

ARCHITECTURE : MUSEUM AS MUSE

Education Program for Grades 9-12

Teacher's Notes



Right to Left: Museum of Anthropology, (Photo: Christopher Erickson), MOA Great Hall, (Photo: Goh Iromoto)

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Book your Education Program at 604 822 3825 or bookings@moa.ubc.ca
 Museum of Anthropology, 6393 N.W. Marine Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z2

Planning Your Visit

Booking Information

Please access our online bookings guide, **Booking Education Programs: What You Need to Know**, available on the MOA website at www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php.

Class Guidelines and Requirements

This educational program is led by trained Volunteer Associates (VAs). Accompanying adults and teachers are responsible to supervise their group **at all times**. Upon arrival, please check in with the Admissions desk and make arrangements for payment. The Volunteer Associate responsible for your group will meet you in the Museum lobby.

Teachers are asked to review and communicate the guidelines for supervising adults available in our online bookings guide, **Booking Education Programs: What You Need to Know**, at www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php.

Program Description and Objectives

Architecture: Museum as Muse is a two hour program designed to encourage students to actively observe their built environments and to respond to the Museum in new ways. During this program, students explore and discuss the relationship between design and function, drawing upon two contrasting exhibition spaces at MOA. Students are introduced to a selection of international museums. Multiple aspects of architectural design such as light, size, color, sound, mood, space, and flow are introduced, and students are challenged to consider ways in which cultural traditions and environmental conditions affect building design.

Curriculum Relevance

Architecture: Museum as Muse is designed to complement the BC Grade 9-10 Curriculum for Fine Arts, Social Studies, and Comparative Civilizations. Skills that students practice during the program include: analysis of how the elements of design relate to context, purpose, and function, and demonstration of values and meanings of objects and buildings of cultural, social and historical significance. The content of the program relates to the following subject areas: First Nations History, BC History, Language Arts, and Visual Arts, Design and Drafting.

Program Outline

Meet and Greet in the Lobby

The class is greeted in the Museum lobby by an Education Volunteer Associate (VA) for a brief introduction to the program and associated activities. Students are then led to the classroom for an introductory presentation before continuing into the Museum galleries.

Slide Presentation

In the classroom, students receive a visual presentation of key terms in the program, including architecture, muse, and phenomenology. Students are introduced to a phenomenological activity.

Phenomenological Activity and Discussion

Guided by the principles of phenomenology – the study of human experience – students are led through two contrasting galleries and asked to record their visual, spatial and emotional impressions. This activity is followed by a group discussion of student observations and responses to the two different galleries in the Museum.

Presentation: MOA and Museums of the World

Back in the Museum classroom, students receive a visual introduction to a range of international and local museum architecture to discuss context, purpose and function. Students are given an overview of the architectural history of the Museum of Anthropology and discuss relationships between MOA's collections, architectural design, and landscaping.

Drawing Activity: Design Your Own Museum

Students have the opportunity to create a preliminary design of either an interior space or a façade for their own museum. Students are encouraged to incorporate their impressions from the phenomenological activity and illustrated discussions.

Wrap up

Students review key themes introduced throughout the program and are encouraged to further develop their museum design in their classrooms.

Pre Visit Activities

Partner Discussion: In pairs, ask students to take turns describing a space that they know without using the specific place names or landmarks. Ask students to record the descriptive words used by their partner before guessing the place that their partner described. The goal of this exercise is to raise student awareness of the built environment and to develop a vocabulary to describe this environment. Note: A glossary of architectural terms and descriptive words is provided in this resource.

Phenomenological Activity 1 – Educational Institution: Ask students to record their observations, immediate feelings, and responses to one space in the school. This activity should take 5 to 10 minutes. The aim of the activity is to enhance students' awareness of the built environment, and to prepare them for the phenomenological activity at MOA.

Private vs. Public Spaces: Ask students to choose one private space (bedroom, friend's house, etc.) and one public space (shopping mall, government building, church etc.) to record their observations by describing, drawing, or taking photographs. This activity can be followed up with a classroom discussion about the general characteristics of public and private spaces. The aim of the activity is to encourage students to think about the similarities and differences in the design and function of public and private spaces.

Architectural Functionality: Lead a group discussion or initiate group brainstorm sessions about the functionality of various buildings. Prompt questions could include: Why do we make buildings? What are they used for? What makes a good building? Encourage critical thinking around issues of form and function by emphasizing the various functions of a building versus its design. As a class, build a check list for successful architecture that students can refer to when designing their own museum.

What is a Museum? Ask students to think about what a museum is, including its social, aesthetic, political and cultural importance. Brainstorm what sort of spaces museums require (i.e. spaces for objects, public programming, educational programs, collections and conservation, storage, community meetings and consultations, toilet facilities, food and beverage services, temporary and permanent exhibition spaces, offices etc.) After the discussion, ask students to define a "museum" in one sentence, before sharing this excerpted definition of museums from the International Council of Museums: "*[Museums] communicate and exhibit the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.*" <http://icom.museum/definition.html>.

