



LUND UNIVERSITY

Journey to the Centre of the Museum

*Cognitive, Object and Introspective User Experiences
in a Design Museum*

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Abstract

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This thesis applies an ethnographic approach to investigate museum visit practices, which shape user experiences in a design museum. Specifically, it explores individual users' meaning making processes through the embodiment of thoughts and lived experiences. To frame the study, it takes on a phenomenological approach to investigate how the body, self, space, and objects relate with each other in the phenomenon of museum going. Four main questions guide the paper. First, why do users go the museum? Second, how do users interact and navigate the museum? Third, how do the senses influence the users' interaction and navigation practices? And fourth, how do users create meanings of the different museum affordances that facilitate lived experiences? By using phenomenology as theory and a bricolage of qualitative methods, it becomes possible to uncover the relationship of users' previous knowledge in setting the trajectory and navigation practices for their journey to and within the museum. This includes how they navigate and orient themselves in space. It can be argued that different users have different experiences in the same museum, but this study clearly identifies the touchpoints in the user journey where disparities in user experiences occur due to asymmetric stimuli and associations. Moreover, thickly describing what users see and feel in the museum can contribute in the growing field of user-centered design and cultural administration and enable similar organisations to understand how users experience the such institutions or leisure spaces.

Keywords: museology; user experience; meaning-making; qualitative methods; cultural analysis; exhibition design

Abstract

Paglakbay sa Gitna ng Museo: Mga Eksperyensiyang Nagbibigay-malay, Bagay, at Nagsisiyasat ng Sarili sa Isang Museong Pang-disenyo

Claudine Ann Dizon

Ang tesis na ito ay gumagamit ng etnograpiya upang suriin ang mga kasanayan ng pagbisita sa mga museo na humuhubog sa experiyensiya ng tagagamit sa isang museong pang-disenyo. Partikular sa pag-aaral na ito ay ang paglugad sa kabuluhan ng indibiduwal sa pamamagitan ng pagsisiyasat ng kanyang kapisanan ng diwa sa karanasan. Upang magbigay konteksto sa pagsuri, ang teoriya ng penomenolohiya ay ginamit upang aralin ang relasyon ng sarili, espasyo at gamit sa penomena ng pagbisita sa museo. Apat ang pangunahing tanong na umaalalay sa pagsuri: Una, bakit pumupunta ang tagagamit sa museo? Pangalawa, papano nakiki-ugnay at naglalayag ang mga tagagamit sa museo? Pangatlo, papano iniimpluwensiyahan ng mga pandama ang pakiki-ugnay at paglalayag ng mga tagagamit? At pang-apat, papano bumubuo ng pag-intindi ang mga tagagamit sa iba't-ibang alok ng museo na binibigyang buhay ang kanyang karanasan? Sa paggamit ng penomenolohiya bilang teoriya isang *bricolage* ng mga kwalitatibong pagsisiyasat ay maaaring bigyang liwanag ang relasyon ng nakaraang kaalaman sa pagtatag ng rutang susundan ng tagagamit sa loob ng museo. Kasama dito ang pagsusuri sa kanilang mga paraan ng paglayag at pagbigay orientasyon sa sarili. Maaaring ipaglaban na ang pagkakaiba ng mga tagagamit ay magdudulot ng iba't-ibang experiyensiya sa loob ng iisang museo subalit pinapaliwanag ng pagsusuring ito ang mga punto ng saling sa salaysay ng tagagamit na may pagkakaiba dahil sa samu't-saring *stimuli* at asosiyasyon. Higit sa rito, ang makapal na paglalarawan ay binibigyang liwanag ang mga nakikita at nararamdaman ng mga tagagamit sa loob ng museo na nagdadagdag at nagpapalawak sa lumalaking larangan ng pagsusuri ng *user-centered design* at administrasyong kultural na maaaring tumulong sa mga nahahawig na organisasyon.

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Copenhagen, 2017-05-22

Claudine Ann Dizon

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1. Chapter 1: Introduction

"The best thing, though, in that museum was that everything always stayed right where it was. Nobody'd move...The only thing that would be different would be you. Not that you'd be so much older or anything. It wouldn't be that exactly. You'd just be different, that's all." (Salinger, 1951, p.65)

I enjoy going to museums. Specifically, I like museums with life-sized taxidermy as in the Metropolitan Museum (New York), those that tell the life of an artist through his work such as the Van Gogh Museum (Amsterdam), or design museums that remind me of the value of everyday objects as in Designmuseum Danmark (Copenhagen). The excitement stems from my interest in these topics as I often find myself carefully wandering through the different rooms in search of things I have read about or in dire hope of learning something new. Other times, I simply enjoy being in a quiet space where the practice of observing and looking is the norm.

Having visited quite a number of museums, I realized that no two museum visits are alike. Moreover, no two *visitors* are alike. Several conditions come into shaping the experience such as the intention, the company, the subject of the museum, the volume of people that day, the exhibition design, and a myriad of other controllable and uncontrollable elements that interact with each other in a specific time and place, through a particular person. What I learn, or not learn, on the museum day is affected by these elements.

In a forthcoming article (Dizon, 2017), which was the point of departure and inspiration for this current study, several visitors at the Designmuseum Danmark expressed different sentiments about the most interesting part about their visit. They all commented on one room filled with mid-century modern chairs. Six different people saw the same room differently where the chairs were perceived as for sitting, testing and learning. Despite viewing the same objects, their perspectives were diverse. Thus, it becomes interesting to consider how a museum, with all their planning and designing, impacts the hundreds of people that come through its doors each day where the message can be translated according to how people prefer to see it.

This thesis is about how museum visitors interact with and navigate a design museum where I take Designmuseum Danmark as a case study. This topic is worth

inquiring as museums set a scenario for users daily where they anticipate behaviors and mindsets that are incorporated in the varying ways of organizing exhibitions and the museum space. As museums receive hundreds of visitors each day, there is limited information of how users structure their experience that is also influenced by messages communicated by the museum using multiple media and formats. For Designmuseum Danmark, these messages are more than the written communication found on their website, brochures, maps and signs. This is an amalgamation of the museum's efforts to create a design world including the tactile objects, sights, sounds and other ephemeral elements that influence the museum user's experience.

Aside from harnessing my own experiences in Designmuseum Danmark, I use different ethnographic methods for this study to produce a thick description of user experiences. This will bring to light the motivations, ways of navigating and orientating, and the relationship between users and Designmuseum Danmark.

To tell the narrative of user experiences, I shall apply *journeying* as a metaphor. Journeys and museum experiences have a comparable way of shaping emotive human experiences. They are both time-sensitive and are influenced by internal and external factors where the self and the physical world are mediated by the body that experiences it. In this thesis, I analyze Designmuseum Danmark as a destination and the actual journey, while the body acts as the vehicle for the journey. The person or the user is clearly the traveler in the narrative. As with all journeys, the trip culminates with a user's assessment of the experience as memorable, valuable, satisfying, or not, which this thesis also explores.

1.1. Aims and Research Questions

This study aims to understand how motivations for museum going influence the ways users create meaning and negotiate user experiences in the design museum. By applying an ethnographic approach to understanding the museum experience, it is my objective to uncover nuances to museum going wherein emotions, values and navigation practices elucidate what the design museum means for users. This includes exploring the users' movement and learning practices together with the materialities and spatiality present. These shall uncover interpretations of the museum space and objects that produce multiple user experiences. By using a range of qualitative methods, I intend to have a well-rounded understanding of the user experience where the museum attributes (Falk and Dierking, 2013) present are assessed as they interact

with the users' patterns of behavior, the emotions they attach, and the meanings they create in the process.

The journey metaphor also aims to structure the temporal aspect of user experiences as before, during and after the museum visit. And by seeing museum users as travelers on a quest, the study seeks to position itself in the field of user experience (UX) and service design in cultural administration and museum management. To meet the objectives of this thesis, the following questions this study shall answer are as follows:

- Why do users go to the museum?
- How do users interact and navigate the museum?
- How do the senses influence the users' interaction and navigation practices?
- How do users create meanings of the different museum affordances that facilitate lived experiences?

1.2. Significance of the Study

This study is relevant for cultural administrators, designers, and museum and tourism professionals. ***By offering a phenomenological explanation of the design museum and its users, it becomes possible to uncover how previous knowledge influences the user experiences as well as the motivations for actually visiting the museum.*** By investigating how user experiences are shaped in a design museum through their ways of navigating and interacting with objects, space and services, new perspectives to museology and cultural administration can be gleaned where subjective and rational processes take place. With this study's standpoint, it aims to further contribute to the field of museology and cultural administration with a user perspective and focusing on a design museum, which is a less researched museum category in museology.

Designmuseum Danmark is a specifically interesting museum to study because design museums, as opposed to other museum classifications, showcase seemingly mundane objects such as chairs, signage, home wear, and textiles, which users eagerly come to see. Thus, understanding the preconceived notions and expectations that users have prior to arriving would reveal much about how they relate with the museum and the material culture preserved by the objects on display. And by knowing how users move within the museum, cultural administrators can

benefit from this study by anticipating and considering different users when designing museum exhibitions.

1.3. Disposition

The succeeding chapters of the thesis outline the theoretical foundations and analysis of the fieldwork data. Chapter 2 presents the landscape of user experience studies in museums, which help situate this thesis in the academic field. Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical foundations of the study and discusses the reasons for using phenomenology as the most appropriate lens for the analysis. Chapter 4 is a discussion on the chosen methodological approaches for collecting field data. Chapter 5 discusses the analyses where the theoretical concepts are interspersed with the fieldwork data to produce a thick description of different user experiences in Designmuseum Danmark. The analysis chapter is further divided into 3 main parts that cover the user journey before, during and after the visit. Chapter 6 concludes with a summary of the main points of the paper and reflects back on the questions posed in the first Chapter. Lastly, Chapter 7 provides recommendations for the study's application in the field of museology, culture administration, and user-driven innovation in a museum setting.

2. Chapter 2: Previous Research

This section provides a concise overview of studies that discuss different aspects of museum visitor experiences. By emphasizing studies that explore determinants and typologies of museum experiences, it becomes possible for this current thesis to take inspiration and form a phenomenological analysis of user behavior and embodiment that allow processes of meaning making to take place. Through this review of related literature, the current study finds its place in the academic conversation by exploring similar concepts that occur in a design museum where attributes and affordances are different from other museums types.

Museums are experiencing a “revolution of rising expectations” (Graburn, 1977, p.1). Museum visitors have an increased awareness of what museums offer, which calls for museum educators and managers to see their work from the point of view of museum users. Nelson Graburn, one of the pioneer academics in sociocultural anthropology to raise the topic of museum visitor experiences, argues that life experiences build upon each other and form the “debris” (Graburn, 1977, p.3), which the public takes with them as they enter a museum.

The build up of experiences affects how meaningful and satisfying a museum experience is. Pekarik, Doering and Karns (1999), in their study of visitors at the Smithsonian museums, share a similar perspective in which visitors do not enter the museum as blank slates but bring with them well-formed interests, knowledge, opinions and museum-going experiences, called *entrance narratives*. These entrance narratives determine how a person understands and appreciates the museum, which takes the form of object, social, introspective and cognitive experiences.

Because museum visitors synthesize past events and current experiences, it can be said that a museum experience is individual and not beholden to the museum’s design (Packer, 2004; Cheung On, 2006; Falk, 2009; Packer & Bond, 2010; Packer & Ballantyne, 2002). Tam Cheung On (2006), in his doctoral thesis on museum visitor experiences of paintings in museums of fine art, confirms this as people engage in individualistic meaning making practices by moving, seeing and feeling that yield emotional, intellectual or visual experiences. Similarly, Jan Packer (2004) has extensively written about free choice learning spaces such as museums and zoos. She argues that the motivational factors of museum going influence what people pay attention to inside the museum. She categorizes these motivational factors as personal goals, capability beliefs, and situational incentives (Packer, 2006).

John Falk (2009) suggests a similar view with his concept of identity-related motivations for visiting museums. Falk (2009) proposes that museumgoers can be explorers, facilitators, professionals/hobbyists, experience seekers, or rechargers. And these identities that museum visitors embody have needs that they seek to fulfill in the museum. For instance, experience seekers that are typically characterized by tourists in a new city go to museums with a tick-off-the-bucket-list attitude wherein they go for the sake of having “done” the museum whereas rechargers are those that find solace in a museum and use it for more meditative purposes (Falk, 2009). Jan Packer and Nigel Bond (2010) suggest a similar concept of the “restorative museum” wherein museum visitors come to the museum in search of psychological well-being, like a retreat from the bustle of city life and day-to-day routine. Here, the museum is perceived a restorative place where the experience of being in the museum bears spiritual and mental benefits.

Thus far, these studies suggest that museum users engage in myriad ways of meaning making. Falk (2009), in his study of natural history museums, defines meaning making in museums as the visitors’ ways of learning. Because museums have an educative role (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994), the manner by which knowledge and understanding of the museum and its contents facilitates this creation of meaning that can be subjective or aligned with the museum’s approach (Packer, 2004). Falk and Dierking (2013) propose that ways of creating meaning influences the museum experience. In their study, they argue that the personal, sociocultural and physical contexts of visitors intersect once they make a decision to go to a museum and are embodied once they are in the physical space. According to the authors, personal contexts are the visitor’s knowledge and prior experience with the content and museum being visited. The sociocultural context pertains to the systems of beliefs, values, languages and thought processes shared by individuals and museums. The physical context is the architecture and ephemeral qualities of the museum—the building structure, the smell, ambience, artifacts and objects. All of these contexts help to understand why visitors go to museums and why they stay. Once they are in the museum, these contexts also act as filters that visitors use in taking in and excluding experiences in the museum visit. More importantly, understanding these contexts help to uncover meaning making in the museum wherein experiences are continuously constructed as the personal and subjective world intersects with the physical world.

It should also be mentioned that class can be a factor in museum going where, in Falk and Dierking's (2013) study on identities and museum experiences, museum visitors are often white, middle class people who find museum visiting as a leisure activity for the family and children. On the other hand, African-Americans were not as keen to visit museums and perceive museums as unwelcoming and unfulfilling of their leisure identity-related needs unless the subject or content was something about African culture that they could identify with. These points to the social context that museums find themselves where they are not only educative (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994) but play an important role in creating inclusion or exclusion (Falk & Dierking, 2013).

Jennifer Kim Lian Chan and Eileen Yeoh (2010), academics of tourism and hospitality in Malaysia, emphasize the complementary relationship of personal experience with the service experience offered by museums, which yield to a satisfactory or unsatisfactory museum experience. Authors such as Maria del Carmen de Rojas and Maria del Carmen Camarero (2006) have further studied this area of museum satisfaction, which they define as a museum exceeding the consumer's expectations that is a subjective "feeling or sensation coming from the cognitive and emotional aspects of the goods or services, as well as an assessment of other features" (p.51). In their research, del Carmen de Rojas and del Carmen Camarero (2006) present a statistical analysis of museum satisfaction that resulted in three significant effects. First, satisfaction is determined by the visitors' perceptions of excellence that influences their reception to the quality of service. Second, pleasure and activation define how happy, engaged and interested museum visitors are. And third, the more satisfied museum visitors are the higher the intensification of the visit, or the more they use the available services such as audio guides, the cafe, the shop, and so on.

