



LIFE

Museum exhibit designs draw on curiosity and the cerebral

Beyond the blackboard



By George Jacob, Museum Matters
Thursday, May 7, 2015 4:50:41 MDT PM

Scientists believe that creativity is not merely intellect. The U.S. Air Force recognized this some 50 years ago when it realized that high IQ alone could not get a pilot out of a complex jam that required inventive, unorthodox thinking. While convergent thinking is logical and orthodox in its approach to solutions, divergent thought process allowed for creative flow of seemingly disconnected ideas to coalesce in problem solving.

Artistic thought emerges from a sense of wonder motivated by uninhibited exploration of expression. It often draws from cultural sensitivity, flexibility of approach and ability to experiment with mind and material. Museums as centers of non-formal experiential learning offer triggers to originality.

The education system forces minds to conform to the capacity of the left-brained, logically-guided, problem-solving methodology that more often than not, ignores the validity of creativity. The human brain, being a creature of habit, follows an established neural pathway that is risk averse and staid in its approach. Creativity withers like a muscle atrophied, when the mind avoids exercising imagination. Creative geniuses like Vincent Van Gogh, Francisco Goya, Mark Rothko and others slipped into different states of madness, vulnerability, depression and addiction, escaping the social norms and transcending cognitive constructs of light, line and layering of colour.

On the other side of the spectrum, visual thinkers like Einstein, Edison, Bohr and Hawking were able to unravel intangible notions of time, space and matter – both visible and invisible in unthinkable ways impacting a quantum leap in our understanding of the universe.

Not all creativity that stems from the left or the right-brain is useful, effective or relevant. When curiosity collates with the cerebral, it gives birth to new forms of abstraction and tangible inventiveness, not previously conceived. Conceiving museum exhibits draws on this premise.

Museum exhibits have evolved in the last century from the days of the wunderkammer – cabinet of curiosities – to the modern day interactive and immersive. While dinosaurs in fully articulated cast installations or those set in conventional and elaborate diorama settings with forced perspective of background and environment, still continue to hold fascination among most museum goers, new technologies have made the process of learning and interactivity, much more exploratory and layered.

The Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum is working closely with some of the best museum exhibit designers and technology specialists to add layers of engagement and facilitate the ease of live feeds and upgradable information platforms. The galleries are designed as a metaphor for a dinosaur dig as it ramps down below ground level. The cavernous volumetric space is akin to the skeletal form of giant dinosaur “bones” holding up the fractal ceiling supported by asymmetrical beams and glulam nodes allowing for 12 metre long plesiosaurs to be mounted above the gallery space marking their extinction in the cretaceous period some 66 million years ago.

One of the increasingly popular apps that museums world-over have been subscribing to is Augmented Reality where exhibit elements are enhanced by computer-generated sensory input involving sound, video, graphics and animation. While Virtual Reality platforms replace the real world with a simulated environment, Augmented Reality offers real-time visitor driven interface. This is indeed a wonderful addition to visual learning that the museum would offer to thousands of school children in the Peace Region and beyond.

The incredible foresight and investment in nurturing creative minds, is a tribute and testimony to our communities that have come together to make this vision a reality.

Design Thinking for Exec

ideou.com

Learn creative problem solving with IDEO's online courses.

UR Reader's comments »

If you already have an account on this newspaper, you can login to the newspaper to add your comments.

By adding a comment on the site, you accept our terms and conditions and our netiquette rules.

Comments for this thread are now closed.



0 Comments

1

Share

Sort by Newest ▾

