

[Barry University](#)
[Institutional Repository](#)

[Theses and Dissertations](#)

2013

Art Museums Engaging in Social Change: Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, Florida and South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

Houghton Kinsman

Art Museums Engaging in Social Change:
Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, Florida and
South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Barry University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the completion of the Honors Program

By

Houghton Kinsman

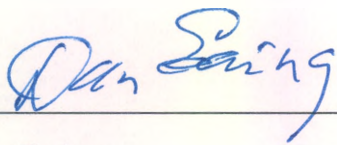
May 2013

Barry University
Honors Program

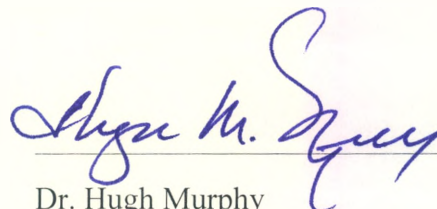
Honors Thesis Written by

Houghton Kinsman

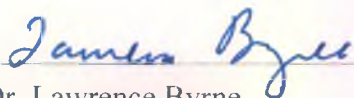
Approved by:



Dr. Dan Ewing
Chair, Thesis Supervisory Committee



Dr. Hugh Murphy
Thesis Supervisory Committee Member



Dr. Lawrence Byrne
Honors Program Faculty Member



Dr. Victor Romano
External Member

THESIS
N
410
.K56
2013

Kinsman, Houghton
Art Museums engaging in Social Change:
Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, Florida
and South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

BFA Fine Arts
May 2013

Abstract of a senior honors thesis at Barry University.
Thesis supervised by Dr. Dan Ewing

Number of pages in text: 37

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of art museums in engaging social issues within their surrounding communities and within a global context. Art museums are in a constant process of evolution. They are cultural institutions that have become cornerstones of society, where they are constantly reinventing themselves in order to stay relevant. Art museums now exist in a postmodern model that is concerned with their role in the surrounding community. Education is now an important tool within the art museum that is used to create awareness about social issues and to teach the community how to solve these issues. The study focused on two art museums, the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami and the South African National Gallery in Cape Town, in order to examine how art museums are engaging with social issues. Alongside these two case studies, the study examined the influences, specifically the Guerilla Girls Feminist movement and the Street Art Movement, on art museums that caused them to evolve into a postmodern institution.

The art museums proved to be an integral part of the struggle to address social issues, through their education, outreach and exhibition programs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to dedicate this thesis to my family. My mother, Janet, my father, Gary and my sister, Madelaine have supported and stood by me on this four-year journey. It hasn't been easy but they have continuously been behind me, encouraging me to pursue my dreams. Without them this thesis would not have been possible.

Then to my family away from home, my advisor and my "mom away from home" Angi Curreri, thank you for lighting the flame! Your enthusiasm has encouraged me to pursue my dream of being an artist!

To Dr. Dan, thank you for your continued support throughout this thesis project, all the suggestions, the emails have made this thesis reach its potential. Thank you too for the knowledge gained in writing about art through your lectures, let me know when you decide to teach that contemporary art class!

A big thanks to my thesis committee, Dr. Victor Romano, Dr. Hugh Murphy and Dr. Larry Byrne, your input and advice was greatly appreciated.

Kayla Nanoo, I have not forgotten about you either, thank you for your incredible support!

Finally, Lark Keeler, Faith 47 and Tyler B Murphy, thank you for your wonderful words and insight. Your participation allowed me to complete the thesis in the most critical fashion.

Thank you all!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
ART MUSEUM ORIGINS	
REVIEW OF CASE STUDIES	3
A TEMPLE OF MUSES	
MOCA NORTH MIAMI	5
SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL GALLERY	9
GUERRILLA GIRLS	11
STREET ART.....	14
TEXTUAL ANALYSIS	16
MOCA AND SANG	16
GUERRILLA GIRLS AND THE MORE INCLUSIVE ART MUSEUM	24
STREET ART.....	26
DISCUSSION.....	30
SIGNIFICANCE OF ART MUSEUMS IN A POSTMODERN CONTEXT	30
APPENDIX.....	35
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	41

INTRODUCTION

Art Museum Origin

Art museums, as we have come to know them, have been the cornerstone of Western society for the past two centuries. They are responsible for allowing us to venture into the vaults of history. Increasingly, they have become a medium through which we can access our cultural, historical and religious beginnings. Art museums have functioned as a parallel to traditional historical museums. However, as contemporary culture evolves so art museums are forced to undergo their very own evolution. This allows them to remain valuable entities within society. It does this, as we will see, with aggressive outreach program, magnet education programs, educational programs and other avenues. Fundamentally, the postmodern museum is about artistic and ethnic diversity and pluralism, with an emphasis upon social and political activism and engagement.

The traditional art museum has generally conformed to a static modern model. In this form, their educational activities were conducted exclusively within the museum walls and participation within the museum culture was reliant upon the interest of the individual.

Due to both internal and external pressures, however art museums has been forced to undergo an evolution. Art movements such as Street Art and the feminist art group Guerilla Girls have exerted significant external pressures that have combined with an internal shift in museum mission to allow the postmodern art museum to undergo an evolution.

Fast-forward to the postmodern context of the last three or four decades and art

museums now exist as more fluid and engaging institutions. No longer is the art museum confined to its walls, but rather its reach extends far beyond its physical structure into the hearts of surrounding communities.

Art museums have been subjected to the evolution of society, meaning that pressures from both within the museum structure and externally have allowed the postmodern model to flourish. Modern art museums are secular inventions¹, therefore they are subjected to changes according to societal evolution in order to stay relevant. Art museums have undergone a development introducing programs, entertainment, publications, workshops and classes in attempt to introduce education to the art museum.² Hilton Kramer, a prominent art critic, attributes this evolution to the fact that, “A good deal of the most fashionable new art of the 1980s was, in one way or another openly “activist”³.”

This paper will examine these pressures in detail through a four-part case study. Two of the case studies will focus on art museums, the Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami and the South African National Gallery Cape Town. Each institution is considered to be at the forefront of contemporary culture, if in vastly different settings. They will be examined specifically to highlight this postmodern evolution. Alongside the investigation into the internal influences of art museum evolution, the other two case studies will explore the Street Art movement and the Guerilla Girls movement as examples of the external influences exerted upon art museums.

This evolution of art museums from a modern to a postmodern model has resulted in art

¹ Carol Duncan's Essay: *The Art Museum as Ritual*, see McEnroe and Pokinski, p. 255

² Hilton Kramer's Essay: *The Assault on the Museums*, see McEnroe and Pokinski, p. 261

³ *Ibid.*

museums becoming more conscious of social issues⁴. By exploring the evolution of art museums we will be able to understand how in a postmodern framework, art museums now function as engagers of social change.

REVIEW OF CASE STUDIES

A Temple of Muses: An Introduction to Art Museums

Art museums have become cornerstones of society. They are responsible for the preservation of culture, they are an indication of societal trends, and they possess the capabilities to enhance the education of the community.

The origins of the art museum can be found in the Classical era, traced back to the Ancient Greek temples dedicated to the muses of the arts and sciences. It was here that competitions took place between members of literary societies. However, the modern idea of an art museum rose to prominence during the Renaissance.⁵

The ideas of collecting and exhibiting became associated with these institutions. The Greek word *museion* (meaning “a temple of the muses,”) was reintroduced during the Renaissance as a “museum”, and it was used to describe rooms containing objects or books that held descriptions of objects. Museums in the Renaissance emerged as a scholarly response to the identification of unfamiliar objects. It became a place where scholars could meet to discuss, identify and enhance their understanding of these objects.⁶

The idea of the museum was set. It was a place for education, a scholarly center.

⁴ Social issues is an umbrella term for issues such as Race, Religion, Sexual Identity etc.