For many people, museums are also considered as leisure places (Holst Kjær, 2016; Serrell, 2010; Falk, 2009; Forrest, 2013). As such, time is of the essence in balancing between life-needs and leisure-needs. Since users are in a museum for a limited period, time is a crucial aspect of the experience. Serrell (2010) introduced the concept of tracking and timing (T&T) studies where she analysed the time spent by museum visitors who are stimulated by the exhibition design.

Forrest (2013) supports the importance of exhibition design in rousing museum users' interests in which exhibition design cues foster affective, cognitive and behavioral responses that support the intention for coming to the museum, as well

as revisiting in the future. With the key role of scenography and atmospherics, this points to the evolving role that contemporary museums are taking and should eventually take. Holst Kjær (2016) proposes the concept of the *performative museum* in which museums, in meeting the changing demands of the market of museum visitors, need to take on the role of storyteller, performer and event-maker in order to establish a stronger connection with different types of visitors.

To round up the relevant studies, several authors call for a need to engage in a more qualitative analysis of the museum visitor experience. Hooper-Greenhill (2006, p.362) argues for “a shift from thinking about visitors as an undifferentiated mass public to beginning to accept visitors as active interpreters and performers of meaning-making practices within complex cultural sites,” which supports the idea for treating users as individuals and not a generic pool. This is also in line with Tiina Roppola’s (2012) view that a phenomenological investigation of the museum visitor experience would reveal the essence of the experience through an investigation of the engagement of body, senses and thoughts. It is in this call that the current thesis finds its place. A phenomenological approach of the design museum user experience can elicit multiple experiences, as defining a single museum experience is impossible due to the coalescing factors that influence it. Furthermore, by focusing on a design museum, it is differentiated from the current academic landscape where studies have been conducted on science and natural history museums (Falk, 2009; Pekarik, Doering & Karns, 1999; Gilmore & Sabine, 1994; Communications Design Team Royal Ontario Museum, 1994) as well as museums of fine art (Packer, 2004; Packer & Bond, 2010).

3. Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

“Phenomenology is the scientific study of experience. It is an attempt to describe human consciousness in its lived intimacy, before it is subject to theoretical elaboration of conceptual systematizing.” (Jackson in Hjemsdal, 2003, p.134)

In this section, I shall elaborate on the theories that serve as the theoretical foundations of this study. To understand users, or the people that use and experience the museum, I apply Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s (1962) theory of phenomenology as a primary lens for unpacking the concept of user experiences. As I seek to uncover how users create meaning in Designmuseum Danmark, phenomenology, as a theory, provides a frame for understanding the relationship of users, objects and space through an investigation of the embodiment of these thoughts and lived experiences. This is important in considering the situatedness of people as they experience the museum from their own perspective where no two experiences are identical. Using phenomenology as a theory and method serves as the fundamental guide for the study because experiences are not isolated phenomena but are built upon by past memories and experiences that influence how they move, see and experience, which are key concepts of the theory.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s concept of phenomenology shall be supplemented with Zahava Doering’s (1999) study on entrance narratives and museum visitor experiences to serve as the lens for analyzing the phenomenon of users’ museum experiences and their processes of meaning making. I will also begin by defining the term *users* and *user experience*, which was defined by Don Norman, Jim Miller and Austin Henderson (1995) originally and applied by Jacob Thorek Jensen and Ida Brændholdt Lundgaard (2015) in a museum context.

3.1. Users and the User Experience

This study uses the terms *user* and *visitor* interchangeably, but there is an emphasis on *users*, which Thorek Jensen and Brændholt Lundgaard (2015, p.56) define as “a visitor at the physical museum or someone who has participated in an event at or outside the museum, which has been organized by the museum”. By applying the term *user* this thesis follows several studies (Houlberg Rung, 2013; Doering, 1999; Hooper-Greenhill, 2004; Hooper-Greenhill, 2006; Roppola, 2012) that

define museum goers as active consumers of the museum who are continuously constructing knowledge from the moment of deciding to visit a the museum, to when they are in the museum space, and when they leave. There is a certain intention for being at the museum, except for school field trips that is outside the scope of this study, where being in the museum space could fulfill curiosity and an eagerness to satisfy specific needs. Intentional participation in the museum's universe, thus, points to the importance of viewing museum users as active consumers in search of an experience.

Going back to the roots of user experience or UX, Don Norman, Jim Miller and Austin Henderson (1995, p.155) first coined the term "user experience" in 1995 while they were working at Apple Computers. With the goal of capturing the consumer experience, they delved into the system of objects, services, technology, and spaces with users or people at the center. Although UX is often associated today with technology and human computer interaction (HCI) studies (Hassenzahl and Tractinsky, 2006), Don Norman (2016), in a recent interview, argues that UX is the "way you experience the world, the way you experience life, the way you experience a service". It is a time-sensitive interaction between a product and service with a user wherein feelings and emotions are generated.

Therefore, the term *user* is most appropriate in this study because user experience captures an individual's emotional experience at the moment it is experienced. In technology use, Hassenzahl and Tractinsky (2006, p.91) define this to span experiences of usability, aesthetic, hedonic, affective or experiential aspects. But going beyond technological discussions of UX, Norman makes an important point about the feelings consumers of a product or service have in a specific touchpoint or interaction with a company.

Museums are a gateway to new experiences. Through the creation of environments and settings, the museum is already assumed by users to be distinct from the outside world, which Foucault and Miskowiec (1986) identify as heterotopias where time continuously builds up with the preservation of objects. Users purposefully come to museums with an intention and it is by this intention—of learning, seeing objects in real life, spending time with family or friends, or satisfying a hobby or passion—and consumption of the museum's services and products that a user experience is formed.

3.2. Phenomenology

Observing and understanding the experience of museum users entails seeing their past, present and future unfold in the museum space, and manifested in ways of perceiving through bodily actions and reactions. The assumption of bodies as conscious and the world as existing allows for a situated analysis of users in a specific context, in this case, the museum visit where lived experiences produce actions.

Phenomenology provides a fundamental foundation for witnessing this phenomenon of the lived experience of bodies and objects encountering each other in the museum space. Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.xix) defines phenomenology as a “disclosure of the world as people live through it. It unites extreme subjectivism and extreme objectivism wherein rationality is measured by the experiences disclosed.” Phenomenology supports this study by acting as a theory and method in that it facilitates a lens for observing the seemingly mundane experience of museum visiting by situating the researcher in the same context of the observed wherein phenomena unfolds at the moment (Frykman & Gilje, 2003; Sefcik, 2012). In this regard, the current thesis does not aim to deliver an objective presentation of experience but it investigates museum user experiences as accounts of what Romdenh-Romluc (2011, p.10) describes as people existing in their “everyday world in terms of the phenomenologist’s own experiences”. In experiencing the world with museum users, I am able to situate the study and myself by experiencing and being inspired by the experience of others, which produces a consciousness of others’ worlds.

Phenomenology has been chosen for this study because of the study’s aim of observing meaning making processes. Tiina Roppola (2012, p.57) also finds it as a suitable theory to engage with in order to “perceive the phenomenon of engaging with the museum exhibits, make sense of it, develop meaning about it and play a part in producing it.” Applying phenomenology as a method is also deemed appropriate as it focuses on how people experience phenomena in their own eyes and words where the senses are engaged to distinguish different experiences (Roppola, 2012). In a museum, people interact with objects and space, which makes phenomenology the lens for understanding such encounters with materiality and means of interpretation.

Crucial in the theory of phenomenology are the concepts of *perception*, *body* and *motility* or movement (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) as subject and object encounter each other. *Perception* helps people to organize the world by connecting things with associations and memories in a process of analyzing what is before them. Stimuli

encountered in the *perceptual field* consist of objects and the space between incites thoughts and a desire to organize and make sense of the situation. The association of ideas brings past experiences into the present to create connections that make the most sense to the subject. Memories play an important role in creating such associations because “upon seeing something, we organize former experiences to explain the patterning of data, the imposition of meaning on a chaos of sense data” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.19). This enables ways for *using* the world. Subjects are able to make sense of a big picture by identifying the individual parts using memories, which are then put together to make sense of the big picture and gain a perception of it. Thus, subjects are conscious and intentional in their perception of the world as they make associations.

Perception is made possible by the body that senses. The body is the “vehicle of being in the world” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.82). The consciousness of the body serves as the intermediary between the inner world and the physical world. As the body encounters physicality, thoughts and perceptions are processed within it, because of the body’s ability to sense. The body *sees, feels, smells, hears* and/or *touches* that reveals qualities of objects and space that project stimuli that catches the subject’s attention. Thus, perception is produced by these outside stimuli that produce sensations, which then leads to corresponding actions that are deemed appropriate for the context upon producing a pattern or composition for making sense of the world.

Movement is the body’s reaction to a situation, which is an embodiment of thoughts and perceptions in a lived experience (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Thus, the moment the body moves is a coming together of reaction to the phenomenon before it together with past thoughts, knowledge and experiences that create meaning of the current experience. In this regard, museum user experiences bring together senses, thoughts and actions into understanding the museum as a space where the self is situated and creates meaning. As Romdenh-Romluc (2011, p.17) describes, this is a world where “things have a definite character and location in that world...which is constantly in a process of exploration and discovery of phenomena”.

As the body perceives, associates and moves, it seeks to understand what is going on in the physical world by navigating it and finding one’s place in it. Sara Ahmed (2006) defines this as *orientation*. The activity of orientating the self happens as the person plays with proximities and movement that supports the individual’s ability to understand the physical world (Ahmed, 2006). In forming direction, Ahmed suggests

the concept of “emotional intentionality” (Ahmed, 2006, p.2) that describes how people are directed by objects that raise feelings such as fear, pleasure, or happiness that move a person closer to or further away from it. Similar to Merleau-Ponty’s (1962) concept of stimuli, Ahmed (2006) claims that emotions towards objects are an assembly of past memories expressed by the body. Ahmed says of this physical manifestation, “emotions shape what bodies do in the present, or how they are moved by the objects they approach” (Ahmed, 2006, p.2). Thus, a person is naturally inclined towards a familiar object and would “feel at home” and less out of place because of the immediate association he/she creates (Ahmed, 2006, p.9).

In the museum setting, orientation is a key concept in creating the analysis because it shapes what people pay attention to and ignore, which is a timing of past knowledge and histories, the encounter with an object, and an embodied reaction at present. Phenomenology emphasizes the situatedness of users where their practices and experiences enable meaning making in the museum where a continuous merging of thought and reflection of past knowledge enables perception, movement and experiencing.

3.3. Entrance Narratives and Museum Experiences

As discussed, museum users are active consumers of the museum. They come to the museum with an intention and a motivation that seek to be satisfied. In order to analyze museum user experiences, Zahava Doering (1999, p.8) offers the concept of *entrance narratives*, which is defined as the “internal story line that visitors enter with.” Doering continues that entrance narratives have the following components (1999.p.8):

- (i) “a basic framework, i.e. the fundamental way that individuals construe and contemplate the world
- (ii) information about the given topic, organized according to that basic framework; and
- (iii) personal experiences, emotions and memories that verify and support this understanding. “

Past experiences in museums, experiences outside the museum setting, gathered knowledge and information of the museum subject all come together to form a basic trajectory for how a user will experience the museum. This creates an intimacy between space, object and person that relates to Ahmed’s (2006) notion of orientation

wherein the world unfolds as the body responds to the familiar objects around it, which inevitably shapes how a person inhabits space. This includes what objects will capture his/her attention, and in this study's case, how the museum's message will be processed and received. Thus, entrance narratives form individual perspectives and ways of approaching the museum experience, therefore creating different conceptions of satisfaction. Users actively form knowledge that stems from internal processes of "remembering, imagining or revering objects, taking objects as symbols, and using objects to tell stories to others" (Doering, 1999, p.8), they can be regarded as meaning makers and museums are facilitators of this individual process.

Doering (1999) and Pekarik, Doering and Karns (1999) identify four types of museum experiences: social, object, cognitive and introspective. *Social experiences* deliver satisfying museum experiences if the museum user's intention for going is to interact with other people. *Object experiences* point to desires of experiencing objects or having the feeling of seeing the "real thing". Here, objects that they have read or heard about, which they know the museum will show during their visit, stimulate users. *Cognitive experiences* are experiences where users engage in an intellectual discourse with the museum and the exhibitions in which the information is processed and a satisfying experience is formed when the user gains new knowledge or information. Lastly, *introspective experiences* engage the users' imagination to uncover feelings and experiences that are private and are triggered by the objects or museum setting (Doering, 1999).

What can be observed is the complementary nature of phenomenology, users/UX, and entrance narratives and museum experiences. Phenomenology frames the argument of the phenomenon of experiencing and meaning making, while entrance narratives situates the discussion to a museum setting. Diagram 1 visually presents the relationship of these theories and concepts into a *phenomenology of museum user experience*. It can be seen how the museum experience is a complex system that forms relationships between users, the museum management, and all the attributes and affordances of the museum that users can perceive. All of these come together into the choreography of a constantly evolving universe that users journey into and leave as they please. And while inside the museum, the journey continues as the user encounters objects, space and other elements of the physical world that may affirm the entrance narrative or provide distractions in the journey.

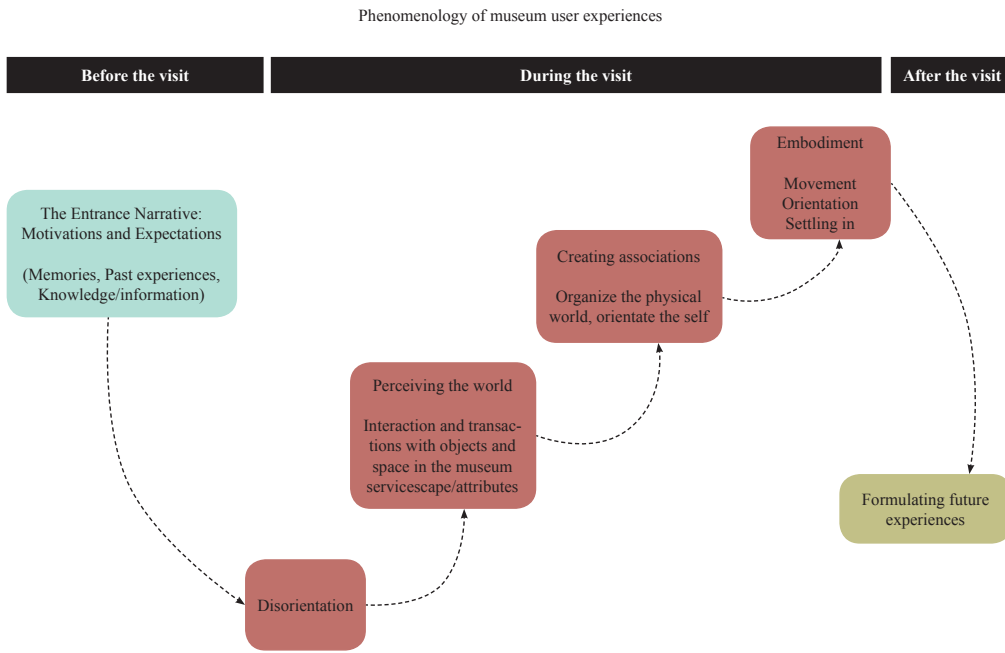


Diagram 1. Phenomenology of museum user experiences.

