

Does “pointing at” in museum exhibitions make a point?  
A study of visitors’ performances in three museums for  
the use of reference as a means of initiating and  
prompting meaning-making

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Declaration of originality

I, Dimitra Christidou confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own.  
Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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## Abstract

My research acknowledges and explores the social interaction unfolding in the museum space by investigating the sociocultural ways through which museum visitors direct and enhance their personal and co-visitors' meaning-making. My research analyses the **visitors' performances** and the **sociocultural means** used in the context of their joint encounters with seven exhibits across three case studies so as to explore the ways these performances and means were further mediated through the personal, physical, sociocultural and institutional context of each encounter. The three case studies selected were the **Courtauld Gallery**, the **Wellcome Collection**, the **Horniman Museum and Gardens**, all in London, UK.

**Audio** and **video-based research** was conducted from March 2010 until August 2011. **Conversation Analysis** and **Ethnomethodology** led the analysis, highlighting the collaborative, sequential, and performative dynamics of meaning-making at the exhibit-face. Three patterns of performances have been identified: **attracting an audience; telling and tagging** and **animating through “displaying doing”**. “Attracting an audience” includes those performances used to attract someone’s attention and subsequently broaden a personal encounter with an exhibit by inviting others. “Telling and tagging” refers respectively to the pivotal performances of narrating and showing something to someone else. “Animating the exhibit through “displaying doing” refers those visitors’ embodied performances that bring aspects of the exhibits into life, aiming at seeing the exhibit in a more vivid and specific way. The analysis revealed two additional dynamics of performing in the museum concerning visitors’ sequence when encountering the exhibits: **arriving at the exhibit second** and, **seeing through another person’s eyes**.

These categories reflect back to the performativity entailed in meaning-making in museums while highlighting the importance of using deixis, especially pointing gestures, for sharing content and context, directing and anchoring attention to an exhibit and for getting a conversation started in ways that language cannot alone do.

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## 1| INTRODUCTION

Museums are complex physical and social environments where different groups of people interact with each other in multiple and, sometimes, surprisingly unexpected ways.<sup>1</sup> Visitors follow their own agendas and pursuits while in the museum, making constant choices and negotiations among themselves, their group and others as well as the content and context of the exhibition (Falk and Dierking 2000). Hennes (2002, 105) finds exhibitions to be “places of experiences as unpredictable and idiosyncratic as the individuals who visit them” acknowledging the diversity and pluralism surrounding the so called “museum experience” (Falk and Dierking 1992). This unpredictability of the museum experience is further prompted by the social dynamics that emerge and are negotiated while being in the museum.

Research has shown (Allen 2002; Blud 1990a; Dierking and Falk 1994; Falk and Dierking 2000; Hood 1983; McManus 1987, 1988; Moussouri 1997) that the majority of visitors come to museums as part of a wider social group; be that a family, a school group, friends, tourists, and so forth. In addition, motivational studies have indicated that social interaction and collaboration are among the most prevalent reasons for visitors coming to museums with others (Falk *et al.* 1998; Packer and Ballantyne 2002). Specifically in the UK, spending time and a day out with friends and family has been reported as one of the six main reasons for visiting museums across the country (Davies 1994; Moussouri 1997).

My research embraces the sociocultural and multimodal perspective in making meaning and explored the means which museum visitors use in order to **make** and

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<sup>1</sup> The term “museums” refers to science centres, science museums, art galleries, natural history museums, design museums, historic homes, aquariums, zoos, galleries, botanical gardens, children museums and natural centres (Falk *et al.* 2007).

**share meaning** by investigating the role of visitors' **performances** in front of seven exhibits across three case studies.

## 1.1. Introduction to Research

Visitors and their naturally occurring behaviours are the backbone of this research, especially the means they use to make and share meaning. This research has been informed by the current progress in a variety of scientific sectors such as Education, Linguistics, and Anthropology, acknowledging the multidisciplinary nature of Museum Studies (MacDonald 2006). Most of this research is the result of an intriguing combination of questions about social interaction: firstly, how should we study interaction? If language alone cannot realise the dimensions of social interaction, should not research consider every mode and its affordance or constraints *in situ*? (Kress *et al.* 2001) If, in the case of museums, exhibits and artefacts, which are means of exploring meaning in a process of understanding, do not embody knowledge by nature but afford knowledge and meaning when they are interpreted, how should we approach these interpretations? (Biggs 2002; Mäkelä 2007; Leinhardt and Crowley 2002) How should social interaction be studied in context, as being at the same time "context-shaped" and "context-renewing"? (Heritage 1984, 242)

## 1.2. Rationale for the research; motivations and objectives

Museums, being a destination for social outings, can offer both highly aesthetic encounters as well as social ones, with visitors spending time with each other while in the galleries (Stevens and Martell 2003). The social character of the museum experience has also been referred to as "distributed meaning-making" or "collaborative learning" (Dierking *et al.* 2001), two terms underlining the ongoing interaction and collaboration that emerges among visitors.

