followed throughout the duration of their SAMA visit. Of the five other volunteers I trained with, two never conducted a single timing and tracking survey and two conducted only two each during February. The other contributed thirteen surveys before finally bowing out of the project to pursue a Master’s degree from University of Texas at Austin. Other than targeting their loyal pool of docents and advertising a limited number of available internships on the Museum’s website, I am unaware of any pro-active measures taken to recruit additional man-power specifically for this project.

My daily responsibilities were highly repetitive. My duties were strictly constrained by the methodological requirements of the study. The “pitch” used to recruit would-be participants, for example, was to be delivered as close to the same as possible every time. As I got into the practice of recruiting visitors, I abbreviated mine down to: “Excuse me, the Museum is conducting a survey to collect feedback from visitors. It’s totally voluntary and takes about ten minutes if you have the time?” If they agreed to participate, I gave them the final required disclosures: 1.) that they could leave at any-time if they needed to (the process could be rather
lengthy depending on how indecisive a person was) and 2.) that they did not have to answer any question that made them feel uncomfortable.

**Contributions**

Over the course of my internship I conducted hundreds of exit interviews and completed fifty-one timing and tracking surveys. Upon the request of Katie Erickson, at the end of my commitment, I trained three new volunteers on timing and tracking and audience survey protocols in the absence of ILI staff. After transitioning, I kept in contact with SAMA, accepting every invitation which was extended to me to attend meetings on the project’s progress, including most recently on March 1, 2013. On March 1\textsuperscript{st} Audience Focus submitted to SAMA final reports on the data collected. This concluded phase one of SAMA’s project, allowing the Museum to move forward with phase two, its interpretive planning process, which will be heavily informed by the data I assisted in collecting.
CHAPTER THREE

Best Practices and Comparative Analysis

Museums: Mission-Based, Visitor Focused Centers of Learning

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) grants accreditation to those museums whose efforts merit the distinction. According to its website:

“The American Alliance of Museums (formerly the American Association of Museums) is the one organization that supports all museums. Through advocacy and excellence, the Alliance strengthens the museum community. We support 21,000 museums, individuals and companies by:

- Developing standards and best practices
- Providing resources and career development
- Advocating for museums to thrive”

As a leader in the field, AAM works with museums across the county to build consensus in order to create voluntary guidelines, standards, and best practices that inform operations. Documents such as the AAM’s Characteristics of Excellence for U.S. Museums and Code of Ethics for Museums provide guidance for institutions looking to achieve the highest possible standard. In its Characteristics of Excellence, AAM provides museums with a road map to follow containing 38 steps in the following areas:

1.) Public Trust and Accountability
2.) Mission and Planning
3.) Leadership and Organizational Structure
4.) Collections Stewardship
5.) Education and Interpretation
6.) Financial Stability
7.) Facilities Management

31 American Alliance of Museums- http://www.aam-us.org/about-us
SAMA received AAM accreditation in 2006. In examining the Characteristics of Excellence under 2) Mission and Planning and 5) Education and Interpretation below, it is clear to see that SAMA’s decision to engage in extensive audience research and interpretive planning falls solidly within the parameters of AAM’s best practices.

2.) Mission and Planning

- The museum has a clear understanding of its mission and communicates why it exists and who benefits as a result of its efforts.
- All aspects of the museum’s operations are integrated and focused on meeting its mission.
- The museum’s governing authority and staff think and act strategically to acquire, develop, and allocate resources to advance the mission of the museum.
- The museum engages in ongoing and reflective institutional planning that includes involvement of its audiences and community.
- The museum establishes measures of success and uses them to evaluate and adjust its activities.

5.) Education and Interpretation

- The museum clearly states its overall educational goals, philosophy, and messages, and demonstrates that its activities are in alignment with them.
- The museum understands the characteristics and needs of its existing and potential audiences and uses this understanding to inform its interpretation.
- The museum uses techniques, technologies, and methods appropriate to its educational goals, content, audiences, and resources.
- The museum presents accurate and appropriate content for each of its audiences.
- The museum demonstrates consistent high quality in its interpretive activities.
- The museum assesses the effectiveness of its interpretive activities and uses those results to plan and improve its activities.32

SAMA staff relied heavily on John Falk’s *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience* when crafting their 2010 IMLS grant proposal, *Building Audience in the 21st Century Museum through the Creation of a Visitor-Centered Interpretive Program*. A purveyor of best practice, faculty member at Oregon State University, and a museum education researcher with more than thirty years of experience in the field, Falk’s influence can also be seen directly within the body of the ILI survey administered to visitors upon exiting. Falk himself developed the five picture cards/twenty statements used in our interviews. They have been used in several museum education research projects across the country and correlate to the five museum visitor identities discussed in greater detail below.

Falk identifies five museum visitor identities: 1.) Explorers, 2.) Facilitators, 3.) Experience Seekers, 4.) Professionals/Hobbyists, and 5.) Rechargers. These identities serve as a lense through which museums can view their audiences’ motivations for visiting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor Identity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explorers</td>
<td>“Explorers are individuals who say they are visiting because of curiosity or a general interest in discovering more about the topic or subject matter of the institution… The typical Explorer visitor perceives that learning is fun.” (p. 190)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitators</td>
<td>“In contrast to Explorers, Facilitators are visiting in order to satisfy the needs and desires of someone they care about rather than just themselves…[Facilitators] see museums as fun, educational places where others are the beneficiary.” (p. 192-193)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience Seekers</td>
<td>“[Experience Seekers], often tourists, are typically motivated to visit primarily in order to ‘collect’ an experience, so that they can feel like they’ve ‘been there, done that’…They are generally not strongly motivated by the specific topic of the museum, regardless of whether it is art, history, natural history, science, or animals; they are motivated by the idea of being in a culturally important place.” (p. 196-197)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/Hobbyists</td>
<td>“Typically, individuals with a Professional/Hobbyist motivation represent the smallest category of visitors to most institutions, but they are often disproportionately influential… The typical museum professional is looking critically at how an exhibition is put together, how labels are written, whether certain objects are on display or not, what the front of house services are like, and all of”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With these visitor identities in mind, SAMA has organized its educational and programmatic offerings to cater to the different needs associated with each visitor identity. For instance, Rechargers can find the peace and solace they seek in SAMA’s “Meditation in the Japanese Galleries.” Facilitating Parents can bring their infants and toddlers to SAMA’s “Art Crawls” or “Playdates”, knowing that they are instilling in them an appreciation of the arts and exposing them to world cultures at an early age. Explorers can satisfy their lust for knowledge through a variety of activities such as gallery talks or films. Professionals/Hobbyists can attend SAMA’s “Artist Conversation” lecture series, in which professional artists are interviewed by Curator of Contemporary Art, David Rubin.

While AAM identifies interpretive plans as a best practice, the creation of such plans has not yet become standard within all museums. Though the AAM strongly encourages such a document, it does not currently require that a museum have an interpretive plan as part of the accreditation process. SAMA is to be commended for such early adoption of interpretive planning. As SAMA just recently concluded phase one (i.e. its data collection), it does not yet have a draft of its interpretive plan, which will be the outcome of phase two.

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| **Rechargers** | “These are individuals who visit in order to reflect, rejuvenate, or generally just bask in the wonder of the place… These individuals express an awe or reverence for the subject matter or setting.” (p. 203-204) 

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Interpretive Planning: Kansas City Museum at Corinthian Hall

Mission statements define an institution’s purpose; however, they typically do not provide for the quantitative measurement of success, nor do they deal with the practicalities of day to day operations. Interpretive plans, on the other hand, are all-inclusive and accommodate both. Like mission statements, interpretive plans are not one-size fits all. They are institution specific, capturing the intersection of a museum’s mission, assets, and public. Created in 2010, the Kansas City Museum at Corinthian Hall presents an excellent example of a well-developed and actionable interpretive plan. The Kansas City Museum at Corinthian Hall’s Interpretive Plan highlights its Mission and Vision; Values and Visitors; Assets and Challenges. It outlines Interpretive Strategy and Opportunities (i.e. how/when/where does the Museum communicate its educational content), Interpretive Experience (i.e. how does the Museum deliver a positive, educational experience to the visitor), and an Implementation Plan (i.e. what actions need to be undertaken to achieve the desired outcomes).\(^\text{34}\) Finally, in its Appendix it describes the purpose and methodologies used to arrive at its plan as well as the organizations, entities, and groups represented in stakeholder input. On a micro scale, Kansas City Museum’s transparency allows its community to judge how well it is meeting its objectives. On a macro scale, this kind of transparency pushes the whole museum industry forward, providing fellow museum professionals with a much needed model with regard to interpretive planning.

Audience Research: Dallas Museum of Art

Institutions do not operate in a vacuum. As such it is necessary to keep abreast with trends and the overall professional community within which one operates—museums are no

\(^{34}\) Kansas City Museum at Corinthian Hall. http://kansascitymuseum.org/KCMInterpretivePlan.pdf
exception. Whether as a means of inspiration or comparison, museum professionals look outward to their peers for ideas that will help shape their own exhibitions, programs, campaigns, etc.

From my own experience, the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) is looked upon with high regard throughout the state as a trailblazer. DMA lends itself to a comparative analysis with SAMA as the two share the common bond of Texas culture and similar demographics. Like SAMA, DMA also recently undertook a massive audience research study, the outcomes of which were published in *Ignite the Power of Art* (2010) co-written by former Director, Bonnie Pitman and Ellen Hirzy.

Under the direction of Bonnie Pitman, in accordance with AAM’s Characteristics of Excellence, DMA embarked on an intensive effort to identify its audience. In order to answer this question DMA undertook a data collection process similar (though extremely streamlined) to that which I participated in at SAMA. Participants responded to a short series of ten questions using a seven point scale.

Upon completion of the project, DMA identified four distinct visitor clusters including:
1.) Observers, 2.) Participants, 3.) Independents, and 4.) Enthusiasts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observers</th>
<th>“Observers are somewhat tentative about looking at art and being in art museums. Among the clusters, they are the least comfortable analyzing or talking about their experience of art, though almost half have some educational background in art and art history, and the majority stay informed on exhibitions and related events. Some Observers may be new to looking at art and visiting museums, as they do not recall in detail their experiences with works of art. But most return to the Museum after an initial visit, and their membership participation is similar to that of the more demonstrably engaged Participants and Independents.” (p. 44)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>“People in this cluster enjoy the learning and social aspects of their experiences in art museums and are comfortable looking at most types of art. They have a strong knowledge of and interest in art, and they like to connect with works of art through music, dance, dramatic performances,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Readings</strong></th>
<th>Participants easily provide thoughtful descriptions of what a meaningful experience in an art museum is, value ‘real’ works of art, and actively use interpretive resources and programs.” (p. 55)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independents</strong></td>
<td>Independents like to view art on their own and develop their own explanations and interpretation. Their interactions with works of art are intense. They are confident about their art knowledge, have a strong educational background in art and are comfortable with art terminology. They talk easily with others about art and have passionate responses to art. They feel the Museum needs to create a setting that encourages and allows visitors to slow down and look at works of art.” (p. 64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enthusiasts</strong></td>
<td>Forming the largest segment of onsite visitors, Enthusiasts are confident, knowledgeable, and enjoy looking at all types of art. They connect with works of art emotionally, both directly and through the performing arts. They participate actively in a wide variety of Museum programming and use interpretive resources in the galleries. They have the strongest art background. They like discussing the meaning of a work of art with friends, and they are interested in the artist’s materials and techniques. Enthusiasts frequently visit the Museum and, among the clusters, are the most likely to be members.” (p. 75)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These visitor clusters share obvious similarities with the categories identified by John Falk. Taken together, both research initiatives subscribe to a belief that psychographics are a more accurate predictor of behavior in terms of museum visitation than are demographics. While both studies did take the time to collect demographic data, its relative lack of prominence is a hopeful sign of the possibility that we could be edging more toward a racially blind society (at least within the museum sphere).

In keeping with the ubiquitous trend of increasing accessibility, as of January 21, 2013, DMA ceased charging a fee for its general admission (special exhibitions will still have fees associated with attendance). This free admission policy represented a welcome return to a policy

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35Pitman & Hirzy. *Ignite the Power of Art: Advancing Visitor Engagement in Museums*, 2010
the Museum held up until 2001. However, that announcement paled in comparison to that which came next: that DMA would begin offering free memberships. This new, free category of membership is called the “Friends Program”; fee-based membership still exists under the heading of the “Partner’s Program.” The “Friends Program” aims to combat the perception of the museum as an exclusionary institution—opening up membership to everyone (free of charge). The “Friends Program” also serves to drive engagement. DMA “Friends” are invited to participate more deeply both on-site and on-line through the use of a new smart phone application, a dedicated web portal housed on DMA’s website, and kiosks stationed throughout the Museum. If they choose to opt-in, visitors can earn “badges” as they visit exhibitions, attend programs, and share experiences on-line, which in turn lead to rewards.