4. Chapter 4: Methodology

“The process of working with informants thus becomes one of a mutual search for understanding that bridges, or mediates, between the social worlds of informant and ethnographer.” (Davies, 2002, p.79)

Different methodologies are applied in this study to form a bricolage of ethnographic data. As a cultural analyst, I extensively use ethnography to capture the mobility, ephemeral, multisensory practices in Designmuseum Danmark where the invisible and sensuous characteristics of experiences may be captured (Pink, 2011; Löfgren, 2016). Applying a combination of qualitative methods enabled me to view the phenomenon from different sources, which is helpful in balancing the limited amount of time spent at the field (O’Dell & Willim, 2014) to thickly describe museum user experiences. This manner of mixing methods reveal varying versions of experiences through myriad ways across the senses and movement, and as experienced by different persons (Mann, Mol, Savirani, Selim, Sur & Yates, 2011).

According to Tiina Roppola (2012, p.58), “phenomenology as a methodology focuses on how people experience a particular phenomenon in their lived world, in their own words.” This means that the methods taken for this study ensure that perspectives are maintained in the users’ perspective to represent their museum experience according to how they sensed, how they felt, and how they moved. Thus, in investigating the relationship of people with objects, space and themselves, there is a constant dialogue between phenomenology as a theory, as guiding methodology, and analysing data from the field.

To do this, this study undertakes a multi-sited approach in the context of George Marcus’ (1995) concept of *follow the people* where moving persons across different points of the museum are observed. By considering the individual as journeying through the museum, capturing different kinds of mini experiences are analyzed, and when put together produces a thick description of the overall user experience. Thus, a composition of ethnography is conducted where the narrative of the observed is created through the investigation of behaviors, emotions, setting, objects and concepts that speak to each other to describe the culture of museum users. All the methodologies used for this study generated valuable data that revealed diverse facets of the museum user and their experience. To offer a hierarchy of the methods,

interviews serve as the main method, followed by participant observation and shadowing, user journey mapping, and lastly, netnography.

The chapter is divided into three sections. First, the material gathered shall be presented. Second, the field is described where Designmuseum Danmark is introduced. And third, the methodologies and data gathered are presented.

4.1. Material

Majority of the empirical material for this research was collected between May-December 2016. Interviews, the main source of field data, were conducted during my work placement at Urgent.Agency, a design and innovation consultancy based in Copenhagen, Denmark. I was part of a brand platform project for Designmuseum Danmark that, aside from determining the museum's image, aimed to understand user experiences in the museum to have a well-rounded assessment of Designmuseum Danmark's brand. Part of that project was a report of the different interviews, a user journey map that outlines the different touchpoints of the museum, and a 3,5 minute video¹ that was taken during participant observations at the museum. Other interviews and observations were done at my personal time for this thesis in December 2016.

A total of 19 interviews were conducted with international visitors and local visitors from Copenhagen. Of this, 12 are considered key informants that raise various aspects of their museum experience wherein they draw on past knowledge and generously describe how they use and move in the museum. From the interviews, a total of 5,5 hours were recorded that resulted in 34 pages of transcriptions.

Interviews were held at the cafe of Designmuseum Danmark immediately after users have visited the museum to have a proximate recollection of their experience. This was patterned after Pekarik, Doering and Karnes' (1999) study where they interview museum visitors as they enter and exit the museum to compare expectations and actual experiences, except this study focuses on the exit interviews as it was not possible to maintain a prolonged relationship with museum visitors who had time restraints.

The informants are also treated as a general pool of data. Demographics are not relevant in distinguishing users, as it is the type of entrance narratives and experiences that will categorize them. This is similar to Falk and Dierking's (2013) study where they report that a segmentation of informants by gender, class, nationality/ethnicity, and others, showed insignificant changes in understanding user experiences. Rather, it

was what the users reveal about their motivations for coming and actual experiences that make the data valuable for the study. Hooper-Greenhill (2006) also recommends taking a more cultural analytical perspective in understanding museum users, as opposed to statistical data, wherein motivations, needs and emotions can be best captured through ethnographic study.

In addition to interviews, participant observation was done in Designmuseum Danmark for 6 days. I went to the museum as a visitor and spent 2 to 3 hours during each visit where I experienced the museum myself while also taking fieldnotes of what other visitors were doing. Part of my observation was also recording the soundscape of the museum in which an aspect of museum's atmosphere was captured to identify the dominant sounds and recurring noises that shape the museum's ephemeral qualities.

One go-along was also conducted with a family relative who had never been to the museum. The go-along lasted for 1,5 hours and ended with a 20 minute interview where the informant had a chance to reflect on his visit. Content analyses of the museum's website, brochures and maps were also done to gain knowledge of how Designmuseum Danmark is communicating with its users. Lastly, netnography also served as a valuable source of data. Observing user reviews and comments on online platforms such as Trip Advisor, Google Reviews and Designmuseum Danmark's Facebook page reveal much about user experiences where statements in these platforms are more direct and unambiguous.

With these data, I am able to produce what Clifford Geertz (1973, p.6) calls a "thick description" of the phenomenon of museum user experiences. Using different sources of fieldwork data enable me to go beyond defining who the users are, but more importantly as a cultural analyst, draw out their emotions, describe their relationship with objects and materials, and paint an image of the museum's landscape with words. These are also analyzed using cultural analytical concepts and theories that present the data as phenomena.

4.2. Describing the Field: Designmuseum Danmark

Designmuseum Danmark is located on Bredgade 68 in Copenhagen, Denmark in a historic neighborhood near the Amelianborg Palace. Two large iron gates clad with posters, and a simple sign that says "Designmuseum Danmark" represent the facade. The building itself is housed in a restored rococo building that formerly served as a

hospital during the reign of King Frederik V in 1752-1757. Today, the building has maintained its historical structure with some minor renovations in their tiles, roof and walls (Designmuseum Danmark, 2012).

Once past the main entrance door, a neutral color scheme of grey tiles and cream-colored walls accented by some brass materials welcome the visitor. Large French windows also let in natural light that support the small wall lamps that emanate a warm hint of yellow light. On the ceiling of the lobby is a textile installation that looks like pieces of grey origami sewn together to create a geometric landscape. The main entrance and lobby stands between the main museum entrance and the doors leading to the exhibitions. It constitutes of a circular table where museum staff sit and sell entrance tickets. Behind the table is a shelf specifically for brochures and maps with information about the museum and its collections. The entrance fee is 100 DKK with access to all exhibitions while students and those under 26 years old are free.



Image 1. Entrance to the Designmuseum Danmark
reception/ticket area

From the ticket area, people usually pause as they are greeted by the opportunity of entering 2 doors to begin their visit. During the fieldwork, the “official” entrance was through the left door, walking past the Museum Cafe (Cafe Klint) and the Museum Shop, until you reach the first exhibition, which is *Learning*

from Japan. Once inside, the museum is laid out as a square floor plan with an outdoor garden at its center. There is also one exhibition on the first floor.

When I conducted fieldwork in May-July 2016, there were four permanent exhibitions on display. The *Learning from Japan* exhibition presents how Danish design, arts and crafts were inspired by Japan from the 1900s to the 20th century. *Mode og Tekstil (Fashion and Fabric)* showcases clothing textiles that cover the past 300 to 400 years. The third exhibition is *Det 20.århundredes Kunsthåndværk og Design (Design and Crafts of the 20th Century)* that outlines Danish design history through a presentation of different furniture and design objects. Lastly, The Porcelain Collection, the only exhibition on the first floor, displays European ceramics from 1890s to the present day.

Since conducting fieldwork again in December 2016 and January 2017, the exhibitions have since changed. A new exhibition called The Danish Chair is now part of the permanent exhibition that stages the evolution and development of one of Danish design's most popular product – the chair. This new exhibition has broken down the previous 20.århundredes Kunsthåndværk og Design by focusing solely on Danish design chairs.

4.3.Methods

“The emphasis is on the method, on the intentions of looking in the same direction as the persons in question and of using oneself in the process of interpretation” (Frykman and Gilje, 2003, p.49)

4.3.1. Interviews

The interview is one of the most recognized research methods in the social sciences (Davies, 2002). Interviews are valuable for recalling the visit through storytelling from a first-person account. The questions posed inquired about the informants' reasons for coming, their expectations, and favorite museums and what makes these special, and others. The purpose of the interview was to probe about the motivation for deciding to visit the museum, as well as have them reflect on their other museum experiences. Inquiring about these different times, places, and situations, in relation to their Designmuseum Danmark experience revealed details about the value of the visit. Sunderland and Denny (2007) describe this as probing

beyond factual information and transporting the interviewer and interviewee to different times that describe the current consumption pattern.

Through this method, informants take me with them as they transport themselves back to the experience of the moment in question. This opportunity gives access to what Davies (2002, p.98) describes as gaining “access to the social world beyond the individual,” which is a critical strength of the interview method.

Informants to the interviews were approached at the museum cafe after concluding their visit. They were recruited for the exit interviews spontaneously wherein the interviews lasted between 15-20 minutes. Since I was approaching individual informants at their leisure time, many of which were on holiday in Copenhagen, I had the challenge of not taking up too much of their personal time. Similarly, as museum going for the informants was a social activity, many of the informants preferred to be interviewed together with their companions.

While recruiting, I would introduce myself as a student studying in Lund University conducting research for my thesis. With this information, the informants, most of which were international visitors in their 20s and 30s, happily obliged. Moreover, the fact that I was studying in Lund and doing research in Copenhagen piqued their interest, which required me to share how I have been living in Copenhagen for the past 5 years and commute to Lund for my studies; others even inquire about the frequency of my commute and how the train to Sweden is like. Sharing this personal information tended to catch their interest and eased the atmosphere for the interview since they also know a little bit more about me. Eventually, the informants become more eager to share their experience of Designmuseum Danmark. Some international visitors who saw the interview as part of their Copenhagen trip took this as a chance to talk to me as a “local” and the interview was perceived as an engagement in a “local” activity. In this regard, the interviews became interactive interviews where I became conscious of my identity as a student and a “local” that consequently entailed me to disclose my personal thoughts of Copenhagen life. Charlotte Davies (2002, p.101-102), a renowned ethnologist and analyst of ethnographic research methods, cites Oakley in defining the role of self-disclosure in the interactive interview:

“Both for ethical reasons and for the efficacy of the interview, an interviewer must be prepared to share their own knowledge; she suggests

that the interviewing process can only develop effectively ‘when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her personal identity in the relationship’.”

Recruiting the informants became an interactive engagement. I sought to understand them and their experience of the museum, while they also aimed to gain a certain degree of understanding of who I was. I happily obliged questions about what to see and do in Copenhagen, which was the least I could do for asking for their time.

A semi-structured interview format was conducted with a prepared set of open-ended questions, which was not followed strictly. It was important for me to adapt the questions to the context of the informant so that I may support them in expounding their thoughts. Davies explains semi-structured interviews to have this nature of flexibility that encourages informants to expand on an idea, digress, or veer off to introduce new concepts that the prepared questions did not anticipate (Davies, 2002).

I also intended to keep the interview at a conversational level where I did not simply ask questions and accepted an answer. Rather, I pried into responses by asking supporting questions. For example, one of my standard opening questions was *Did you have any expectations before coming?* One of my informants, John, replied that he had no expectations and had never been to the design museum before. He just wanted something else to do on a weekend that wasn't errands or looking at shops. To which I asked, an unplanned question, *How would you compare the museum visit to errands or shopping?* He replied by saying that he enjoyed the popular chairs by Arne Jacobsen. He never understood the hype about them before, but seeing the chairs next to his other designs made him understand how special they were. In this example, actively listening and coming up with relevant follow up questions make the semi-structured interview a great tool for inquiring into respondents' thoughts and allowing them to express their thoughts in their own words where their experiences can be articulated upon recollection of different stimuli encountered in the museum.

The post-visit conversations with users give them time to reflect on what they had just seen, felt or heard. It also allows me to transport myself to that moment with them as they describe the experience in the museum space where they would sometimes point to exact areas of the building where a memory took place despite us sitting outside at the garden. Thus, conducting the interviews immediately after the

visit was important because the memory is fresh, considering such trips rarely happen again for visiting tourists. Lastly, while in the museum, informants are able to manifest the experience once more with the help of the space and bodily movements that supplement the proximate memory of the experience.

Of the 21 informants interviewed, 5 were individual and 8 were in pairs (16 people). Some of the interviews evolved into a pair/group interview for reasons of convenience and inevitability. Primarily, it was easier to approach people who were in pairs in the cafe because it was rare to see someone engaged in solitary eating. Secondly, because the museum is a space where many social groups gather, it was natural for both people to join in. Davies (2002) describes this as part of the interactive interview in which excluding persons in the same social space may affect the interaction in the interview. In this case, it would have been detrimental for the interview to exclude companions from the conversation.

The informants were guaranteed confidentiality when asked for their consent to be interviewed. By disclosing that the material would be used for purely academic purposes, they obliged on the account that their original full names are not used and that the recording was only going to be heard by me.

4.3.2. Participant Observation

Participant observation was conducted in Designmuseum Danmark six times during the periods of May-July 2016 and December 2016-January 2017. 2-4 hours was spent observing at the museum each time. Field notes were taken during the fieldwork that comprise of texts of key words and descriptions of behaviors and overheard conversations from users. Besides this, I also drew diagrams of directions that people took inside the museum to take note of distances and movements between rooms and objects.

Participant observation opens up the field and the observed in a first hand account of people in their natural environment. It also offers an experience of the atmospheric and ephemeral details of the field (Löfgren, 2015) where moods, sounds and rhythms of movement are captured through a direct observation in the field. For this study, participant observation was a critical method that complements the phenomenological theory and method. Phenomenology seeks to understand human experiences that can be investigated by what anthropologist Michael Jackson calls “thinking with one’s feet” (Jackson in Mathiesen Hjemdahl, 2003, p.134). Thus, by

participating in the practices of museum users, I experienced what Kirsti Matheisen Hjemdahl (2003, p.13) had in her study of theme parks, which is “using the body as others do” that “grasps the meaning connected to different doings, experiences and expressions, as well as putting practices and reflections into context.”

Participant observation strongly complemented the interviews by contextualizing what the informants were saying as I have seen or experienced it myself. More importantly, directly seeing how people move in the space, witnessing where they stopped and what caught their attention, where they simply didn't bother to take notice, and other seemingly “superficially insignificant details of everyday living” (Davies, 2002, p.71) were uncovered.

By participating in the setting as a museum user myself, I was able to situate myself in the context of other users where I observed their museum going rituals and behaviors in the same perspective. There were times when I would try some of the things that the observed were doing. I tried to get as close to the other objects, as museum users often do, which tested the limits of security and deference to museum rules. It was crucial to place myself in the same situation as the people I was observing and empathize with their feelings in the museum. Trying out these things and “going native” (Davies, 2002, p.71) is afforded by participant observation in building up knowledge in a first-hand perspective.

