

# Visitor Experience





Who are museum visitors?

Why do they visit?

Why do they take tours?

Why should we attempt to understand our audiences?



# John Falk

## Motivational Identities

Visitors have different motivations for visiting  
museums

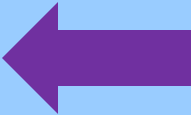


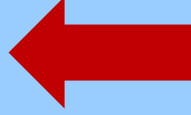

...therefore...

have different learning needs

...and...

benefit in different ways

# Motivations

- |                    |   |  |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Explorers          |    | Expect to learn something<br>Use variety of learning styles                                      |
| Experience Seekers |    | Focus on the whole museum experience<br>Less likely to visit alone                               |
| Rechargers         |    | Want personal, emotional, spiritual experience<br>Best when comfortable and relaxed              |
| Aficionado         |   | Drawn to specific objects or information<br>Return for new & intellectually stimulating exhibits |
| Facilitators       |  | Drawn to interactive and social experiences<br>Appreciate a variety of activities                |

# Factors that influence a museum experience

## Experiential contexts

## In other words

- Personal context → Learning begins with the individual
- Social context → Learning involves others
- Physical context → Learning takes place somewhere

# So Now What?



- Focus on the museum experience from the VISITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

## Value Proposition

A new take on a classic art museum where friends and family can enjoy the triumphs of human creativity





## What does “visitor-centric” mean?

Working as a museum to ensure the

intellectual

emotional

physical

comfort of the visitor.

# MIA Plus

MIA Meta Theme:

Throughout time, artists have astonished the world through their uniquely human ability to imagine, create and invent.

## Gallery Panels

Art Stories

[artstories.artsmia.org](http://artstories.artsmia.org)

Collection  
Highlights



Extended Labels

Seating

# How can we provide an exceptional museum experience?



# Service Goals & Objectives

Strategic Plan Goal #5, Visitor Experience:

Create high-quality, thought-provoking, and broadly accessible experiences with original works of art in a welcoming and enjoyable environment.





## The Power of First Impressions:

In **7** seconds of contact, a visitor forms **11** impressions about you, your organization, and even Minneapolis.

# What is your ZONE?



# Tour Best Practices

- Be prepared
- Be flexible
- Be a gracious host
- Know the organization
- Know your audience
- Establish clear expectations
- Engage the audience in the process of learning
- Be a good “custodian of culture”
- Make it fun!



## Challenging visitors...

1. Let the visitor “vent”
2. Respond with emotional language



# Putting Together a Tour



# Guidelines for Putting Together a Contemporary World Art Tour

**AUDIENCE:** Adult

**SUBJECT/TITLE:** *Contemporary World Art*

**THEME:** A subtext in which to tie the objects of your tour together, but not so restricted as to restrict your choices

**CONTENT:** 6 to 8 objects from a variety of cultures and media (2 objects may be from the Modern or Post-Modern galleries)

