

decide that it is a byproduct, it will be important to avoid Pinker's dismissive approach. Even if many by-products are meaningless frills, the arts most certainly are not. Rather, art behaviors are complex, nuanced signals of fitness because they are so various and so demanding to master, even if they are also near universal. This does not mean that they are best regarded as adaptations for signaling fitness. There are so many non-artistic ways for marking and displaying intelligence and the like that art behaviors are not specific to that end. But they are rich and important signals of many aptitudes relevant to fitness. That they are so highly valued and avidly pursued reveals their importance to us.

Either way, as adaptations or as by-products, art behaviors would give expression to our evolved human nature. Only if they are purely cultural technologies, with only the most indirect and distant links to our evolved capacities, would they be unconnected with evolution. In that case, art behaviors must have become universal through diffusion because they are useful and valuable. That seems implausible, though, given that art is present at the first encounters with cultures long isolated from outside contact.

To return to an earlier question, can art's current function and importance be explained by reference to its origins? This is perhaps unlikely if the focus is on the more arcane and refined kinds of fine art. Indeed, both Dissanayake and Denis Dutton suspect that fine art, with its bias toward the cognitive and to esoteric self-reference, has taken on functions opposing those for which art was created in the first place. But by considering the vigor with which the more humble and mundane arts are made and consumed, it may be possible to track the earlier functions of art. These were to vivify and entrench group history, lore, and values; to warm human existence and provide it with meaning and value; and to establish group and individual identities.

Evocriticism. Thus far this article has been considering the possibility that aesthetic and art behaviors are a product of evolution. But there is a quite different connection that can be drawn from them. The narrative, dramatic, and depictive arts often focus on important human themes. On sexual jealousy, altruism, sibling rivalry, and ambition, for instance. On boy finds girl, loses girl, and re-finds girl or wins her back. On war and peace, crime and punishment, death in the midst of life, love and hate, metaphysical transcendence and bodily sensuality. These are all topics that have been addressed by evolutionary psychologists, who seek to explain why they arise and how they function. Art critics can apply the psychologists' theories to analyze art and explain how it interests and moves people as it does. The result has been called "evocriticism." Evocriticism has been applied to the critical examination of many novels, Shakespearian drama, poetic lyrics, popular genres such as science fiction, folk tales, and narratives told by hunter-foragers. Typically, these works are approached singly, though some statistically aggregated cross-genre studies have been attempted.

Notice that evocriticism need not be committed to literary Darwinism, which was described earlier. It might use the theories of evolutionary psychologists as an interpretative prompt, as it also uses psychoanalysis and Marxist ideologies, without thereby accepting that the narrative, dramatic, and depictive arts are evolutionary adaptations, or even that the stories told by evolutionary psychologists are true.

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STEPHEN DAVIES

EXHIBITION. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, exhibition is "a public display (of works of art, manufactured articles, natural productions etc.); also, the place where the display is made" (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 6 a.): the nature of this public display encompasses both permanent and temporary exhibitions in museums and public art galleries and shows held in commercial and other kinds of venues on a specific subject, artist, or art movement. The ambiguity of meaning reflects the intrinsic reciprocity of showing and viewing that the exhibition embodies. An exhibition

results from the manifold variations of its material features (objects, space, light, color, texts [including audiovisuals], and interactive media) and it is governed by the selection and spatial arrangement of exhibits according to encompassing principles, including chronology, style, or subject matter. Hence, it can be conceived as a choreographed space for the viewing of art (design and other artifacts) that artists, architects, designers, museum directors, and the relatively new figure of the (art) curator collaboratively shape (den Ouden, 2011, p. 14).

