

8 nodes

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January 23, 2014

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Networks

--the true façade of every 21st century cultural institution opens out onto the defining public space of our era: the WWW

--the experience of surrogates ever increasingly precedes that of “originals”; surrogates are the friends (not enemies) of originals; a potent force to leverage as part of every curatorial/design process; the rise of networks has renewed the original meaning of *copia* = abundance

--every cultural object is a network; every collection is a set of connections

--the rise of networks marks the end of the museum visit as a discrete temporal event: the increasing fluidity of the *before*, *during*, and *after*

Data

--are there any “analog only” cultural objects left in museums today? nearly all cultural objects, whether belonging to the remote past or immediate present, circulate surrounded by a halo of data and *capta*

--data is the defining cultural material of the 21st century; it is our marble and clay, our coal and petroleum; but raw data alone don't do anything; they have to be collected, processed, curated, and shaped

--any museum that doesn't treat its data as clay/marble to be sculpted or as the fuel that powers its programming hasn't yet fully joined the 21st century

Across the analog/digital divide

--the defining design challenge of our epoch: to weave together information and space in a meaningful fashion: the museum, the library, the archive as model "smart spaces" for the rest of society

--scenarios that are never mutually exclusive: convergence (augmentation, complementarity, superpositions) vs. divergence (screen fatigue, contemplation of the thing in space, reduction and de-distraction) vs. substitution (the surrogate as original)

Ontologies

--the analog object increasingly circulates surrounded by a halo of surrogates and metadata; this halo is becoming an integral feature of their identity; it is through it that most visitors gain access to cultural objects

--every object is (and always was) a network of relations; exposing those relations leverages the power of objects to tell expanded stories to expanded audiences; (the end of the grand narratives = the birth of multiple threaded narratives?)

--new models of representation and arts of description are required that capture this multiplication of perspectives and horizons both at the micro and the macro level

Porosities

--an overall breakdown is occurring of the boundary lines between museums, libraries, and archives: time to realign institutions of culture, memory, and learning? = institution as platform

--ubiquity (the museum that is everywhere and nowhere, that opens on your device)

--new temporalities: the visit that never "begins" and that never "ends"

Experience

--from product to process: the power of exposing problems and procedures (not just solutions)

--the urge to expand and multiply the sensorium of museum experiences

--today's visitor want to *do things* with objects, not just contemplate them in rapt attention

--visitors: more mobility + less cultural baggage and preparation = the need for additional context, for more elaborate storytelling, for multiple forms of and avenues for engagement

Cognitive scales and densities

--*zooming*: new scales of experience that shuttle back and forth between the micro, the meso, and the macro; with some resulting new genres: the single object exhibition; the million object exhibition

--renewed densities: multilayered things and places—nurturing and sustaining multiple stories (political, demographic, ideological, architectural, geological); no cultural object or place is singular, single, simple, unified...

--featuring collections as aggregates: the migration of objects is as important as the migration of people; collections history and data as an increasingly integral facet of cultural experiences

Storage

--the era of visitable and usable storage has arrived; there's no reason or excuse for the greater part of the human record to continue to be locked up in deep storage

--can we break processing logjams through forms of outreach and participation –collections based teaching, crowdsourcing, engaging communities of experts—but also by adopting differentiated standards for processing and conservation?

--*moral of the story*... let's animate and activate our cultural resources and reserves