Though museums differ from commercial businesses in that they operate under an umbrella of public trust, if a museum is to thrive it must operate in a mode of sustainability, both financially and from a position of relevancy. Non-profits have an opportunity to reflect on the best that for-profits have to offer and to benefit from the knowledge that they have poured countless sums of money into in order to acquire. In today’s marketplace there has been a substantial push by commercial enterprises to connect with consumers using participatory/social platforms as a means of building brand loyalty. DMA’s “Friends Program” is an adaptation of this kind of approach. The thought, however, is off-putting to some. In an article about DMA’s new policies, Jillian Stienhauer, cultural critic and senior editor of the art blogazine Hyperallergic, writes, “part of me recoils at some of the language and descriptions here: ‘badges’, ‘points’, and ‘rewards’ conjure thoughts of Starbucks…Is that what the museum is: something we need to be enticed to buy into.” However, she goes on to say: “On the other hand for better or worse, this may simply be the way that people engage with companies and
institutions alike these days, and the DMA might one day prove visionary for translating that into a museum membership model. And what is nice is that it seems to offer a more holistic, ongoing, active experience than the typical museum-going one.”36

DMA’s new “Friends” endeavor may be more commercial than previous efforts, but it does open an interesting dialogue about whether or not a museum can simultaneously be visitor focused, maintain its image as a house of learning, and also remain attractive and relevant to newer generations (i.e. Generation Y’s, Millennials, etc). This system of rewarding engagement not only fosters a sense of belonging, but also provides a systematic way for the Museum to gage the patterns and behaviors of visitors. This information will in turn allow DMA to track the success of exhibitions and programs leading to a greater understanding of the wants and needs of its visitors in order to provide the best experience possible.

36Steinhauer, Jillian. “What Does Free Museum Membership Look Like?”
http://www.artdaily.org/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=59199#.UUP8s1cZ98E
CHAPTER FOUR

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Strengths

- Optimism Over the New Director

One of SAMA’s greatest strengths is its current Director, Dr. Katherine Luber. A native, Texan, Dr. Luber completed her undergraduate work at Yale University; she also holds a Master’s and PhD in Art History from University of Texas and Bryn Mawr College (respectively); as well as an MBA from Johns Hopkins University. Stepping into the SAMA directorship in July 2011, she has achieved much in a short amount of time. Under her leadership, SAMA published its first ever annual report. Dr. Luber secured SAMA a position on the city of San Antonio’s $596 million bond package. SAMA’s $6 million share affords the Museum the financial resources necessary to replace and relocate climate control equipment badly in need of updating. In its most recent re-accreditation (2010), the AAM put SAMA on notice that any future re-accreditations hinged on making these updates to its system. Maneuvering her way onto the bond package would not have been possible, however, without the help of powerful political allies. Therefore, perhaps her most important accomplishment has been to build strong relationships with District 1 Councilman, Diego Bernal and the Downtown Alliance. As Dr. Luber puts it, “I see my job very much as being an ambassador of the mission of the museum to the community, from public school kids to the most elevated collectors that are out there and everyone in between.”

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• **Collection**

Representing every major cultures’ artistic contribution, spanning over 5,000 years, SAMA is a world-class encyclopedic museum. The very fact that SAMA aspires to be encyclopedic distinguishes it from its closest competitor, the McNay, which reflects the collecting tastes of its founder, Marion McNay, who held a predilection for Modern Art. SAMA’s comprehensive and diverse collection is an asset not only to the academic community but also to the community as a whole as its presence facilitates the exchange of ideas and expands the capacity for multi-cultural tolerance throughout the community.

• **Location**

The area surrounding the Museum is in the midst of a major renaissance. Dormant for nearly thirty years, developers have recently been snatching up real-estate in the 78125 zip code. Mixed use spaces, containing shops, restaurants, and trendy warehouse-style condos are becoming popular in the Museum’s immediate vicinity. One figure suggests that by the time this development boom runs its course, SAMA could have as many as 1,000 new housing units within a six block radius.\(^{38}\) In SAMA’s Annual Report, Katie Luber says of the shift:

> “Our founders had enormous foresight and courage to buy a dilapidated brewery and fallow land on the river. Now the rest of San Antonio is catching up to our founders’ vision. We have gone from being an isolated place on the fringe to being a destination at the heart of the city’s cultural district, on a scenic new bend of the river’s Museum Reach.”\(^{39}\)

SAMA’s location on the river could also prove more advantageous than ever. In May of 2009, San Antonio’s completed a 1.3 mile expansion of its famed Riverwalk, connecting the downtown

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tourist attraction with SAMA and the Pearl Brewery (one of the mixed, commercial/residential developments mentioned above). This “Museum Reach” cost the city $76 million dollars. It is beautifully landscaped, includes walking paths and public art installations, as well as a complex lock built to overcome the nine-foot difference in elevation. The next phase of the project is currently underway— “Mission Reach.” Slated for completion by Labor Day 2013, Mission Reach is expected to cost the city $247.5 million. Extending the Riverwalk by an additional eight miles, Mission Reach will increase the flow of tourists who will pass directly in front of SAMA’s Gloria Galt Landing and Café.

- **Willingness to Address the Needs of the Community**

  SAMA possesses a tremendous desire to improve wherever it can. In conducting its research SAMA sought to find out not just what current visitors thought and wanted, but also what non-visitors thought. Throughout my work at SAMA I witnessed an eagerness to listen and respond. In a focus group, non-visitors responded that they did not see SAMA as a friendly place for small children. Since that focus group, “Playdates” and “Art Crawls” have been added to the Museum’s calendar of events. Hearing in the same focus group that admission fees would deter some from visiting the Museum, SAMA added another admission free opportunity to the public. In addition to its long-time Free Tuesdays (4 p.m. – 9 p.m.) courtesy of the grocery chain H-E-B, SAMA now also offers Free Sundays (10 a.m. – 12 p.m.) courtesy of the Mays Family Foundation. When visitors commented in the exit interviews that they would have liked to have seen more seating in the galleries, the Visitor Services Committee sprang into action,

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41 Chasnoff, Brian “Mission Reach Residents Feel Taken for a Ride” http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/news_columnists/brian_chasnoff/article/Mission-Reach-residents-feel-taken-for-a-ride-on-4322315.php
commissioning a local craftsman to build additional benches. In lieu of a consultant from ILI, I was invited by the same Committee to present an interim report on the results of the timing and tracking surveys. When presented with evidence as to how and why visitors had a difficult time navigating the Museum’s two towers, the Committee was open to my suggestions and immediately began brainstorming potential solutions. Overall, SAMA has embraced the opportunities presented to it through the audience research study to grow and deserves praises for its efforts thus far.

Weaknesses

- Communicating with the San Antonio Public

  Over the course of my interviews, a disappointingly high number of locals confided in me that knowledge of SAMA’s existence had only come to them recently. On one particular afternoon, I struck up a conversation with a grandfather and his tween-age granddaughter on their way out of the Museum. Though they did not have time to complete the eight-ten minute survey, the grandfather commented that his granddaughter was visiting from Dallas, Texas and so he wanted to bring her to the Museum. He said they were very impressed by both the art and architecture of the building. I mentioned what a compliment that was especially considering some of the fantastic institutions that exist in Dallas. Over the course of this brief discussion it surfaced that although he was a local of San Antonio, this visit with his granddaughter was actually his first to SAMA. When I inquired as to why he had not visited before, he answered my question with a question. He replied that he had not had a chance to visit since the Museum had only just opened its doors recently; “What, it was in 2008 or so, wasn’t it?” Despite the argument that even four years is ample time to have scheduled at least one visit to his local museum, the
fact remains that somehow SAMA had failed for some twenty-seven years to make itself known to this gentleman, who possessed some interest in art.

This anecdote demonstrates SAMA’s low profile within its local community. In fact, raising the profile of the Museum within the state and country and most importantly within the city of San Antonio itself was one of the major directives given to Katie Luber by the Board upon her hiring. Focus groups have shown that one of the most common misconceptions held by the public about SAMA (for those who know that it exists) is that it is a museum dedicated to the art of San Antonio, rather than an encyclopedic museum. Part of the challenge as Katie Luber points out is that:

“it partly has to do with the history of the museum, that it’s such a young institution ... so that people who are over 30 years of age never came here as a kid. They didn't have the benefit of a Valero-sponsored sixth-grade trip to the art museum, so they don't know about it. It doesn't exist for them.”42

Further affirmation that SAMA has demonstrated difficulty in communicating with the public is confirmed by the feedback received within the non-visitor focus groups. Misinterpretations of the brand included that rather than being an encyclopedic museum, SAMA was a museum dedicated to Southwest Art and/or art created in/related to San Antonio in some way. As a result of this feedback, SAMA is considering putting out a RFP for design firms to re-image its logo, which can be seen in Appendix I. 43

43 Appendix I- Visitor Services Committee Agenda
Poor Communication of Layout

While monitoring the movements of a father and son for timing and tracking purposes, I was stopped by a male visitor in the Islamic gallery on the fourth floor of the West tower, who asked, “Do these [stairs] take you down to the galleries on the next floor?” pointing to the stairwell. My response was, “Yes, of course.” Prompted either by the confusion on my face or in my voice, or perhaps both, the gentleman replied defensively, “Thanks, I wasn’t sure if it was just an emergency exit.”

This exchange took place in June, five months into my work at SAMA. I find it worthy of telling in that it demonstrates how museum employees can lose the ability to visualize things from the perspective of the first time visitor. In just a few short months, my memory of how difficult I found it to navigate SAMA at first had completely evaporated and I was unable to understand why a visitor would be asking me whether the stairs took him down to the next floor’s galleries. My immediate reaction, which I am sure would be shared by the majority of people on staff, was: “Well of course the stairs bring you down to the next floor. Isn’t that what all stairs were designed to do?”

Prior to joining SAMA, I had visited the Museum a few times for my own enjoyment. Though just a faint memory now, I remember being unsettled by the layout of the galleries on my first visit, most especially having to cut through the gift shop to view the collections displayed in the East Tower (i.e. circumstance which disrupts Melton’s identified right turn bias). Like most other people I also found the concept of there being two, separate (unconnected) second and third floors difficult to grasp at first. Though not for lack of trying, after my second visit I still had not viewed the Museum in its entirety. Sadly, it was not until attending the volunteer training for timing and tracking that I was introduced to all of SAMA’s public spaces.
The Museum’s design poses many challenges for visitors; however, most people enjoy learning that the Museum was once a dilapidated old brewery and are willing to overlook some hardships as an inevitable consequence of re-tooling a space, rather than starting from scratch. While the configuration of the Museum into two separate towers is a reality that cannot be changed, SAMA can and needs to do a better job of communicating its layout to visitors.

• **Size/Make-up of the Board**

  The size of SAMA’s Board of Trustees is cumbersome. Having such a large number of members on the board makes building consensus that much more difficult and thus can limit progress. SAMA’s bylaws do indicate that member’s terms last three years; however, many have served multiple consecutive terms. While an organizations’ survival depends on loyal and generous donors/board members, rotation provides an organization with opportunities for new ideas and fresh exchanges. When board function is satisfactory, members feel less compelled to enforce term limits; however, boards do well to set good precedent in order to guard against “group-think” and complacency. Finally, as a city which boosts a 62% Hispanic population, San Antonio’s flagship museum, could stand to increase the representation of the Hispanics on the board, as well as in key positions of power on SAMA’s staff.
Opportunities

- **Research Study Provides a Goldmine of Insights into Potential Areas of Improvement**

  The first phase of SAMA’s IMLS grant-funded audience research project has come to a close. SAMA must now forge ahead with phase two, the creation of an interpretive plan, which promised to place the visitor at the center of all activities in which the museum engages.

  Recently, Audience Focus handed over its final reports to the Museum. Armed with this information, SAMA is well-informed about the needs of its audiences and posed to act. Data collected over the course of the research and summarized in the Audience Focus final reports presents a huge opportunity to SAMA, providing it with a goldmine of insights into potential areas of improvement.