The beginning of the exhibition coincides with the eighteenth-century establishment of the museum whereby private princely art and historical collections began to be publicly displayed and housed in designated buildings such as the Louvre in Paris, the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, and the Museum Fridericianum in Kassel. This history entwines with the formation of the art academy and of the display of painting competitions, such as the salons in Paris starting from 1737 and the Royal Academy's shows in London from 1768, and further relates to the mid-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century world fairs and commercial design exhibitions, most significantly those of the Bauhaus. The aesthetic of the exhibition bears signs of this history as it transitioned from the richly decorated rooms of eighteenth-century princely galleries, to the densely hanged Salon's shows, to the soberer displays of the Session exhibition held in Munich in 1910 and the experimental exhibitions of the European avant-gardes in Berlin, Moscow, and Paris at the beginning of the twentieth century. Indeed, modernism transformed the aesthetic paradigm of the exhibition, setting the parameters of much of twentieth- and early-twenty-first-century display practice.

The White Cube and the Modern Exhibition of Art.

In 1976 in a now canonical series of articles, Brian O'Doherty observed that the "archetypal image of 20th century art" is not that of a single picture but rather "of a white, ideal space" that he named "the white cube" (O'Doherty, 1999, p. 14). O'Doherty drew parallels between the development of modernist art and the creation of this "ideal," self-contained, and timeless space that conferred almost religious centrality to the work of art. The white cube is historically rooted in the early-twentieth-century European avant-gardes and in the creation of the museum of modern art—specifically the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York in 1929. MoMA in fact consolidated the adoption "of a particular type of installation that has come to dominate museum practices, whereby the language of display articulates a modernist, seemingly autonomous aesthetics" (Staniszewski, 1998, p. 61). Alfred H. Barr, the museum's first director, and his collaborators modeled this aesthetic language upon De Stijl's and the Bauhaus's groundbreaking exhibitions of the 1920s and 1930s, the display experimentation of Dada, surrealist and futurist shows, and the innovative museum concept of Alexander

Dorner, the director of the Hannover Landesmuseum (1925–1937).

Dorner understood the reciprocity between the artworks and the room in which they were displayed and exhibited the collections of the Landesmuseum according to historical periods in "atmospheric rooms," whereby the display matched the aesthetic principles of each epoch (Cauman, 1958, pp. 88–89). Dorner also innovatively exhibited modernist art as part of a historical collection and commissioned to the Russian constructivist artist El Lissitzky the *Abstract Cabinet* (1925), a room with modular sliding partitions that could be reshaped according to the artworks on display. Works by Picasso, Gabo, Mondrian, Léger, Moholy, and Lissitzky himself were placed unframed on walls striated with vertically aligned metal stripes painted in white, black, and gray that "produced a cool shimmer that changed with the slightest movement of the visitor's head" (Cauman, 1958, pp. 103–104). This abstract space of reflective surfaces was, as most modernist exhibitions, the product of the artworks for which it was conceived in ways that would foreground the now-familiar aesthetics of the white cube.

Modernist exhibitions stressed the purposefulness of the design and used asymmetry as the governing principle for the spatial organization of artworks and the framing of views within and across galleries. Whereas the traditional nineteenth-century Salon style showed paintings placed according to their size, giving prominence to larger canvases with smaller pictures either floored or skyed, the modernist asymmetrical hanging meant that large and small paintings were placed side by side at equal distance and equal height on walls painted on neutral palettes of white and off-white and were spotlighted to isolate them and give them prominence. Galleries were conceived as free-flowing spaces and immersive environments for a visitor who began to be thought of as an active agent within the display. Exhibitions thus both mirrored modernist functional aesthetic and defined new ways of seeing art and design within a figuratively neutral and autonomous environment (Staniszewski, 1998, pp. 3–56).