⁵ Jeffrey Abt and Helen Searing. "Museum." *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press. Web. 4 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T060530>>.

⁶ Abt and Searing “Museum”

The emergence of artistic objects alongside artifacts, as decorative features, led to the establishment of the art museum or *kunstkamer*, as it became known.

The emergence of the art museum as we know it today came in the 17th century. These private collections were opened to the public. However, these museums were restricted to the upper echelons of society. Scholars, royals, nobles, artists and officials were the only ones allowed access to these “public” collections.⁷

The French Revolution had a major impact on the role of the art museum as a public institution. Previously, the museum, although “public” in nature, was restricted to the privileged. However, as the French Revolution swept through France, the *Musee du Louvre* was the first truly public art museum as it was created to resemble the “notion of the museum as inherently public, religiously and politically ‘neutral’ and symbolic of social and cultural durability.” The idea of the art museum as we know it today “was a direct result of French political and administrative reforms.”⁸

During the 1900s art museums experienced pressure from external sources. People were beginning to question how well museums related to specific minority, ethnic and underprivileged cultures. These pressures increased and forced the structured nature of the art museum to change.

Fast-forward to the present and art museums today have their own voice, they are able to influence the communities around them. Art museums now “offer their own beliefs and ideas of social, political and sexual identity.”⁹

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Freehan, Catherine. *A Study on Contemporary Art Museums as Activist Agents for Social Change*. Diss. University of Houston, 2010.

Art museums are often run by passionate, dedicated and influential staffs. The mission, goals and idea of the art museum are hinge on the thoughts and interests of the staff expressed in the institutional mission statement. The direction of the art museum broadly differs from one institution to another. As we examine both the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami and the South African National Gallery in Cape Town, it will become clearer how these two museums differ in the way they operate, the community outreach programs they offer, and the exhibits they house. These depend immensely on the Museum Director and the Museum Curator. Together they are responsible for determining the types of exhibitions, the type of artwork acquired for the museum's permanent collection, and the social context of the museum.¹⁰

The role of the curator is particularly important in the context of the art museum. It was once considered to be a "side show" job but now as the art market evolves it has become a cornerstone of the postmodern art museum. Curators are now becoming more and more invested in both the physical and intellectual experiences of an exhibition.¹¹

Community outreach programs and workshops are increasing the accessibility of museums to their surrounding communities. Education through art, an idea prominent at MOCA in North Miami, is becoming more common to art museums. "We really do put education front and center," said Adam D. Weinberg, the director of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.¹²

All these factors, when combined, allow the art museum to offer an education accessible to a large portion of its surrounding populations.

¹⁰ Ratnam, Niru. "Hang it All." *Guardian: The Observer*. 8 Mar 2003: n. page. Web. 8 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theobserver/2003/mar/09/features.magazine47>>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Vogel, Carol. "From Show and Look to Show and Teach." *New York Times*. 14 Mar 2012: n. page. Web. 8 Mar. 2013.

MOCA North Miami: An Art Museum with a Big Heart

The Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami is one of the most progressive contemporary art museums within America. Having opened its doors in 1996, it has continued to exist at the forefront of the contemporary art world for 15 years.¹³ Their March 2013 exhibition, titled “Pivot Points,” is a reflection upon this pioneering past. The importance of the museum lies not in its significance to the contemporary art world but rather to the surrounding community.

Being based in North Miami, the center of a city that hosts a large population of underprivileged youths, the museum has gained notoriety for its work in educating both underprivileged and affluent children. The museum is an exemplary version of the new postmodern art museum. The museum has been recognized for its contribution to the community by the Institute of Museum and Library services, which is a federal agency. The director Bonnie Clearwater, along with a staff member Kassandra Timothe, who began her career as a volunteer teenage docent at the museum, travelled to Washington D.C in 2012 to receive the National medal for Museum and Library service. This was an important milestone in the museum’s short 15-year history.¹⁴

Following its opening in February 1996, the museum expanded from the original Center of Contemporary Art, which was a modest single space gallery. The Center of Contemporary Art was inaugurated in 1981, so the more modern expansion was a signal of the government’s intention to place more emphasis on contemporary art education.

¹³ "Mission Statement and History." *Museum of Contemporary Art*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Mar 2013. <<http://mocanomi.org/about/museum-history/>>.

¹⁴ Sampson, Hannah. "National Award for Museum of Contemporary Art." *Miami Herald*. 05 Nov 2012: n. page. Web. 10 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/11/05/3082780/north-miamis-museum-of-contemporary.html>>.

The new space is a “state of the art” 23,000 square foot structure with 12,000 square feet of exhibition space. In addition to the interior, the exterior courtyard offers space for outdoor sculptures and film screenings.¹⁵

There are plans for an expansion of the museum’s current building¹⁶, which would almost triple the exhibition space and allow for an entire education wing, solely dedicated to offering more educational opportunities to the surrounding community.

The museum has a dedicated staff, passionate about contemporary art and most importantly passionate about educating the community through art. Spearheaded by director Bonnie Clearwater and Education Curator Lark Keeler, the museum has established itself as a education oriented museum. When asked about the mission of the museum, Clearwater had this to say, “Everything we do is education. Exhibitions are education, outreach is education, public programming is education, even our membership programs are education-focused.”¹⁷

The mission statement of the museum, as stated on its website is as follows: “The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) is dedicated to making contemporary art accessible to diverse audiences – especially underserved populations – through the collection, preservation and exhibition of the best of contemporary art and its art historical influences.”¹⁸

The museum is geared towards exhibiting artwork of both emerging and established artists; in order to create an in depth discussion around what is topical in the contemporary art world at a particular moment in time. The museum has a permanent

¹⁵ Mission Statement and History

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Sampson, Hannah. "National Award for Museum of Contemporary Art."

¹⁸ Mission Statement and History

collection that “represents significant artistic development in contemporary art.”¹⁹ The permanent collection now numbers 700 artworks and consists of work by leading practitioners of contemporary art, such as John Baldessari, Ed Ruscha and Julian Schnabel.²⁰

However alongside the educational aspect and the permanent collection, the exhibitions held at MOCA are progressive, risky and very often social in nature. The museum has an extensive exhibition history, displaying between four and five exhibitions each calendar year.

The best example of the MOCA’s set of progressive exhibitions was their Bruce Weber photographic exhibition titled *Haiti/Little Haiti*. The Knight Foundation, an organization that the museum frequently works with to provide exhibitions of meaningful social significance, funded this exhibition. In this exhibition of Weber, a well-known American fashion photographer²¹, focused on the community of Little Haiti in Miami, alongside his images of the destruction caused by the earthquake in Haiti on January 12, 2010.

This exhibition of his work not only showed the destruction of the earthquake but it showed us the essence of the Haitian community. The strength and resilience they displayed in getting back on their feet after the earthquake, was incredibly powerful. The exhibition served as a source of pride for Haitians in Miami as Weber documented their vibrant culture and island heritage. It was both an examination and a celebration of the Haitian community. Alongside this exhibition, the museum offered a program called

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Maslin, Janet (March 24, 1989) Review/Film Festival; The History of a Musician's Disintegration New York Times

HeArt to HeArt for Haiti, which encouraged expression and healing through art.²² This exhibition epitomizes the nature of exhibitions at MOCA.

South African National Gallery: Defining a National Heritage

In much the same way as MOCA in North Miami is involved in affecting change in its community, the South African National Gallery has an integral part in preserving and changing the direction of South African culture. The gallery itself is housed in the city center, in the middle of the beautiful Company Gardens, at the heart of the cities cultural life in the most cosmopolitan city in South Africa. Established in 1851²³, the museum has remained a cornerstone of cultural establishments in the country. The museum itself houses both traditional paintings from the Dutch, British and French cultures, alongside a cutting edge contemporary collection.²⁴

The museum welcomed new director Raish Naidoo to the helm in 2009 and he went about revamping the museum, and gearing it towards a post-modern model concerned with not only preserving history but challenging contemporary South African culture.

