



Teaching in the Art Museum: Interpretation as Experience

Rika Burnham, Elliott Kai-Kee

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At the heart of all good art museum teaching is an effort to bring people and artworks together in meaningful ways. But what constitutes an experience of a work of art? What should be taught and why? What kinds of uniquely valuable experiences are museum educators alone equipped to provide? This book—unlike any other publication currently available—addresses these and myriad other questions and investigates the mission, history, theory, practice, and future prospects of museum education. Every critical issue that has preoccupied the profession throughout its hundred-year history is considered, including lecture- versus conversation-based formats; the place of information in gallery teaching; the relation of art museum teaching to the disciplines of art history, curation, and conservation; the use of questions to stimulate discussion; and the role of playfulness, self-awareness, and institutional context in constructing the visitor's experience.

The book will prove invaluable for all professional museum educators and volunteer docents as well as museum studies students, art and art history teachers, curators, and museum administrators. The essays distill the authors' decades of experience as practitioners and observers of gallery teaching across the United States and abroad. They offer a range of perspectives on which everyone involved with art museum education may reflect and in so doing, encourage education to take its proper place at the center of the twenty-first century art museum.

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