

Notes on responses from about 25 present for the workshop

How do you know when you have facilitated a satisfying tour? What specific behaviors do you see among those on your tour when things are going well?

- *Children converse with docent and one another*
- *Focus is not about pulling out info from the students, but around ideas and conversation*
- *Nonverbal cues, body language from those on tour are positive. Desire to be involved even if they can't articulate their ideas.*
- *Students are really looking and see something docent had not noticed in an artwork*
- *CONNECTION – an important word used by many docents to describe a successful tour*
- *“electric charge in group” – more enthusiasm; new ideas sparked*
- *When asked about favorite work on a tour, students share eagerly*
- *At the end of the tour, the docent knows students' by name. This communicates to the docents that true interaction has occurred.*
- *Students do not want to leave, they have more questions and comments than we have time and want more time to spend with the work*
- *Students desire information about the museum's hours and want to know when and how they can use their family pass*
- *When a group that has never been in a museum gives unprompted thank you for your tour*
- *Students make their own spontaneous connections among works they saw on the tour*
- *Student comments come without asking a question. They realize that their ideas are important at each work and share them without prompting.*
- *When students feel safe to disagree with one another's observations or to ask for reasons why another student has a certain opinion – this is done respectfully*

How has your experience of being on a tour changed when you visit other museums as a result of your work here at OCMA?

- *“I avoid docent tours at other museums.” It is too much of a distraction from our experience on our own. This is a big shift from how we used to do museums.*
- *Notice transitions and whether they seem graceful or mechanical and perfunctory*
- *Pointing at art is distracting.*
- *Don't want to see the structure of a tour if it keeps the docent from being “in the moment.” More important for the docent to express sincere enthusiasm than have every element of a tour in place.*
- *Want the docent to be in the moment, to be real.*
- *Notice whether those on tour follow along or drift away*
- *Notice whether docent is flexible*
- *Some didactic information is valuable but want to be invited to see the art not bombarded with information*
- *Sometimes docents choose to “hover” near a tour and just pick up a bit of information rather than committing to a full tour.*
- *A binder of information or catalogue used during a tour can detract from looking at the art itself.*

- *Information offered needs to be relevant and not overwhelm the act of looking*
- *Most tours are a forced march – too many works and not enough time to look*
- *Try to be a helpful viewer when I am on a docent tour. I am more willing to share my ideas and help the docent out, so as to encourage the other participants to participate. I want to show them it is not that scary to share or take up so much airtime that they are forced to participate due to their annoyance at my abundance of opinions.*

What engagement strategies did you notice Lynda use for her adult tour demo with Penelope Umbrico's *Sunset Portraits*?

- *Prompted viewers to look at work from multiple angles, starting far away and then moving closer. She asked them to contrast their experience and interpretation of the work from each vista.*
- *Offered opportunities for viewers to make connections to their own lives.*
- *Repeated what viewers said, pulled out the crux of the comment and then allowed the other comments or her questions to build upon viewer response. Her repeating of the comments communicated that she valued all the ideas being shared.*
- *Didn't make assumptions about the audience and their familiarity with digital photography or online photo sites. She explained all terms that might be unfamiliar.*
- *Allowed dialogue to extend beyond the work by asking very open-ended questions and encouraging viewers to connect the work to their life, as well as to bigger societal ideas.*
- *Shared air time and ensured that she heard from a variety of people by prioritizing viewers who hadn't shared a comment yet.*
- *Responses to comments were neutral and non-judgmental while remaining encouraging. It was clear from her responses that she was looking for and open to a wide variety of responses.*

Ideas for working with Carlos Almaraz's *Over the Bridge* brainstormed with Joaline?

- *Investigate the colors in the work by passing out colored papers to the group and having them respond to questions/prompts using the different colors*
- *Compare/Contrast: Ask students to compare and contrast different elements of the painting (e.g. How do the strokes at the top of the canvas compare to those at the bottom?)*
- *Prompt students to connect the painting to a narrative or story*
- *Ask students to recreate the figures' pose. Ask how they chose how to place their body. How does it feel to be in that position? What new insights can come from physically embodying the figures?*
- *Compare the painting with a historic picture of Echo Park Lake (the setting depicted in the painting)*
- *Challenge students to brainstorm what sort of music would be playing in the painting or sounds that come to mind*

Image Investigation: Participants were asked to view 20 selected images of artwork featured in *California Landscape into Abstraction*. These images were hung at random. They were asked to respond to the following questions. Their responses are included below:

What do you notice? What connections do you see? What words come to mind?

- Love of Nature
- Colorful Sunset
- Theme of Ecology

- Where are we?
- What defines a landscape?
- What do the multiples represent?
- Timing-Lighting
- Nature or artifice?
- How do humans enhance the environment? Do they ever?
- What impact does man have on the landscape?
- Color in nature
- Straight or Curved
- Some (not all)...Amateur
- What makes a landscape?
- How do these images go together?
- The Palms: The possibly lone native tree vs. the landscaped ones
- The original state vs. the landscaped changed one
- Sad!
- What roles do fences play?
- What are we doing to the environment?
- Connection between life and death
- Construction often at the cost or destruction of nature/environment
- Reinventing new uses for old areas
- Multiple images - photo or painting?
- Importance of framing
- Nature - Polluted by man. Desolation
- Word- Stark
- Disgusting
- Is this California?
- Monumental
- Austere
- Tragic
- From order to disorder
- Death
- Yards- for beauty or function?
- Protect the environment
- Words: Juxtaposition, Color, Repetition, Lighting, Patterns, Placement, Forms
- Shading, Alienation

- We humans want to make our mark on the natural environment.
- Themes: "I'm struggling with the big idea."
- Who shot these?
- What does repeating an image do to the overall image?
- What is unique or beautiful about each one?
- Where? Who? Why? Connections: pattern, texture, color
- Repeated images being more thoughts
- How each person sees the same things differently?
- Connection: enclosing endless landscapes into little square areas
- Words: Places
- Are these all Southern California locations?
- How were these made?
- Man made. Natural. Surreal. Botanical. Repetitive
- How do they relate to one another? I see change, unused space, imagination
- Connection: Color, Space
- Repeat- one looks closer
- Memories of "previous"- new connection here. Are they better this way
- Words: environment/location, nature/development, artifice
- What is scale?
- Pattern in common
- Connections: grids and multiples, development/change, overtime/evolution
- How have humans affected the environment?
- "COOL" especially the empty pool shot
- They are all places/spaces
- How does having multiple, very similar images, attract attention? What questions do multiples invite?

THANK YOU!

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