Presented with the challenge of creating a congenial environment for modern art, Barr and his collaborators embraced this innovative approach and made it a defining feature of MoMA's temporary exhibitions first and of the museum's permanent display from 1940s onward. Barr generally favored a chronological arrangement, according to style or subject, to build visual narratives for the visitor that outlined an ideal development of modernism, whereas exhibitions such as *Cubism and Abstract Art* (1936) and *Timeless Aspects of Modern Art* (1949) juxtaposed primitive and historical artifacts and modernist artworks, suggesting formal and figurative connections across time. Barr also introduced exhibition texts: labels and panels (Staniszewski, 1998, pp. 45–50). Graphics, like wall color and lighting, became functional to the overall feeling and identity of an exhibition, whereas the textual interpretations provided basic information and

discursive guidance to the viewing. This mode of display has determined the modern idea of the exhibition by establishing a now common paradigm that “far from neutral produces a powerful and continually repeated social experience that enhances the viewer’s sense of autonomy and independence,” both responding and contributing to the fashioning of the modern individual (Staniszewski, p. 66; Duncan, 1995, pp. 19–20) in what could be perceived as “a democratic public sphere” (Esche, 2011, p. 12), a space of equality and independence.

This model, despite the institutional changes undertaken by museums and art galleries and the postmodern emphasis on architecture and design in the orchestration of exhibitions, still dominates, conferring artworks and artifacts a figurative command of the gallery space. From the 1960s onward, such an “ideal image” of the exhibition has, however, been challenged by artists (and curators) through art practices that rendered the exhibition space integral to the conception and production of the work of art (for example, site-specific installation, video and sound installation, participatory art, and live performance). Yves Klein’s display of an empty white gallery (*Void*, Galerie Iris Clert, 1958) shifted the white cube’s image into a situation that the artist both appropriated and controlled; Michael Asher reconfigured the gallery in temporary installations that deployed its architectural features and display practices to expose the often unapparent factors that influence the ways in which we look at art. Curators, including Seth Siegelaub and Harald Szeemann, were also central in this institutional critique of the gallery and the paradigm of the exhibition through a reassessment of contemporary art and its processes (Altshuler, 1994, p. 236). Szeemann’s groundbreaking 1969 show, *When Attitude Becomes Form* (Bern, Kunsthalle), focused on “attitude and process, and the corresponding demotion of the object,” thus challenging expectations on the meaning of art and of its display (Altshuler, 1994, p. 245). Szeemann invited twenty-eight artists from across Europe and the United States to produce work at Bern’s Kunsthalle and across the city to demonstrate the developments in art related to a redefinition of materials, forms, execution, and intentionality and hence of its relationships with audiences, institutions, and their broader social and political contexts. The exhibition included representatives from Arte Povera, Land art, post-minimalism, and conceptual art. Now considered a milestone in the development of the contemporary exhibition, *When Attitudes Become Form* resisted definitions or categorizations, attempting instead an overview of different artistic tendencies and, “for the first time, staged an encounter between the work being produced in the U.S. and parallel developments across Europe” (Rattemeyer, 2010, p. 15).

In the 1970s the term exhibition also broadened to include, alongside permanent displays and temporary exhibi-

tions, rotating displays within permanent collections, biennales, and all the other embodiments of the public display in non-art-designated spaces. In this context, two analogies recur to denote the theoretical and aesthetic configuration of the exhibition, namely, narrative and experiment or laboratory. Far from exclusive, these analogies coexist, interweave, and mutually redefine each other, pointing to the underpinning framework of the exhibition and to a reflection upon its cultural practices. They both emphasize the spatial choreography, discursive strategies, and contextual references that bring artworks into public awareness.

Exhibition as Narrative. According to Bruce Ferguson, exhibitions “are narratives which use art objects as elements in institutionalized stories that are promoted to an audience” and can be considered the preeminent “medium of contemporary art in the sense of being its main agency of communication—the body and voice from which an authoritative character emerge” (Ferguson, 1996, pp. 175 and 176). Indeed, narrative provides a theoretical standpoint to consider the exhibition since it implies a “synthesis of heterogeneous elements” (Ricoeur, 1991, pp. 21–22) through the organization of unrelated and even discordant components by establishing spatiotemporal, mimetic, logical, and other kinds of relations. In exhibitions this synthesis refers to the discursive mediation among exhibits, what Mieke Bal refers to (1996, p. 2) as the spatial syntax of vicinity and distance that physically and figuratively enacts the principles governing the display and its discursive interpretation through exhibition texts (labels, panels, audioguides, leaflets, maps, and the like).