4.3.3. Shadowing/ Go-along

Margarethe Kusenbach (2003, p.2) defines the go-along method as a “hybrid between observing and interviewing.” In a go-along, informants are actively observed and interviewed *in situ* (Kusenbach, 2003, p. 3) where their spatial practices and environmental perceptions are gathered while going through the space with them. By mirroring the movement of informants, the researcher is given a glimpse into the processes of meaning making as the informant interacts with the space and everything within it (Czarniawska, 2007). This method is relevant for the study as informants offer their interpretations of the museum at the moment they experience it, which is what phenomenology aims to capture.

One go-along was conducted for this thesis. Because of the delicate and focused nature of go-alongs of accompanying an informant throughout the museum visit, it was possible to do an informed and natural go-along with a family relative

without being intrusive to his experience. This is a limitation of the go-along method where the participant may feel awkward.

From the go-along, perceptions are also gathered as “emotions, taste, values, and previous experiences for instance—are acquired and learned” (Kusenbach, 2003, p.6). By understanding how the informant activates certain filters for what is or isn’t interesting in the museum, it was possible to uncover spatial practices by identifying where he preferred to go in the museum.

4.3.4. Netnography

The Internet is a significant space for discussing opinions of the physical world more than ever, thanks to online forums and social media. Netnography, a combination of the words “ethnography” and “internet” is generally defined by Kozinets (in Rokka, 2010, p.383) as “an application of ethnographic methods to study online cultures.” For this thesis, scouring travel websites such as Trip Advisor and social media websites like Facebook and Instagram contributed in gaining more user insights by capturing their post-visit thoughts of the museum experience. Such travel websites, and social media, allow for an exploration of conversations of experiences that happen long after people have left the museum premises. For this study, netnography offered a glimpse into the thoughts of users regarding the museum and complemented the other methods in validating user sentiments. Because the Internet offers a certain safety through anonymity (Herd, 2013), it could also be observed that travel reviews are very direct in their language where both satisfaction and dissatisfaction are eloquently and concisely expressed.

4.3.5. Customer/User Journey Mapping

The museum user journey presents the ecology of interactions between the museum and the user. The roles and performances intertwine in systems, exhibitions and micro-moments where both users and the museum produce experiences. The user journey map is a graphical, design and market-based tool that offers a “visual representation of the user journey and experience in using a service or space” (Marquez, Downey & Clement, 2015, p. 136). While the above research methods provide ethnographic basis for gathering data in the field, the user journey map helps me analyse the movement and behavior of users as I graphically map out their journey in the museum. This offers a comparative visual representation of the users

experiences in the museum. It is a useful tool for providing a summary that represents the important elements of time, satisfaction and going through in a user-centered conceptual framework (Bejarano, Ceballos and Maya, 2017), which is derived from the ethnographic material.

The user journey map has 3 components: the touchpoints or prompts where company and user meet, stages of the journey, and the actual journey that reflect the users' emotions and affective reactions across different phases of the museum visit. Diagram 2 shows an example of a user journey map by Bejarano, Ceballos and Maya (2017) outlining the user experience with EnCicla, a bicycle sharing system in Medellin, Colombia. It shows the moment a user takes a bicycle, uses it, and returns bicycle with corresponding feelings for each point.

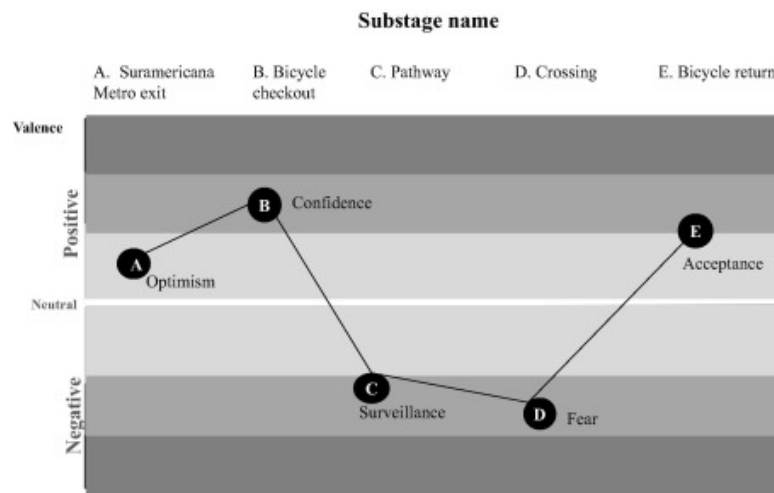


Diagram 2. User Journey Map for EnCicla (Bejarano, Ceballo and Maya, 2017, p.153)

For this study, the user journey map functions as a visual outline of the narrative of Designmuseum Danmark's users. The ethnographic methods thickly describe the stories and emotions of users, but the user journey map offers a snapshot of what they go through that helps to summarize each type of museum user experience. Each analysis section concludes with a map of the user journey.

5. Chapter 5: Discussion and Analysis

The word Perception indicates a direction rather than a primitive function.

- Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.12

Merleau-Ponty (1962) describes the body as the vessel of the self where the inner and outer worlds intersect. While walking through the different rooms of Designmuseum Danmark, a distinct level of silence prevails. A hushed tone is maintained regardless of the number of people in the exhibitions and halls. Ethnographer Tine Damsholt (2008, p.56) describes soundscape, which she adapts from renowned composer Murray Schafer, as the “auditory or aural landscape. Like a landscape, a soundscape is simultaneously a physical environment and way of perceiving that environment...I might add ways of doing or practicing that specific environment.”

In Designmuseum Danmark, there is a constant soft murmuring of people who keep a low tone of voice as they gradually move closer and further from the objects. I noticed museum users whispering to each other or unobtrusively staring at the objects before them in silence. Occasionally, there will be a loud banging of floor tiles followed by soft giggles that indicate accidental stepping on loose floor tiles wherein people that do step on it seem embarrassed as if creating such a loud sound disrupts the sanctity of the museum. *Keynote sounds* or the sounds continuously heard (Damsholt, 2008) are the soft murmurs of people and soft hitting of shoes on the ground. Occasionally, the monotony is broken by *soundmarks*, which are the unique prominent sounds that are noticed and set a landmark to the environment (Damsholt, 2008). In the museum, these are the slabs of broken floor tiles that are mistakenly stepped on by users that break the silence. There is a careful treading across the exhibitions and the curious observers of the objects keep a safe distance. Tom O’Dell (2010), in his study of spas in Sweden, describes a similar decorum in which the spa’s unambiguous rules dictate the behavior of visitors to one that is more appropriate for a space designed for relaxation.

Museums tend to have a sacred quality to them (Hooper-Greenhill, 1990). As a space of intellectual discourse through materiality, museums can be a place where dreams can be fulfilled, the mind can be fascinated, or the body can find respite from the everyday world. The same is observed in Designmuseum Danmark. Being an important design destination for many users, they come to the place where they

quietly admire objects from a fluctuating distance that helps them to align their ability to comprehend the exhibitions and objects and formulate meaning and a design museum experience.

This chapter analyses the different ways users experience a design museum, with specific focus on Designmuseum Danmark as a case. In an analysis of the navigation and interactions that take place, meanings are uncovered, which yield to unique experiences of the museum. The chapter is divided into three user experience themes. These are, namely, Cognitive User Experience, Object User Experience, and Introspective User Experience that are presented with their own sub-sections broken down in time-related phases such as before the visit, during the visit, and after the visit. This division of the temporal aspect of museum usage helps to identify how meaning is shaped before and during the visit, which also contributes to a continuous construction of meaning after they have left the museum's physical space; all of which forms the overall museum user experience. These typologies provide analytical distinctions of user experiences that, although they may not starkly vary in reality, they enable this study to look deep in the variations of people's museum practices.

Kirsti Mathiesen Hjemdahl (2003) uses a similar strategy for her phenomenological study of theme parks where she takes note of the phases of entering the amusement park with full expectations (before), shattered illusions upon encountering reality (during), and the will to imagine despite meeting reality (during and after). Analysing what happens in each phase elucidates the meaning making practices, which form a continuous process of experiences and thoughts building upon each other as people create new meanings and experiences. Since museum visiting entails going to an activity outside the routine of everyday life, I find this delineation of the museum experience crucial to understanding how perceptions are formed that inevitably influences how users navigate and interact with the museum. Eventually, what takes place before and during the museum visit shapes their recollection and value for the experience in retrospection.

5.1. Cognitive User Experiences

This section analyses the users' cognitive experience, which Zahava Doering (1999) defines as the process of enriching understanding, and gaining information and knowledge through mental reasoning of the objects encountered in a museum. She further defines these users as, "individuals whose experience is clearly enhanced by

contextual presentations tend to describe cognitive experiences as most satisfying. While the objects are still important, these visitors find their primary satisfaction in the interpretive or intellectual aspects of the experience” (Doering, 1999, p.11). What I have also discovered is that the intellectual experience of users at Designmuseum Danmark merges with strong emotions of dreams and beliefs about design, which emerges from the users’ knowledge of design and Danish design. With users having clear opinions of the museum content, cognition, understanding, and feeling happens both through the museum’s communication through their texts, labels and exhibitions, as well as through the movement of users within the museum.

In the first sub-section entitled *Pre-visit: Preparing for the Pilgrimage to the Center of Design*, it discusses users arriving with notions and expectations of Danish design that become the driving force for coming to and moving within Designmuseum Danmark. Following this, *At the museum: Feeling Lost and Finding Faith* elucidates how users build up their knowledge of design with the objects and spaces they encounter wherein lived experiences are embodied through careful and scrutinizing movements. And lastly, *Post-visit: Sense of Renewal* reveals how ideas of design may or may not change after visiting the museum.

I also introduce Paul and Ellie, Bob and Camilla, Signe, and Heena. These informants are local and international visitors who were motivated to come to Designmuseum Danmark because of their goal to see design and Danish design. Their familiarity with design was formed by professional and personal factors that influence how they create meaning of the museum, which can be likened to paying homage to a design mecca where they aspire to build upon what they know.

5.1.1. Pre-visit: Preparing for the Pilgrimage to the Center of Design

Imagine planning for a pilgrimage - a grand voyage that entails having convictions of why the trip is worth taking, and what will be felt and observed while and upon reaching the final destination. For the faithful that have travelled to Mecca or undertaken the long walk to Santiago de Compostela, they embody a desire for enlightenment, an aspiration for renewal, or other personal reasons. Formulating such knowledge may emerge from either consciously having an interest in the nature of the pilgrimage that is borne out of faith, study or profession, or a subconscious influence by sociocultural environments. With all the above mentioned, it is crucial to highlight that the journey starts long before it actually happens, which is based on what one

reads, preaches, dreams, and aspires, all of which help to create a mental image of the experience.

In the same way that pilgrims travel, visitors to design museums can be motivated with similar intense beliefs for justifying their journey. Museum users arrive with entrance narratives (Doering, 1999) comprising of carefully formulated design opinions. These notions act like a baggage containing the users' personal and sociocultural contexts that define what design and Danish design is for them. For many Designmuseum Danmark visitors, their narrative is the aspiration to see Danish design in the museum where they imagine design and Danish design to be well curated and explained. They may have read about Denmark and Danish design in the past, which makes it a natural choice for international visitors to include Designmuseum Danmark in their itinerary while in Copenhagen. For others, Danish design is even *the purpose* for coming to Copenhagen. Having this design orientation sets the primary intention for coming to the museum and with some users come from as far as Australia and Nepal.

Several informants pointed out that Danish design is popular in their home country, which significantly influenced their decision to come to Designmuseum Danmark. Paul, an informant from the Netherlands, said that he was motivated to visit the museum because according to him, "Danish design is well-known in the Netherlands. Since we are in Copenhagen we try and see the museum" (Paul, 19 May 2016, personal communication). Paul mainly came for Danish design based on information he acquired from years of exposure to Danish mid-century modern furniture in his home country. Furthermore, he is a craftsman himself, which makes him naturally inclined to appreciate design. While planning for the trip, he and his wife read about Copenhagen through a book and travel guide that increased their motivation for seeing Danish design furniture at Designmuseum Danmark. This tacit knowledge of Danish design acquired while growing up was strengthened by the explicit information gathering process for his weekend holiday in Copenhagen.

Paul continued that he did not expect to see much else in the museum, aside from a lot of Danish design. Thus, for Paul and his wife, Ellie, their familiarity with Danish design determined their intention as being the "main thing" (Ellie, 19 May 2016, personal communication) they came for. They had a desire to expand and affirm their knowledge of Danish design by being physically present in a place where they believe Danish design is celebrated and showcased, and where they can arrive, seemingly, as

experts of the subject. They claimed to have a lot of knowledge that they expect to be confirmed by the museum.

Ellie elaborated that she expected to see “a lot of Danish design because it’s a Danish museum” (Ellie, 19 May 2016, personal communication). Her statement assumes a natural predisposition and high expectation because of the museum’s name. This points to the large influence of the museum’s name in attracting design enthusiasts. Designmuseum Danmark is an institution with a long history of preserving Denmark’s heritage in the form of the decorative arts and crafts. Since changing its name from Kunstindustrimuseet in 2011, the museum has seen a rapidly increasing influx of visitors where numbers have more than doubled since (Danmarks Statistik, 2015).ⁱⁱ

Designmuseum Danmark is aware that Danish design is the primary magnet for tourists, which becomes a critical aspect of the museum’s content as more than half of its users are international visitors (Olsen-Rule, 2013). Thus, the name change encumbers the museum with the responsibility of meeting museum visitors who, according to Mette Kirk, who has worked with Designmuseum Danmark and the National Ministry for Culture’s user research project, “many of whom have some specific knowledge for coming and clear expectations about their experience in the museum” (Kirk in Designmuseum Danmark, 2012, p.48-49).

To adapt to the demands of the growing number of international and local visitors, the museum’s 2013 strategy suggests to “place users at the center” and to “be an open, inclusive and living house” (Designmuseum Danmark, 2013, p.4). Furthermore, the museum has consciously undertaken a stand on constructing dynamic exhibitions that are engaging not only to the industry of design but also to the international public (Holmsted Olesen, 2013). The increasing number of visitors shows the appeal of Danish design to its potential users, which is intensified by the museum’s name. The name change sends a message of offering Danish design, which becomes a critical factor for the decision to go by foreign visitors. With this, the museum successfully entices its international users to visit by sheer virtue of its name. In fact, one of the informants, Heena from Nepal, stated, “I have a lot of expectations because it’s Denmark and it is a design museum so I have a lot of expectations and I am excited” (Heena, 20 July 2016, personal communication). To be more precise, the current name of the museum encourages users to make assumptions of its material contents as exuding purely of Danish design. However, users often find themselves

surprised when there are exhibitions from other countries or genres not commonly associated to design or Danish design, which the succeeding section elaborates upon. National identity and cultural heritage may also shape museum experiences. Though this area of study is not a focus for the current thesis, there is a wealth of research in this topic that can be further explored in the future.