**Introduction**

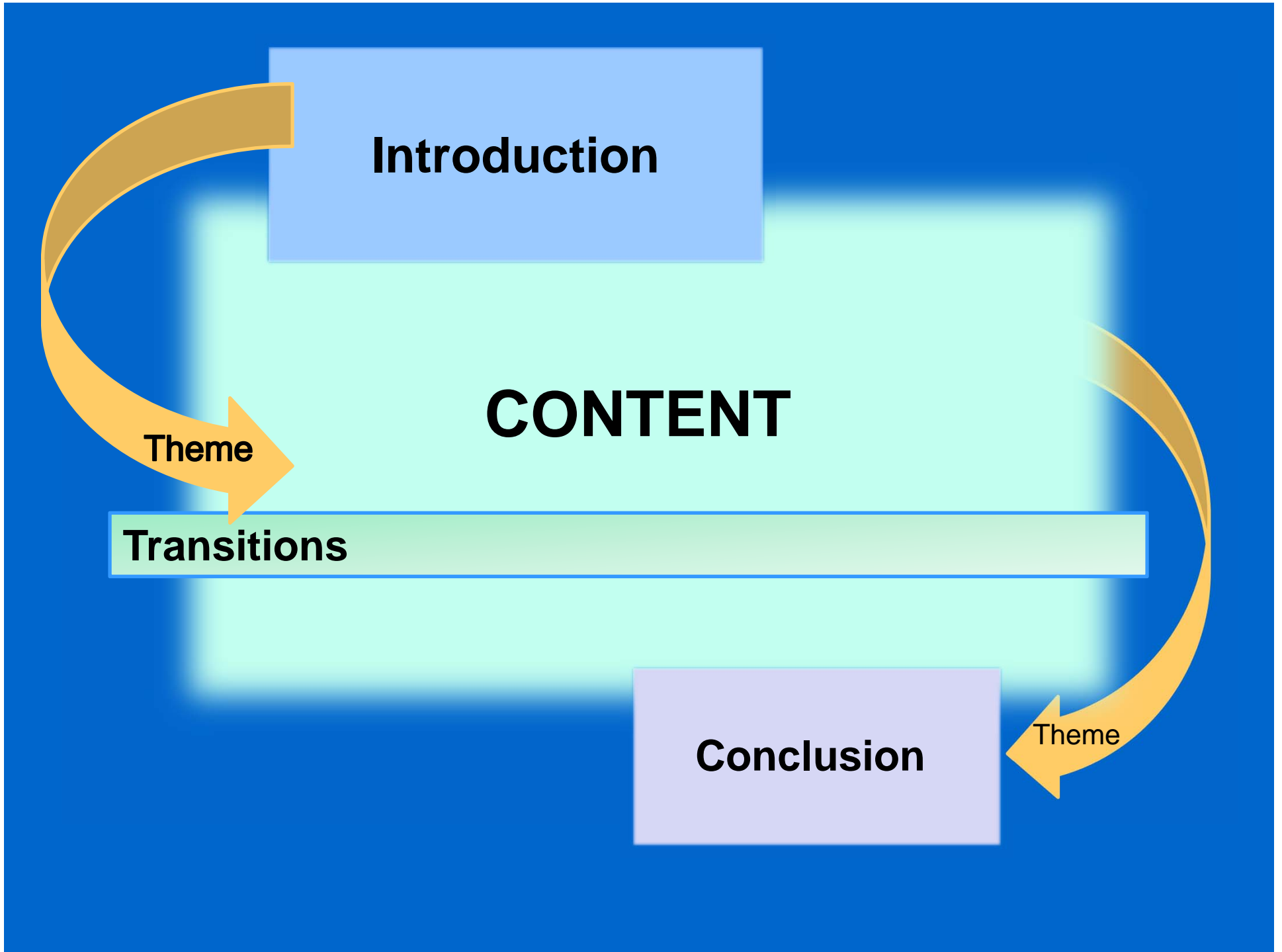
**CONTENT**

**Transitions**

**Conclusion**

**Theme**

**Theme**



## **Why has the MIA made a new commitment to contemporary art?**

All of the art in the MIA's collection was, at one time, contemporary. The MIA recognizes that, if it does not collect the art of its time, it will not have a record of the past.

The museum had not actively collected contemporary art since 1960; a new focus on the art of the past 50 years, sets parameters for the museum's collection going forward.

# How does the MIA's relationship with contemporary art differ from that of the Walker Art Center?



The MIA's collection and programming with contemporary art will build on the strengths and breadth of the museum's historical collections.

Continuities with cultural traditions, as well as an assessment of ways in which our times have caused divergences and disruptions with the past.



## **Mission**

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts enriches the community by collecting, preserving, and making accessible outstanding works of art from the world's diverse cultures.

## **Vision**

Inspiring wonder through the power of art.

## **Values**

Accessibility, Excellence, Respect, Preservation,  
Creativity, Learning, Integrity