The museum is now focused on exporting an African art identity to the world, which essentially means that these exhibitions will display the essence of South African society to the world. When interviewed about the promotion of African art, Naidoo said, "So the idea is to showcase African art here where possible, given that we have the

²² Bruce Weber Exhibition, see Clearwater, p. 142.

²³ Berman, Esmé (2010). *Art and Artists of South Africa*. Cape Town: G3 Publishers. pp. 376–379.

²⁴ "South African National Gallery Collections." *Iziko Museums*. N.p.. Web. 20 Mar 2013. <<http://www.iziko.org.za/static/page/art-collections>>.

conditions.”²⁵ This is a clear sign that the museum is devoted to exhibiting artists that have a voice and that are distinctly African in origin. The quote, “And considering that a large percentage of our visitors are foreign (50%) it makes sense to also be a window onto the art of the continent,”³ is yet another example of Naidoo’s vision for the museum. With a global vision like this, it means that African artists are able to develop a more potent voice, as their artworks are now becoming available to a worldwide audience, much like the US counterparts at MOCA.

This shows that a museum like the South African National Gallery now not only caters to its surrounding community, but to the global community as a whole. This international exposure is incredibly important for museums in terms of dealing with social issues. One of the biggest reasons for the success of the SANG is its role in the turbulent history of South Africa. The museum has been involved in exhibitions that directly challenged the Apartheid regime. The exhibition titled, “Facing the Past: Seeking the Future - Reflections on a Decade of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission”²⁶ which was on show in 2006 is just one of many examples of the willingness of the museum to address social issues that have affected and continue to affect South African society.

The museum has also begun to concern itself with community programs and public education workshops. Naidoo spoke about the funding for the museum, which is supplied by the Department of Arts and Culture, as a source for establishing better quality community education programs. “I don’t want to give away too much at this stage. We’re

²⁵ Blackman, Matthew. "From Bailey to Dakar Biennale." *Art Throb*. n.d. n. page. Web. 4 Feb. 2013. <<http://www.artthrob.co.za/Reviews/2009-2012-From-Bailey-to-the-Dakar-Biennale.asp&xgt;>>.

²⁶ "Facing the Past: Seeking the Future - Reflections on a Decade of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission." *Iziko Museums Exhibition Catalogue*. N.p.. Web. 20 Mar 2013.

also looking at using the Annex space for collaborative art education and public program”²⁷

Museums are becoming more and more concerned with the community around them. Naidoo reported an increase of museum patrons during the World Cup, when attendance at all other South African museums was down.²⁸ This shows the impact of the SANG, its exhibitions and its permanent collection on a nationwide scale. At the same time, it shows the interest of the public in a museum that has a strong permanent collection, intellectual and socially penetrating exhibitions alongside thought provoking public programs.

There is a demand for thought provoking contemporary art in an atmosphere that promotes learning and encourages the discussion of social issues. The South African National Gallery is beginning to realize the importance of its establishment in the evolution of art museums on a global spectrum.

Guerilla Girls: Feminism Influences Art Museums

Guerilla Girls is a feminist action group that was formed in 1985 in New York in response to the Museum of Modern Art’s exhibition, “ An International Survey of Recent Painting and Drawing.”²⁹ The two founding members, “Kathe Kollwitz” and “ Frida Kahlo”, protested outside MoMA’s exhibition in response to the reluctance of curators to include more women in the show. The exhibition represented 169 artists and of those 169, only 13 were women.³⁰ They stood out front of the MoMA and picketed and

²⁷ Berman, Esmé (2010). *Art and Artists of South Africa*

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Brenson, Michael (April 21, 1984). "A Living Artists Show at the Modern Museum". *The New York Times*. Retrieved 27 February 2013.

³⁰ Stark, Lizzie. "An Interview with the Guerrilla Girls". *Fringe Magazine*. Retrieved 27 February 2013.

demonstrated but they were unable to affect any major change, or response from exhibition-goers. It was this unsuccessful demonstration that prompted “Kollowitz” and “Kahlo” to rethink the Guerilla Girls. They decided to adopt new protest strategies and broaden the social issues that they aimed to confront in art museum exhibitions. They began to focus on racism, as well as feminism.

The group often acts on an anonymous basis, with members regularly sporting gorilla masks and nicknames relating to dead, famous female artists. When “Kathe Kollwitz” was asked why she chose the famous German artist’s name she replied, “I chose Kathe Kollwitz, a German artist who lived from 1845-1945. I admire her because she was a lifelong political activist and believed that art should be accessible to all, not just to the wealthy.”³¹ The nicknames in themselves become a type of protest. The Guerilla Girls adopt these nicknames because they stand for what the artist themselves believed in.

After the failure of the first demonstration and the revamping of the Guerilla Girls, a massive poster campaign was unleashed throughout Soho and the East Village in New York City. These posters dealt with the discrimination that existed against women in the art world. They conducted research into this discrimination by interviewing artists, dealers, curators, critics and collectors. Most of the people interviewed admitted to the existence of discrimination. The group took these quotes and turned them into the posters that would adorn the arts district in New York City.³² This fight against sexism was a

³¹ Ibid.

³² Kahlo, Frida. *Confessions of the Guerilla Girls*. 1995. 1995. Print.
<http://www.guerrillagirls.com/interview/index.shtml>.

major driving point for the Guerilla Girls and soon the movement began to pick up a head of steam.³³

The anonymity of the group was particularly important for the movement because many of the women involved in the protest movement were artists themselves. This anonymity allowed them to steer clear of the consequences of involvement with the Guerilla Girls and it kept their artwork separate from the movement. The movement after all was about protest and demonstration against the unfair discrimination of women within art institutions, and had nothing to do with the type of artwork women were creating.³⁴

Fast forward to the 21st century and the legacy of the Guerilla Girls is plain for all to see. Women now make up over 50 percent of the admissions to art schools for the past decade, Marina Abramovic has had a solo show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the “Women’s” Whitney Biennale has become famous, and now even MoMA owns some of the posters the Guerilla Girls created in protest.³⁵

The Guerilla Girls is a movement that is vitally important to the evolution of the art museum from an exclusive modern model to an inclusive postmodern model. The movement has been responsible in forcing the museum to become aware not only of female artists but of artists of colour as well. As a result the art museum has now become an institution that is concerned with culture across the board. As a result of the actions of

³³ Ashton Cooper (2010). "Guerrilla Girls speak on social injustice, radical art". *A&E. Columbia Spectator*. Retrieved 20 April 2010.

³⁴ Stark, Lizzie. "An Interview with the Guerrilla Girls". *Fringe Magazine*. Retrieved 27 February 2013.

³⁵ Ashton Cooper (2010). "Guerrilla Girls speak on social injustice, radical art". *A&E. Columbia Spectator*. Retrieved 20 April 2010.

the Guerilla Girls the art museum continues to exhibit a shift towards a more extensive representation of cultural heritage and sexual equality.

Street Art: Moving into the Museum

Street Art is a new movement within the art world. Considered to be graffiti, street art began to gain popularity as it transitioned from illegal art or vandalism into the traditional art world. Street art has always been considered a public art form, one that speaks the language of the street, and exemplifies the culture from where which it stems. Initially the transition of the art form from the streets into galleries and museums received a great deal of criticism, because it was seen to be “cashing” in on the commercial hype.

Graffiti has a long history, dating back to the Roman Empire, where it could be found at prestigious sites such as Pompeii. It was initially known as *sgraffito*, which denoted scribbles or drawings on a flat surface. These marks were often found on ancient Roman architecture.³⁶ Graffiti is mostly used to refer to the 20th century phenomenon in which one creates art in a public space.