  Focus groups conducted as part of the non-visitors component of SAMA’s audience research study exposed weaknesses in SAMA’s brand, specifically in viewing the logo non-visitors perceived the Museum’s collections as being dedicated primarily to the art of the southwest. As an encyclopedic museum, this confusion is a problem and does an injustice to the museum’s diverse collections. Had SAMA not engaged in its audience research study, this shortfall would have remained hidden. SAMA has the opportunity to address the issues with its logo. If it can afford the expense, which includes not just paying creative but also reprinting of all its promotional materials, SAMA can seek RFPs from graphic designers to bring clarity to its brand.

  In its IMLS grant narrative, SAMA highlights the demographic landscape of San Antonio, pointing to its current status as a majority-minority (i.e. Hispanic) city as well as projections that many American cities will be similarly situated in coming years. Currently bi-
lingual text panels are only available within the East tower’s second floor Spanish Colonial art galleries. With this fact in mind, focus group participants were asked whether or not they would like to see interpretive materials printed in both English and Spanish. The feedback regarding this question was unexpected, as those who were most enthusiastic about the incorporation of bilingual text in the galleries were not necessarily primary Spanish speakers; instead many were people with an interest in improving foreign language skills. This included “Facilitator” parents who wanted to help support their children’s learning of a foreign language. Others included people who straddled both Spanish-speaking and English-speaking cultures who were looking to improve the weaker of their two languages. This presents interesting implications which warrant further discussion among professionals in the field. This is just one of many such examples to come out of the research conducted by SAMA. From the very beginning, SAMA knew that its research would reveal valuable insights, which would have implications beyond its own walls. It said so directly in its IMLS grant. Moving forward, SAMA should explore not just the opportunities which exist for its own self-improvement, but also the opportunities which could inform other organizations’ improvement, as a way of honoring its IMLS grant statements.

- **Large Number of Colleges and Universities in the San Antonio Area**

   San Antonio is home to a large number of colleges and universities including: Trinity University, University of the Incarnate Word, University of Texas at San Antonio, and the Alamo Community Colleges—all of which offer degree programs in fine arts. If SAMA’s Director of Education could develop an agreement with these universities in which students received some credit in exchange for their volunteer time (i.e. assignment grade/participation grade) both the colleges and the Museum would benefit. Students would receive valuable insight
and experience working in a museum setting. The Museum would gain a team of volunteers eager to fulfill their class obligations—thus lowering the prevalence of volunteer dropout. SAMA’s audience study is a prime example of how such an arrangement would have been useful. Data collection suffered not only because of the departure of ILI but also due to the low number of volunteers recruited for the audience research study. Better planning and preparation would have improved the outcome of data collection at SAMA. Because of the highly prescribed nature of survey administering, task variety was almost non-existent, which results in dwindling motivation overtime, thereby calling for incentives such as a grade to prevent drop out.

- **Burgeoning Arts Scene**

  Despite the city’s population tallying in the millions, San Antonio has only one major art event, Luminaria, which draws the support of the entire city. One potential reason for this is a lack of organization and collaboration among the city’s arts organizations. Unlike New Orleans, whose arts district associations successfully organize events such as White Linen Night, Dirty Linen Night, and Arts for Arts Sake, no such infrastructure in San Antonio exists. In the absence of definitive leadership, small groups of like-minded individuals have banded together to create and promote their own grass-roots art spaces and events, including Contemporary Art Month (CAM), which takes place in March (though it is unlikely the average citizen would know in which of the twelve CAM is celebrated). Usually scheduled in conjunction with CAM is Luminaria. Celebrating its sixth anniversary in 2013, Luminaria is the city’s most widely attended art event showcasing all art forms including: visual, music, theatre, performance, literary, media, and dance.
In summary, if the Museum did not wish to take-on a leadership role (and with it the financial risk) of creating a new art event, it would serve them well to build stronger alliances with those who have. As Falk points out, building favor among fellow organizations can be as simple as offering a conference room for planning meetings, etc.\textsuperscript{44} In doing so, the Museum does not over-extend itself, but is able to express its support of its local arts community, which as of yet, is far from over saturated with arts events.

**Threats**

- **Geographic Distance**

  As mentioned earlier, San Antonio is succumbing to urban sprawl. In the non-visitor focus groups, distance was given as one of the reasons many families would opt not to attend. Suburban living threatens the relationship of the community with its museum, as physical distance breeds psychological distance. As citizens become more separated from downtown, secluding themselves in the comforts of suburbia they also lose a feeling of ownership toward their city’s museum. It becomes a place to attract tourists, rather than a gathering place for locals.

- **Staff Turnover**

  Turnover is listed as a potential threat to SAMA, because of its potential to hamper momentum and decrease efficiency. The main author of SAMA’s IMLS grant was Robb Wasielewski. When I joined SAMA’s research team in January of 2012, the Museum was wishing Robb farewell. While museums don’t really have the power to prevent people from

\textsuperscript{44} Falk, John. *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience*. 2009 Page 203
moving onto other opportunities, they can create institutional documents to have available for new comers to familiarize themselves with, allowing them to gain a greater understanding of the museum’s mission, vision, values, goals, strategic plans, etc. SAMA’s strategic and interpretive planning efforts are among some of the only steps within the Museum’s power to mitigate the potentially unwelcome effects associated with staff turnover.

- **Competition and a Lack of Cooperative Spirit**

  As was outlined in SAMA’s organizational overview, the Witte is San Antonio’s oldest museum. For many older San Antonians, the Witte remains to this day the city’s only museum. Because the McNay opened in the 1960’s and SAMA in the 1980’s, many older residents never had the privilege of visiting either museum in their formative years. If the Witte is the older, more established museum, than the McNay is thought to be the wealthier, better funded museum. Both of these museums possess competitive advantages over SAMA.

  Healthy competition can be a good thing. It can serve to push organizations to elevate the quality of their work. Unfortunately, in my opinion there exists a degree of combativeness in San Antonio which I find unhealthy. Elevated egos have led to the opening of new museums, which duplicate the services and parallel missions of pre-existing museums. It seems that rather than lend their expertise through volunteerism or service on a board, the preference of some is to strike out on their own, building organizations from scratch rather than attempting to initiate positive change from within. In an era where public and private funding is so scarce, this type of me-first mentality is harmful to the health of the entire cultural community. As seems to be the case in almost every case in Texas, newer is always seen as better, thus forcing older organizations to compete with new organizations for not only financial resources but audiences
as well. Organizations seem to operate less on an integrative approach and more on a distributive approach in determining the division of the pie that is the San Antonio cultural consumer.
CHAPTER FIVE

Recommendations

- **Sustain Commitment to Improvement through On-going Research and Evaluation**

  SAMA’s engagement in intensive audience research is a commendable action. Indeed, any museum which has difficulty connecting with its audience would be well-served to follow SAMA’s positive example. The IMLS chart on pages ten and eleven sets up an interesting dialogue and a matrix by which to judge whether or not a museum is taking the appropriate steps to move forward into the next century. SAMA has shown tremendous dedication to positive change and self-improvement by initiating the research which I participated in over the course of my internship; however, it is merely a stepping stone. Next steps include the creation of a visitor-centered interpretive plan; however, this plan should not be carved in stone. In keeping with the AAM’s Characteristics of Excellence, it too will need to be evaluated for effectiveness (i.e. “The museum assesses the effectiveness of its interpretive activities and uses those results to plan and improve activities”). SAMA will need to follow-up on its research to see if the changes it has instituted have garnered intended results. Moving forward, SAMA should continue to work to keep the channels of communication with visitors open using research and evaluation tools, in doing so SAMA will continue to build on one of its greatest strengths: a willingness to listen and respond to the needs and wants of its community.
• “Work Smarter, Not Harder” with Respect to Community Partnerships and Marketing

At present, SAMA’s Marketing Director is doing a tremendous job of reaching out to form a wide range of community partnerships (i.e. Jazz radio station, runners, etc.). However, with such limited resources partnerships need to be fine-tuned, strategic, and carefully managed in order to mitigate the risk of exhausting staff and SAMA’s future capacity to build meaningful alliances with new organizations. As programs are implemented, SAMA must systematically track the return on investment yielded by these partnerships in order to ensure that efforts are maximized. Creating new partnerships can be invigorating for an organization, but maintaining them can be extremely taxing.

One partnership which SAMA has allowed to languish is that with the Southwest School of Art (SSA). I recommend SAMA revisit this relationship. In the past, SAMA has partnered with SSA to accomplish that which would be financially infeasible to achieve on its own. Blockbuster shows are notorious crowd-pleasers, but they are extraordinarily expensive. In 2003, SAMA teamed up with SSA to bring Fire and Ice: Dale Chihuly to San Antonio.\(^{45}\) In 2007, SAMA and SSA teamed up again to bring Botero: Beloved Artist of the Americas to the city.\(^{46}\) Both exhibitions were extraordinarily well-received (breaking public attendance records according to SSA staff). This kind of strategic partnership is smart, not only because it allows organizations to share costs, but also because it provides exposure to one another’s membership and mailing lists. As previously mentioned, SAMA has had some difficulty in making its presence known throughout the community. Such partnering with older, more established organization on relevant, mission-based projects only stands to broaden its visibility.

\(^{45}\)www.chihuly.com/exhibition-history.aspx
In addition to community partnerships maximizing the efforts of SAMA’s Marketing Department, they could also be mobilized to build the volunteer ranks needed for SAMA to continue research and evaluation. In an effort to rectify the previously mentioned problem of inadequate volunteer resources, it is my recommendation that the Director of Education forge long-term partnerships with area colleges and universities. In situations where tasks are as highly repetitive as survey administration was, it is important to not allow motivation to wane. Path-Goal Theory principles of management would encourage those in leadership positions to provide high amounts of support as a means of helping workers to stay motivated. As mentioned earlier, however, limited time and an ever-evolving list of competing priorities made it difficult for SAMA staff to generously provide this kind of support. For that reason, it is all the more important that volunteers’ participation be incentivized in another way. An arrangement between a local faculty member and SAMA’s Education Department, whereby enrolled students could receive some type of assignment/participation grade in exchange for their service, would benefit all parties involved. Faculty has the opportunity to broaden students’ horizons beyond the classroom, introducing them to “real world” experiences inside an arts organization. Students receive valuable insight from working in a museum setting. The Museum acquires a cadre of dedicated volunteers eager to complete the obligations of his/her academic program. Nearby Trinity University is a viable target, already having contributed one of the more prolific volunteers to the project. Another potential option for SAMA to explore is University of Texas at San Antonio, where a course titled, Art Gallery and Museum Practices is offered on a rotating schedule.

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• Improve Way-finding Tools

The disintegration of ILI caused SAMA to remain uninformed about the progress of timing and tracking longer than any other component of audience research. Motivated by a desire for feedback and the absence of an up-to-speed consultant, I was invited to present an interim report of the findings of timing and tracking. On August 8, 2012, I made the following recommendations to SAMA’s Visitor Service Committee: 1.) Redesign hand-held map and 2.) Revamp signage throughout the Museum. SAMA’s current visitor guide is cluttered and does a poor job of communicating the asymmetry of the towers. I suggested the Museum consider switching to an elevation-style map which I think would illustrate this fact more clearly. One of the major short comings of the wall-mounted maps located throughout SAMA is that they do not illustrate where a person is with the respect to the Museum as a whole. There are no “You Are Here” indications plotted anywhere, meaning if a visitor doesn’t already know where he/she is, the map cannot help. Because people are often unwilling to take a map with them, the Museum should consider taking advantage of the huge, open space available in the lobby. Occasionally banners promoting exhibitions hang from the high ceilings. I think visitors would be better served by permanently installing graphic banners which highlight the contents of the East and West towers. Another highly underutilized space for providing way-finding information is the Museum’s many stairwells. I understand the argument that maps and way-finding tools can compete with and detract from the artwork inside galleries, but this argument does not apply within the stairwells. One of the anecdotes I shared with the Visitor Services Committee, during my presentation was of a woman who actually entered the stairwell in the Islamic Galleries on the fourth floor, only to turn around instead making her way to the elevator, making the comment that she wished the staircase would have been better marked.
• **Balance Need for Accessibility with Long-term Financial Health of the Museum**

Accessibility is among the chief concerns facing museum administrators. Its importance has motivated many museums to expand hours of public operation. It is important, however, to balance the need for accessibility with long-term financial health of institutions. If a museum is not on solid financial footing, the mission is at risk. Currently SAMA is open every Friday and Saturday evening until 9 p.m.; however, extended hours also mean increased costs. First, the Museum must pay to staff all galleries with guards during public hours of operation. Second, staying open every Friday and Saturday evening severely limits the Museum’s ability to earn income. Rentals such as weddings and corporate parties are cash-cows for museums. However, the most popular days for such events are Fridays and Saturdays, which has essentially decimated SAMA’s ability to pull in rental income. Therefore, I suggest SAMA take a closer look at the model set by DMA, which instead stays open until 12 a.m. just one weekend evening out of every month. With the exception of the second Friday of the month, on which “pARTy” is held, I do not believe attendance justifies SAMA’s expense. One of the reasons I advocate for the implementation of one evening a month as opposed to eight, is that the perception of scarcity often drives more interest. Sadly, the more available something is the more it tends to be taken for granted. In sum, accessibility is important, but it cannot come at the sacrifice of a museum’s financial well-being.

