

# Rethinking the Immersive Curatorial Approach

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## Abstract:

The immersive curatorial approach is the central issue discussed in this article. The sensory experience attracts the attention of the public, while at the same time bringing to the public an aesthetic visual experience and fun that was different from the traditional one. Mariani (2012) believed that that the immersive viewing experience can bring entertainment to the public, while at the same time triggering public thinking about the problem to some extent. On the one hand, it has been a curatorial way to effectively mobilize a variety of media and technical means, with rich visual elements and a variety of sensory experience.

## Keywords:

Curatorial Approach, Immersive Exhibition, Cultural Interpretation

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## 1. Introduction

The main body of this paper was divided into three parts. The first part is to explain the term concept of curatorial, and to clarify the process of its transformation in the specific development of art history. It mainly focus on the basic definition of the immersive curatorial approach and its historical background. In the second part, analyzing the immersive art exhibition mode and the specific enlightenment significance of the curator in the contemporary art exhibition. In this part, the focus was focused on the role and importance of the role of the curator in specific art exhibitions. It analyzed how curators can effectively use various media such as art exhibitions, and how to effectively rely on holographic image digital media and media technology to maximize the public's attention.

However, it also reflected on the limitations of the immersive curatorial approach, that is, the curator over-reliance on technical media tools, while ignoring the certain consequences of the text. In the third part of this essay, the combination specific art exhibitions was to conduct specific case studies on immersive curatorial methods. Finally, this essay aims to clarify that the immersive method is applicable to some exhibitions. This is not suitable for all contemporary art exhibitions because of the complete presentation of artistic concepts and artistic concepts.

## 2. The Changing Definition of Curatorial Terms

Firstly, the term curatorial is not a process that was changed by the development of art history, but has a certain connection with social change and progress. Obrist [16] pointed out that professional curators have the following four core missions: one is to properly preserve the collection in a fixed place, and the other is to select the collection with a unique vision. Third, this is similar to the mission of university faculty and staff, to establish their own right to speak and contribute to the historical development of art history. The last one is closely related to the practice of contemporary art, that is, to effectively arrange the museum space, and to communicate effectively with the artist in the process, sometimes it may be a compromise process. From his definition of the curator's identity, it can be seen that the change of the curator's identity has a certain connection with the social change, because contemporary art is a dynamic history that is changing every day. For instance, the classical art such as Rembrandt, Van Gogh, Cezanne and other well-known painters, and subsequent management have become the main responsibilities of many art curators and related art museum staff in the early 20th century. It can be seen from the original intention and expansion history of the Tate Modern Art Museum that the early art exhibitions did not present works of art in the current public view, such as oil paintings, watercolors, and other works on the shelf, art exhibition. Early exhibitions were more of an exhibition format. The early art products were rich in variety, covering plants, animal specimens, porcelain, jewellery, and many other artistic appreciations. These collections on the one hand show the financial resources of the owner of the collection, as well as its unique cultural taste. Many of these art products, especially the early 17th and 18th centuries and art collections, can be found in the current permanent exhibitions of the British Museum.

Apart from that, Obrist [16] insisted that cultural phenomena are closely related to the generation and enrichment of visual arts, so that is the emergence of an important concept which is public. He also listed an important exhibition in the history of art exhibitions, which was the French Louvre Exhibition in 1793. It also shows that from the late 18th century, the main duties of art museums and the main mission of curators are to popularize art to the general public, forming an art exhibition that is easy for the public to accept. These changes have some connection with social change, because in the late 18th century the theme of these national exhibition halls and the choice of works of art were usually related to the specific presentation of mainstream ideology and art history, because what the curators intend to express was visual Art is no longer the exclusive power of the original aristocracy and church forces, but is directed to the general public.

## 3. The Role of the Curator in the Exhibition

Secondly, the concept of a curator has also undergone a corresponding change in the contemporary cultural context. That is, the organizers of the theme arrangement and exhibition activities that originally followed the social changes, and turned to higher-level critics of cultural phenomena. It should be noted that the cultural critique here is not a derogatory term but a neutral concept. Because it is important for the curator not to blindly criticize and criticize the current cultural phenomena and cultural issues, but to maintain a relatively objective and sober mind to look at many aspects of things. Balzer [3] believed that the curator's role is not only the decision maker of the content of the exhibition, but also a certain cultural critique and mission. Specifically, it has a sense of current cultural phenomena and a sense of social

responsibility and mission. He also particularly emphasized that the role of curators is not just to effectively classify the exhibits, but more importantly, to be brave to break the inherent concepts and to make continuous breakthroughs and innovations in the form and content of art exhibitions. Promote new art exhibitions and thinking models. At this point the identity of the curator is given the role of cultural inquiry. Meanwhile, according to Smith [18] the role of the curator in the late 20th century not only expanded the meaningfulness of the museum space, but also assisted artists in organizing biennials and undertook related art fairs and other activities. These events show that the roles of curators today and early curators have changed. They are not only the providers of art exhibition content, but also personal participants.

