Project 03

Objects and Narratives
#FutureMuseum

Design Lab ARTD6116
Launch: 20th March
Crits 14th and 15th May 2025

Formative Assessment
You will receive formative assessment in the form of discussion and feedback throughout the project. You are also required to attend a formative feedback review in March.

“Real museums are places where time is transformed into space”

– Orhan Pamuk, 2009

The brief
Utilising your selected collection of objects from the Science Museum, explore imaginative ways to bring the objects to life and tell their stories tailored for a specific audience. Through innovative communication methods, you need to engage a specific audience into an immersive experience, bringing the significance of these artifacts to life in a memorable and impactful way.

Part 1. Preparatory research
Choose a group of objects from the content links. Explore the objects in lots of detail: What was the function? What materials? What narratives do they tell?

The whole collection is available at https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk

There 200,000+ objects with images:
https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/search/images

Part 2. Choose a problem statement
to frame your projects and create a speculative product or experience that tells a story of your chosen object. This must be finished to the highest quality.

Further information

90% of museum collections are not on display but can be found on the links. Consider ways to activate and tell the story of one of these objects. This project will involve rethinking how we use/access the museum content and exploring completely new concepts to amplify and share information. It might be an enhanced experience within the museum or something streamed to a device. Pop-up event, projection-mapped, interactive, speculative and experimental, offline and online.

Outcomes

Body of research, sketchbooks and experimentation.
High quality finished visualisation/mock up of your proposed outcome.

Part 2. Prompt questions

Choose up to three *how might we* statements below to guide and focus your project.

- How might museums increase the reach of their vast collections?
- How might museums surface the lesser-known aspects of their collections?
- How might museums present alternative user interfaces onto their collections (rather than a search box)?
- How might the collection be interacted with to encourage exploration and discovery?
- How might the experience of the collection be more playful and delightful?
- How might museums present their collections in different contexts, for example how might the museum collection be integrated with audiences everyday experiences?
- How might digital discovery have a serendipitous aspect (as with visiting a museum)?
- What alternative organising principles might be used to create experiences?
- How might audiences be encouraged to share collections?

Project Staff
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External Guest
John Stack
(Digital Director of the Science Museum)

Academic Integrity:
It is important that the work you submit for assessment is your own and does not include material that has been submitted for previous modules. Any third party elements must be clearly cited. For detailed guidance about plagiarism and the broader Academic Integrity policy of the University of Southampton please refer to the document: Academic Integrity Guidance for Students.

It is the duty of all students to work in a safe & healthy manner and to have a duty of care unto yourself and others. Please ensure that you are aware of the relevant Health & Safety requirements for all activities that you undertake during your study. In particular you must refer to Studio & Workshop codes of practice, attend all mandatory and relevant training, and refer to the traffic light system for equipment use. Please check with your academic staff if you are required to complete a project proposal from and/or a specific risk assessment

http://wsa.wikidot.com/healthandsafety

Things to look at

Definition of a museum
http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/museum

Audiences

There are two good sources of information on audiences for cultural experiences:

(1) https://mhminsight.com/culture-segments

(2) https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-finder-data-tools/audience-spectrum#Explore_Segments

Science Museum Strategy Doc

https://learning.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/learning/learning-strategy-2020-2030/

https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/museums-in-the-digital-age

https://econsultancy.com/how-museums-are-using-immersive-digital-experiences/

https://futureofartsandculture.org

Other information

Within the product/experience design, museums often think about:

Product objectives
> Which museum objective(s) is fulfilled?
> What outcomes are desired (e.g. learning outcomes)?

User behaviours
> What are these behaviours?
> What will users have to do to achieve this goal?

Drivers for these behaviours
> Why would a user do this?
> What are the influencers that will drive them to action?

Context of these behaviours
> Where will these behaviours happen?
> What tools will people use for the behaviours?

Calls to action for these behaviours
> What is the message that will drive this behaviour?
> What language is going to be most effective to drive users to act?

Products that will support these behaviours
> What do you need to make or do to make this happen?
> What is the context or product you need to drive the behaviour?

How will we measure this?
> How will you know that users have actually done what you have asked?
> What are the tools or ways of measuring this?

This project focuses on the following module learning outcomes:

A2 theoretical underpinnings of design research and practice-led research.

B1 independently select and effectively employ advanced media production and design research methods;

B2 analyse complex range of material, identify and communicate a clear research focus.

C1 communicate the process and outcomes of design activities in a range of outputs including an exhibition;

C2 collaborate effectively on a group project and manage your time proficiently.

D1 demonstrate exploratory, experimental and critical approaches to design via speculative outcomes;

D2 define a design approach and research focus;

D3 write reflectively and critically debate module's key themes at an advanced level.

The full learning outcomes, aims of the module and the Assessment criteria/rubric is available under the Module information on Blackboard.