This research adopts the **sociocultural framework**, arguing that visitors' encounters are active, distributed, social, situated, and mediated processes. In the museum field specifically, the implementation of the sociocultural framework coming from the field of formal education (schooling) has led to a branch of research that places visitors in the centre of the meaning-making process. This branch of research

mainly explores visitors' meaning-making by studying their conversations while in the museum (Allen 1997; Blud 1990a; Leinhardt *et al.* 2002; Leinhardt and Knutson 2004).

Visitors' conversations have been treated as uttered expressions of their interests that actively engage others and subsequently prompt the conversation to elaborate through ongoing social interaction (Lehr *et al.* 2007). Although the importance of each visitor's input has been underlined in the shaping of their shared meaning-making, the analysis and methods used have treated visitors' conversations as responses of individuals, focusing on the individual as the unit of analysis (Allen 2002; Rennie *et al.* 2003). Additionally, the focus of analysis has been on the verbal mode, setting aside the multimodality entailed in meaning-making. This gap has been identified by a few researchers who, in contrast, also chose to include a few non-verbal behaviours in their analysis and interpretations (Puchner *et al.* 2001; Rahm 2004; Weier and Piscitelli 2003). My study contributes to the latter branch of research, as it considers the verbal and nonverbal behaviours at the same time, acknowledging the fact that there are not two kinds of **communication**, but **one** (Hall 1959, 1966; Jones and LeBaron 2002; Kendon 1972, 1980; McNeill 1992, 2005). Additionally, the different **modes** of communication have been included in the transcripts, indicated as they simultaneously occur. This way of representing social interaction and communication is considered suitable in giving the simultaneous, minute-by-minute occurrence of the finer details that comprise social interaction.

Throughout this research, the focus of interest is placed on visitors' performances: the term *performance* is used to refer to visitors' conduct and interaction, their responsive and situated verbal and non-verbal behaviours within the specific context of each joint encounter. The groups of visitors have been considered to be **communities of practice**, whose members share the same interests and exercise the same practices, further negotiated while being in the museum. The visit to the museum was seen as a joint, social activity, placing the anchoring of **joint attention** among the most pivotal means of carrying out visitors' social sharing. For the establishment of joint attention, visitors' **common ground**, as developed through their interaction and membership to the community of practice, allowed them to **minimise their**

**collaborative effort** while attempting to reach shared meaning-making. Understanding how visitors negotiate the shaping of meaning for each encounter involves not only exploring the themes of their conversations but also the ways they say what they say; how their actions are jointly **linked, negotiated, occasioned and deployed** (Rowe 2002).

By studying the unfolding nature of visitors' performances in different museum contexts, this research focuses on, gathers, and compares possible ways in which visitors share with each other their attention hooks. Looking closer at the ways performances are produced, recognised, and shared during the encounter, the importance of joint attention and reference is realised. Falk and Dierking (2000), in an attempt to answer if there are particular ways for sociocultural "information" to be shared in the museum, came up with two possible means: narration, or story form, and modeling.<sup>2</sup> My research argues that **reference** is another way for information to be shared and that **performing** at the exhibit-face may influence the experience not only for the group performing, but also for others sharing the same space.

Apart from reaching shared meanings through their interaction at the museum, members of the same group distribute knowledge socially (Ash 2003; Crowley and Callanan 1998; Rowe 2002), by reinforcing their common ground and history (Falk and Dierking 2000). Besides shared meaning-making, every member holds his/her own personal views and attaches his/her personal meaning to the museum encounters. My research explores the personal-social interconnection by analysing the shared practices of meaning-making in the context of a joint activity -their joint encounters at seven exhibit-faces- as well as the ways in which these practices have been mediated by the social, physical, personal and institutional context of each encounter.

There has been a noteworthy lack in research on how gestures function when artefacts are present. An exception is *proxemics* (Hall 1959; 1966), that studies how people move and how they position themselves in space, *kinesics*, which explores the

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<sup>2</sup> Modeling or social or observational learning refers to learning that occurs through observation and imitation (Falk and Dierking 2000).

body expression in communication (Birdwhistell 1952), and *choreometrics*, which focuses on the choreography of culture (Lomax *et al.* 1969). A gap was identified concerning the ways people examine and experience objects in public places, especially in museums and galleries (Roth and Lawless 2002; Heath and vom Lehn 2004). In the last decade there have been a few publications exploring aspects of interaction emerging in work environments such as the London Underground control room (Hindmarsh and Heath 2000), archaeological sites (Goodwin 2003), classrooms (Kääntä 2005; Goldin-Meadow 2007) and shop counters (Clark 2003).

Specifically, Hindmarsh and Heath (2000) studied the referential practices used in everyday settings, such as a telecommunication control centre in London, arguing that the referential practice is socially situated and collaboratively organised with regard to the referent and the participants in interaction (speaker; hearer) who constantly shift roles. They also identify a gap in linguistics on how gestures supplement utterances for carrying out a directive performance, setting the use of demonstrative reference unexplored. These studies pinpoint the use of gestures, particularly reference, as a collaborative practice that facilitates the task by making it easier for the participants to discern a particular aspect of the relevant complex environment.