“Graffiti is recognized as a way of dealing with problems of identification in overcrowded or self-denying environments, and are an outlet through which people may choose to publish their thoughts, philosophies or poems.”³⁷

Street art is an evolutionary form of graffiti. It remains hard to define street art, as it has strong ties to the nature of graffiti; however it deals with concepts that are often more political or social.

³⁶ Susan A. Phillips. "Graffiti." *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press. Web. 9 Mar. 2013. <<http://oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T033960>>.www.

³⁷ Ibid.

Street art has always struggled to shirk the label of vandalism, however through this critique many of the artists have created a strong social and political dimension to their work. This ultimately stems from the lack of accessibility to mainstream media that people have.³⁸ Therefore artists turn to the street. Public places offer the perfect opportunity for artists to reach a widespread audience, as these public places are cultural hubs of modern society. Therefore a political or social message is far more likely to influence more people on the side of a building as opposed to being exhibited within a gallery.

When questioned about Street Art, New York City's Queens Museum of Art Executive Director Tom Finkelpearl said public art "is the best way for people to express themselves in this city." Finkelpearl, who helps organize socially conscious art exhibitions, added, "Art gets dialogue going. That's very good."³⁹

Although Street Art remains illegal in nature, more and more companies are turning to street artists in order to compete with large-scale advertisements and billboards, hence a strong sense of commercialism being associated with the movement. The transition from the street into an art world, that is intent on exhibiting these artworks at exorbitant prices, has caused some unrest amongst street arts most ardent fans.⁴⁰ However Street Art remains the most accessible art form to all spheres of society.

As museums begin to expand beyond their walls, they are realizing how important Street Art is to this idea of social education. Museums are beginning to exhibit street

³⁸ McPhee, Josh. "Street Art and Social Movements." *Just Seeds Artist Cooperative*. N.p., 17 Feb 2009. Web. Web. 8 Mar. 2013.

³⁹ <http://artradarjournal.com/2010/01/21/what-is-street-art-vandalism-graffiti-or-public-art-part-i/>

⁴⁰ Mizota, Sharon. "Art Review: 'Art in the Streets' at Geffen Contemporary." *Los Angeles Times*. 15 Apr 2011: n. page. Web. 8 Mar. 2013.

artwork alongside other forms of contemporary art in order to attract people. The public who are familiar with the art in public spaces, are being enticed into a museum experience. Together Street Art and contemporary art museums have formed a relationship that is beneficial to both parties.

South African street artist Faith 47 talks about her role as a street artist in creating awareness and inspiring action with regards to both social and political issues. By understanding the role of street art in engaging social/political problems, it will be instrumental in allowing us to comprehend the transformation of art museums. Street art is an external pressure, it is in essence a 'noisy neighbor' and contemporary art museums can no longer ignore it.

The relationship between art museums and street art is, in itself, a symbol of the transformation of art museums.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

MOCA and SANG: How Museums Operate in a Postmodern Context

Both the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in North Miami and the South African National Gallery (SANG) in Cape Town have been institutions closely related to their surrounding communities, but at the same time have become accessible to a worldwide audience. MOCA constantly exchanges exhibitions, artworks and ideas with the Tate Museum in London and the Museum of Modern Art in New York⁴¹, contributing to the global reach of the museum. When viewing the museum in relation to engaging social issues this global perspective is an extremely important component of the success of the museum. It allows the museum to become aware of social issues that exist on a global scale.

⁴¹ Clearwater, Bonnie. "Collector to Collector." MOCA, Miami. 23 Mar 2013. Address.

The South African National Gallery is the most significant museum in South Africa, as it is designated as the country's "national" gallery. This places both significant importance and scrutiny upon the institution. As with the MOCA in North Miami, it is responsible for exhibiting artists that reflect not only the cultural heritage of South Africa but also artists that exist at the forefront of Contemporary Art in Africa and internationally. "Selections from the Permanent Collection change regularly to enable the museum to have a full program of temporary exhibitions of paintings, works on paper, photography, sculpture, beadwork, textiles and architecture. They provide insight into the extraordinary range of aesthetic production in this country, the African continent and further afield."⁴² This global dialogue is extremely important to the evolution of art museums, especially as social issues are affecting people on an international scale.

The South African National Gallery is beginning to open its doors to artists from abroad. Historically, the museum has focused upon South African artists and exhibits. As the "national" gallery, it is tasked with exhibiting artwork central to the heritage of South Africa. The new director Raish Naidoo is beginning to view the museum on a more international scale, he is now concerned with turning the museum into an institution that not only focuses on the surrounding community as a source for exhibits, but also on artists throughout Africa and internationally, in order to expose the local community to international ideas about art in a social context. This quote makes the strategy explicit: "It is about broadening our knowledge and engaging more with the continent we're located

⁴² "Iziko Museums." *South African National Gallery*. Iziko . Web. 28 Mar 2013. <<http://www.iziko.org.za/museums/south-african-national-gallery>>.

in and with countries we have not previously engaged with.⁴³ This global approach means that the museum is creating an opportunity for the community to be exposed to international thoughts and ideas. The dialogue that these international exhibitions provokes combined with the dialogue from the local exhibitions leads to the community being more informed about the world in a global context. This global knowledge allows the community to better understand complex social issues. With a better understanding of social issues people within the community are able to engage the issues in an educated manner, which ultimately would yield more successful results.

As Catherine Freehan states in her dissertation: “Contemporary Art educates, influences and instigates questions and it may assume an artistic role concerning a current issue, or simply make a statement. This type of art changes lives by making people think broadly about themselves, their community and the world.”⁴⁴ Contemporary art is an important part of this discussion because without the art, the art museum would not exist. The standard and significance of the artwork often leads to the success of art museums in creating awareness around social aspects of contemporary society. “Contemporary Art is the art of our lifetime,”⁴⁵ and therefore it reflects the mechanics of today’s society.

The more critical artists are of their surroundings the more significant their artwork. Throughout art history we have examples of artists making statements about political or social ideas, whether it be Picasso with *Guernica* and addressing the Spanish

⁴³ Blackman, Matthew. "From Bailey to Dakar Biennale." *Art Throb*. n.d. n. page. Web. 4 Feb. 2013. <<http://www.artthrob.co.za/Reviews/2009-2012-From-Bailey-to-the-Dakar-Biennale.asp&xgt;>;

⁴⁴ Freehan, Catherine. *A Study on Contemporary Art Museums as Activist Agents for Social Change*. Diss. University of Houston, 2010. Pp. 3

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Civil War,⁴⁶ or Goya and his painting, *The Third of May 1808* about the Spanish massacre by the invading French forces.⁴⁷ Or, fast-forward to the 1960's and Eddie Adams', Pulitzer Prize winning photograph, *General Nguyen Ngoc Loan Killing Vietcong Nguyen Van Lem*, which depicted the general executing Lem.⁴⁸ All of these artworks have significant social and political meaning. It is the nature of art, and contemporary art specifically to allow artists to have a voice to express not only their emotions but to allow them to express both social and political messages.

Besides the exhibitions of the museums, which will be examined later on, art museums are beginning to introduce educational outreach programs in order to extend the reach of the institution beyond the museum walls. These programs allow the museum to reach the community on a personal level and education takes place in a physical environment. Very often these outreach programs use art and artists as a vehicle to transfer knowledge. " Art museums educate the public about various aspects of art including particular art styles, mediums, artist's interpretations, aesthetics, art genre, art history and art criticism."⁴⁹ By teaching the community about art, about how to interpret artwork and how to understand the different genres of art it allows the viewer to formulate a well-rounded interpretation of the artwork or exhibition, which in turn educates them. This education then can be applied to practical, everyday situations, including those situations social in nature.

⁴⁶ "Picasso: Love and War 1935-1945, Journey through the Exhibition: Guernica." *National Gallery of Victoria*. N.p.. Web. 28 Mar 2013.