The chronological or thematic arrangement of the exhibits produces a sequential narrative “in a plotting system that transforms juxtaposition and simple succession into an evolutionary narrative of influence and descent, into a configured story culminating in our present” (Preziosi, 2004, p. 78). This central plot interweaves with related narrative lines that stage “objects in contrast to each other on an ethical, moral, or aesthetic plane, as exemplars of this or that individual mentality, period, race, place, gender, ethnicity, and so forth” (Preziosi, 2004, p. 79), thus endorsing through the artworks on display and their interpretation the existing cultural constructs. Exhibition texts further discursively interweave with the display and corroborate its cultural, social, and aesthetic meanings. Realism, as the narrative trope of the nineteenth-century novel, biography, and essay writing, is evident in the privileging of linearity, of an encompassing point of view, and of internal coherence characteristic to the narrative structure of many museums (Bal, 1996, p. 97). The metanarrative and fragmentation of modernist and postmodernist techniques resonate instead with exhibitions that use narrative strategies derived from time-based media, such as photography, film, and live performance, to create multiple perspectives and immersive environments, often including mutable features proper of digital and generative

web art that introduce flow and chance mutation and render unpredictability key to the exhibition itself.

Critical to a consideration of exhibition narrative is the visitor, as its figurative enactor or protagonist. It is the visitor who, by looking and ignoring, listening, and reading, pulls together the heterogeneous features of the exhibition, unfolding its meanings and responding to its affective impact. In commenting on the landmark exhibition *Les immatériaux* (1985, Centre George Pompidou, Paris), its curator, Jean-François Lyotard, observed that an exhibition visitor is "a body in movement" and that this movement is comparable to that of the main character in an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century formation novel characterized by a narrative organization that connect "space-time-subject" (Lyotard, 1996, p. 167). The experience of the visitor is, for Lyotard, primarily achieved through "views (*vedute*)" that act as "pictures opening on to sites or situations which are the 'subjects' of the pictures" (Lyotard, p. 167). Through and within the specific narrative arrangement (or *syntax*, to use Bal's definition) of an exhibition, these views convey "an establishment of culture, that is to say the acquisition and assimilation of heterogeneous data in the unity of an experience which constitutes a subject" (Lyotard, p. 167). In *Les immatériaux*, Lyotard disrupted the traditional sequential linearity underpinning the space-time-subject of museum displays, creating a labyrinthine structure of sixty-one disconnected zones. The visitor meandered the galleries, unexpectedly encountering simulated images while listening through headphones to an assemblage of texts that varied according to the exhibition area to multiform sound effects (Lyotard, p. 167). The fragmentary and multilayered narrative of the exhibition contended with an established model of knowledge making, expanding it across the growing fields of information technologies and virtual reality and the changing perception of time and space that governs post- and late modernity.

Such experimentation with narrative is indicative of a tendency to explore the experiential possibilities of the exhibition as a medium and interrogate the affectivity of its strategies of display. This entails, for instance, the deliberate contrasts of intimate close-up views of artworks with expansive gallery views and dramatic perspectives producing filmic effects of alternating points of view and modes of involvement: close-ups tend to be emotionally charged: encompassing gallery views, instead, convey a feeling of control over the exhibition and its meanings. Sensory triggers and virtual environments are used to induce physical sensations, mental associations, and feelings. It is also common to relate the gallery display to the venue's exterior, spilling the exhibition into the external environment and thus layering narrative trajectories. All these strategies affect the ways in which a visitor perceives and responds to the exhibits and an exhibition as a whole, in terms of both meanings and emotional resonance. They imply a metanarrative approach to exhibition that is self-reflective, if not critical, of its form.