• **Be Prepared for the Unexpected**

The establishment of internal museums documents such as strategic and interpretive plans tether institutions to their mission. Given its history with staff turnover, SAMA would be wise to continue to invest in such documents. Like other non-profits with limited budgets,
museums struggle to retain the “best and brightest” employees. Salaries are generally low and pay increases are given infrequently. Though SAMA cannot control whether or not employees choose to pursue more lucrative opportunities, it can be prepared to outfit new hires with documents to help orient them to the goals, priorities, and culture of the institution. Strategic and interpretive plans can help to insulate museums from the negative effects of turnover, which is a reality; however, it should not be allowed to interfere with the service of the museum’s missions.
Conclusions

In Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience, John Falk points out that inventions and advances in technology have made modern life more convenient than ever before. As meeting basic daily needs becomes easier, so too does leisure time become more ubiquitous. Historically museums have been highly favored among those looking to expend their leisure time. Today however, there are an increasing number and variety of competitors all vying for the time and attention of museum audiences. To remain competitive in such a market, Falk cautions that museums must get better at understanding and meeting the needs of their audiences.

Inspired by Falk, SAMA approached IMLS to fund the research study, a study which it claimed had the potential to inform and impact museum practice in other major cities for decades to come. In Falk’s view, SAMA’s research does have a decisive role to play in shaping the future of museums in society, as he writes:

“If we knew who visited museums and what meanings they took away from the experience, we would know something about the role that museums play in society. Likewise, we could also learn something about the societal role of museums from knowing more about why other people choose not to visit museums. If we knew something about who visited museums and what meanings they made we would also understand something about the role museums play in individual people’s lives. Buried within the construct we call the museum visitor experience lie answers to fundamental questions about the worth of museums—how museums make a difference within society, how they support the public’s understanding of the world as well as themselves.”

SAMA’s audience research timeline proved overly ambitious given its resources, a fact which was only exacerbated by the premature departure of ILI. Though it did not collect

sufficient data to gain any real understanding of the meaning that visitors take away from their visits, its other research findings have significant value and warrant sharing among practitioners in the field. SAMA need not go as far as DMA did in publishing its own book, though it should approach professional organizations as such AAM and/or the National Association of Art Educators for invitations to present key findings and tips for other museums interested in undertaking research aimed at better understanding their audiences.

As a relatively young institution, SAMA will face many more challenges in the years ahead as it struggles to establish itself. In its first thirty years it has not had a stable leader to build an institutional identity. Change has been ever-present at SAMA, not just with regard to leadership, but with ever-expanding collections and the spaces transformed to accommodate them. Any one of the three circumstances would be enough to explain an institutions’ lack of a strong sense of self; however, compounded, it is clear to see why SAMA has had difficulty asserting who it is within the community. Though SAMA’s audience research study is not alone capable of answering for the Museum the tough question: “Who are we/What should we be?” It certainly sheds light on the question: “Who does the public think we are/What do they want us to be?” This is a healthy place for SAMA to start, especially when the end-goal is a visitor-centered museum. There have been significant shifts in the expectations placed on museums from 20th to the 21st century. Now it is up to museums to heed the advice of IMLS or risk losing relevancy in today’s society. Communication between museum and visitor no longer moves in only one direction. The increasing incorporation of trends such as visual thinking strategies has provided a marked departure from the image of museums as “ivory towers” of knowledge. Audience responses and feedback are no longer something merely to be tolerated, but rather to be encouraged. This can be a difficult transition for many institutions that clutch to their old
traditions. For all the challenges its youth presents, in this way SAMA benefits from its lack of age. It doesn’t have 100 years of history, deeply held traditions, or “old guard” on which to cling. SAMA is set firmly on the path of progress. Non-profits should take the best, most successful aspects of for-profit and adapt them to their mission-based (rather than profit-driven) work. Reflecting on this principal and the wisdom of Falk, the lesson for museums to adapt in the decades ahead may be: “The customer is always right!”
References


Kansas City Museum at Corinthian Hall. “Interpretive Master Plan September 2010.”


Rodriguez, Andi. “Botero Exhibit is a Collaboration of Grand Proportions.”


Steinhauer, Jillian, “What Does Free Museum Membership Look Like?”


Appendix

Appendix A: SAMA Visitor Guide
Appendix B: SAMA Calendar of Events
Appendix C: IMLS Grant Narrative
Appendix D: Key Questions Addressed by Study
Appendix E: ILI Letter to SAMA
Appendix F: Audience Study Questionnaire
Appendix G: Survey Protocol
Appendix H: Timing and Tracking Survey Sheets
Appendix I: Visitor Services Committee Agenda
Appendix J: Timing and Tracking Interim Report Handout
Appendix A

HOURS
Tuesday ........................................ 10 am to 9 pm
Wednesday – Saturday ...................... 10 am to 5 pm
Sunday ............................................. Noon to 6 pm
Closed Mondays, Easter Sunday, Battle of Flowers Parade Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year’s Day.

ADMISSION
SAMA Members .................................. Free
Adults .............................................. $8
Seniors (65+) ..................................... $7
Military and students with ID ................ $5
Children 4 to 11 ................................. $3
Children under 4 ............................... Free
On Tuesdays from 4 to 9 pm, admission is free for all visitors.
Surcharges may apply for special exhibitions and events.

PARKING AND ACCESSIBILITY
Parking is located in front of the Museum and is free with SAMA admission. The Museum is fully accessible to the mobility impaired.

For more information, visit www.samuseum.org or call (210) 978-8100.

San Antonio Museum of Art

VISITOR GUIDE

200 West Jones Avenue
San Antonio, Texas 78215
(210) 978-8100
www.samuseum.org
Our History

In 1884, officials from the Lone Star Brewing Company chose this site as the ideal location for their new brewery because of its proximity to the San Antonio River, and by the early 1900s, the facility was one of the largest of its kind in the state. The business operations could not survive the Prohibition era, however, and by the 1970s the building and grounds had fallen into disrepair.

Fortunately, a group of innovative museum officials and community leaders saw potential in the building's distinctive architecture and dramatic internal spaces, and they set about to transform the site into a striking example of adaptive reuse of historic buildings. Their vision became a reality on March 1, 1981, when the old brewhouse reopened as the San Antonio Museum of Art.

Since then, additional spaces have been renovated, including the Ewing Halsell Wing for Ancient Art and the William L. Cowden Gallery for special exhibitions. In 1998, SAMA opened the Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Latin American Art, and in 2005 added the Lenora and Walter F. Brown Asian Art Wing.

Today, our location on the San Antonio River still plays an important role in shaping the site. In 2009, SAMA became the heart of the “Museum Reach” expansion of the celebrated River Walk.
The Collection

The San Antonio Museum of Art maintains a collection of more than 25,000 objects representing cultures from around the world and more than 5,000 years of history. SAMA offers important permanent collections of Egyptian, Greek and Roman antiquities, Asian art, Latin American art, American paintings and contemporary art.

The Ewing Halsell Wing for Ancient Art is devoted to the Museum’s collection of Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Etruscan antiquities. The Museum is also home to an important collection of glass vessels from the ancient Mediterranean.

The Leonora and Walter F. Brown Asian Art Wing houses one of the finest and most comprehensive collections of Asian art on view in the United States, including major works of art from south, southeast, and east Asia. The collection is particularly known for outstanding examples of Buddhist art, Chinese ceramics, and Japanese lacquer.

The Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Latin American Art is home to the nation’s first center for the study and appreciation of Latin American art, and includes works of pre-Columbian, Spanish colonial, folk and modern Latin American art. SAMA’s contemporary collection includes an emphasis on pioneering abstract artists of the 20th century, figuative and narrative works, as well as sculpture based on everyday objects and digital art of the 21st century.

Additionally, the Museum offers excellent representations of Oceanic art, Islamic art, Irish silver, Wedgwood ceramics, European paintings, photography, and more.

General Information

Guided tours of SAMA’s collections and special exhibitions are regularly offered to the public, and are free with Museum admission. Docent-led tours are also available for students in grades K-12, university and college classes, and adult groups of 10 or more. Visit www.samuseum.org or call (210) 978-8838 to schedule a tour.

In addition to tours, SAMA offers a variety of educational programs including films, lectures, workshops, family activities and performances. For a full listing of SAMA programs, visit www.samuseum.org, and to receive updates about SAMA’s programs and events, subscribe to our e-newsletter from the homepage on our website or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

While enjoying your visit, please remember

★ Still photography and video are permitted in the permanent collections only. Flash photography, tripods and other photographic equipment are not allowed without prior written consent from the Museum.

★ Smoking is not permitted in the Museum, and food and beverages are not permitted in any of the galleries.

★ Please do not touch the artwork or the display cases.

Al Held
American, (1928 – 2005)
Eagle Rock III, 2000 (detail)
acrylic on canvas
chromogenic print, 89 1/8 x 71 in.
Al Held Foundation, Courtesy of Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York
© Al Held Foundation/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY
FOR FAMILIES

First Sundays for Families
First Sunday of the month
1:00–3:00 p.m.
Great Hall
Free for children 12 and under.

101 Ways to Recycle Newspapers, Magazines & Books
Sunday, January 6
Make jewelry, accessories and unique items for your home, and learn how to make paper from scratch. Go on a scavenger hunt through the Contemporary galleries to gather inspiration from the artists who use recycled materials in their work. Generously underwritten by the Frances Margaret Seaver Fund of the San Antonio Area Foundation.

Celebrate the Chinese New Year—Year of the Snake
Sunday, February 3
Celebrate the Chinese New Year with a special lion dance performance, bamboo brush painting, dragon puppets, calligraphy and more. Generously underwritten by the Bank of America Charitable Foundation.

Art Crawl
Gallery Tours for Caregivers and Babies 0–18 months
Second Thursdays
10:00–10:45 a.m.
Free with Museum admission.
Moms, dads and caregivers of all sorts, put your babies in their sling and take a walk with us through the galleries. Talks are geared toward adults while art selections are chosen to engage the senses of both you and your infant. Coating babies welcome! Each tour begins at the Front Desk and ends with playtime and refreshments.

Front-carrying baby carriers encouraged and strollers are welcome.
Check Museum website for dates and themes.

SAMA Playdates
Wednesdays
10:00–11:00 a.m.
Meet at the Front Desk.
Free with Museum admission.
SAMA Playdates cultivate and inspire creativity while developing an appreciation of art and world cultures. Toddlers experience stories, gallery activities, hands-on art and music. Ages 2–4.

Interactive Family Tour: Aphrodite and the Gods of Love
Sunday, January 6
Sunday, February 3
2:00–3:00 p.m.
Great Hall
Free for children 12 and under.
Families are invited to take a journey through Aphrodite and the Gods of Love with a Museum docent and end with an Aphrodite-inspired activity. Every first Sunday throughout the exhibition. Attendance is limited, so arrive early.

Family Flicks:
The Story of the Weeping Camel (Mongolia, 2003) 87 minutes
Saturday, February 9
6:30–8:30 p.m.
West Courtyard
Free with Museum admission.
Special performances and art activities will begin one hour prior to screening time; films begin promptly at sundown. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets and picnics. Beer and wine selections available at SAMA’s Café des Artistes. During inclement weather, check the Museum’s website for weather updates and program details.

Family Flicks is a new outdoor film series in collaboration with Slab Cinema held every second Saturday.

EDUCATOR WORKSHOPS

Saturday Workshop:
The Chemistry of Color
Saturday, January 26
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Hops House, $10, advanced registration required.
6 CPE/GT credits.
To register, call (210) 978-8129.
Step back in time! Learn the history of paints and pigments found in the Museum’s collections while mixing your own using techniques from the past. Science and art converge in interdisciplinary lessons for the classroom.

GALLERY TALKS

The Languages of Love
Sunday, February 10
2:00–3:00 p.m.
Meet at the Front Desk.
Free with Museum admission.
Love-themed gallery talk featuring the permanent collection and Aphrodite and the Gods of Love.