With users aware of Danish design's prominence, other users perceive Designmuseum Danmark as a purveyor of design that should meet their design consciousness. Bob, who was visiting from Australia with his wife Camilla, described what he wanted to see in the museum as the, "different Danish approach to design as opposed to an Australian approach" (Bob, 1 May 2016, personal communication). He had strong subjective definitions of Danish design from reading about it in books and in comparison to his knowledge of other genres of design. This therefore rose an expectation of the possible experience in what they thought was a museum for Danish design. In discussing what design means for them, Camilla explained, "Design is more so that it becomes a style in some way. And I think that perhaps the Danish have a style that is all their own. It is a little different. I think that's what people think of when they hear design. They pick a style that is functional and beautiful but on their own" (Camilla, 1 May 2016, personal communication). This statement demonstrates Camilla's idea of Danish design having clear parameters of being stylish or unique while being functional, something different from the design they are accustomed to in Australia, which she would like to experience in the museum.

Another informant, Signe, described her motivation for visiting the museum as, "to see good design and the Japanese exhibition" (Signe, 1 May 2016, personal communication). As a person who studied design in university, Signe distinctly defined design to be a mix of having "function and looks" that is based on a meticulous decision-making process by the designer. In visiting the museum, she was interested to learn about the process of the different designers' work process through the museum exhibitions and objects. Her aspiration to expand and apply her professional knowledge with the museum's contents set up a filter for how she would later experience the museum and her process for learning.

The above statements reflect the myriad sources of information that structure a museum user's intellectual standpoint on Danish design. Sources for the motivation to visit have been identified as: knowledge, interest and exposure to Danish design, museum recommendations through travel literature, and the weight of Designmuseum

Danmark's name in attracting users, which complements the other motivations. All these sources shape the users' consciousness, raises expectations, and a cognitive capacity that predisposes them in relating with the objects once in the museum space.

Sara Ahmed (2006, p.27) talks about consciousness as "directed or orientated towards objects, which is what gives consciousness its 'worldly' dimension. If consciousness is about how we perceive the world 'around us, then consciousness is also embodied, sensitive, and situated." She further elaborates that perceiving entails taking a position, such as liking, admiring or hating an object, which inevitably also gives a person a position as a reaction to what they are seeing. For cognitive users, their consciousness becomes embodied as they arrive at the museum with their own Danish design lens and each individual undergoes a process of meaning making where they find satisfaction in what they learn or not. The next sub-section discusses the manner by which consciousness and the position of taking and giving between objects and people happen. This is practiced by users in their continued quest for learning or affirming their Danish design knowledge through a merging of mind and body, which Merleau-Ponty (1962) also describes to be blurred as a person creates meaning of the world using perception and the body.

To highlight, this time-bound phase of preparing for the pilgrimage shows the first embodied movement that users make in their journey, which is traveling to Designmuseum Danmark. The existence of the physical space of Danish design lures users where their intellect, expectations, hopes and fantasies can be fulfilled or challenged. Revealing more than intellectual capacity, these entrance narratives point to the organization of a "basic framework" (Doering, 1999, p.8) comprised of Danish design knowledge as well as an emotional attachment to the concept of Danish design that comes from different influences.

Signe and Paul possess a high level of information about Danish design because of their profession, education and hobby related to the discipline of designing and craftmaking. Bob, Camilla and Heena exhibit a sheer interest in Danish design that is knowledge gained in relation to their holiday trip preparations but is also influenced by some exposure to design concepts that may or may not be Danish. Regardless, these users have formed opinions and statements of Danish design that would pave the way for how they experience the museum.

According to Doering (1999), cognitive user experiences is about satisfying a process of learning or cognition. However, this study expands on the concept

proposed, as empirical data has shown that the cognitive user experience is much more complex as intellect and emotions intertwine for a user. Prior knowledge set up high expectations and feelings that influence their eagerness for learning in the museum. This relates to Merleau-Ponty's (1962) discussion on reflexivity wherein a person's agency or self-consciousness inherently creates unique experiences.

The variation of a novice or expert level of knowledge is described by Merleau-Ponty as a critical aspect for perceiving and performing his/her skill (Dreyfus, 1996). The skills referred here are the depth of knowledge of Danish design and design that, consequently, are embodied by the person's usage and engagement with Designmuseum Danmark. This translates into the activity of meaning making where the users' understanding of the museum reveals varied processes of acquiring knowledge using the body, which the next section expounds.

5.1.2. At the museum: Feeling Lost and Finding Faith

"I'm quite surprised that it's housed in a really old building. I was expecting something ultra modern but it's kinda nice that it's not that because I was expecting that and it kind of didn't go as I expected but it's a nice surprise" (Heena, 20 July 2016, personal communication). This statement shows Heena's surprise upon seeing Designmuseum Danmark in an old structure. All her reading of Danish design created a mental image of a design world that is modern, light, open, pastel colored, and distinctly minimal in form and look. She said that she almost missed the museum and later on hesitated to enter the premises because, despite the absence of a large sign, she did not imagine a Danish design museum to be housed in an old building, which reminded her of a sanctuary.

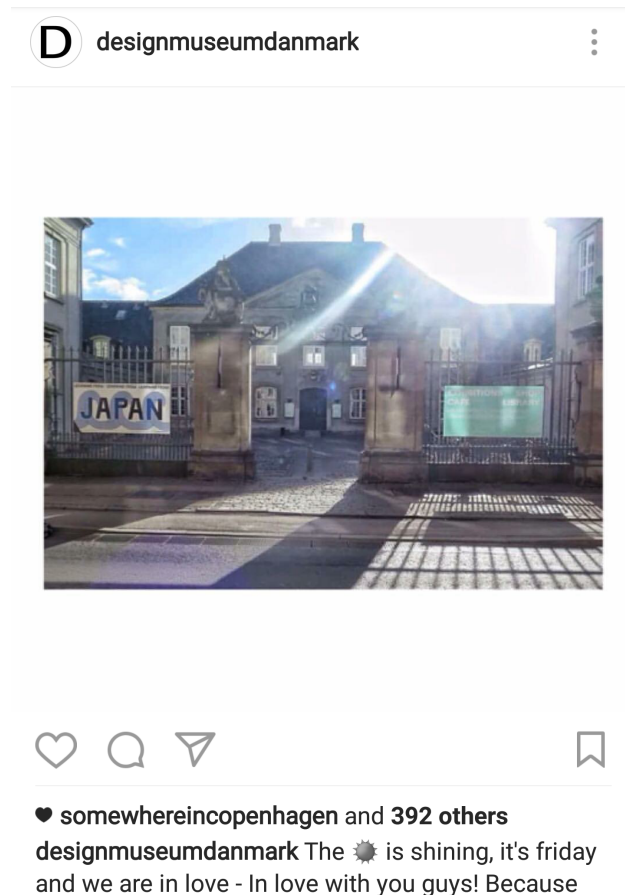


Image 2. Entrance to Designmuseum Danmark
(Designmuseum Danmark, 2017)

Heena's first impression of the museum contradicted her expectations. Similarly, journeys are not always smooth sailing because there can be moments of confusion, doubt, and particularly the feeling of being lost. In trying to make sense of the museum, users enact individual movements that help them to understand what is before them and surrounding them. To describe ways of interaction and navigation that produce cognition, I begin by describing the users' first encounter with the museum building, and then slowly move into their perceptions as they go deeper into the museum.

Heena's comment about the building refers to having a moment of confusion. After all the mental images she has conjured up of how a museum of Danish designs should look, she could not match the physical structure with what she had in mind. Getting her bearings also took a while because upon entering the museum, she was met by two entrances, one to the left and another to the right. She had to ask a museum attendant to tell her where to go.

The two entrances to the exhibitions located in the reception/ticketing area also show no clear sign of directions for where to enter. During the times I was at the museum, an attendant either told me where to begin or I winged it on my own. In the event that I was not verbally instructed, I instinctively turned to right and away from the museum shop and cafe, which Falk and Dierking (2013) have observed as a common intuitive way of moving among museum visitors that are lost. Trip Advisor reviewer, Anne-Louise Q (2016), posted of her experience at Designmuseum Danmark:

“Never enter through the café!”

Reviewed April 4, 2016 via mobile

I really like the exhibition of Japanese design that opened the start of our walk through the Design Museum. The work and variety were exquisite. The museum itself is a familiar environment. An old building with rooms forming a familiar walk through and large picture windows that a grand old building like this cannot change. So in a way it reminded me of the Cooper Hewitt in New York. Now please don't get me wrong, I still enjoyed this museum, but out of all those I saw in Copenhagen, this had the least positive impact. Considering it's the Design museum too, I don't think there's an excuse. To begin the visit you have to walk through the café, where by nature, chairs and people are in the way. Poor design layout...

Normally, people visit the museum shop and cafe last as an indication of the end of the visit and a signal to buy souvenirs or relax with some food. Naturally, a sense of disorientation arises as users are met by these museum services first when they are accustomed to doing it last. Signe, an informant from Copenhagen, has visited the museum in the past and experienced the museum backwards this time around. On beginning her visit she said, “we got to start backwards into the Japanese exhibition, we just kept going, or else you have to walk through the same exhibition again to go back to the start. We were confused because we couldn't do that last time. So we actually just began there” (Signe, 1 May 2016, personal communication). Signe demonstrates her navigation technique that was based on her past visits. She usually just turns to the right side entrance door, which was how the previous museum layout

was designed. Signe demonstrates the role of an expert user who was left confused by the reversal of the entrances and was suddenly conscious of the choice between two entrance doors this time. Her heavy reliance on prior knowledge became a setback to her visit because she went through the museum in the opposite direction. To recover from this obstacle, Signe kept going until she found something familiar, the mid-century modern furniture exhibition.

For Signe, reaching the Design and Crafts from the 20th Century Exhibition (Det 20. Århundredes Kunsthåndværk og Design) gave her a sense of what the museum was about once more because she could recognize the objects that she associates to the museum. Up until that point, she constantly sought for something familiar after walking through rooms of Danish Design Now (Dansk Design Nu), a new exhibition. It was only after physically moving from room to room and visually seeing familiar objects did she gain an orientation of where she was. To reiterate, Signe's intention for the visit was to see mid-century Danish and Japanese design as a designer. Thus, there was a feeling of alienation when the earlier space and objects did not register to her, which was the Danish Design Now exhibition, a collection of contemporary objects that include homeware, furniture and graphic design.



Image 3. First Room at the Danish Design Now exhibition

Sara Ahmed (2006) writes about gaining a sense of awareness by “making the strange familiar through the extension of bodies into space” (p.5). This describes Signe's experience where she found comfort by going deep into the museum where she slowly became oriented more and more with the space. Although Signe found the Danish Design Now exhibition “interesting” as it was new for her, it was only after

she came across what she wanted to see (Japanese and Danish design) that she became at ease and satisfied, as if everything was just easy to digest after that. This was a gradual process that took time where she eventually found comfort between her body and the environment the longer she stayed and more acquainted she became with the museum.

Many users who come for Danish design become acquainted by the space once they perceive Danish design in the exhibitions. The *perceptual field* is described by Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.15) as made up of things and “spaces between things”. Meaning making happens through an analysis of the objects and exhibitions as users search for *their* notion of Danish design, which transpires as they move through exhibitions and between objects. Users have described moving around the objects from up close and afar as a way of understanding their design.

Paul’s craftsmanship knowledge is easily stimulated by familiar Danish design objects. For instance, he describes his experience in the Design and Crafts from the 20th Century Exhibition (Det 20. Århundredes Kunsthåndværk og Design) as being overwhelmed by the number of chairs. He thought that with that amount of chairs, about 30 in a single room, “It’s so busy this designing a chair, so many different forms. That amazed me. It’s the different forms, materials” (Paul, 1 May 2016, personal communication). Further inquiry into his fascination disclosed that Paul often wondered how they were made, which was information not offered by the labels and exhibition design. The texts on the object labels gave information about the object’s name, production year, designer, material and producer.

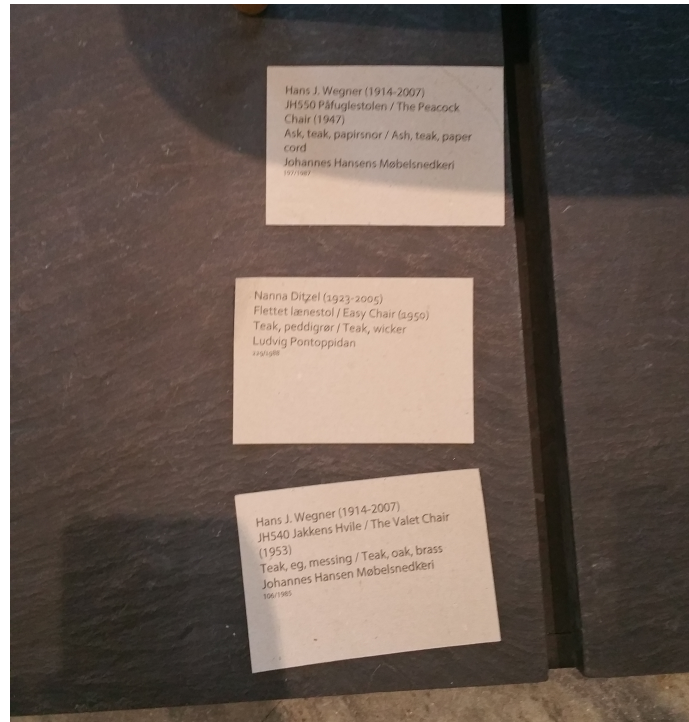


Image 4. Example of object labels at Designmuseum Danmark

However, Paul's curiosity into the chairs' production process is what would be of greatest value for him as a craftsman. He often asked, "How's it made?" (Paul, 1 May 2016, personal communication). To know this, Paul slowly walked around the objects and tried to come as close as possible to scrutinize their design where he eventually figured out how they were constructed. Using his body, he closed the information gap from the museum labels and texts to find out the knowledge he craves on his own by coming close within the distance set by the museum between users and objects. Merleau-Ponty (1962) writes about distance and proximity as critical to sense experience because meaning is created as it is sensed visually, in relation to other objects around it, and in the current context of the object.

Paul's meaning making experience was to maintain a certain distance with the perceptual field where he could associate the objects through an embodiment of his own knowledge of Danish design and connecting that with this experience of handicrafts. This process enabled him to make better sense of the exhibition and understood more about Danish design chairs by moving up close to them and harnessing his own knowledge of woodcrafts. It was through the walking close to the borders of the restricted space surrounding the chairs that Paul learned the most, which was unique information he generated himself, not offered by the museum, as

enabled by the body's movement. Merleau-Ponty (1962) explains that this association of ideas and previous experiences create connections and a sensation of the world through the body. Paul validates this in his movement where the object and person are able to formulate their own design story through movement and presence in a space.

Another informant, Signe, a designer by profession, talked about the same chairs, as "It's a shame that you cannot sit on the chairs, I think; that you couldn't try any of the objects. I understand, but it is a chair so half of the experience is to sit on it" (Signe, 1 May 2016, personal communication). For her, the strict proximity between user and objects defined by the museum becomes a limitation for creating a better understanding of the design world created by the museum. The possibility of touching would enable Signe to make a better judgment of the chair's design quality because, as a designer herself, her entrance narrative was to see good design, which, to her, meant being able to use and test the objects. Heena also expressed that "design is functional and democratic with a certain beauty. It is never on a pedestal" (Henna, 20 July 2016, personal communication). And this perception of design and the barrier set by Designmuseum Danmark in the form of several "DO NOT TOUCH" signs contradict a user's idea of design. This brings to light the potential of interactive museum exhibitions for creating more sensual and elevated experiences for users interested to learn more about the impact of design processes and their finished products.