Exhibition as Experiment. Since the first decades of the twentieth century the exhibition has been compared to an experiment and laboratory. The analogy alludes to science as the prevalent *episteme* of modernity and late modernity, implicitly endorsing the relevance of art in our time. The experiment references the potential of reassessment and reinvention, of a set of practices and methods that underpin a process of knowledge making and a site of innovation. The laboratory indicates an ideal space as autonomous, functional, and transnational. Barr invoked the analogy in the 1940s when describing the concept for MoMA to support its actuality and rigor, and Glenn Lowry restated it in 2004 following MoMA's extensive refurbishing to pledge the Museum's contemporaneity. Yet, curators also refer to the exhibition as an experiment to expose and challenge established politics of display in favor of social and political commitment (Blazwick, 2006, p. 118; Esche, 2009, pp. 58–67), of curatorial innovation (Obrist, 2001, pp. 23–44), and of investigation and testing of aesthetic expression. In referring to the exhibition as an experiment or laboratory, the emphasis is on process and experience, on the production rather than illustration of knowledge (Macdonald and Basu, 2007, pp. 4–6), endorsing metanarrative approaches.

The analogy also betrays a growing theoretical reflection on the exhibition and its history, implicitly acknowledging the cultural reassessment that science itself underwent in the second half of the twentieth century. The modernist interest in science and technology foreshadowed the cultural authority conferred to these disciplines as the product of an ever-advancing human endeavor to attain an understanding of reality supposedly free from religious or other forms of dogmatism. Scientific advancements followed a linear narration of improvement mainly devoid of historical, political, and social considerations that rendered the laboratory the sanctuary of human intellect and of its autonomous achievements (Shapin, 2010, pp. 3–4). Comparatively, the white cube in the early decades of the twentieth century epitomized a similar space of intellectual and artistic freedom. As an experiment, it demonstrated a methodological and systematic display of art and hence a rigorous understanding of its formal development through consecutive evolutionary phases that defined art according to formal principles unconfined by the idealistic quest of the imitation of nature. The exhibition guaranteed a self-containing and self-referential environment that abstracted and framed both the artwork and the visitor within its rarefied atmosphere and independent aesthetic values. The white wall and spotlight ambience of the white cube were conducive to the abstract modular compositions of modernism and to forms of experimentation that in art, as much as in science, had moved beyond the perceivable confines of nineteenth-century natural sciences and naturalistic representations. Both art and science created their own apparatuses to accommodate the new,

whether in terms of constructivism and abstraction or quantum physics and genetics.

The cultural connotations of science have, however, changed and with them the concept of the exhibition as an experiment. Although science still detains cultural authority, its appreciation has gained complexity, suggesting a greater plurality of methods and endeavors that, far from transcending historical contingencies and contexts, make sciences heterogeneous, historically and socially embedded sets of practices (Shapin, 2010, pp. 5–10). The laboratory sits—no less than the art gallery—at institutional and commercial boundaries, and the experiment borrows from the arts the notions of performative and material practices to explain the “assemblages” and interactions of people, materials, and machines (Shapin, p. 7; Weibel and Latour, 2007, pp. 94–108). Hence the exhibition as a laboratory or experiment refers to a broad range of approaches and practices, of contextual and historical settings and conditions, of modes of enquires and a search for innovation.

From the 1970s onward, artists and curators in their critique of standard display practices have experimented with the exhibition as medium within and beyond the gallery space. Marcel Broodthaers's and Joseph Kosuth's interventions in museum displays are examples of art's critical exposure and disruption of the taxonomies and strategies of presentation that underscore museums' and galleries' exhibitions; in works such as *Les Archives* (1987), Christian Boltanski reconfigures these same practices of collecting and displaying, showing blurred photographs of anonymous individuals on metal grids resembling those of museum storage, deconstructing the processes of individualization and interpretation that undergird the exhibition. Curators and artists have also challenged the physical and ideological boundaries of the art gallery by engaging with the urban fabric and the social, demographic, and cultural contexts of cities worldwide. Exhibitions have been set in nonconventional art venues, including scientific institutions, industrial buildings, abandoned edifices, and historical sites. The aesthetic of the white cube has given way not to a denial of its practices, but rather to a contextualization of art and modes of display. In the early twenty-first century, the ideal of abstraction and autonomy of the white cube contends with and within the many and different places and contexts of the exhibition where antithetical aesthetic practices are juxtaposed and new synergies are sought. Enquiry informs theories and practices of exhibition making through diverse approaches and transdisciplinary collaborations that render this medium multi-form and multifaceted, embodied and contextualized.