#### **4. Pros and Cons of Immersive Curatorial Methods**

Therefore, after explaining the definition of curation, what needs to be discussed is to adopt a corresponding and effective way for cultural interpenetration. Specificity, the definition of immersive curatorial methods includes a variety. Among them, the mainstream definitions define the immersive curation method as the media material combination of visual image and multimedia technology. According to Janet H and Ryan [12] a cultural phenomenon worthy of attention is that art galleries or museums are moving toward digital electrocution. Based on this network, the virtual museum museum has facilitated the development of multimedia. Among them, the immersive approach is inseparable from the innovation of Internet technology and multimedia technology. Axelsen, M. [2] believed that in order to attract more public to enter the museum art gallery to visit and experience the art gallery, the Australian Art Museum takes effective media and virtual imaging and a variety of media means, while enriching the artistic experience of the public. Holder [11] also insisted that the history of the way of warfare was closely related to the prosperity of computer and multimedia technology in the mid-1980s. The artist has sharply captured the Internet multimedia technology, bringing convenience to the artist's practice and creation.

However, the definition of the immersive curatorial approach has also changed with the advent of the information age and the richness of digital images. That is to say, it has been the curatorial method not only as an extension of multimedia technology, but also as a performance carrier for virtual imaging technology, 3D imaging, printing and other emerging technology media means. Schettino, P. (2016) agreed that he proposes to constantly update the curatorial style in the cultural decision-making of museums and art galleries. While the immersive curatorial approach brings new technical means, it also forged an effective communication bridge between curators and audiences, artists and curators, artists and audiences.

Kenning, D [13] pointed that the specific role of the immersive curatorial method in the public education extension of the museum was discussed in detail. He discussed in detail the feedback and influence of colleges and teachers and students on the immersive curatorial approach under the influence of school education under the background of the development of contemporary art. It can be seen that this characteristic mode not only plays a role in contacting the public for the curator. Specifically, it also played its intrinsic educational role.

First of all, the immersive curatorial approach could maximize the use of art space management for curators, and used and enrich the public's aesthetic experience. Because, for the management of the art space, there are usually several aspects that need to be communicated, that is, the team between the curator and the artist curator

and the museum exhibition in the traditional sense. Indeed, in the new context, the relationship between the curator and the public can also be passed. Terry (2015) noted that the duties of curators are divided into three categories. The first is to expand the original art gallery exhibition space, and the second is to explore the art biennium for a variety of curatorial paths. Third, effectively manage and expand the art space of the museum. This kind of curatorial method emphasizes the integration of multimedia technology. It will enrich the original monotonous art space. Stogner [17] believed that in the context of the ever-changing new media technology in the 21st century, contemporary art exhibitions choose an immersive experience of multimedia exhibitions, comparing this new auto present concept with traditional single-image technology, public participation.

Secondly, the immersive curatorial method could express the implicit meaning of the art exhibition. In the past, the curator was considered as the supervisor of the collection of art museums. In the context of the current cultural industry, the identity of art curators has been given more responsibilities. Hans Ulrich, (2014) believed that the current art exhibitions are different from the traditional exhibitions of the precious goods of the late Middle Ages. In the contemporary cultural context, the art exhibitions are more about the artist's use of artistic language to explore social issues. At the same time, from this point of view, the curatorial way of immersive experience not only satisfies the visualization of the art material media, but also spurs the interest of the public to enter the exhibition hall for exhibitions. In this process, new media technologies have played a role. Beryl and Sarah [4] argued that in the cultural context of contemporary art exhibitions, it is a new curatorial concept that is technology-oriented and future-oriented. Because curators need to consider not only the adoption of a specific measurement method, but also the impact of the cutting-edge technological revolution on the field of culture and art. Curators rethink new media technologies, and the impact on future curatorial methods will be beneficial to future exhibition planning and carried out. Because the immersive experience effectively mobilizes various senses such as visual hearing and touch, and facilitates the public to understand the artist's ideas and the cultural position of the curator from a variety of perspectives, thus stimulating public interest.