<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/picasso/education/ed_JTE_ITG.html>

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Winslow, Donald R. (April 19, 2011). "The Pulitzer Eddie Adams Didn't Want". *The New York Times*

⁴⁹ Freehan A Study on Contemporary Art Museums pp. 15

MOCA has numerous different outreach programs geared towards specific sections of the community. Very often one associates outreach programs with people who are less fortunate. This stereotype tends to alienate the population of the community that is not affected by issues such as poverty but still they have their own issues to deal with, such as gender inequality, and the search for identity, so the museum offers a wide range of programs catered to all sections of the community. The list of programs that are offered at the museum is as follows:

Women on the Rise

Women on the Rise! is a unique gender-specific outreach program that presents the work of contemporary women artists such as Ana Mendieta and Carrie Mae Weems to teenage girls ages 12-18 who are served by social justice organizations such as Urgent, Inc. and Thelma Gibson Health Initiative.

Art Corps

Art Corps is MOCA's new outreach program serving teens and young adult males by exposing them to Contemporary Art and using self-expression as a tool for better communication and empowerment.

Heart to Heart

MOCA works closely with mentally and physically challenged children, teens and adults through partnerships with Jewish Community Services (JCS) of North Miami, and Miami-Dade County Public Schools Exceptional Student Education (ESE) program.

MOCA on the Move

Custom Designed Museum Art Programs are available for your school or organization. MOCA art instructors travel to locations through the community to teach children about modern and contemporary artists and engage them in hands-on art projects.

One can see the diverse range of programs targeting a range of age groups from young children to adults. Education is not only specific to kids or teenagers it needs to be accessible to adults as well. If society's adults are not educated, what does that mean for the education of the youth? These outreach programs are the reason why the Museum of Contemporary Art is recognized both nationally and internationally as a museum at the forefront of the evolution of art museums within today's society. This was reaffirmed by the award the museum received in Washington DC, the National medal for Museum and Library service.⁵⁰

The South African National Gallery is setup in a very similar fashion with regard to public education and outreach programs. The South African National Gallery is able to offer a more extensive outreach department due to the size and significance of the museum. MOCA offers an incredibly extensive education wing for its relatively small scale premises and staff. Being the "national" gallery of South Africa, SANG is able to offer a more extensive amount of varying educational, social and artistic programs. There are programs targeting schools, that are arts, natural and social history, there are public programs that target older community members that are designing to be "meaningful and

⁵⁰ Sampson, Hannah. "National Award for Museum of Contemporary Art." *Miami Herald*. 05 Nov 2012: n. page. Web. 10 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/11/05/3082780/north-miamis-museum-of-contemporary.html>>.

educational.”⁵¹ These public programs at both museums encourage inclusionary discussions and inter-generational dialogues.⁵²

The SANG has adopted the approach of “a museum without walls”, which is the postmodern idea of museums expanding beyond their walls to educate the community. The museums outreach programs deal specifically with social and political concerns. One of the topics that is presented in the outreach curriculum is Resistance Art.⁵³ This was an art form that was born out of the Apartheid years, as a voice for the anti-Apartheid struggle. This type of education hits home in the most riveting way possible. It is dealing with social issues that are at the core of South African culture.

As stated on the SANG website: “The Core Function of the Education & Public Programmes Department: is to offer multimodal program by utilizing the collections, objects, stories, exhibitions, commemorative days and other resources that: are inclusive, encourage participation, promote awareness, enhance knowledge and understanding, foster respect of human rights, contribute to social cohesion and human dignity.”⁵⁴

This is the perfect example of how art museums are providing fundamental education that will allow us as a society to understand and better combat problems, such as race, poverty, gender inequality and sexual prejudice.

There is a clear relationship between the goals of MOCA and the SANG, in terms of outreach. Even though they are separated by the Atlantic Ocean, the mission is shared across the world. It is yet another sign that the evolution of these postmodern institutions

⁵¹ "Education and Public Programmes." *Iziko Museums*. Iziko. Web. 28 Mar 2013. <<http://www.iziko.org.za/static/landing/education-and-public-programmes>>.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid. School Programmes section

⁵⁴ "Outreach." *Iziko Museums*. Iziko. Web. 28 Mar 2013. <<http://www.iziko.org.za/static/page/outreach>>.

is forcing us to become aware of how to deal with social issues through education.

However, outreach is not the only way of engaging the community.

Along with these educational outreach programs, MOCA offers lectures and panel discussions with artist, art critics and art collectors. This is yet another way the community is engaged through education. The people being interviewed on the panel are often selected because their artwork deals with issues affecting society on a global scale or they have grown up in a community that is deeply affected by social issues and they have gone on to make a success of themselves. It becomes very much about their story and how their communal upbringing affects them. The latest series focused on art collectors, and one of the people interviewed was Boris Hirmas, an art collector from Mexico City. Coming from Mexico, a country facing many social issues, (poverty, class separation etc), he spoke about how important art was to the community. He spoke about how art taught him problem solving. Art is creative; problems are encountered by artists and must be solved in order to create a comprehensive work. Boris Hirmas told of how by understanding how artists solved problems within their work he was able to apply those creative principles to his own field, finance.⁵⁵ He is now Entrepreneur-in-Residence at FIU.⁵⁶

Hirmas is now able to give back to his community thanks to not only his financial status but his business acumen. As Entrepreneur-in-Residence, he holds discussions with students and fellow entrepreneurs in order to stimulate economic growth. He was able to establish his business practice and make it successful, thanks to his education through art.

⁵⁵ Clearwater, Bonnie. "Collector to Collector." MOCA, Miami. 23 Mar 2013. Address.

⁵⁶ Hirmas, Boris. "Coffee Break Miami with Entrepreneur-In-Residence, Boris Hirmas." Florida International University. FIU: Business Campus, Miami. 29 Mar 2013. Speech.

He also spoke about the role of art museums as institutions responsible for inspiring individuals, whether it be in the art field, social sphere, political world or within the economy. He made it extremely clear that the art museum needs to involve the entire community in order to successfully engage social trends.⁵⁷

“Museums are safe places for people to grow. Museums extract higher levels of thinking from the public.”⁵⁸ This is an interesting idea because the art museum is in many ways similar to a school. In America, art museums were officially proclaimed as educational institutions in 1969 thanks to the Tax Reform Act of 1969⁵⁹. This meant that art museums now had “the responsibility of educating the public.”⁶⁰ This revelation forced American museums to reevaluate their strategies.

Guerilla Girls and a more inclusive art museum

Moving forward to the 1980’s and a major factor in art museums repositioning themselves as education centers was the influence of the Guerilla Girls. Traditionally, the female form was frequently present in art museums in the form of a nude and there were very few if not any female artists being exhibited in art museums, especially in America.

Guerilla Girls protested mainly in the form of poster art. Members assumed the identities of dead female artist’s, allowing them to remove their personalities from the equation and to focus on the issue of gender inequality within the art world, specifically art museums.⁶¹ The Guerrilla Girls embody the idea of the external pressures that art museums face. It is not only about the direction of the curator or the museum director, but art museums also have to deal with pressure coming from outside the walls of the

⁵⁷ Clearwater, Bonnie. “Collector to Collector”

⁵⁸ Freehan A Study on Contemporary Art Museums pg. 15

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ "Guerilla Girls." . Web. 28 Mar 2013. <<http://www.guerrillagirls.com/index.shtml>>.

museum. As much as it is about the museum reaching beyond its walls to the community, it is about the community telling the art museum what they want to see inside the museum. Therefore a very intriguing dialogue develops between the art museum and the community. This is a relationship that has two sides to it.

The Guerilla Girls determined early on that art museums were not treating women with parity and they went about creating a way to pressure art museums into adopting their policy to integrate women into the museum in a more fulfilling way.