CURATOR’S CHOICE

Insightful 25-minute talks by SAMA’s curators. Tuesday talks are free. Friday talks are free with Museum admission. Meet at the Front Desk.

Appropriation in Art of the 1980s
Friday, January 4
6:30–7:00 p.m.
Curator David S. Rubin discusses Contemporary paintings by Gregory Botts, Paul Maries and Jim Morphea.

Painted Books of Ancient Mexico
Tuesday, February 5
6:00–6:30 p.m.
Latin American art curator Marion Gettinger discusses painted books in the pre-Columbian gallery.

Picnic Dinner & A Movie
EVERY TUESDAY
Gallery Talks:
Aphrodite and the Gods of Love & Museum Highlights
4:30-5:30 p.m.
Meet at the Front Desk. Free.
No tour January 1.
Gallery talks by SAMA docents based on the works of art in the Museum’s collections and special exhibitions. Gallery talks will switch to Museum Highlights only on February 19.

Sketching in SAMA’s Galleries
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Meet in the Great Hall. Free.
No class January 1.
Enjoy an evening of casual instruction based on the works of art in SAMA’s collections. Sketching in SAMA’s Galleries is made possible by generous support from the M.E. Hert Foundation.

EVERY SATURDAY
Meditation in the Japanese Gallery
10:15-11:00 a.m.
Free with Museum admission.
Practice 20 to 30 minutes of serene meditation in the Japanese art gallery. Cushions and stools are provided.

EVERY SUNDAY
Aphrodite and the Gods of Love & Museum Highlights
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Meet at the Front Desk. Free with Museum admission.
Gallery talks by SAMA docents are based on the works of art in the Museum’s collections and special exhibitions. Gallery talks will switch to Museum Highlights only February 24.

SPECIAL EVENTS
San Antonio Public Library Foundation: Great Books at SAMA
Saturday, January 12
Saturday, February 9
Saturday, March 9
Saturday, April 13
5:00-6:30 p.m.
Meet in the Great Hall. $20 for members, $25 for non-members. The series of four, $50 for members, $80 for non-members. To register, call (210) 978-8121.
The seminars, provided by the San Antonio Public Library Foundation, are modeled after the great books educational program at St. John’s College. Each seminar is held in one of SAMA’s galleries and focuses on literature from that time period and culture. Hors d’oeuvres at 5 p.m. Seminar at 5:30 p.m.

ArtBites Presents:
Art of Aphrodisiacs Cooking Class
Thursday, January 24
4:30-8:00 p.m.
Saturday, January 26 & Sunday, January 27
3:00-6:30 p.m.
Cowden Gallery and Café des Artistes.
$60 for members, $75 for non-members includes Museum tour, all ingredients, recipes and dinner with wine.
To register, call (210) 978-8121.
Explore the myths and stories related to love, sex and beauty in Aphrodisiacs and the Gods of Love through the cooking class Art of Aphrodisiacs. Enjoy a gallery talk, participate in a hands-on cooking class using proven aphrodisiacs and old-world ingredients, and dine on SAMA’s Café des Artistes’ terrace. Three class dates available.

16th Annual Mays Symposium:
From the Opulent to the Mundane: Design and Decorative Arts
Saturday, February 2
9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Auditorium, $40 for members, $60 for non-members, $20 for students. Lunch included; space limited.
To register, call (210) 978-8133.
Join our distinguished speakers as they explore the tradition of ornament—Renaissance interiors recalling ancient Greek and Baroque architecture; anti-Classical inspirations of curving Rococo and Chinoiserie; and twenty-first century design interests.
This is the sixteenth in a series of decorative arts symposia underwritten by the Mays Family Foundation.

Be My Valentine
5K Run/Walk
Sunday, February 10
9:30 a.m.
$35 early registration, $40 on race day. Register online at www.bemyvalentineun.com.
The Be My Valentine 5K Run/Walk begins and ends at SAMA, and the course follows the Museum Reach part of the River Walk. Free Museum admission for runners, an Aphrodite costume contest and music.

Last Night of Love
Saturday, February 16
7:00 p.m.-midnight
 Entire Museum.
$10 members, $20 non-members.
A farewell party for Aphrodisiacs and the Gods of Love on the last night of the exhibition as well as a prix fixe Café menu and big discounts in the Exhibition SAMA Shop.

Art Party at SAMA
Second Fridays
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Cocktails and music inspired by:
 January 11 Fantin-Latour Opera Prints
February 8 Entombed Treasures
River Landing.
Free with Museum admission. Cash bar.
Bring your friends and enjoy art, music, and cocktails on the River Landing. Art Party is a collaboration of SAMA and KRUI Jazz 91.7.

Run with SAMA
Second Tuesdays
6:00 p.m.
New time due to Daylight Savings. Meet in the Great Hall. Free.
Runners of all levels are welcome. Enjoy a 5-10 minute gallery talk on fitness in SAMA’s collection; run and walk with runners and professional coaches from Run Wild Sports; and stretch with instructors from The Synergy Studio. Runners enjoy free admission and 10% off in the SAMA Shop and at Café des Artistes.

Café Art Talk: Terry Ybañez
January 25
6:30-7:00 p.m.
Café des Artistes
Local artist Terry Ybañez talks about her work, on view in the café through February 10.

For an up-to-date calendar, visit www.samuseum.org
CONCERTS

- Brahms Festival:
  - Music at the Museum XII
  - Monday, January 28
  - 5:30–9:00 p.m.
  - Great Hall.
  - $50. Pre-registration required.
  - To register, call (210) 978-8121.
  - Through the collaborative efforts of the San Antonio Symphony League and the San Antonio Museum of Art Docents, Music at the Museum, a concert, reception, and silent auction fundraiser provides support for art and music education programs for students in Bexar County.
  - Brahms Festival: Shirley Yoo, Stephen Buck, & the Trinity Choir:
    - Fingers and Cords
    - Monday, February 4
    - 6:00 p.m.
    - Great Hall.
    - $20 for members, $25 for non-members.
    - To register, call (210) 978-8121.
    - Fingers and Cords will showcase the incredible fingering expression of two world-renowned artists, Shirley Yoo and Stephen Buck and highlight Trinity University’s student choir.

- Brahms Festival: Romancing Brahms... A Golden Finale
  - Monday, February 11
  - 5:30 p.m.
  - Great Hall.
  - $20 for members, $25 for non-members.
  - To register, call (210) 978-8121.
  - This concert is a fitting finale to the symphony’s Brahms Festival. The concert is presented by leading musicians of the San Antonio Symphony in collaboration with music faculty of the University of Texas at San Antonio.
  - The Brahms Festival is created and curated by Sebastian Lang-Lessing and the San Antonio Symphony.

MEMBERS-ONLY EVENTS

- Docent-led Tour and Reception: Contemporary Collection
  - Saturday, January 5
  - 5:00–6:30 p.m.
  - Meet at Café des Artistes.
  - Free for members.

- Docent-led Tour and Reception: Aphrodite and the Gods of Love
  - Saturday, February 9
  - 5:00–6:30 p.m.
  - Meet at Café des Artistes followed by a private, docent-led tour of the exhibition.

- Preview Reception: Artists of SAMOCA from the SAMOCA Collection
  - February 9
  - 5:30–7:30 p.m.
  - SAMOCA Contemporary Members only.

FILMS

- Brahms Festival Film: Song of Love
  - USA, 1947
  - 118 minutes
  - Tuesday, January 15
  - 6:30–8:00 p.m.
  - Auditorium. Free.
  - Composer Robert Schumann struggles to compose his symphonies while his loving wife Clara offers her support. Also helping the Schumanns is their lifelong friend, composer Johannes Brahms.

- Global Lens 2013: Beijing Flickers (You-Zhong)
  - China, 2012
  - 96 minutes
  - Sunday, February 17
  - 3:00 p.m.
  - Friday, February 22
  - 7:00 p.m.
  - Auditorium. Free with Museum admission.
  - Zhang Yuan’s gorgeously gritty, angst-ridden portrait of youthful disaffection and perseverance in the teeth of heartbreak, ruthless inequality and unfeeling ambition. This film is in Mandarin with English subtitles. Steven Keilman, UTSA Professor of Comparative Literature, writer and film critic, will give an introduction and post-film discussion at the Sunday showing.

LECTURES

- Origin of Mingei Ceramics
  - Friday, January 4
  - 7:00–8:00 p.m.
  - Auditorium. Free with Museum admission.
  - Join SAMA docent and art collector Dr. Robert Persellin and SAMA’s Coates-Cowden-Brown Curator of Asian Art John Johnston for a talk about Japanese Mingei ceramics. The Mingei movement began in the 1920s and celebrated the “art of the people.” Mingei ceramists produced handmade wares that had a profound influence on ceramics worldwide. Dr. Persellin will recount his visits to famous ceramics studios, and Mr. Johnston will discuss the art historical significance of Mingei ceramics.

- San Antonio Missions as World Heritage Site
  - Sunday, January 13
  - 3:00–4:00 p.m.
  - Auditorium. Free with Museum admission.
  - Come hear the National Park Service, which maintains the five San Antonio Missions, discuss leading the World Heritage application process.

- Aphrodite in Pompeii
  - Tuesday, January 29
  - 6:30–8:00 p.m.
  - Auditorium. Free.
  - Reception to follow.
  - Jessica Powers, The Gilbert M. Denman, Jr. Curator of Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World, discusses evidence for both public and private devotion to this goddess, including artifacts from Pompeii on loan to Aphrodite and the Gods of Love from the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Italy.

- ICAA Lecture Series:
  - Palm Beach Landscapes
  - Tuesday, February 5
  - 7:00–8:00 p.m.
  - Auditorium. $10. Free for Institute of Classical Art & Architecture members.
  - Specializing in master planning, garden design and landscape preservation, Jorge Sanchez and Phil Maddux uphold their philosophy of a “botanical garden” approach within historic and classical garden-design frameworks.
Appendix C

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Project Title: Building Audience in a 21st Century Museum through the Creation of a Visitor-Centered Interpretive Plan

Project Narrative:

Statement of Need

The San Antonio Museum of Art is located in the nation’s seventh largest city. San Antonio, Texas faces challenges similar to other communities, not the least of which is of course a decline in funding from both the public and private sectors combined with an escalating competition for the citizenry’s increasingly limited leisure time. SAMA is not unique in recognizing the need to adapt and refine the way it relates to patrons – and, perhaps equally importantly – non-visitors.

However, there are aspects of San Antonio that are unique; and these distinctions have implications well beyond our own city. For example, San Antonio is a “majority-minority” city with a predominant and growing culturally-rich Latino population which demographers predict will be the case in multiple cities in American, perhaps as early as 2020.

Additionally, San Antonio has taken advantage of its large land area to develop neighborhoods and communities far from the city center. While not all cities have the luxury of being able to spread “out” instead of “up,” many metropolitan areas’ transportation, educational, growth policies have often led to the unfortunate byproduct of “urban sprawl” that contributes to a growing population of citizens increasingly removed from the traditional “cultural heart” that is typically located in the center of cities’ urban core. The resulting, relatively new suburban competition for resources leads to a further diminishment of resources for many long-standing cultural institutions.

In fact, in 2007, the Museum began an extensive strategic planning process involving broad participation by community leaders, board members and staff. Multiple work sessions were conducted to thoroughly assess, discuss and explore SAMA’s strengths and opportunities as well as the institution’s weaknesses and challenges. The culmination was the 2008 strategic planning document that made audience development the primary focus over the next five years.

As a result of the 2007-2008 strategic plan, the San Antonio Museum of Art embraced the belief that the core mission of 21st century museums is to create continual learning opportunities for the communities they serve. That is, while SAMA and similar institutions were previously evaluated on the strength of their collections and exhibitions, 21st century museums measure their success on their ability to meaningfully engage visitors with art through thoughtful, engaging, and participatory interpretive experiences. In other words – impacting lives through art, more than simply acquiring art – is the aspiration.

Central to a visitor-centered model of operating is a focus on audience development. Traditional ways of growing audiences are in many ways inadequate. For example, in response to audience related concerns, museums over the last twenty-five years have significantly increased marketing budgets and invested sizeable resources to try to promote their collections and exhibitions; this despite the fact that research shows that specific museum content attracted less than 20% of visits (Falk, 24).

In reality, the answer to attracting audiences in the upcoming decades will not be through increased marketing; it will be through engaging visitors and providing them with meaningful experiences which is best
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accomplished through comprehensive, institution-wide interpretive planning that places the visitor at the center of operations. Interpretive plans that once were used primarily to provide guidance on content and exhibition design, now – if produced properly – have the potential to be the preeminent guiding document in an organization. Likewise, an interpretive plan that does not have a focus on audience development and engagement at its core is inadequate and outdated - particularly given the realities of urban life today.