However, it should be noted that the limitation of the immersive curatorial approach is that it is far from the textual interpretation. The direct consequence is that the public is caught in a dilemma in artistic acceptance, or the solidity of the artistic works is superficial, superficial, or over explained art works. Although in a positive sense, this curatorial approach allows the public to be a young audience to actively participate in the exhibition. Mason and McCarthy [15] pointed out that the reason why young people are willing to visit the contemporary art museum is that the museum has seized the young people's desire to be unique and pursue individualized psychology. In this case, this interactive method of physical measurement and exhibition will effectively mobilize a variety of cater to the aesthetic taste of young people. It was thought that the immersive art experience should also play a certain educational inspiration while meeting the needs of youth and entertainment. Allen [1] challenged that the essence of education is to effectively balance pure play and aesthetic pleasure, and to link such relationships with artistic activities, thus contributing to the growth of children. The potential drawback of the immersive combat method is that the aesthetic activities are limited to pure entertainment, without deep rational thinking and artistic criticism.

In order to clarify the specific implementation of the immersive art exhibition, the following art exhibitions will further illustrate this issue. The example is the

exhibition of Antony Gormley (2019). Iron Baby by Gormley [10] was placed on the square of the Royal Academy. On the one hand, there is no textual description around the work, and it is easy for people passing by to ignore this iron statue. On the other hand, this iron statue blends well with the surrounding concrete floor. The public unconsciously compared the concept of a hard, cold, iron statue with the concept of softness and warmth brought by the word baby. After the comparison, it was found that the inconsistency is what the artist tends to express, because the concept of the baby's object is in stark contrast to the surrounding concrete floor.

Another of his works was Clearing VII by Gormley [7]. In fact, there is no textual description that is more significant, only a huge star space of the wire material. While challenging the public's body flexibility, this art work will also break the irregular shape, and this bitter concept will be broken. Thus, through direct bending and changing the viewing position and direct dialogue and experience with the artwork. This kind of dialogue and experience is the direct manifestation of the immersive curatorial approach. (Figure 1)



**Figure 1.** *Clearing VII by Gormley (2019), Royal Academy arts, London (Viewed: 19 October 2019).*

In his other work, Lost horizon by Gormley [6] was placed the human body figure irregularly in a space. The purpose of this space is that the five questions seem to be weightless, and there is no logic in the rehearsal, so when the work enters this space. Although there is no repeated influence on this art space, media technology lacks a simple visual element and a simple environment to attract the public into this space to achieve an immersive viewing experience. (Figure 2)



**Figure 2.** *Lost horizon by Gormley (2008), Royal Academy arts, London (Viewed: 19 October 2019).*

Another impressive piece in this exhibition is the Cave by Gormley [9]. At the entrance to the entrance, the staff will first explain the precautions. Based on the inner and inner spaces, there is a limit on the number of visitors to the work to ensure a good visit experience. In fact, according to the description of the artist and the art curator, the main purpose of this work is to explore the possibility of other human

sensory perceptions. Because there is no contribution within this space, the public can only help me through the senses of hearing, touch and help me to meet the ideology of the immersive experience and curatorial approach.

## 5. Conclusion

Overall, on the one hand, the immersive curatorial approach bridged the communication between the public and the artist curator. On the other hand, it also realized that the artist curator uses social language to think about social issues.

First of all, the definition of this expansion method is based on a variety of media, the product of visual exploration of a single image. The immersive approach appeared in the continuous innovation of computer multimedia technology in the late 1980s. Meanwhile, the definition is constantly changing with the richness of the world's images. Secondly, the analysis of this curatorial method shows that this method can help the artistic space visual effect to the maximum and at the same time mobilize the participation of the audience. Furthermore, this measurement method helps to expand the duties of the original curator based on display and collections, and explores the influence of curators in contemporary culture on the use of artistic language to think about cultural phenomena. These thoughts contributed to public education to a certain extent. However, it should also be noted that this method of curation meets the young people's pursuit of individualized artistic experience, and the lack of corresponding artistic interpretation and textual interpretation brings about over-interpretation or surface problems. To be more specific, the exhibitions of (Antony Gormley, 2019), from one aspect to show the specific ways of the immersive art experience in contemporary art exhibitions. The decision to demonstrate the curatorial concept should be based on a certain cultural standpoint and theoretical basis.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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