They relied on facts, statistics and humor in order to protest the policies of major art museums. The most notable art museum to come under scrutiny was the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. They created a huge billboard with a female nude from Ingre's famous painting, *Grande Odalesque* emblazoned with a gorilla mask, (which the Guerilla Girls adopted in order to hide their identities⁶²) alongside the statistic that "less than 4 percent of the artists in the modern art section of the museum were women but 76 percent of the nudes are female."⁶³ The Museum of Modern Art in New York, with whom MOCA regularly exchanges exhibitions and artworks, also came into the spotlight after the Guerilla Girls protested at its future feminist symposium.⁶⁴

The importance of these protests cannot be denied. The significance of art museums becoming equally inclusive of both genders is as important as art museums becoming involved on a global scale. The inclusion of more female artists in exhibitions means that the art museum is now able to relate to a wider audience. More people are able to become enthusiastic about art museums because they are including artists and artworks that they want to see, so the impact of the art museum becomes more significant

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

because more people are attending its exhibitions. If art museums continued to ignore female artists, they would run the risk of completely alienating the female population. This would have a major impact on the importance of the art museum.

This move towards a comprehensive representation of gender and ethnicities throughout art museums is important in order for the art museum to maintain its ability to create awareness and combat social issues. The more inclusive the representation, the more ideas and thought provoking art is being created and therefore a greater diversity of social issues are being dealt with. An art museum that shows only American male painters will have only one specific dimension, no matter how well versed those painters are, as opposed to an art museum that represents artists from all over the world, both male and female, and the dimensionality of the art museum will increase tenfold.

These external pressures that influence art museums are vitally important to increasing the standard of exhibitions on show at the museum. The more diverse the artist pool, the more opportunity there is for the artwork to be of a higher standard, and as a result for the exhibition to be more successful in engaging social issues.

Street Art: An urban art form with a voice

Along with the Guerilla Girls, the Street Art movement has had a significant impact on the way art museums function and the type of exhibitions they hold. The success of Street Art within museums is another sign of how museums are creating awareness and attempting to combat the shortcomings of today's society.

Street Art which has its roots in the traditional art form of graffiti, is making a transition from being seen as an urban art form to an art form at home inside an art

museum. This is a huge transition, that is extremely important for the evolution of art museums.

Street artists are messengers of social issues.⁶⁵ As art museums strategize plans on how to better combat social issues, so they are turning to street artists more frequently. Street artists have an affiliation with the streets; in many ways they represent the truth of what is happening in and around their communities. Street Art is the both the truest and rawest form of artists giving themselves a voice.

Street art has been instrumental in creating a relationship between the art museum and the community. "Street art arrived to save the day, bringing a noble mission of making good use of public space to display art that served the public interest."⁶⁶

The Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami had an exhibition titled "Pivot Points: 15 Years and Counting" and within this exhibition they have included the group Assume Vivid Astro Focus. This artist collective frequently exhibits public murals with a culturally infused message, bringing together their diverse cultural backgrounds. Members of the group come from as far and wide as Paris and Sao Paulo.⁶⁷ This example shows us how much of an integral part of the museum's mission it is to create social awareness through their exhibitions.

The South African National Gallery has also become a part of this transition of street art into museums. They just recently held an exhibition entitled, "1910-2010

⁶⁵ Krismantari, Ika. "Street art makes a statement." *Jakarta Post*. 23 Jul 2011: n. page. Web. 30 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/07/23/street-art-makes-a-statement.html>>.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Museum Catalog

Pierneef to Gugulective.”⁶⁸ The exhibition focused on 100 years of South African art and included the Gugulective, an artist collective that includes street artist Faith 47.⁶⁹ Faith 47 is a South African street artist that is making waves around the world with her socially critical murals and exhibitions. By including this collective in the show alongside other significant South African master artists, it signaled the importance of including street art within the national gallery. This was a sign of how important street art has become to national heritage.

This model of showing street art within museums was reflected most poignantly at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (LA MOCA), the sister institution of MOCA North Miami. LA MOCA had a huge street art show titled “Art in the Streets.”⁷⁰ This was the first major show of contemporary street art in an traditional art museum ever.⁷¹ This was a sign of the growing influence of street art as an external pressure on art museums. The significance of the movement was becoming too important to ignore and, combined with this continuous shift of art museums towards addressing social issues, was the perfect match. In much the same way that the Guerilla Girls forced art museums to change the content of their exhibitions to become more inclusive, street art

⁶⁸ Adams, Shameem. "1910-2010 Peirneef to Gugulective." *Iziko Museums Exhibition Catalogue*. Iziko, 15 Apr 2010. Web. 30 Mar 2013. <<http://www.iziko.org.za/calendar/event/1910-2010-from-pierneef-to-gugulective>>.

⁶⁹ "...for those who live in it, Pop-culture politics and strong voices' Athi-Patra Ruga, Zanele Muholi, Faith47, Gugulective and Musa Nxumalo at MU." *Arthrob*. 22 May 2010: n. page. Web. 30 Mar. 2013. <http://www.artthrob.co.za/Listings/AthiPatra_Ruga,_Musa_Nxumalo_,_Zanele_Muholi,_Faith47_and_Gugulective_at_MU_in_May_2010.asp&xgt>

⁷⁰ Mizota, Sharon. "Art Review: 'Art in the Streets' at Geffen Contemporary." *Los Angeles Times*. 15 Apr 2011: n. page. Web. 8 Mar. 2013.

⁷¹ "Art in the Streets." *Los Angeles MOCA*. Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, 17 Apr 2011. Web. 30 Mar 2013. <<http://www.moca.org/museum/exhibitiondetail.php?id=443>>.

has forced art museums to broaden the scope of their exhibition programs in order to address contemporary societal issues.

Examining the art museum and how effectively it is able to address social issues, whether it is through creating awareness, offering education or inspiring education, is an ongoing process. The art museum is in a process of constant evolution, transforming itself in order to stay relevant to today's society. The extent of the art museum's reach is growing, especially at institutions such as MOCA and the SANG. These two examples are the ideal models for how effectively the art museum is able to address social issues.

One of the best examples of this education for a better cause at the Museum of Contemporary Art is the story of Cassandra Timothe. Timothe began her career at MOCA as a volunteer docent in one of the museum's art education programs whilst she was in middle school. Seven years later she was part of the museum's staff and traveled with Bonnie Clearwater to Washington D.C to receive the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.⁷² She is now a legislative aide to Tampa City Councilwomen, having graduated from University of South Florida and had this to say about the significance of the museum in her success, "I attribute my success today to the experience I gained through volunteering at MOCA. If it had not been for the mentoring and education I received at the museum, I know I wouldn't be where I am today."⁷³ These education programs keep children off the street and allow the children an opportunity to meet like-minded students and develop friendships within the

⁷² Sampson, Hannah. "National Award for Museum of Contemporary Art." *Miami Herald*. 05 Nov 2012: n. page. Web. 10 Mar. 2013.

<<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/11/05/3082780/north-miamis-museum-of-contemporary.html>>.

⁷³ Butera, Alexandra. United States. Institute of Museum and Library Services. *News and Events*. 2012. Web. <http://www.ims.gov/news/2012_medals_museum_of_contemporary_art.asp&xgt;

community.⁷⁴ It is the success of these programs that show the public how important art museums are in engaging social problems.

DISCUSSION

Significance of art museums in a postmodern context

As mentioned previously, art museums are in a constant state of evolution. As cornerstone institutions it is important that they consistently remain up to date with the trends within society. It is extremely important that museums stay relevant. They are institutions that are responsible for providing education that is imperative in the fight against social and cultural issues. They are vehicles through which people are able to understand and confront social issues. The two museum case studies have shown that art museum staffs and funding partners are aware of their responsibility to provide education through art, and more specifically to educate people enough to go back out into the world and make a difference.