Post Visit Activities

Architectural Manifesto: Ask students to refer to their notes from the pre-visit activities and, in particular, to their one-sentence definition of a museum. Has their visit to MOA changed their thoughts about what makes an effective architectural space or what museums are? Using these notes, ask students to write a manifesto, or public declaration, of what good museum architecture is and does.

The Design Project: Give students the opportunity to design and/or construct either one space in a museum, or a full model of their museum. Before beginning their design, ask students to submit an outline of their intended design process. This short document should list important considerations such as setting, audience, building purpose, materials, and spatial requirements.

Important points for students to consider include:

- a) What types of objects are in the collection?
- b) How many objects are in the collection and how much space will they occupy?
- c) How will your objects be displayed?
- d) Who will use your museum?
- e) Where will your museum be located?
- f) What facilities will you need in your museum?

Additional Teacher Resources

Introduction to MOA Architecture

Vancouver's Museum of Anthropology was founded in 1949 in the basement of the Main Library at the University of British Columbia. In 1971 renowned Canadian architect and urban planner Arthur Erickson (1924-2009) designed the Museum. MOA opened to the public in 1976. He based his award-winning design on traditional Northwest Coast post and beam structures and design elements from the Acropolis in Athens and Japanese Shinto sanctuaries.

The Museum's architectural design combines Arthur Erickson's use of natural light and materials and respect for the building's environment to express the essence of West Coast style. The Great Hall's soaring glass walls create a unique transition from interior spaces to the exterior spaces. The museum grounds were designed by landscape architect Cornelia Oberlander and feature indigenous plants and grasses.

Since 1976, the Museum of Anthropology has been one of Canada's best known buildings internationally. It has received numerous awards, including the Governor General Award for Architecture (1989) and was one of four buildings to receive the 2011 Prix du XXe Siècle Award for enduring excellence in Canadian architecture from Architecture Canada / RAIC, the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.

Features include:

- A 'Welcome Plaza' showcases contemporary works by Musqueam artists Susan Point and Joe Becker
- The 'Rotunda,' where Bill Reid's sculpture, "The Raven and the First Men" is displayed
- An outdoor reflecting pool, which represents a BC coastal inlet
- The 15-metre glass walls of the Great Hall overlooking totem poles from the Haida, Gitksan, Nisga'a, Oweekeno, and Kwakwa'wakw First Nations
- An internationally recognized collection of more than 38,000 ethnographic objects and 535,000 archaeological objects
- The Koerner European Ceramics Gallery houses 600 pieces of 15-19th C. pottery
- MOA's Multiversity Galleries providing public access to more than 10,000 objects
- The O'Brian Gallery, a 2,456 sq ft temporary exhibition space
- The Audain Gallery, a 5,800 sq ft temporary exhibition space showcasing travelling and local exhibits.

What is Phenomenology?

Adapted from the Oxford English Dictionary <http://dictionary.oed.com>

The Oxford English Dictionary describes phenomenology from two roots, *phenomenon*– and *–ology*, where:

***Phenomenon*–**

1. A thing which is perceived or observed; a particular (kind of) fact, occurrence, or change as perceived through the senses or known intellectually
2. An immediate object or sensation or perception (often as distinguished from a real thing or substance); a phenomenal or empirical object (as opposed to a thing in itself)

–ology

1. the science or discipline of (what is indicated by the first element)

Architectural theorist J. William Rudd explains phenomenology: “Each person’s experience of something will be different because they bring their own histories, tastes, and experiences to their encounter ... In sum: [phenomenology] focuses on HOW someone experiences a space– their emotional and physical responses.” (Rudd, William. *Architecture and Ideas: A Phenomenology of Interpretation*. *Journal of Architectural Education* 38.3 (Winter, 1985): 9-12. 9)

Recommended educational websites:

Arthur Erickson Architect

<http://www.arthurerickson.com/>

Arthur Erickson’s work and architectural vision are key components of MOA, and thus to this program. This web page has a gallery of photographs of many of Erickson’s works, as well as a series of short animations.

Frank Lloyd Wright Architect Studio 3-D

<http://architectstudio3d.org/AS3d/index.html>

Frank Lloyd Wright was one of the great American architects, designing hundreds of homes in his lifetime. This website has an excellent interactive component where visitors can create their own house. Click on ‘Design Studio’ to begin your creations.

Building Big PBS Online

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/buildingbig/index.html>

The activities on this site are based on a mini-series that PBS ran on mega-structures.

Architectural photos, plans, and background information for museums and other buildings (including MAXXI Museum):

<http://www.arcspace.com/html/links.html#Anchor-Museums-47857>

<http://www.arcspace.com/architects/hadid/maxxi2/maxxi2.html>

Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Center – Floorplans and Charts:

<http://www.slcc.ca/host-an-event/plans-and-charts/floorplans>

<http://www.slcc.ca/host-an-event/plans-and-charts>

Architecture as Experience: Daniel Libeskind (5 min video):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySaxXLNSIOY&feature=relmfu>

Teacher Readings:

Erickson, Arthur. *The Architecture of Arthur Erickson*. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1988.