By situating the exhibition at the intersection of art and curating, criticism, art history and exhibition history, museum politics and the art market, culture and its production and reception, the analogy of the experiment acquires renewed prominence, highlighting a search for dialogues and possibilities that bring to the fore both the potentials and the limits

of the exhibition as a site of innovation. In maintaining the exhibition as an experiment or laboratory, artists and curators presuppose it as “a changing, volatile, developing construct, continuously connected to a multitude of sources of art and information, where confusion, contradiction, friction, and surprise play key roles” (Kuoni, 2001, p. 16). Accordingly, the exhibition still seeks innovative approaches as it attempts to incorporate the global cross-cultural landscape of artists, artworks, and themes that define the contemporary curatorial enterprise as well as the technological and political changes that characterize today's culture.

[See also Conceptual Art; Conceptualism; Contemporary Art; Curating; Modernism; and Museums.]

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CATERINA ALBANO

EXISTENTIALISM. See Heidegger, Martin; Kierkegaard, Søren Aabye; Merleau-Ponty, Maurice; and Sartre, Jean-Paul.

EXPERIENCE, AESTHETIC. See Abhinavagupta; Addison, Joseph; Alison, Archibald; Appreciation; Aristotle; Attitude; Beardsley, Monroe C.; Bullough, Edward; Dewey, John; Dufrenne, Mikel; Emerson, Ralph Waldo; Emotions; Gadamer, Hans-Georg; Husserl, Edmund Gustav Albrecht; Hypertext; Imagery; Japanese Aesthetics; Mendelssohn, Moses; Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm; Perception; Pleasure; and Qualities, Aesthetic.

EXPERIMENTALISM. To explore and explain experimentalism in different art forms, this entry consists of three essays:

Each essay discusses how experimentalism is understood and practiced in one or more art forms—music, film, and video—and each analyzes, if only indirectly, the implications of experimentalism for aesthetics. The first essay on music covers mostly classical or new music, while the second covers specifically electronic music. For a discussion of experimentalism in poetry, see *Avant-Garde*; and *Poetics*.

Music

The aesthetics of experimental music are deeply intertwined with the history of what experimental music has been: it was not some set of timeless formal properties passed magically from work to work, but a thoroughly contingent network that began in the United States before spreading internationally. Moreover, the shape of this heterogeneous network has morphed over time, as scholars and artists have isolated and attenuated certain attachments while multiplying and strengthening others. In the early twentieth century, for example, Charles Ives and Luigi Russolo occupied totally different historical situations, and yet it has now become common to translate both as "precursors" or "early figures" in experimental music history. Likewise, by the turn of the twenty-first century, commentators have begun to draw aesthetic connections between post-Cagean composer-performers and the improvisers of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), even if earlier accounts of experimental music maintained a rather strict separation. Therefore, any account of experimental music has to register these shifts while also paying close attention to the limits and exclusions of the formation at a given point in history.

Early Experimentalism. Charles Ives (1874–1954) experimented with a number of compositional techniques and combined a wide variety of different styles into a raucous pluralism. His innovative procedures included various forms of bitonality and polytonality, polyrhythm and temporal layering, spatial effects (both real and represented), the occasional use of quarter-tones, and a general proclivity toward noisy timbres and complex textures. Above all, Ives used these techniques to effect an elision between art and daily life: the simultaneity of multiple meters or the addition of "wrong" notes might evoke the heterophony of an amateur choir, while polytonality might be used to recreate the effect of two or more marching bands passing each other in a town square.

Most important of all, perhaps, was Ives's collage aesthetic, which he employed to create space in his rarefied aesthetic for the quotidian tastes of ordinary people. His works are