Thus far, there are users such as Paul who made do of his own skills and knowledge to compose his own experience supported by his movement around objects. According to Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.82), "the outline of my body is a frontier which ordinary spatial relations cross". Therefore, the associations that are made from the stimuli in the perceptual field enable former experiences to make sense and meaning of the present world. But just as important, making and experiencing through movement is a result of the context where the body and object is in. In this case, museum users in pursuit of cognitive gain follow the objects and exhibitions accordingly to understand design more or affirm what they know. Thus, a merging of past and present through the body takes place where it is moved by the object and exhibitions.

On the other hand, there are others who maintain a slight sense of confusion because of the barricades that limit movement and hinder a better experience of the exhibition. The mismatch between what users know of Danish design as *democratic*

and *functional* together with their understanding of the design museum's environment and rules leaves a hole in their experience where they are momentarily dissatisfied. Such barriers cause "shrinkage in the field" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.106) or limitations between person and object that happens when objects could not be comprehended by touch or physical interaction, as Signe experienced.

5.1.3. Post-visit: Sense of Renewal

Users recollect their visit with constructions of which exhibitions should and should not be included that is compared to what they know of Danish design and what they actually experienced in the museum. Offerings of suggestions indicate a continued meaning making process post-visit and incessant construction of the design museum.

As Bob recollected his visit, he said, "It was interesting, but I would like to see more. Probably more Danish modern design. I think at the moment the museum is roughly half historical, half Japanese design." At the time of the fieldwork, the museum featured a "Learning from Japan" exhibition that occupied about one-fourth of the museum's space. The remaining space was allocated for the other major collections of "Fashion and Textiles" (Mode og Tekstil), and the contemporary "Danish Design Now" (Dansk Design Nu) on the ground floor, and the porcelain collection on the first floor. The Japanese exhibition may seem to take up more space to Bob, which I interpret his statement as his expectations revolving around the possibility of seeing more Danish design that he and his wife read about from a book back in Australia. Moreover, he suggested for the porcelain collection to be removed because it was more of a Chinese story than a Danish one. Bob's experience reflects a sustained cognitive experience where he kept searching for the *Danish approach* in all exhibitions wherein learning more and affirming his knowledge was tantamount to having made the most of his museum visit. Leveling expectations between users and museum content is not an easy task because satisfaction is subjective to personal ideas of quality, pleasure, and a user's state of mind (del Carmen de Rojas and del Carmen de Camarero, 2006). At the same time, museums often take an educational (Hooper-Greenhill, 2004) or historically academic standpoint (Houlberg Rung, 2013). And when museums do not meet user expectations, users may feel exhausted, tired and disinterested.

Falk and Dierking (2013) define *museum fatigue* as the decline in attention and time given by users to exhibitions. This aspect of physical exhaustion can be a pain point for users when the museum does not function as a host that anticipates their needs. Camilla commented that she and Bob did not see all the exhibitions, only the ones they thought were interesting. Being that they were under the older age bracket, *pensionists* on holiday, they were tired after a full day of sightseeing in Copenhagen and constantly sought for places to sit and rest in the museum but could not find any chairs to sit on.

Tiredness also results from difficulty in comprehending exhibitions, which may be caused by basic elements of exhibition design (Hooper-Greenhill, 2006). As users delved into Designmuseum Danmark's design universe, they experienced museum fatigue when they could not make sense of the museum that gave a feeling of being underwhelmed. In the Designmuseum Danmark, users raised that resting areas are necessary to contemplate on what they have been seeing as a way for processing the information and sensations they experienced. Moments to pause enrich the user experience where a flow and rhythm of movement is created in and between exhibitions.

Below, a user journey map outlines the cognitive user experience. It provides an overview of the upward and downward micro experiences that users have in Designmuseum Danmark where sentiments of satisfaction are shown using the smile icons. The map outlines the user's journey before, during and after the museum visit where they all come together to form a cognitive user experience. Learning occurs across the timeline and is supplemented by bodily movement, and the museum affordances. The diagram shows how disorientation in the beginning of the visit, through the two entrances, is redeemed by the familiarity of the 20th Century Craft and Design exhibition, which satisfies the entrance narrative of experiencing Danish design. This is the highlight for cognitive users and is where they stay the longest as they enrich their knowledge by scrutinizing the different objects using their body and based on what they know.

Cognitive User Experience

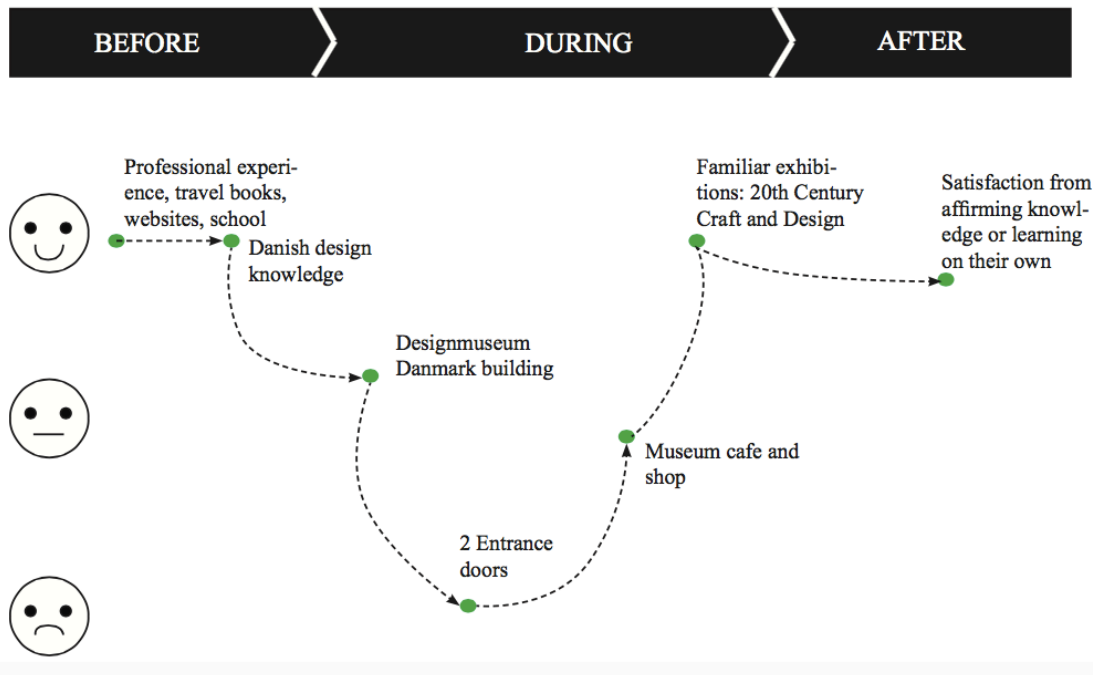


Diagram 1. User Journey Map for Cognitive User Experience at Designmuseum Danmark

When I asked Paul, Ellie, Bob, Camilla, Heena and Signe and Stine about what else they saw inside the museum, they commented about being impressed by the number of chairs displayed. More importantly, they expressed that the museum lived up to their expectation because they “recognized a lot of Danish design things” (Paul, 19 May 2016, personal communication). Paul and Ellie’s entrance narrative supports the satisfaction or value of the experience. According to Zahava Doering (1999, p.7):

People tend to attend the exhibitions that they think will be congruent with their own attitudes, with those point of view they expect to agree and that they respond best to exhibitions and themes that are personally relevant and with which they can easily connect. We found, consequently, that most museum visitors acquire little new factual knowledge.

What could be surmised from these users is an entrance narrative that not only encouraged them to visit the museum, but also consequently predetermined the

attention and direction they took once inside. The desire to experience Danish design in Designmuseum Danmark had them constantly searching for this experience that would live up to their ideal. After the visit, the user experience was a confirmation of the entrance narrative. Despite the moments of confusion of feeling lost, they maintain their faith in Danish design and Designmuseum Danmark because they have seen it and understood it as best they can with and through the museum. With their focus on Danish design as an expertise of furniture making, users easily disregard the porcelain and textile collections that were also on display; the Japanese was often described as *interesting* but with little enthusiasm as compared to seeing the history of Danish design through the various objects.

5.2. Object User Experiences

Users are depicted in this section as explorers embarking on a journey in search of adventure. If the cognitive user experience tells the story of persons seeking to affirm a personal notion of design, object user experiences narrates the desire to see objects in real life - much like tourists in a new city hoping to see the highlights or popular landmarks. Users engaged in an object experience act as adventurers hunting for excitement and describe their relationship with specific objects where, aside from being the main reason for coming to the museum, they become the guiding star in their expedition once inside the museum.

This section begins with the *Pre-visit: Setting the Compass*, which tells the entrance narrative of users and their motivation for seeing particular things in Designmuseum Danmark. This is followed by *At the museum: Following the North Star and Thrill-seeking* where objects act as the users' means for orienting themselves in the museum. Thrill seeking describes the ways users encounter the objects where proximities and rules are tested in order to make the most of the museum experience. Lastly, in *Post-visit: Collecting Souvenirs*, users relay what they take away from the museum. To tell the object user experience, the informants Henriette, Tiina and John describe the things they aspire to see in Designmuseum Danmark together with notes from participant observations.

5.2.1. Pre-visit: Setting the Compass

Many users come to the design museum with a clear objective for viewing particular things. Knowledge of these objects is often acquired from books and other

literature about Scandinavian or Danish design in which beautiful designs may have stood out and left a mark on a users' mind. This mark ignites a desire to meet such iconic things in person or in *real life*.

For example, when asked the question *was there anything in particular that you wanted to see?* Several users responded with a desire to see a chair by Finn Juhl, Verner Panton, or Grete Jalk, or specific graphic designs where they would cite the name of the design and offer some details about the designer. For instance, Tiina, from Finland, wanted to see Arne Jacobsen's Egg and Swan chairs. "I wanted to see the Egg Chair and the Swan Chair because I learned about them as a student, also about Arne Jacobsen. His designs are inspiring for me and my work" (Tiina, 9 December 2016, personal communication). As a graphic designer, Tiina has learned a lot about modern design and Arne Jacobsen is one of the designers she admires. Thus, her entrance narrative begins with her life as a student and designer that aspires to see these iconic chairs.

Other users share this sentiment as well, according to Henriette, "I would like to see the Arne Jacobsen furnitures" (Henriette, 19 May 2016, personal communication). Henriette shows a fascination for Arne Jacobsen that stems from his designs' popularity in Norway and his influence in Norwegian design. Thus for her, to see the original pieces that she has heard much about growing up was a highlight for her trip to Designmuseum Danmark.

These motivations point to the intention of seeing objects from literature to real life. The users may have some idea of Danish design as users with cognitive experiences, but it can be said that Tiina and Henriette, and other informants featured in this section, have an even more specific mission to achieve in Designmuseum Danmark—to see one, two or three objects in their physical form. These users exhibit a value for everyday objects preserved in a museum that they have deemed worthy to travel for. For them, these chairs or posters are not merely mundane things; they are up on a pedestal as popular objects that deserve their time, money and attention. These objects, beckon the users. They strongly shape the motivation for users to come to the museum and influence how they act once they see these iconic pieces that they value as a rare and beautiful object.

Zahava Doering (1999, p.11) defines object experiences as "something outside the visitor, in this case the material culture object or the 'real thing'". Such experiences involve objects having an impact on a user's life by encountering it in person. The

impact of object experiences are defined by four sentiments, namely, the fulfillment of seeing rare or valuable things, being moved by beauty, imagining ownership of the objects, or taking inspiration from them (Pekarik, Doering and Karns, 1999).

Therefore, knowing that iconic objects are in a particular museum, such as Designmuseum Danmark, gives users a fixed target for their visit that they can work towards. They set their intention to see these things that sets the trajectory of their visit. Intentionality produces actions and emotions that users deem appropriate for their motivation and the context they find themselves in the museum.

5.2.2. At the museum: Following the North Star and Thrill-seeking

“I think I came in from the left, I started at the Japanese exhibition but I didn’t notice if that was the right door to begin or not. I just asked the museum staff where the Armchair and Bow Chair by Grete Jalk were and took it from there” (John, 20 July 2016, personal communication) was how John, an informant who has been living in Denmark for 7 years, described how he started his journey inside the Designmuseum Danmark. This quote from John shows how he was unfazed by the two entrances, which had earlier confused the users with the cognitive experiences. With an intention to see a particular chair, and a few other “minor” ones, John went ahead and asked for assistance to find out where they were located and let himself be directed to the Armchair that was in the Learning from Japan exhibition. Other chairs he wanted to see were the Spanish Chair by Børge Mogensen and Chair 45 by Finn Juhl, which were in the Design and Crafts of the 20th Century.



Image 5. Chairs at the Design and Crafts of the 20th Century Exhibition.

The Design and Crafts of the 20th Century Exhibition is where most of the Danish design “crown jewels” are, as described by museum staff. It is a long room separated by a narrow aisle. “Upon approaching the center, one is drowned by a sea of chairs facing different directions. They are mostly in the shades of brown, with the occasional pop of bright red or yellow by a few. Natural materials of wood and rope warped into unique shapes also dominate the chairs” (Dizon, 2017, p.9).ⁱⁱⁱ To the left of the room are a row chairs arranged single file on a platform. To the right, is a medley of chairs facing in different directions with each one showing of its unique curves and profile. Designs by Hans Wegner, Kaare Klint, Finn Juhl, Børge Mogensen, and other Danish classics are featured in this room in a seemingly haphazard manner, but in clearly good company with their fellow iconic design companions. On the narrow aisle, several people tend to briskly walk through room with a few who really stop and stare at the pieces.

John’s intention to see four chairs charted the direction for his visit. Like the Grete Jalk chair acting as the North Star that John follows, he skipped the phase of disorientation and confusion by using the chair to direct his actions. With his personal goal, he set directional lines that marked out a clear path for his visit. These lines allow us to find our way, which also makes other things visible or invisible (Ahmed, 2006). According to Sara Ahmed (2006, p.9), “When we have a line to follow, we are having a ‘take’ on the world, a set of views and viewing points, as well as a route

through the contours of the world, which gives our world its own contours.” Therefore, from approaching museum staff to walking directly to the exhibition where the chair is located, John is an example of the body acting as what Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.82) describes as a “vehicle of being in the world”. This means that the body performs thoughts and perceptions in a conscious movement towards something. In this case, the museum staff is the experts of the museum space and John takes their word for the direction he should take to meet his goal.

Objects and the space become what Sara Ahmed (2006, p.9) calls “homing devices” that indicate our location in space and time. As people move through spaces, a need to orient them arises to create order of surroundings. Through movement, meaning making slowly unfolds with knowledge of the place. Association again plays a key part in the museum experience’s unfolding as the person’s relationship with objects and space is translated into bodily movement. Therefore, movement becomes a result of meanings or ways of perceiving (Merleau-Ponty, 1962).