What we have seen is that these art museums are not solely focused on children from underprivileged backgrounds but rather people from all backgrounds and all ages, from young kids all the way through to adults. This is an extremely important aspect of art museum education. The fact that they are also targeting adults is a sign of how important it is for adults to be informed as well. The better informed the adults are the more opportunities their children will have to realize the significance of a good education. The more informed the people are, the more people will be able to combat social issues and the better communities will become, which will in turn produce a much

⁷⁴ Keeler, Lark. e-mail Interview. 05 April 2013.

more harmonious society. This type of education is an ongoing process that needs to involve every generation.

Lark Keeler, the educational curator at MOCA, in our interview, made clear this point of education being equally important to adults. She spoke of how the museum's education programs allow adults to find "social connections and therapy." She gave an example of how an adult drawing student was able to revisit her dream of completing her fine art degree through the museum's program. She had given up on her dream in order to become a parent.⁷⁵

The art museum has an even more important role as an educational institution due to the educational budget cuts for the arts in public schools. Core curricula are becoming more important and the arts are getting phased out.⁷⁶ It is vitally important, however, for students to continue to receive an arts-based education because it teaches problem solving.⁷⁷ It is this type of education that allows people to better address social issues. By teaching students about these social issues, whether it be through learning about them, creating an understanding, or by learning about how to improve them the students are forced to directly confront these issues.

This idea of a personal connection to the community through art is a sentiment echoed by Faith 47, a South African street artist. When I asked her about why she was drawn to street art, she spoke of a personal connection to the surrounding community, "time lends itself to the 'people' because as an artist it's impossible to paint in different communities and not feel some kind of connection to them through the work you put up.

⁷⁵ Keeler, Lark. e-mail Interview. 05 April 2013.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

It's pretty interesting and has a very real personal impact”⁷⁸

This personal connection makes the education more genuine, as the more genuine the interaction the more students will listen and the more inclined they will be to go out and make a difference. The artists and educators become mentors; students look up to these figures for advice, guidance and friendship.⁷⁹ Keeler reinforces this sentiment with the quote, “Educational outreach also allows MOCA to encourage at-risk youth to discover artistic role models and constructive paths and outlets to express emotion.”

This idea of education producing responsible citizens is something that Melody Millbrandt focused on in her book entitled, *Studies in Art Education*. She maintains that, “the use of art historical inquiry to research objects in the popular culture in order to produce more literate and responsible consumers. Art history provides the beneficial hindsight that allows students to consider the consequences of responsible moral citizenship within the society.”⁸⁰

The research has shown that these two specific art museums, MOCA and SANG, are determined to contribute to the improvement of not only their local community but also the greater global community. These two art museums are able to serve as a blueprint for art museums across the world as they continue to evolve into institutions that are actively engaging social issues within the global community. The success of these art museums in creating awareness and engaging these social issues is determined by the actions of their patrons and students. The most important indication of the art

⁷⁸ 47, Faith. e-mail Interview. 04 April 2013.

⁷⁹ Keeler, Lark. e-mail Interview

⁸⁰ “Addressing Contemporary Social Issues in Art Education: A Survey of Public School Art Educators in Georgia” Melody K. Milbrandt *Studies in Art Education* Vol. 43, No. 2 (Winter, 2002), pp. 141-157 Published by: National Art Education Association
Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1321001>

museum's significance in today's society is not how successful they are at engaging these issues, but rather the fact that they are actively creating opportunities for the community that encourage discussion, and furthermore, offering education that compels them to act against these issues.

How the community decides to make use of their education can only be determined by their personal attitude. Faith 47 speaks about street art being a very personal act, one that doesn't necessarily have to address social responsibility. She states, "I don't think it is a prerequisite or responsibility of a street artist to make socially relevant work, it's down to each individual to make the work that is relevant to him/her."⁸¹

As shown in this study, the modern art museum was a static institution, one that rarely ventured beyond its own walls. The evolution of the art museum from a modern model towards a postmodern model, from a restricted, static institution to an institution that is actively engaging the community beyond its walls, is due in large part to the pressures facing the art museum. It is the fact that the art museum has been influenced by both external pressures, such as the Guerrilla Girls and the Street Art movement and internal pressures such as the need for art museums to bridge the educational gap, this gap being one that exists between a high school diploma and a university degree, that has led to this inclusive strategy. This orientation is imperative because, as Faith 47 says about Street Art, "it is today's movement."⁸²

Social problems such as sexual identity, racial identity and gender stereotyping are social problems of today's society. These issues are significant and the art museum

⁸¹ 47, Faith. E-mail Interview. 04 April 2013.

⁸² Ibid.

needs to be able to represent the issues, both artistically and socially, in order to remain relevant. Through the two art museum case studies, MOCA and SANG, we have seen how contemporary art museums are reflecting and addressing the social issues of today, through outreach programs, educational programming and exhibition themes. These art museums are becoming the way for us as a society to develop the understanding needed in order to be able to soothe the troubles of our postmodern society. These pressures, both internally and externally, have influenced the evolution of art museums. As we have seen with the Guerilla Girls and the Street Art movement, these external pressures were instrumental in forcing the postmodern art museum to become more inclusive in both their approach (i.e., exhibitions, collections, outreach) and their outlook (i.e., mission statement, legacy).

However the success of the postmodern art museum lies with its audience. Action against the social issues becomes the responsibility of the art museum's audience. All the art museum can do is provide an understanding and a context, alongside an education that teaches the skills needed to deal with these social issues. Cassandra Timothe can stand as one example among many, of how the postmodern museum can be a powerful force for affecting individual lives and the greater global society.

APPENDIX

Interviews

Lark Keeler
Curator of Education
Museum of Contemporary Art
North Miami, Florida

Transcription of e-mail interview conducted by the author with Lark Keeler, 5 April 2013

Q. What is your role at the museum?

A. I am the Curator of Education at the Museum of Contemporary Art (and I love my job). I oversee the programming and development of innovative classes, lectures, workshops, and community partnerships. The museum has expanded its educational programming to now offer over 40 different educational experiences throughout the year. I have the privilege of teaching many of the classes (MOCA by Moonlight Adult Classes, Figure Drawing, Teen Painting and Open Studio, Creative Arts for Kids, Docents, tours, MOCA on the Move, among others) and also working with a team of 20 instructors that help MOCA serve approximately 20,000 children, teens, and adults each year. Our goal in the MOCA Art Institute is to offer a variety of comprehensive classes that promote a well-rounded understanding of art and the world, while inspiring participants to become life-long learners and lovers of art.

Q. How important is education to the museum?

A. Education has become more and more important for students interested in studying arts and communications. With continuous budget cuts in schools and priorities given to core curricula, the arts are being slowly removed from the traditional school setting. The

MOCA Art Institute bridges the widening gap, offering important *visual art* education. Beginning at an early age, MOCA begins to introduce children to historic and contemporary artistic figures while exposing them to innovative thinking, interdisciplinary connections, responsible risk taking, visual literacy, skills and techniques.

Teen students that attend the MOCA Art Institute's free after school classes are looking to develop their creative thinking and problem solving, but also to help discover their own identity. Teens are looking for knowledge about creative careers and industries that will continue to be in demand in the future. Our adolescent students find like-minded peers at MOCA and develop friendships with students from schools around the county in a variety of classes that range from fashion design to digital journalism, film to painting, and many others. Keeping teens off the streets and out of trouble, the programs have become a safe and fun opportunity for young people to find their passion and make new friends.

Adult students can sometimes find social connections and therapy in the classes. Recently a conversation with an adult figure-drawing student revealed that she had abandoned her art degree as a twenty-something to become a parent. Now as a retiree, she was inspired by the figure drawing classes to begin to finish her remaining courses and complete her degree! Another student who had recently lost her husband, found the classes to be therapeutic and re-energizing, helping her to find new friends and recover from her painful loss.