Castro, Ricardo L. and David Theodore. *Critical Works of Arthur Erickson*. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2006.

Stinson, Kathy. *Love Every Leaf: The life of landscape architect Cornelia Hahn Oberlander*. New York: Tundra Books, 2008.

Ching, Francis D.K. *Architecture: Form, Space & Order* (Third Edition). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2007.

Ching, Francis D.K. *Architectural Graphics (Fourth Edition)*. New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2003.

Ching, Francis D.K. *A Visual Dictionary of Architecture*. New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1996.

Crouch, Christopher. *Modernism in art, design and architecture*. USA: St. Martin's Press, 1999.

Giebelhausen, Michela. *Architecture of the Museum*. UK: Manchester University Press, 2003.

Salvadori, Mario & Matthys Levy. *Why Buildings Stand Up*. London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002.

Salvadori, Mario & Matthys Levy. *Why Buildings Fall Down*. London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1992.

Glossary of Architectural Terms:

Architecture: The art and science of designing and building structures.

Atrium: Dramatic enclosed glass-roof indoor spaces.

Axis: The centerline of openings or objects that align in a row along an imaginary line. A primary element in architectural composition, around which it is possible to create a sense of symmetry both in plan and in the elevation of a building.

Beam: A horizontal load-bearing element that forms a principal part of a structure, usually using timber, steel, or concrete.

Canopy: A projection or hood over a door or window.

Column: A slender, upright structure, usually a supporting member in a building.

Dimensions: A measurement of the size of something in a particular direction (length, width, height, diameter).

Elevation: A two dimensional view of the vertical features of a building (front, rear, side, interior elevation).

Exhibition: A large-scale public showing or display of art, products, skills and activities.

Façade: an exterior face or wall of a building.

Floor Plan: A representation of a floor layout.

Foundation: The base of a house providing stability and rigidity.

Function: The natural action or intended purpose of a person or thing in a specific role.

Insulation: A material designed to control the passing of heat and or sound.

Masonry: Stonework or brickwork.

Molding: Shaped decorative outlines on projecting pieces of wood or stone.

Orthographic: A drawing where true dimensions of an object or place are represented, a means of representing a 3-D object, or a place in 2-D.

Phenomenology: The study of phenomena, that is the study of anything perceived as an occurrence or fact by the sense.

Partition: The name given to an interior wall.

Public Utilities: Those utilities including water supply, sewage, electricity, disposal, gas, telephone, cable that are available to the public.

Site Plan: A drawing that shows the boundaries of a section of land, including important landscape elements that impact the design and the placement of buildings, roads, driveways, utility needs etc.

Story: A horizontal division of a building, from the floor to the ceiling above it.

Traffic Plan: A plan of room and door placement designed for convenience of movement during normal everyday activities.

Adjectives Lists

Descriptive words / Adjectives for Shapes and Patterns:

adjacent baggy checkered concave contoured convex curved	dappled depressed elongated level narrow octagonal parallel	pointed protruding rectangular rounded serpentine shallow spherical	streamlined sunken swollen tight vertical wide winding
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Descriptive words / Adjectives for Touch and Feel:

cold cool crisp damp dry elastic firm	fragile furry gritty hard hot oily icy	rough rubbery sharp silky slimy smooth soft	spongy thick thin warm waxy wet wooly
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Descriptive Words/ Adjectives for Smell:

acidic acrid aromatic balmy briny burnt damp	dank earthy fishy fragrant fresh gamy gaseous	mildewed moldy musty perfumed pungent rotten savory	spicy spoiled sour stagnant sweet tart tempting
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Descriptive words / Adjectives for Taste:

alkaline bitter bittersweet bland burnt buttery fishy	fruity gingery hearty hot medicinal mellow oily	overripe peppery raw ripe salty sour spicy	sugary spoiled sweet tangy tasteless unripe vinegary
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Descriptive words / Adjectives for Hearing (Soft Sounds):

buzz chime clink crackle faint gurgle hiss	hum hush inaudible lilting melody murmur mutter	patter peep purr rush rustle sigh snap	still swish tinkle twitter whir whisper zing
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Descriptive words / Adjectives for Hearing (Loud Sounds):

bang bark blare bleat bluster clamor clap	crash grate jangle rasp raucous riot roar	rumble scream screech shout slam smash squawk	thump thunder tumult whine whistle yell thud
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Descriptive words / Adjectives for Mood:

agitated angry ambiguous ambivalent apathetic cynical disturbed	diverse dominant exuberant humorous hysterical insensitive irate	jovial lackadaisical livid morose precocious ruffled reserved	relaxed sarcastic sensitive sleepy soothed tired vivacious
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