Cognizant of the fact that San Antonio, Texas in many respects is confronting challenges that other communities will soon be addressing, SAMA is poised to take action to develop a 21st century interpretive plan that takes into account the burgeoning realities of profound shifts in demographics and urban development. SAMA is poised to create an interpretive plan that will not only build institutional capacity but will also serve as a model for other cultural institutions that are engaged in or soon will confront similar circumstances. In other words, SAMA believes that the answer to audience development in the 21st century lies in creating affinity based on the unique experiences the Museum provides, and the approach used to create this affinity will provide a model for other institutions that are confronting or soon will face similar societal challenges.

Project Design

In their most recent 5-year strategic plan, SAMA identified a primary institutional focus on audience development, which includes: 1) Increasing the number of visitors served by SAMA annually; and 2) Diversifying the SAMA audience by reaching out to visitors who do not come to the Museum. Traditionally, museum would have achieved the objectives above by pouring money into their marketing and public relations budgets. In reality, with a 21st century museum, the old models no longer suffice. As mentioned above, SAMA intends to build audience by developing long-term, institutional capacity for the creation of engaging and meaningful interpretive experiences for all SAMA visitors – and in doing so create an institutional model for other museums confronting similar challenges.

Our partner in this proposal is The Institute for Learning Innovation (ILI), a nonprofit research and development organization based in Edgewater, MD. In order to develop the project design, ILI researchers spent 2 days at SAMA, meeting with staff in several of the Museum’s key departments – management, curatorial, development, marketing, membership, retail, education (including docents), exhibits, and operations – and interviewed them about their perceptions, issues and ideas related to audience development at SAMA. Across all departments, ILI heard a consistent commitment to audience development, but uncertainty about how best to accomplish it. After listening carefully to SAMA staff, ILI proposed a two-part process for building institutional capacity. First, they will design and advise on key audience research studies. These studies will provide much-needed data about the museums’ public that will serve as a foundation for interpretive planning. Second, they will engage SAMA staff in a comprehensive interpretive planning process that will result in the identification of key audiences, as well as strategies for engaging those audiences with the art.

Part I: Building a Foundation with Audience Research Studies

Before SAMA can make decisions about how to develop their audience, they need to more fully understand the nature of their current audience, as well as the nature of the experience that the Museum provides for that audience. While SAMA has evaluated some of their isolated programs and activities, they have not had
the opportunity to engage in institution-wide evaluation about their visitors and their visitor experiences. In other words, such data is sorely needed. To that end, ILI will conduct a suite of integrated studies designed to provide rich, detailed information about SAMA visitors and their museum experience, as well as non-visitors and their awareness and perceptions of the museum.

(1) Audience Study

A large-scale, year-long audience study will provide SAMA staff with comprehensive data on their visitors, including not only basic demographics (e.g., age, sex, social group, race/ethnicity, museum visitation, membership status, income, education, occupation) but more importantly key psychographics (e.g., motivations for visiting, visit expectations, interest in and knowledge of art, comfort with museums).

The primary method for this audience study will be a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, designed by ILI researchers and administered to a random sample of SAMA visitors by Museum staff, volunteers, and/or docents over a year-long period. At the outset of the study, ILI will work with SAMA to identify a detailed sampling strategy – deciding for example where to administer the questionnaires (e.g., ticket desk, shop, café, galleries), at what times to administer the questionnaires (e.g., across multiple days, times of year, programs offered), and in what language(s) to administer the questionnaires (e.g., English, Spanish). The sample size for this study will range from 600-800 questionnaires. Questionnaire data will be analyzed by ILI researchers, using appropriate statistical procedures, and a report will be written describing key trends and patterns in the data in order to inform institutional planning.

(2) Experience Study

A focused experience study will offer insight into what visitors do while at SAMA, answering questions such as: How long do visitors spend in the Museum? What route(s) do they take through the Museum? Which galleries are most (and least) frequently visited? Which objects are most (and least) engaging to visitors? Which objects stimulate conversation between members of visitor groups? Data from this study will also inform decision-making about Museum way-finding, an important issue right now at SAMA.

The primary method used for this study is tracking, which involves identifying a visitor as they enter the Museum, and asking them if data collectors can “keep an eye on their group as they move through the Museum in order to better understand how people use the space.” With visitor consent, data collectors then unobtrusively observe the visitor throughout their visit, documenting on a Museum map their entrance and exit time, the pathway they take, the objects at which they “stop,” and the nature of their engagement with those objects. Again, ILI researchers will work with SAMA staff to determine specific sampling procedures (e.g., time of day, day of week, specific programs offered). The sample size for this study will range from 100-150 tracks. As with the audience study, data will be analyzed by ILI researchers, and a report will be produced describing key results and conclusions from the experience study.

(3) Outcomes Study

A targeted outcomes study will clarify what exactly visitors take away from their SAMA experience, what they value from their experience and how they perceive they benefit from it. Research shows a range of possible outcomes from an art museum visit, from learning more about a particular artist or collection to spending quality time together as a family to ‘recharging your batteries’ (Luke & Adams, 2008; Luke &
The study will help SAMA staff to know which outcomes are most relevant for their visitors, and why.

For this study, the method will involve in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with visitors as they are exiting the Museum. Interviews will assess visitors’ perception of their museum experience, and how well they felt their expectations were met. At the core of the interview will be a series of outcome statements, crafted by ILI researchers and SAMA staff to reflect the range of possible outcomes from a SAMA visit. Typical outcome statements might include the following, and might draw from previous studies conducted by ILI to examine art museum outcomes (Luke, Ong & Figueiredo, 2010; Luke, Ong, Koepfler & Low, 2008; Luke & Stein, 2006):

- I looked carefully and thoughtfully at a work of art
- I feel confident expressing my opinions about art
- I thought about art in new ways
- I made connections between the art and myself
- I talked with others about art
- I felt curious about a work of art
- I understand how artists work.

Using this method, visitors would be asked to review the SAMA outcome statements, and to rate each one on a scale from 1-7, where 1 is “This does not describe my experience at all” and 7 is “This describes my experience completely.” Follow-up questions will probe for examples of outcomes, where they occurred, as well as hypotheses about why certain outcomes may not have occurred. As with the tracking study, ILI researchers will work with SAMA staff to develop a sampling plan, taking into account factors such as time of day, day of week, and specific programs during which we might want to target visitors; and the data will be analyzed by ILI researchers to produce a report detailing key results and conclusions. The sample size for this study will range from 100-150 interviews, conducted in both English and Spanish.

(4) Non-Visitor Study

An in-depth, non-visitor study will round out results by helping SAMA staff to better understand not only who does not visit the Museum, but perhaps more importantly, why people do not visit the Museum. What is the public’s awareness of SAMA? If they are aware of it, what are their perceptions of the Museum? Why do they not visit? What else do they do in their leisure time? What would it take to get them to SAMA?

Mixed methods will be used to conduct the non-visitor study, including in-depth, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. At total of 100-150 interviews will be conducted at local sites in San Antonio where we are most likely to find “near visitors,” or those people who do not visit SAMA but who use other cultural institutions in the city. A series of approximately 5-7 focus groups (each with 10-15 people) will be facilitated with non-visitors in specific zip codes or neighborhoods that SAMA wants to target. Focus groups will occur at the Museum; participants will be recruited through staff and/or local connections, and invited to the Museum for a meal and conversation. In this way, focus groups accomplish our research needs and also help to “message” the museum to local community members.
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As with the three previous studies described, ILI will analyze data from the interviews and focus groups, and write a report summarizing key results and conclusions.

Part II: Developing the Audience-Building Interpretive Plan

Data from the audience research studies just described will provide an empirical foundation from which to make strategic and informed institutional decisions about the future of SAMA. Specifically, these data will inform the development of SAMA’s interpretive plan, a living document that will outline a vision for the visitor experience at the Museum.

In many museums and cultural institutions where interpretive planning has been undertaken, the process is driven by the education, exhibitions, or curatorial departments to determine the most effective way to communicate a message to a targeted audience. However, as previously stated, SAMA’s interpretive plan will be directly linked to its current strategic plan, particularly as it relates to audience development. In other words, if the strategic plan is an expression of the Museum’s goals and ambitions, SAMA’s interpretive plan will be the road map for how to get there.

To engage SAMA staff in interpretive planning, ILI researchers will facilitate a series of small- and large-group workshops designed to build consensus for the process amongst staff, to introduce to staff the purpose and process of interpretive planning, and to flesh out the key components of the plan, including audiences, learning goals and objectives, and interpretive strategies and media. Data from the visitor studies will provide conversational platforms for making decisions about SAMA’s focus and strategies. In between workshops, ILI will take the lead in writing a draft plan that is continually revised and updated based on feedback from staff and workshop discussions.

Project Resources: Time, Personnel, Budget

Time: The project will be completed over a one year time period beginning August 1, 2011 and ending July 31, 2012. Part I: Building a Foundation with Audience Research will begin in August 1, 2011 and continue through the May 2012 in order to gather research data from audiences over several seasons. Part II: Developing the Audience-Building Interpretive Plan will begin in December 2011 and will conclude at the end of July 2012.

Personnel: Robb Wasielewski, SAMA’s Director of Marketing, will serve as project director. Since he joined SAMA in November 2009, Robb Wasielewski has been tasked with leading the audience development portion of the Museum’s strategic plan. Throughout this project, he will contribute 10% of his time, overseeing the weekly responsibilities of the four-part audience research project and the development of the interpretation plan in collaboration with consultants, and the project budget. Katie Erickson, AT&T Director of Education/Adult Programs, who has been with SAMA since 2005 will contribute 10% of her work time, and Emily M. Jones, COO, who has worked at SAMA since 2002, will contribute 5% of her work time, both working closely with Robb Wasielewski on the weekly responsibilities of the four-part audience research project and the development of the interpretation plan in collaboration with consultants. Dan Walton, Director of Operations and SAMA’s Visitation staff, who has worked at SAMA since 1995, will assist with determining the best strategies to administer the questionnaires, interviews, and the tracking study, contributing 5% of his work time to the project. During the process of the development of the interpretive plan, members from various departments will participate in consultant-led staff workshops in order to build consensus on this
important document. In addition to the staff members listed above, each of the following staff members will contribute 2% of their work time to this portion of the project: Marion Oettinger, The Kelso Director of the San Antonio Museum of Art and Curator of Latin American Art; Nicole McLeod, Assistant Director of Education; Laura Rushing, School Programs and Volunteer Coordinator; John Johnston, Coates-Cowden-Brown Curator of Asian Art; Jessica Powers, The Gilbert M. Denman, Jr. Curator of Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World; David S. Rubin, The Brown Foundation Curator of Contemporary Art; Elizabeth Montemayor, Membership Manager; and Dan Walton, Director of Operations and Visititation. Key partner and consultant staff will include Jessica J. Luke, Ph.D., Director of Research & Evaluation, and Steve Yalowitz, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, employed by The Institute for Learning Innovation (ILI). Jessica Luke and Steve Yalowitz will collaborate with SAMa staff and provide resources for conducting four key visitor studies to provide information about SAMa visitors and the visitor experience, and to use the data to lead SAMa staff through the process of developing a comprehensive, institution-wide interpretive plan that will fundamentally change practice within the museum. ILI was chosen to be SAMa’s consultant because of their expertise in this area.

Budget: The overall project budget is $163,051.02 of which SAMa is requesting 49.9% percent ($81,368.50) from IMLS. The San Antonio Museum of Art’s cost sharing will be fulfilled primarily through a contribution of indirect costs and staff time, additional fundraising, and through The Institute for Learning Innovation’s in-kind contribution of a portion of their fees.

Impact

One result at the end of the project will of course be a SAMa-specific interpretive plan informed by reliable visitor research that presents a detailed plan for how the Museum will create meaningful and engaging visitor experiences over the next 3-5 years. The document will be a “new kind” of interpretive plan; one that recognizes that the museum visitor experience is neither about visitors nor about museum exhibitions and programs – it is about capturing and assessing the interaction of these as they briefly come together in time and space (Falk, 216).

In other words, the interpretive plan will be the synthesis of strategic planning, thorough data collection and analyses, and staff/community support. Consequently, every department works to ensure that our visitors leave SAMa eager to provide positive word-of-mouth recommendations to their friends.

Using the interpretive plan to guide actions and decisions outside of the usual educational or exhibition context (like “marketing” for example) is a radical departure from the way that SAMa – and many other museums – operate. Nevertheless, we are convinced that to be a successful 21st century museum, all institutions must shift from a “content-first” focus to providing an engaging, collaborative experience.