In Designmuseum Danmark, many users come because of the motivation to see Danish design chairs, in a specific or vague capacity. Because of this prior knowledge, users themselves craft or recreate the exhibition’s display arrangements. For example, Henriette (1 May 2016, personal communication) describes how she saw the organization of the chair display between the Arne Jacobsen exhibition and the Design and Crafts of the 20th Century exhibition:

So we were standing in one room talking about the different chairs, then we said, ‘well one was missing. Where is that one?’ So we had to go back and find it. It’s a bit messy that one.

Henriette was inclined to carefully examine the exhibited objects because of some awareness of Danish design. Her knowledge of Arne Jacobsen and other Danish design objects raised an expectation of what should be grouped together on the display. Her moving back and forth to find the chair she wanted to see gave a feeling of a “messy” exhibition. But once she found it, albeit in another room, order was restored and she was satisfied that the Chair exhibition affirmed her entrance narrative of seeing Arne Jacobsen’s “Myren” chair.

This again relates to the feeling of disorientation, a certain uneasiness described by Sara Ahmed (2006), which is overcome by finding familiarity in surroundings.

When faced with objects in a space, and a known task, such as seeing Arne Jacobsen's "Myren" in Designmuseum Danmark, users who are design fans move accordingly through the medium of the body. Following the chair was necessary for Henriette to make the exhibition meet the display order she had in mind, which was satisfied upon finding the missing chair. In the course of the conversation, she suggested that certain chairs would be best grouped together to make the display more pleasing.

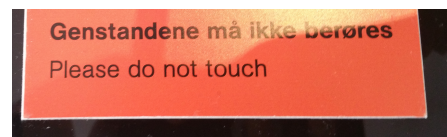
The chairs, in this example, are the homing devices that help users find themselves in the midst of different objects; much like how the North Star is used by seafarers for navigating the sea. Users become oriented with the space through objects and by creating an order that they themselves organize. And once they find order, they feel more at ease and less lost in the chaos of the physical world surrounding them. The chairs encourage people to move by conceptualizing a display that generates the most meaning for them where the past and present converge into forming a new experience for the user.

Upon seeing the Bow Chair, John said, "It was amazing. It seemed more elegant in person and all the curves looked so smooth I almost forgot it was made of wood" (John, 29 July 2016, personal communication). This shows his immediate satisfaction upon seeing the chair. Compared to cognitive experiences where a lot of time is spent trying to understand what the object is or making sense of whole exhibitions, users with an object experience are contented to be in the proximity of these objects.



Image 6. Grete Jalk's Bow Chair
("Sløjfestolen"), Designed 1963
(Admin, 2015)

Despite the museum users' motivations, emotions are not held as constant wherein meaning is continuously made as the body experiences the physical world (Sefcik, 2012). Being manufactured cultural and historical spaces, museums try to command and control the behavior of its users. With the museum institution's role as a repository of objects, the most basic rule present in most museums is preventing users from touching the objects. This rule is just as ever present at Designmuseum Danmark where several signs that clearly say "DO NOT TOUCH" are printed out in different colors and paper types.



Images 7 and 8. Examples of "Do not touch" signs at Designmuseum Danmark

Object experience users can see these signs as barriers to fully realizing object experiences. Users are in search of maximizing their visit and they will, naturally, try to make the most out of it as much as they can. While observing at the Designmuseum Danmark last summer, I was observing a couple, a man and woman, in the Design and Crafts of the 20th Century exhibition. They were fascinated by the chairs and the man started to reach out and grasp Verner Panton's Panton Chair. In complete disregard for the "do not touch" signs, the man leaned in and held onto the chair for a couple of seconds before his female companion saw him and reprimanded him. He simply replied, "It's right there, how could I not??" (Dizon, fieldnotes, 1 May 2016)



Image 9. Man leans on the Panton Chair at the Design and Crafts of the 20th Century

What the man experienced is the bodily reaction when orientation, perception and the physical world manifest itself in an instant. Despite being in a museum, the man's situation was one that reveals a desire to move towards the object but is weakly hindered by the "do not touch" signs. He was seeing the chair in his context and not the museum's. When the woman finally scolded him, he realized his limitations that suggested some disappointment after putting the effort to come to Designmuseum Danmark. Merleau-Ponty (1962) describes this situation as a system where the subject and the world come together and results in performing actions. Ahmed (2006) expounds on this thought in which one's orientation is formed by expectations and norms that concern museum visiting. When the body is hindered, it naturally becomes unable to move and a shrinkage in the phenomenal field appears because what was previously seen as having limitless possibilities was prevented by, in this case, a small white or red sign. Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.106) says that "such a disturbance limits objects that are actually touchable", and this disrupts the subject-object dialogue where proximity was redefined by the museum.

This example reveals an interesting quality of the material culture at the Designmuseum Danmark. Soopydoop86 (2016), a reviewer on Trip Advisor, posted a photo of the chairs in the Design and Crafts from the 20th Century on Instagram with

the caption, “Lots of chairs at the design museum that you’re not allowed to sit on. Just made me want to sit down even more!”

Another informant, Adam, who, upon seeing the same exhibition, was reminded of how tired he was, shared this sentiment (Adam, 20 December 2016, personal communication):

The only thing I had to complain about was for a museum with a lot of chairs; there was nowhere to sit down. I kind of meant that as a joke but I was a bit serious because, of course you want to sit and not just look at them. It kind of teases you.

These statements point to the users constantly negotiating experiences in the museum. They visit because of a desire to see things in real life in a museum setting, but this is compromised when they also see the objects in Designmuseum Danmark for what they are – everyday objects. The objects therefore perform a dual role to users, that of display and function. As mundane things that are expected to offer seating, rest, tactility and other functions, users are inclined to act according to the objects and may forget their other purpose of being artifacts owned by the museum. Daniel Milller (2010) discusses the human relationship with objects as inciting actions because objects have agency with regard to their designed purpose and function that also commands certain behavior from people. He described the Indian sari as a transformative material that changes the way a woman moves in social, supportive and emotional contexts because of the functions the clothing affords. In the same way, seeing an empty chair combined with feelings of tiredness naturally motivate users to negotiate it from being an artifact to an everyday thing. At the same time, seeing the same chair in a museum commands respect for its iconic quality despite, still, being an everyday object.

5.2.3. Post-visit: Collecting Souvenirs

This desire for creating lived experiences together with the museum’s affordances and attributes enables users live out a dream in real life. This is not only a central concept to object user experiences that Zahava Doering (1999), Andrew Pekarik, Zahava Doering and David Karns (1999) describe, but it is a core concept of phenomenology particularly that of *orientation* (Merleau-Ponty, 1962).

The interview question that inquires into things that users might want to see explores the concrete intentions for coming that may raise the value of their visit. True enough, users name certain objects they have learned of in the past as highlights to their experience. At the same time, the objects are also perceived in their everyday form when users feel tired. This brings down the experience for users because the objects are unable to fulfill their task and use them.

The thought of the museum alone and the promise of a great environment is enough motivation to set an intention for visiting. What can be observed is that for some of Designmuseum Danmark's visitors, they come because of individual objects that gained their popularity over time. The parts or objects make up the whole of the museum experience, in which users see individual pieces and generate an overall meaning of the visit.

Below, the user journey map sums up the object user experience.

Object User Experience

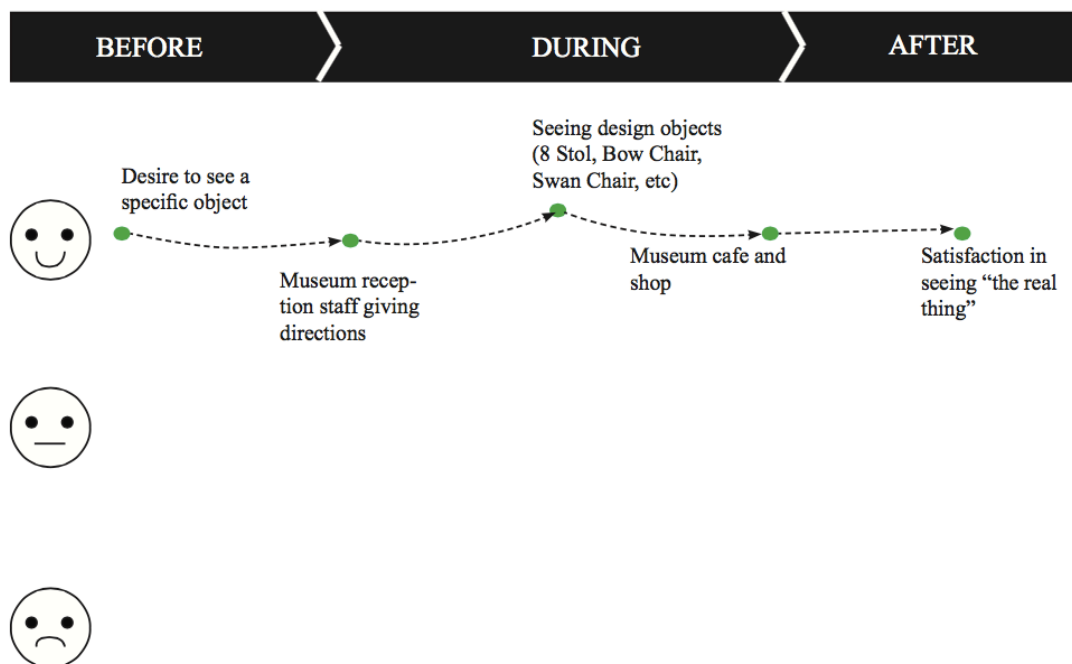


Diagram 2. User Journey Map for Object User Experience at Designmuseum Denmark

Users who came for specific objects have an overall satisfied experience. They all expressed that they would recommend the museum to others and in recalling what it is they would talk to their friends about the museum visit, they all go back to their

entrance narrative of seeing the real thing. Furthermore, all the interactions with the museum, such as the museum staff, support their goal and entrance narrative. When asked what else they recalled from the museum, they had very little to say.

5.3. Introspective User Experiences

Aside from cognitive and object experiences, museum going can also be a quest for coming back to places, and meeting new ones, where past, present and future lives meet inside the museum space. In this final section of the analysis, the metaphor of *arriving* provides the narrative for users that long to connect with past and future times. The section shall again be divided into three sections: *Before the visit: Longing for Connections*, which elaborates on the desire to create intimate connections to past experiences. This will be followed by *During the visit: Settling In* that describes how familiarity of the museum's content enables a user to find and compare versions of himself. Finally, *After the Visit: Finding Home?* closes the analysis with a reminiscence of the visit and the feelings towards the museum. To share the experience, Raymond, a Thai informant currently living in Sweden, and Pernille, a Copenhagener, are introduced. I also draw upon my own experiences as a Filipina living in Denmark for 5,5 years.

5.3.1. Pre-visit: A Longing to Connect

Users with a desire to relive past experiences through the exhibitions arrive with personal memories that they aspire to somewhat relive inside the museum. Raymond, an informant from Bangkok studied high school in Japan and currently lives in Lund. He came to the museum to see the *Learning from Japan* exhibition in particular. Of his intention to visit, he said:

I was excited about the idea of a Japanese exhibition in Scandinavia. That was why I really wanted to go see the exhibition when I saw the advertisement. It was interesting and amusing to see how Scandinavian people perceive Japanese or Asian cultures, from both the exhibitionist or people who set up the exhibition, if that's how they call them, and the visitors. So basically I wanted to see how the exhibition was set and the reactions of the visitors.

(Raymond, 12 December 2016, personal communication)

Compared to cognitive and object user experiences that associate the museum with some knowledge or opinion of design, introspective user experiences happen because of the motivation to recall travels, childhood experiences or other memories (Pekarik, Doering & Karns, 1999). Raymond visited Designmuseum Danmark because he wanted to encounter a fragment of his life in Japan in a Scandinavian setting. It also brings to light his desire to know more about himself. He wanted to see not only how the exhibitions were displayed but also to observe the reactions of other visitors. For him, this would reveal Scandinavian sensitivities to his Asian heritage. Is the exhibition interesting or uninteresting for them? Is *he* interesting or uninteresting for them? More importantly, he wanted to see and experience if he could relate to this Asian and Japanese image that he had grown up with that was now, somewhat, summarized into three or four rooms of objects inside the museum.

In the study conducted by Andrew J. Pekarik, Zahava D. Doering and David A. Karns (1999, p.6) of visitors to the Smithsonian museums, they describe introspective experiences to occur when an “individual turns inward to feelings and experiences that are essentially private, usually triggered by an object or a setting in the museum.” For Raymond, he desired to connect with his past and Asian self while merging it with his present context of living in Scandinavia. With the Japanese exhibition as motivation, he was enticed to come to Designmuseum Danmark with the chance of meeting Japan again and, at the same time, see it with a new perspective.

I share this view with Raymond. I am highly interested in design, its products and processes. However, over the course of visiting the museum many times, there were occasions when coming to the Designmuseum Danmark became predictable. But when I heard that the museum was having an exhibition about how Danish design was inspired by Japanese design, I was excited. Japanese culture fascinates me. Moreover, anything “Asian” that is presented in Copenhagen, where Filipinos are a small population, immediately motivates me to participate. And after visiting Japan a couple of years ago, the seemingly polar opposites of the modern and traditional spheres of Japanese culture continues to intrigue and beguile me. Therefore, my first visit to the design museum for this study’s fieldwork was also highly motivated by the longing to encounter Japan once more. I wanted to see the Danish interpretation of my understanding of traditional Japanese design, which is inspired by nature as well as natural materials and simple forms. At the same time, I know Japanese design to also

be experimental, with an initial thought of their relationship with technology, cosplay and anime, and fashion, which was interesting for me to see.

The desire to encounter a foreign culture is also shared by Pernille who perceived the *Learning from Japan* exhibition as an opportunity to meet a culture other than her own in her hometown. Despite having been to the museum before, she was encouraged to visit because of the prospect of gaining a new experience as opposed to how she described previous visits as “mostly looking at the permanent exhibition” (Pernille, 1 May 2016, personal communication), which consists of the extensive Danish design furniture collection. As part of the informants who are returning users living in Denmark, she was motivated by the Japanese exhibition because it was a “different theme and that it was nice that it was another culture,” (Pernille, 1 May 2016, personal communication). These statements show another perspective to entrance narratives. For many returning users, a new and foreign exhibition motivates an intimate encounter with other cultures where they can have an introspective experience of “imagining other times or places” (Pekarik, Doering & Karns, 1999, p.6) that is made possible through the museum.

5.3.2. At the museum: Settling In

The *Learning from Japan* exhibition showcases textiles, ceramics, furniture, woodwork, posters, and others that date back from the 1900s to the present. Divided into three rooms, large jars and wooden furniture take the center stage where they stand in a low platform that allow users to have 360-degree views of the objects. On the walls are hanging posters, textiles and kimono-type clothes that are designed by both Japanese and Danish designers. Their distinction is hardly recognizable, which points to the exhibition’s purpose of demonstrating the strong influence of Japanese design on Danish design. To the sides of the room are glass cases holding smaller objects like tableware, and wooden drawers filled with sword parts, among other things.