Educational outreach also allows MOCA to encourage at-risk youth to discover artistic role models and constructive paths and outlets to express emotion. MOCA's

Women on the Rise! program brings gender specific art education to young women in the Juvenile Justice System and treatment centers among other places. Partnerships with the schools help support creative thinking in core curricula classes--training teachers on arts integration strategies and inspired lesson planning that translates into points toward teaching re-certification.

Perhaps most importantly, however, child and youth education programming at our museum is training the art appreciators and advocates of the future.

Q. How do you see the role of the museum in relationship to the community?

A. I believe that education is the key to helping the community connect with the museum. MOCA's education initiatives work with our close community, as well as the larger South Florida area, serving schools and organizations from Homestead to Boca Raton. Additionally, the contemporary art world can sometimes present challenging work, and education is what can help visitors, guests, and students navigate exhibitions and understand new concepts and movements. MOCA also brings value to the community by attracting patrons to the local businesses and international tourists to the city. The museum was an integral key component in North Miami receiving the 2010 All-American City Award and continues to bring honor to the city by recently being awarded the National Medal for Museum and Library Service. With many students in North Miami receiving Federal Assistance through the Free or Reduced Lunch Program, MOCA offers scholarship opportunities for classes with tuition to ensure that every child can participate.

Q. How important are art museums in dealing with social issues?

A. MOCA has always created programming to promote conversation about important issues. For example, earlier this year, *Latina Women and the Body* offered a series of programs exploring sexuality, stereotypes, and artists using such themes to shape their work. Recently the *Women on the Rise!* program partnered with the Gay and Lesbian Film Festival to present a film documenting Audre Lorde's work while she was in Berlin. Many exhibited artists are investigating social issues within their art, bringing attention to topics that need to have greater awareness. As social issues arise, MOCA is often a venue that can explore even the most difficult conversations through dialog and the investigation of art and art making.

Faith 47
Street Artist
Cape Town, South Africa

Transcription of e-mail interview by author with Faith 47, 6 April 2013

Q. Why do you create art?

A. It's always been a way for me to process my thoughts and experience of this life. Therapy I guess.

Q. What drew you to street art?

A. I was doing graffiti for several years but grew tired of the conservative attitudes And found it quite limiting. I wanted to explore my work more and the way in which it related to the environment. There us something so tactile and physical about putting your work in public. It can be seen as uplifting as well as arrogant. It has a DIY pinkish kind of attitude which I like. Unapologetic . But at the same time lends itself to the 'people' because as an artist it's impossible to paint in different communities and not feel some kind of connection to them through the work you put up. It's pretty interesting and has a very real personal impact

Q. Why do you think street art is transitioning into a Museum setting? (ie LA MOCA "Art in the Streets" exhibition)

A. It's only natural. Street art is today's movement. It will have to go down in the museums and history books. We will see more of that. Hopefully it will be represented fairly and somewhat accurately

Q. What do art museums represent for you?

A. I think it's good to have places where art can be safe, valued and archived. So much of the art we do on the streets is temporary and impermanent, the museums are the opposite to that. I think it's important that they start to attempt to put value on what's happening and find a way to interact and value the work within the artworld.

Q. How important is street art in dealing with social issues?

A. I don't think it is a prerequisite or responsibility of a street artist to make socially relevant work, it's down to each individual to make the work that is relevant to him/her.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Jefferey Abt and Helen Searing. "Museum." *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press. Web. 4 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T060530>>.
- "Art in the Streets." *Los Angeles MOCA*. Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, 17 Apr 2011. Web. 30 Mar 2013. <<http://www.moca.org/museum/exhibitiondetail.php?id=443>>
- Adams, Shameem. "1910-2010, Peirneef to Gugulective." *Iziko Museums Exhibition Catalogue*. Iziko, 15 Apr 2010. Web. 30 Mar 2013. <<http://www.iziko.org.za/calendar/event/1910-2010-from-pierneef-to-gugulective>>.
- Blackman, Matthew. "From Bailey to Dakar Biennale." *Art Throb*. n.d. n. page. Web. 4 Feb. 2013. <<http://www.artthrob.co.za/Reviews/2009-2012-From-Bailey-to-the-Dakar-Biennale.asp&xgt>>.
- Butera, Alexandra. United States. Institute of Museum and Library Services. *News and Events*. 2012. Web. <http://www.ims.gov/news/2012_medals_museum_of_contemporary_art.asp&xgt>.
- "Education and Public Programmes." *Iziko Museums*. Iziko. Web. 28 Mar 2013. <<http://www.iziko.org.za/static/landing/education-and-public-programmes>>.
- Faith 47. e-mail Interview. 04 April 2013.
- Freehan, Catherine. *A Study on Contemporary Art Museums as Activist Agents for Social Change*. Diss. University of Houston, 2010.
- Guerilla Girls." . N.p.. Web. 28 Mar 2013. <<http://www.guerrillagirls.com/index.shtml>>.
- Hirmas, Boris. "Coffee Break Miami with Entrepreneur-In-Residence, Boris Hirmas." Florida International University. FIU: Business Campus, Miami. 29 Mar 2013. Speech.
- "Iziko Museums." *South African National Gallery*. Iziko . Web. 28 Mar 2013. <<http://www.iziko.org.za/museums/south-african-national-gallery>>.
- Keeler, Lark. e-mail Interview. 05 April 2013.
- Krismantari, Ika. "Street art makes a statement." *Jakarta Post*. 23 Jul 2011: n. page. Web. 30 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/07/23/street-art-makes-a-statement.html>>.

John McEnroe and Deborah Pokinski. *Critical Perspectives on Art History*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, 2002. Print

McPhee, Josh. "Street Art and Social Movements." *Just Seeds Artist Cooperative*. N.p., 17 Feb 2009. Web. Web. 8 Mar. 2013.

Millbrandt, Melody, Addressing Contemporary Social Issues in Art Education: A Survey of Public School Art Educators in Georgia, *Studies in Art Education* Vol. 43, No. 2 (Winter, 2002), pp. 141-157 Published by: National Art Education Association
Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1321001>

Mizota, Sharon. "Art Review: 'Art in the Streets' at Geffen Contemporary." *Los Angeles Times*. 15 Apr 2011: n. page. Web. 8 Mar. 2013.

Outreach." *Iziko Museums*. Iziko. Web. 28 Mar 2013.
<<http://www.iziko.org.za/static/page/outreach>>.

Phillips, Susan A. "Graffiti." *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press. Web. 9 Mar. 2013. <<http://oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T033960>>.www.

"Picasso: Love and War 1935-1945, Journey through the Exhibition: Guernica." *National Gallery of Victoria*. N.p.. Web. 28 Mar 2013.
<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/picasso/education/ed_JTE_ITG.html>

Ratnam, Niru. "Hang it All." *Guardian:The Observer*. 8 Mar 2003: n. page. Web. 8 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theobserver/2003/mar/09/features.magazine47>>.

Sampson, Hannah. "National Award for Museum of Contemporary Art." *Miami Herald*. 05 Nov 2012: n. page. Web. 10 Mar. 2013.
<<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/11/05/3082780/north-miamis-museum-of-contemporary.html>>.

Stark, Lizzie. "An Interview with the Guerrilla Girls". *Fringe Magazine*. Retrieved 27 February 2013.

Winslow, Donald R. (April 19, 2011). "The Pulitzer Eddie Adams Didn't Want". *The New York Times*

<http://artradarjournal.com/2010/01/21/what-is-street-art-vandalism-graffiti-or-public-art-part-i>

"...for those who live in it, Pop-culture politics and strong voices' Athi-Patra Ruga, Zanele Muholi, Faith47, Gugulective and Musa Nxumalo at MU." *Arthrob*. 22 May 2010: n. page. Web. 30 Mar. 2013.

<http://www.artthrob.co.za/Listings/AthiPatra_Ruga,_Musa_Nxumalo_,_Zanele_Muholi,_Faith47_and_Gugulective_at_MU_in_May_2010.asp&xgt