More importantly, however, will be the documentation of the process that we can communicate to similar institutions. For many communities in America, San Antonio is a demographic and geographic harbinger of things to come. Therefore, if we are successful in using our proposal to address these challenges now, we will have provided a way for others to do it in the future.

Lastly, SAMa’s interpretative plan will be different in that it will contain clear implementation benchmarks and specific metrics for gauging its success. The belief is that these data will prove to be tremendously more useful
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to our Museum, and many cultural organizations, as we continue to develop and prepare for the future. SAMA will lead the way in not simply measuring "numbers of visitors"; instead, we will ask – and quantify - "how many lives were positively changed by this museum experience?"

References


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Questions Addressed</th>
<th>Method(s)</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience Study</strong></td>
<td>Exit Interviews</td>
<td>Target N= 600-800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Who is currently visiting SAMA, and why?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Current N= 670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What is their experience like – what do they see/do? What do they enjoy most/least?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What are their perceptions of SAMA?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes Study</strong></td>
<td>Follow-up, online questionnaire (with visitors from the audience study)</td>
<td>Target N= 100-150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What do visitors value about their museum experience? How do they benefit from their visit?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience Study</strong></td>
<td>Tracking &amp; Timing</td>
<td>Target N= 100-150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do visitors do while at SAMA?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Current N= 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long do they spend?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which galleries do they visit?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At what level do they engage?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-visitor Study</strong></td>
<td>Onsite interviews</td>
<td>Target N= 100-150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who does NOT visit the museum, and WHY NOT?</td>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>Target K= 5-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the public’s awareness of and perceptions towards SAMA?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What else do they do in their leisure time?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Current K = 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

July 3, 2012

San Antonio Museum of Art
Katie Erickson
200 West Jones Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78215

Project: Building a 21st Century Museum

Dear Ms. Erickson:

As an important client and stakeholder of the Institute for Learning Innovation, I am writing to let you know that the Institute is in the process of undertaking a series of steps to address its future. At its June 18, 2012, meeting, after much discussion and consideration of options, the ILI Board of Directors decided to close ILI operations and terminate all remaining project contracts as well as its active role in the research and evaluation business.

The staff and board are proud of the contributions ILI has made to research, evaluation, and free-choice learning. And ILI intends to complete its commitment to you in the same professional manner with which it has conducted business in the past. Therefore, in the near future you will receive a phone call from ILI to talk about its remaining commitment to you.

Thank you for your support of ILI as it goes through this transition.

Sincerely,

Terry L. Davis
President & CEO of American Association for State and Local History
Chair of the Board of the Institute for Learning Innovation

Institute for Learning Innovation
3168 Braverton St., Suite 280, Edgewater, MD 21037 t: (410) 956-5144 f: (410) 956-5148 www.ilinet.org
Appendix F

SAMA Audience Study Questionnaire

Part 1: Familiarity with the Museum

To begin, I’d like to learn about your familiarity with the Museum.

1. Have you visited the San Antonio Museum of Art before?
   □ Yes
   □ No, this is my first visit

2. [If Q1=Yes] In the last 24 months, how many times have you been to the San Antonio Museum of Art? ________

3. In the last 24 months, how many times have you been to an art museum or gallery other than the San Antonio Museum of Art? ________

4. Are you currently a member of the San Antonio Museum of Art?
   □ Yes
   □ No

5. How did you hear about SAMA? [Visitor can choose as many as apply.]
   □ Print ads
   □ Street signs
   □ Social media (e.g., Facebook, twitter)
   □ Radio
   □ Television
   □ Word of mouth (friends, family, or co-workers)
   □ Other: ____________________

Part 2: Reason for visiting the Museum

Now let’s talk about your reasons for visiting the Museum. The next question is about why you visited today and it is the first of three questions in this survey where I’d like to audio record your responses, simply for accuracy’s sake. Will that be okay?

6. Why did you come to the San Antonio Museum of Art today?

7. I have a series of picture cards that represent some of the most common reasons people give for visiting museums. I would like you to pick the ONE card that best matches your reasons for visiting TODAY.
   □ I was told that it is one of the best places to visit around here
   □ I wanted to be able to say that I’d been there
   □ This place is a landmark in this community
   □ I wanted to have fun
Part 3: SAMA Experience

Now, I’d like to ask a few questions about what you did today while you were at the Museum.

8. Think back to when you first entered the Museum. Which entrance did you use?
   - Front entrance
   - Riverwalk entrance
   - Other

9. How did you feel when you first entered the Museum? For example, what kinds of feelings did you experience, in looking around the first time? I’m going to record your response again here. Tell me what you mean by that? Do you find that a positive or a negative? Can you tell me more about that?

10. For each of the following, please tell me if you did it during your visit today. Are you interested in that?
    - Ate in the café
    - Went into the SAMA Shop
    - Attended a program
    - Went to the special exhibition
    - Went to one or more of the Galleries
    - Spent time outside on the Museum grounds
    - Other

11. [If Q10=Attended a program] You said you went to a program today. Which of the following did you attend?
    - Talk/tour
    - Film/performance
    - Class
    - Member event
    - Special event
12. [If Q10=Went to one or more of the Galleries] You said you went to one or more of the Galleries today. Which of the following did you visit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art Type</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceanic Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Art</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>not sure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is completely unsatisfactory and 7 is completely satisfactory, please rate the following aspects of your visit:

| Aspect          | Unsatisfactory | Satisfactory | NA |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Museum staff    | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | NA           |
| Museum map      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | NA           |
| Museum guide    | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | NA           |
| Overall facility| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | NA           |
| Parking         | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | NA           |

14. What did you enjoy most about your visit today, and why? Can I record your response again?

15. Tell me one thing that you did NOT enjoy about your visit. Please be honest. This is the last of the questions where I’ll record your answer.

16. On a scale from 1-7, where 1 is not at all and 7 is completely, how important was the actual art itself to your experience at SAMA today?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. This next question is a little different. I want to know how you would describe your experience today at the San Antonio Museum of Art. So I’m going to read you a series of paired words. For each pair, think of the words as two opposites. Point to which line shows how you feel about SAMA. You can also tell me by saying, “2 plusses” or “1 star,” for example.
Part 4: Art Viewing Preferences

The next few questions are about how you like to look at works of art in a museum—not necessarily what you did at SAMA today, but how you generally like to look at works of art when you go to a museum.

18. For the following statements, indicate how well each one describes you on scale from 1-7, where 1 is “It doesn’t describe me at all” and 7 is “It describes me completely.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When visiting an art museum, I like to learn about a work of art...</th>
<th>Doesn’t describe me at all</th>
<th>Describes me completely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...on my own without explanations or interpretations.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...through conversation with friends and/or family.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...by reading an object label.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...by listening to an audio or cell phone guide.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...from a staff member or volunteer.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...through a tour by smart phone or similar device.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...through an interactive computer station.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...through an activity or program.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. For the following statements, indicate the extent to which you agree with each one on a scale from 1-7, where 1 is fully disagree and 7 is fully agree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To experience a work of art, I like to...</th>
<th>Fully disagree</th>
<th>Fully agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...be told a straightforward fact to help me know</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 5: Tell us About You

The Museum would like to learn a little bit about you. This will help them figure out how well they are reaching different audiences.

20. On a scale from 1-7, where 1 is not at all and 7 is fully, rate your interest in art generally, including both the visual arts and the performing arts.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

21. On a scale from 1-7, where 1 is not at all important and 7 is extremely important, how important is it to you that the art you experience relates to your own cultural background?

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

22. Please answer each of the following statements about your background in the visual arts specifically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I create art for my own enjoyment.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have participated in visual art enrichment classes in my free time. (e.g., art-making, lectures, gallery talks, etc.)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have taken 2 or more visual art courses in school.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a visual arts-related degree.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I create visual art professionally.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work or have worked in a visual arts-related field.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. Who did you visit the museum with today? (Select all that apply.)
   □ No one, I’m alone
   □ With other adults
   □ With other adults and children
   □ With children only
24. [If Q23=With ... ] Are any members of your group part of your family?
   □ Yes
   □ No
25. Were you born in the United States?
   □ Yes
   □ No
26. [If Q25=No] What country were you born in? ______________
27. Do you currently live in the United States?
   □ Yes
   □ No
28. [If Q27=Yes] What is your zip code? ____________
29. [If Q27=No] What is your country of residence? _______________
30. In what year were you born? ____________
   
   *For this final set of questions, I'm going to hand you a card you can use to follow along.*

31. 1. Are you...
   □ Male
   □ Female
32. 2. Which racial or ethnic group(s) best describes you? Tell me as many as apply.
   □ White (non-Hispanic)
   □ Latino
   □ African American
   □ Asian
   □ American Indian
   □ Other: _______________
33. 3. For this question, you can simply share the number to the right of your response. In which of the following categories is your household's approximate annual income?
   □ Less than $35,000 (1)
   □ $35,000 to $49,999 (2)
   □ $50,000 to $74,999 (3)
   □ $75,000 to $99,999 (4)
   □ $100,000 to $149,999 (5)
   □ $150,000 to $199,999 (6)
   □ $200,000 or more (7)
34. 4. Again, you can simply share the number to the right of your response. Please indicate the highest level of education you have completed so far.

- Some high school (1)
- High school graduate (2)
- Some college (3)
- Associate’s degree (4)
- College degree (5)
- Some graduate work (6)
- Postgraduate degree (7)

35. 5. What is the primary language spoken in your home?
- English
- Spanish
- Other: __________________________

Thank you for your time. The information you have shared with us will help us to better understand who visits the San Antonio Museum of Art, and to make the visitor experience even better.
Appendix G

San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA)
Building a 21st Century Museum
Audience Study

DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOL
Updated 10.28.11

Introduction
The San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA) is seeking to better understand who visits the Museum, why, and what they do while at the Museum. To that end, an online questionnaire is being administered to a random sample of visitors as they are leaving the Museum between November 2011 and July 2012. The questionnaire is designed to collect not only basic demographics (e.g., age, sex, social group, race/ethnicity, museum visitation, membership status, income, education, occupation) but also key psychographics (e.g., motivations for visiting, visit expectations, interest in and knowledge of art, comfort with museums). Although the Museum currently collects some demographic data from visitors, these data have the potential to be unreliable (e.g., visually determining race/ethnicity of visitors at the ticket desk) and/or ungeneralizable (e.g., demographics of visitors attending a specific program at SAMA).

Procedures
Your role is to administer the online questionnaire (via ipad) to Museum visitors, and upload completed questionnaires at the end of each “shift.”

What materials do I need for data collection?
Each data collector is doing 3 2-hour shifts each month, as scheduled by Katie Erickson. For each shift, you will want to arrive about 10 minutes early to assemble your materials and get yourself situated in the Great Hall. You will need the following materials:

- Your docent name badge that identifies you as a Museum person;
• One of the ILI ipads (check with Katie to see where they will be stored, and how to sign them out);
• One of the laminated set of data collection materials.

Where should I administer the questionnaires?
A data collection station will be set up in the Great Hall during data collection shifts, consisting of a table, some chairs, and some activities for children in the event that your study participant is at the Museum with a family group. This data collection station will serve as your home base; you can invite study participants back to the table, and invite them to sit down with you in order to take the questionnaire.

You will recruit study participants as they are leaving the Museum. For the most part, you will be stationed near the front doors that exit to the Street, since that is where the majority of SAMA visitors leave the Museum. (There may be a couple of shifts per month that involve being stationed at the Breezeway exit; Katie will provide instructions on this.)

It may be that during some shifts, there are not a lot of visitors exiting the Museum. We know this can be frustrating, but it’s important to complete your entire shift so that we know we’ve built a representative sample of SAMA visitors. We don’t want to only collect data during busy times or else the sample will be biased.

How do I approach visitors?
In order to achieve a random sample, we will use a “next available” approach, meaning as soon as the data collector is ready, he/she will approach the next adult visitor who crosses a pre-determined, imaginary line near the Museum exit. Only approach visitors who appear to be 18 years or older. Try to approach those who look as though they are leaving the Museum, but it is not a problem if you mistakenly approach someone upon their entrance. When the adult is part of a group, approach the visitor closest to you, making clear eye-contact with that individual.

Use the following script to engage with the visitor:

Hi. My name is [insert name], and I work with SAMA. The Museum is conducting a study to better understand their visitors, and so we’re talking with people today about why they came here and what they did during their visit. Your feedback will help the Museum create new and meaningful experiences for its visitors. Would you be willing to talk with me quickly? I have a table where you can sit down.