Image 10. Furniture display at the Learning from Japan exhibition



Image 11. Wooden drawers with sword cross holders at the Learning from Japan exhibition

Raymond found himself scrutinizing the objects based from his memory of Japan. There was a constant back and forth between the past and present, where Danish and Asian worlds met in the walls of the museum. In fact, it was the exhibition where he stayed the longest during that visit. This prolonged stay in the Japanese exhibition was interesting because although everything looked familiar, he was carefully scanning through objects that were more than an acquaintance but more personal. He was navigating it as he was recalling his years of living in Japan. In his steering of the exhibition space, he found that:

I was quite surprised that they perceived it really traditionally. The collection they were showing was Japanese history from that time. They

were starting from the roots, like the Edo, that era with really traditional textile and materials. I would prefer more modern than all the way back.
(Raymond, 12 December 2016, personal communication)

As a student in Japan, he related the most to a *young* Japan where an avant-garde Japan is just as relevant for him as the traditional. This phenomenon is described by Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.14) as the “projection of memories”, which explains that the meanings of things are generated by the person’s organization of the world by associating ideas and create connections based on past experiences. The exhibition as a whole was the stimuli that offered Raymond an experience that merges this internal process of orienting the self with perception. It was his opportunity of a “composition of the true world” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.17), which, for Raymond, was the Japanese exhibition that could ease the unattractiveness of Danish design objects in that moment.

In this case, the role of memories in perception comes to the foreground wherein upon seeing the Japanese exhibition, Raymond was able to organize former experiences to create the patterning of data where he imposes his meaning to what he was seeing from the exhibition. Specifically, he was viewing and making meaning of the exhibition from his perspective and experiences in Japan, not Designmuseum Danmark’s.

Such personal approaches to the museum exhibition can create a dissonance because the expectation cannot be anticipated by the museum and dissatisfaction may ensue. In this case, Designmuseum Danmark set a limitation to the exhibition where Danish design’s relationship with Japanese design from a *certain period* is not clearly stated in its communication materials (web, brochures and posters). Thus, the expectation was set at a limitless possibility where Raymond thought that it was all about Japanese design in a widely encompassing exhibition.

This connects to the value of communication in forming perception. Merleau-Ponty (1962) uses the example of word associations in creating patterns of data that give meaning to phenomena. According to him, we know something exists and is relevant for us when we see it. Like how a painting is dissected by any viewer based on the qualities of the small parts, like an image with whiskers, a furry body, pointed ears, two circles and a tail suggests that it is an image of a cat (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). For Raymond, a poster that simply says in big bold letters *Japan* resonates with him.

It offers a promise of meeting Japan once more, *his youthful Japan*. What the poster did not tell him is that the exhibition was not entirely about Japan, in terms of the margins in time and object content, but a combination of Danish and Japanese design produced in the 1900s to early 2000s.



Image 12. Learning from Japan poster
(Designmuseum Danmark, n.d.)

The presentation of Japanese culture in the museum was, for him, a conventional point of view of his former home as if layers and nuances of Japanese design were neglected. Regardless, Raymond found that this was actually the only exhibition he remembered from that visit to the museum. Despite being interested in design as well, the possibility of reliving Japan in the Designmuseum Danmark outweighed other contents of the museum. All other exhibitions were vague in his memory.

On the other hand, Pernille enjoyed *Learning from Japan*. “It was very nice, I think, seeing different stories” (Pernille, 19 May 2016, personal communication). She found the different stories and pictures interesting and hoped that this is something that Designmuseum Danmark would do more often. For her, the opportunity to know more about the connection of her Danish culture with a foreign one was interesting. She gained new knowledge and despite having never been to Japan, it all seemed to

make sense for her because she perceived the exhibition with a familiarity of Danish design objects. Therefore, she was creating comparisons between Danish designs with Japanese designs.

5.3.3. Post-visit: Finding home?

Raymond and Pernille both found home but experienced it differently. Raymond found a connection with *Learning from Japan* but still felt some distance from it because it was not as close to his idea of Japan. On the other hand, Pernille found her Danish home in the exhibition. It could be likened to welcoming a Japanese visitor to a neutral space that Designmuseum Danmark offered. See below the user journey map for the introspective user experience:

Introspective User Experience

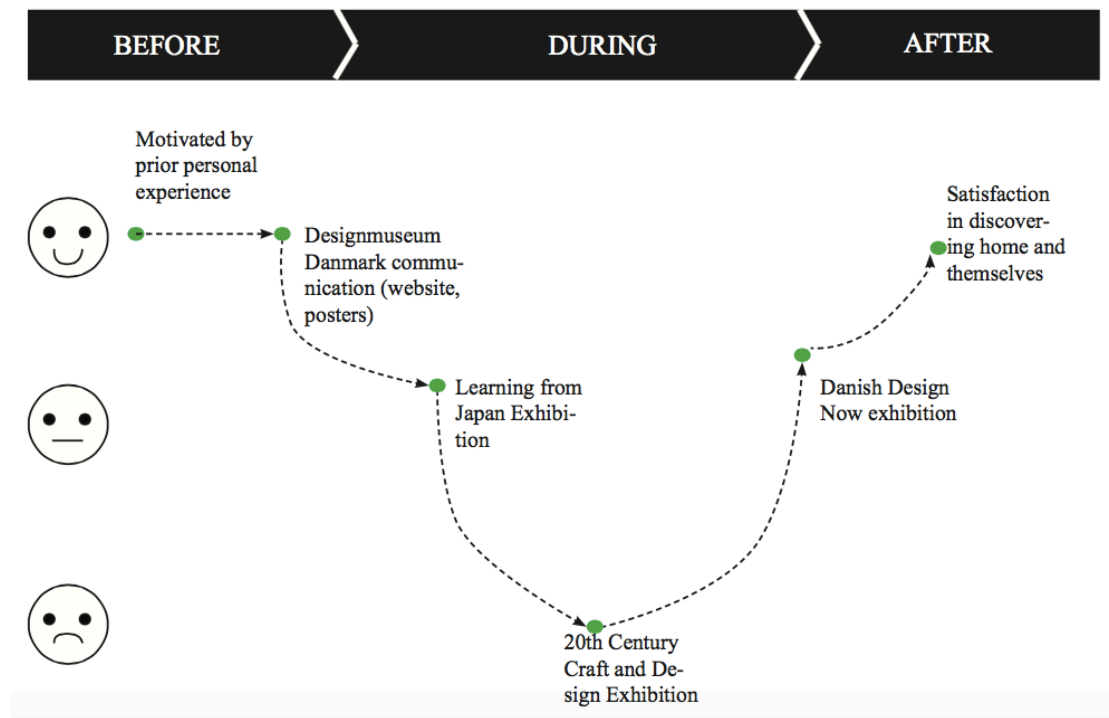


Diagram 3. User Journey Map for Introspective User Experience at Designmuseum Danmark

As can be gleaned from the narratives the journey home for the informants was varied but they discovered a sliver of themselves in it regardless. Towards the end of the interviews, both informants spoke highly of the exhibition as a memory they take away with them where they have much to speak of. It could be said that the projection of their memories and the associations facilitated a continuous building of experiences

where experiences add to each other and are never segmented from one another. Merleau-Ponty (1962) describes this relationship of memories and perception as a curved line and not points as the meanings of things are built upon by previous experiences that empower us to navigate the world better, albeit, in our own ways.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

This thesis set out to understand the ways users interact with a design museum before, during and after their visit. To reiterate, the study began by posing the questions: *Why do users go to the museum? How do users interact and navigate the museum? How do the senses influence the users' interaction and navigation practices? And how do users create meanings of the different museum affordances that facilitate lived experiences?* Using phenomenology as a lens for analysing the data reveals that individual navigation techniques, movement and embodiment of lived experiences occur in a design museum where users choreograph their own ways of crafting a satisfying museum experience with their body as a key medium. Combining different ethnographic methods enabled me to identify the relationship of the body, object, space, and prior memories and knowledge, all of which converge in the museum's physical space.

Analysis of the temporal aspect of museum going reveals four important points that answer the research questions. First, users go to the museum because their personal and social contexts shape the formation of tacit and explicit information, which contributes largely to the intention to visit. Personal histories, memories and prior knowledge play a large part in motivating a museum visit. This can be a professional or informal exposure to Danish design that creates a fascination for the subject or particular objects, which is experienced by cognitive and object user experiences. On the other hand, others come for purely personal reasons with a desire to connect to other times in their life and have an opportunity to revisit or discover places, which introspective user experience shows. Regardless, the visit happens before users arrive at the museum space and they enter with their selves—past and present mental and physical selves—that converge at the museum.

Second, once at the museum, users' entrance narratives set unique trajectories for the visit and influences their navigation practices. The desire to experience design, see a design object, or relate to a personal story shapes the museum user experience. Different intentions create dissimilar reactions to stimuli for each user, thus creating variable points of the museum that are focused on or overlooked, as users encounter the perceptual field differently.

Third, navigation and meaning making happens by engaging the senses to formulate an understanding of the physical space and the objects around them, which also shapes the museum atmosphere. Users actively use their body and senses to

fulfill their entrance narrative. Whatever catches their attention is often a stimulus that is related to their reason for visiting. Whether the museum provides this or not, users play with distance with the objects, speed of movement, time, museum rules, and harness their own knowledge and feelings to satisfy what they set out to learn or find. Thus, the body becomes their medium for experiencing, interacting and navigating the museum wherein the body extends itself, physically and temporally, to become orientated with its surroundings. In this case, it can be said that the body informs intellect and emotion, and vice versa. Association and perception direct users' movement through the embodiment of thoughts and feelings towards objects while the body also feeds the mind more information in its encounters with the physical world. Thus, a mutual relationship between body and mind ensues in the museum.

And finally, users' meaning making practices is an amalgamation of past and present experiences combined with tactile and sensory functions that enable the body to orientate itself and perceive the museum from their own perspective. Users show a desire to empower what they know through affirmation or by building upon it. Most informants interviewed expressed what they would share to their friends of their visit as practically the same things they came for—Arne Jacobsen, the Bow Chair, modern Japan, and so on. Therefore, the meanings created are built upon over time and culminate in their interaction with the objects *in real life*. They also leave the museum with a blurred line between this *after* period and their next museum visit's *before* period because the post-visit sets the stage for how they may frame the succeeding museum experience. The temporal aspect of museum experiencing is a continuous process in between museum visits as users are exposed to various social contexts.

To conclude, this study has shown the ways users greatly shape their own museum experience together with the museum. The design museum becomes an intellectual, emotional and personal space where different times of life-experiences intersect, which influence how a user experiences the museum at that moment. The center of the museum is not the physical central location, rather, it is the space defined by the user as most important for him/her. This space is the destination that he/she journeys towards through the body.

Museum user experiences are not designed entirely by museums because people walk into the museum with their own agenda, which the museum can foresee and plan for but never anticipate in its entirety. Therefore, as users actively engage with museums to fulfill their visit goals, design museums are also called to actively

embark on the journey with users, to understand the needs and wants of the diverse people that walk through their doors so that gaps and distances can be closed and users can comfortably engage and experience the museum.

Chapter 7. Applicability

This thesis finds its applicability in contributing to the academic discussion on museums and its visitors. Specifically, it finds its place as a study focusing on the design museum user experience, which is an unexplored museum category. On a broader scale, the study offers a practical application of theory and qualitative methodologies in analysing user experiences in a design museum. Designmuseum Danmark can gain from the study by learning more about its users and ways of navigating the space. Moreover, interpreting the users' movements, motivations and interactions with Designmuseum Danmark's space would be beneficial in tailor-fitting exhibitions and museum services according to their users' needs and wants.

Besides these, the study finds other three main points of applicability. First, it provides the *journey* model for museums to understand their users. Second, it offers the value of qualitative research to museology. And third, it gives insights to user driven innovation and design with a focus on museum spaces and services.

7.1. The Journey metaphor

Designmuseum Danmark, and other museums can apply the journey metaphor to understand which touchpoints are strong and weak in their users' museum experience. By applying user experience models in a cultural administration setting, a comprehensive understanding of museum users can be gleaned that is not isolated inside the museum space but explores the various factors that converge into forming a museum user experience.

In different occasions, users challenge the museum in their quest to achieve their purpose for going. It is in this negotiation of experiences that museums have the burden to truly understand their users to be able to create exhibitions that users can interact with physically, emotionally and/or intellectually. It is crucial for museum administrators and designers to think about the impact of proximities, labels, design and other attributes that make the museum because they can easily be experienced as barrier or an enabler for users.

7.2. Qualitative research and museology

The qualitative methods applied in this thesis enabled me to understand users' reasons and ways of moving in the design museum. Using phenomenology as a theory and method allowed me to frame the museum in the users' perspective and deep dive

into their experience to uncover how experience is created by users and how such interactions come about. As Frykman and Gilje (2003, p.15) describe of experience making:

By going to the experiencer (*upplevaren*), by making *experience* the starting point, it becomes possible to see how, in the moment of interpretation, people do not just lend their inspiration to the surroundings but rather *bring them to life* and let them *happen*.

Thus, qualitative methods in museum user analysis give a thick description and a contextual view of museums from a user's perspective. Going beyond statistics or quantitative methods, ethnography brings forth rich data from which museum administrators can generate insights, identify weak points in the user's journey, and create changes that are precise. Moreover, knowing the narratives of users, which impact social and personal aspects of meaning making, can make them more informed in planning and managing the museum. For example, Raymond's reaction to the Learning from Japan poster points to opportunities for improving communication that levels expectations for users. In this regard, qualitative methods can enrich the museum as an institution offering experiences and, at the same time, the points of interaction between user and museum can be understood and improved by designers and cultural administrators, which the next section expounds.

7.3. User-driven innovation with experience as a product

Consumers today are in constant search of better experiences (Schauer, 2017) and the museum and cultural industries are not exempt from this growing demand (Holst Kjær, 2016) as the lines of museum's role as an educational or leisure center blurs even more. "An experience is not an amorphous construct" either, according to B. Joseph Pine II and James Gilmore (1998). Rather, excellent experiences know the user as the core of the business where micro experiences, the touchpoints of their journey, are tracked and carried out with seamless composition from start to finish.

To do this, a user-centered mindset supported by qualitative *and* quantitative data can help museums, and business engaged with delivering products and services, is needed. As the previous section describes, understanding users creates value for the business but knowing precisely at which part of the business user interactions occur can better drive innovation and change. Therefore, this study contributes to inspiring

museums and cultural centers to undertake a more user-centered business approach by shedding light on the actual and distinct user experience of design museum visitors.

Thus, any business interested in delivering compelling products or services need to understand the users—their needs and wants—to strengthen the value of their product or service. For museums like Designmuseum Danmark, the fact that it charges an admission fee suggest a staged experience that users evaluate as worth it or not (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). As the analysed data presents, expectations, anticipating levels of fatigue, ways of learning and meaning making, and attaching personal histories, suggest that communication, exhibition design and general museum management can be further explored to foresee user needs and bring forward a stronger Designmuseum Danmark user experience.

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Dizon, fieldnotes, 1 May 2016

End Notes

ⁱ The video produced for Urgent.Agency and Designmuseum Danmark can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I70yEmfpGmI>

ⁱⁱ 63.123 people visited the museum in 2011, which jumped to 82.508 visitors in 2012. In 2015, 172.459 people visited the museum, almost a 300% increase in four years (Danmarks Statistik, 2016).

ⁱⁱⁱ The excerpt is taken from previous text for an unpublished journal article, which was the basis for this thesis.