If NO: Thank you. Have a great afternoon. [Record the refusal in the Refusal log on the ipad, and follow the protocol above to approach your next visitor.]
If YES: Wonderful! Your feedback will be very helpful. [Walk them to the data collection station, and invite them to sit down.] If HESITANT or has QUESTIONS: It will take about 7-8 minutes, and you’re free to leave at any point.
If the visitor you have approached is with one or more other adults and it seems they will want to be together while you ask questions, use this language: *For this particular study, we can only get responses from one visitor within a group. You are welcome to join us here and listen in, but I’ll be directing my questions to you and only recording your comments. Is that alright?* Make sure you get a response from your target visitor for each question. If during the conversation, it seems the additional adult(s)’ comments are influencing the respondent’s answers to the scale questions, ask your target visitor questions such as *Is that what you think?* or, *Is that what you would have said?*

**How do I actually administer the questionnaire?**

*When administering the questionnaire, you will be the one completing the form. You will read each question aloud, read the answer choices available, and then click on the visitor’s answer choice to enter the data. Feel free to let the visitor look at the questionnaire with you. That will be especially helpful for them in answering the scale questions, as many people need to visualize a scale. Although they can look at it with you, you should still read each question out loud, and you should enter the response, not the visitor. Be sure to allow enough time for them to think before answering, as some of these questions do require some thought.*

*There are two places in the questionnaire where you’ll need to use accompanying print materials. The first is the question about why the visitor came to the Museum today, where they are handed a series of picture cards and asked to choose which card BEST represents their motivation for visiting. You will have a laminated set of those cards, and can simply hand them to the visitor so they can choose. Remember that we need them to choose just ONE card, so do what you can to help them narrow down their choices if need be. The second place where you’ll need accompanying print materials are the demographics at the end of the questionnaire. When you get to these questions, hand the laminated card to the visitor, and ask them to follow along with you by pointing to the response that best represents them.*

**How do I wrap up a questionnaire before sampling my next visitor?**

*After they’ve answered the final question, thank them for their time and again assure them that their feedback will be extremely useful for the Museum. Once the visitor has left the data collection station, complete the box at the bottom of the last page.*

*NOTE: If for some reason you are not online – hooked into wifi – during your data collection, please be sure to do so and upload all of your completed questionnaires at the end of your shift.*

**Some Data Collection Tips**

- *If the visitor does not want to answer a particular question, that’s okay. Just don’t enter a response for that question, and move to the next one.*
- *If the visitor has to leave before they have completed the questionnaire, that’s okay too. Just upload the questionnaire with the responses you managed to collect.*
• If the visitor is reluctant to share demographic information, re-assure them that the only reason you are asking is because it’s important to know for a study like this that we’ve sampled a diverse group of visitors, and this information allows us to know that.

Our Contact Information
You are more than welcome to contact us with questions or concerns at any time during this process.

Sharisse Butler  Jessica Luke  
butler@ilinet.org  luke@ilinet.org
410.956.5144  410.956.5144
Timing and Tracking Protocol Outline

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Invitation: “Hello, my name is ______ and the San Antonio Museum of Art is trying to find out where people go and what they see in the museum. We’re asking groups to let us join them on the visit today, and since we realize this is not a typical request, we’d like to offer you free entrance to the museum today as well as a family pass to come back whenever you want. Is this something you might consider doing to help the museum?”
2. If yes, “Great, I’ll just join your group and take notes every now and then. When you’re done let me know and I have just six very quick questions.”
3. Select one ADULT (18+) to track through the museum. Record the starting and stopping time of the whole visit, and the time on the running stopwatch every time they enter a gallery/space or when they use the stair/restroom/café. These are split into Galleries and Practical categories.
4. For each Floor, also record the start and stop times.
5. For each Gallery, record the additional information below the time they entered. Do this only after they have left the gallery, for accuracy purposes.
6. When they tell you they’re done, record the stopping time, then ask them the INSTRUCTION QUESTIONS to the left.
7. Thank the group and make sure to give them the family pass as a thank you.

Before you begin, get the materials from the cabinet: clipboard, sheets, family passes, stopwatch.

When you finish, record refusals for the day, put completed sheet(s) in the folder, return above materials.

Observer ID _________
Date: ____________
Observation Start Time: ____________ Observation End Time: ____________
Stopwatch time at end: ____________

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:
Have you visited the San Antonio Museum of Art before today? □ Yes □ No
Are you currently a member of the Museum? □ Yes □ No
How many adults and how many children under 18 are in your group? Ad. ___ Ch. ___
What is your US zip code, or county of residence? ____________
What is the primary language spoken in your home? ____________
What year were you born? _______
RECORD, NOT A QUESTION: Gender □ Male □ Female

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT:
Galleries, stopped at:
1 = None / only one element
2 = More than one, up to half
3 = Majority of element
4 = All / almost all elements

Interacting with the group they’re in:
1 = Not at all / or a little bit
2 = Some but less than half
3 = The majority of the time
4 = All or almost all the time

Notes:
### Practical
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stair</th>
<th>Bathroom</th>
<th>Stair</th>
<th>Elevator</th>
<th>Stair</th>
<th>Elevator</th>
<th>Bathroom</th>
<th>Elevator</th>
<th>Stair</th>
<th>Stair</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Start Time __________

### Leave Time __________

### Comments __________

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#### Floor 2

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#### Levels of Engagement:
- Galleries, stopped at:
  1. None at all /  
  2. More than one, or up to half  
  3. Majority of galleries  
  4. All or almost all galleries  

#### Interacting with their group:
- Not at all /  
- Some but less than half  
- The majority of the time  
- All or almost all the time

---

#### Galleries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Galleries</th>
<th>2-1 Japanese Art</th>
<th>2-2 Special Exhibitions</th>
<th>2-3 South East Asian Art</th>
<th>2-4 Chinese Art</th>
<th>2-5 South East Asian Art</th>
<th>2-6 South Asian Art</th>
<th>2-7 Himalayan Art</th>
<th>2-8 Auditorium</th>
<th>2-9 Cont Art Rm 3</th>
<th>2-10 Cont Art Rm 2</th>
<th>2-11 Cont Art Rm 1</th>
<th>2-12 Special Exhibition</th>
<th>2-13 Colonial American</th>
<th>2-14 Spanish Colonial</th>
<th>2-15 Modern and Cont Latin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Enter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement with Galleries (1-4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement with Group (1-4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donors/Staff (✔)</td>
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<td>Set down (✔)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Timing and Tracking Protocol Outline

THE ROYALlek mang and the San Antonio Museum of Art is fiding out
where people go and what they see in the museum. We're asking group to let us join them on
the visit today, and since we realize this is not a typical request, we'd like to offer you free
entrance to the museum today as well as a family pass to come back whenever you wish. Is this
something you might consider doing to help the museum?

2. If yes: "Great, I'll join your group and take notes every now and then. When you're done let me
know and I have just six very quick questions."
3. Select one ADULT (18+) to track through the museum. Record the starting and stopping time of the
whole visit, and the time on the running stopwatch every time they enter a gallery/room or
when they use the stairs/restaurant. These are split into Galleries and Practical categories.
4. For each Floor, also record the start and stop times.
5. For each Gallery, record the additional information below the time they entered. Do this only after
they have left the gallery, for accuracy purposes.
6. When they tell you they're done, record the stopping time, then ask them the INTERVIEW
QUESTIONS to the left.
7. Thank the group and make sure to give them the family pass as a thank you.

Before you begin: Get the materials from the cabinet; clipboard, sheetc, family passes, stopwatch,
When you fill in record refills for the day, put completed sheet(s) in the folder, return above
materials.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Have you visited the San Antonio Museum of Art before today? [ ] Yes [ ] No
Are you currently a member of the Museum? [ ] Yes [ ] No
How many adults and how many children under 18 are in your group? [ ] Ad [ ] Ch
What is your US zip code, or country of residence? _______
What is the primary language spoken in your home? _______
What year were you born? _______

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT:

Galleries, stopped at:
1. None / only one element
2. More than one, up to half
3. Majority of the elements
4. All / almost all elements

Interacting with the group they're in:
1. Not at all / or a little bit
2. Some but less than half
3. The majority of the time
4. All or almost all the time

Notes:
## Practical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical</th>
<th>Bathroom F1:E1</th>
<th>Stair F1:S1</th>
<th>Elevator F1:E3</th>
<th>Stair F1:S2</th>
<th>Outside/Courtyard</th>
<th>Elevator F1:E2</th>
<th>Bathroom F1:E2</th>
<th>Elevator F1:E3</th>
<th>Bathroom F1:E3</th>
<th>Elevator F1:S4</th>
<th>Stair F1:S5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Enter</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Floor 1

Start Time: 9:00
Leave Time: 10:00

**Outside/Courtyard**

- 1-7 Special Exhibitions
- Restaurant

### Galleries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Galleries</th>
<th>1-6 Roman Art</th>
<th>1-5 Greek Art</th>
<th>1-4 Ancient Glass</th>
<th>1-3 Egyptian Art 1</th>
<th>1-2 Egyptian Art 2</th>
<th>1-7 Special Exhibitions</th>
<th>1-1 Great Hall</th>
<th>1-9 SAMA Store</th>
<th>INFO DEM</th>
<th>1-8 Auditorium</th>
<th>1-10 Focus Gallery</th>
<th>1-11 European Decorative</th>
<th>1-12 POS Gallery</th>
<th>1-13 Before</th>
<th>1-14 PGS Art</th>
<th>1-15 Pre Columbian</th>
<th>1-15 Pre Columbian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Enter</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Levels of Engagement:

- 1 = None / only one element
- 2 = More than one, up to half
- 3 = Majority of elements
- 4 = All / almost all elements

- Interacting with their group
- Not at all/or a little bit
- Some but less than half
- The majority of the time
- All or almost all the time
Appendix I

Visitor Services Committee
Meeting Agenda

August 8, 2012
2:00 pm

1. Website Update
2. Benches
3. Voicemail Message
4. Timing and Tracking Observations
Appendix J

TIMING & TRACKING

69 = OBSERVATIONS COMPLETED AS OF 8/7/12

1st Time Visitors = 40

1st Time Visitors 58%  
Visitors 42%

Length of Museum Visit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 3 Hour</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 2 Hour</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 1 Hour</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 Hour</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recorded Difficulty Way-finding = 18

Recorded Difficulty Way-finding 26%  
No Recorded Difficulty Way-finding 74%

Additional questions, please contact me at: katherinemarquette@gmail.com

Audience Focus to deliver final T&T results in December
TIMING AND TRACKING

CHALLENGES:

- Assymetry of the building
- 2M & 4M Concept
- LAC elevator
- Stairway in Japanese Gallery
- Stairway in Islamic Gallery
- Gift Shop as entry point to East Tower on 1st floor

EXAMPLE OBSERVATIONS:

- VISITOR 1- Received directions from 2 guards (front desk and in gallery). Even still, spent 23 minutes of her 1:04:35 minute visit trying to get re-oriented after becoming lost in East Tower searching for skybridge.
- VISITOR 2- (1st time visitor) Complained that website and directions to the Museum were unclear/not helpful. Frustration was exacerbated by a lack of signage. Like VISITOR 1, VISITOR 2 was confused by LAC elevator.
- VISITOR 3- (1st time visitor) Like many, VISITOR 3 had trouble grasping the concept of the 2 separate towers as well as the Mezzanine levels.
- VISITOR 4- Walked into staircase in Islamic gallery, turned around and used elevator instead. Made the remark that she wanted the stairway to be more clearly marked.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Redesign hand-held map.
  New map should be less cluttered and illustrate the assymetry of the building.
  Consider switching to an elevation style map that would more clearly represent the divide between the 2 towers and identify the 1st and 4th floors as the only means of switching between East and West.
- Revamp signage within the Museum.
  Maps located within the galleries should show galleries location in relationship to the Museum as a whole. Also, consider introducing visitors to the layout of the Museum/contents of the East and West towers in the Great Hall.
VITA

Katherine Hoffpauir Marquette was born in Baton Rouge, LA. She attended Louisiana State University, receiving her BFA with a concentration in Ceramics and a minor in Art History in 2007. Prior to joining the Arts Administration program at the University of New Orleans, she acquired valuable experience in the field as an employee of organizations such as: the New Orleans Museum of Art, Louisiana Division of the Arts, Louisiana Cultural Economy Foundation, and the Southern Food and Beverage Museum. Katherine currently lives in San Antonio, Texas and is the Membership Coordinator at the McNay Art Museum.