In the field of museum studies, reference has also been identified as an aspect of the museum experience but without really elaborating on its use. Specifically, Borun and her colleagues (1996; 1998) listed different behaviours as learning indicators for family science learning in the museum; one of those was pointing. Griffin (1999), building upon a review of relevant literature, developed a list of behavioural indicators of student engagement in learning processes in a museum setting. Pointing gestures were considered as an indicator of learning and "sharing learning with peers and experts" (Griffin 1999, 116), placing it among the sociocultural means of learning.<sup>3</sup> Recently, Meisner and her colleagues (2007) found that visitors observe others at interactive exhibit-faces in order to adjust their own interaction and performance. "Pointing at objects" was among those means of showing others how to manipulate the exhibits.

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<sup>3</sup> Griffin argues that these behaviours cannot measure learning but can instead indicate the presence of "conditions learning" (Griffin 1999, 117).

Finally, King (2009) noticed that quite often museum Explainers and students make use of the terms *this* and *that* or *pointed* to objects while interacting with science exhibits at the Natural History Museum in London. Reference seems to facilitate the ongoing negotiation and the explanations provided by the Explainers to the students about different aspects of the exhibits. This past research has highlighted the essence and recurrence of reference -especially in the form of pointing gestures- in the museum, leading my own interest in the deeper exploration of what occurs at the exhibit-face.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Research -Research Questions and case studies**

This research argues that performances support, enhance, and finally transform private experiences into shared meaning-making. The basic objectives of my research were to explore the following questions:

- How do visitors' performances initiate, prompt, and lead to shared meaning-making?
- How do visitors render their personal interests public both to each other and possibly to non-members of their group? <sup>4</sup>
- How does context affect performance and hence meaning-making? Specifically, how do the three dimensions of context (physical, personal, and sociocultural), along with the institutional, shape the emerging performances and vice versa?
- Which communicative functions are mainly addressed by visitors' performances? How do visitors' performances unfold to address these functions? Which practices do group members use in order to share their performances with the other members of the group and other people that share the same space? How do members of the same group use reference and how does the use of reference affect the museum experience and the performance that arises?

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<sup>4</sup> The term *visitors* (in plural) refers to all these people visiting the museum in groups consisting of at least two people who stop and perform in front of those exhibits under investigation.

To address these objectives, I have conducted qualitative research as it is a flexible way to study human behaviour in natural context, and also takes into account the existence of “multiple realities that are socially defined” (Firestone 1987, 16), approaching them from the perspective of those who act, while they act, by using their own quotations and descriptions (Firestone 1987).

Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis have provided the methodological resources through which the situated, social, and moment-by-moment production of performance is explored and analysed. The detail capture of the naturally occurring performances, as they were actually taking place, was achieved through the use of audio and video recordings (Miles and Huberman 1994).

Three case studies were chosen; the Wellcome Collection, the Courtauld Gallery and the Horniman Museum and Gardens, all in London, UK. From these three case studies, seven exhibits were selected in order to draw comparisons on the influence of the physical and institutional context on visitors’ shared meaning-making. More detailed information on the selected exhibits is provided in Chapter 4.

#### **1.4. Intended Contributions of this research**

This research aims at unravelling the complexities and patterns of performances unfolding naturally at seven exhibit-faces. To achieve that, I have utilised video and audio recordings of joint encounters, further micro-analysed based on Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis. This microanalysis acknowledged the multimodality and performativity entailed in meaning-making. Specifically, verbal and nonverbal behaviours are considered equal contributors in facilitating thought and interaction, which are multimodally performed by the visitors (Kress *et al.* 2001).

My focus is not on evaluating each mode’s importance, but instead on the understanding of the affordances and interconnections of these modes of action in the meaning-making process. The research aim is not to reach universal meanings, but, contrarily, to draw generalizations by linking visitors’ action in front of the specific

exhibits in the specific institutional contexts to their meaning-making process, what Scheflen (1974) calls “customary acts”. Additionally, exploring what actually happens at the face of these exhibits was considered to facilitate possibly the communicational process among visitors and between the visitors and the museum.

The examination of the patterns and structures of action is achieved through the exploration of the role that different semiotic resources have in action; how these semiotic resources come into existence or are reshaped within and through action and social interaction. Through the comparison of actions, modes and contexts, different sociocultural means and patterns of performances come to the foreground. By doing the above, my research places another building block in the understanding of the interconnection of actual visitors' behaviours and the design of the exhibitions (Borun *et al.* 1998; Chiodo and Rupp 1999; Falk and Dierking 2000; Falk *et al.* 1993). My research constitutes a systematic attempt to capture visitors' social sharing *in situ*, by considering all the emerging modes and their affordances or constraints. By focusing on visitors' initial interests and the means through which these interests are distributed, this research can aid museum institutions in understanding and finding ways to build upon and encourage visitors' engagement.

This research also acknowledges the possible conventions that exist during a museum visit: institutional conventions coupled with the group's identity have been considered a crucial factor affecting the museum experience. Being required to be quiet, normally not being allowed to touch, eat, smell, and approach exhibits that one may never have seen before, are special conventions that shape the museum experience in such ways that the affordances of reference try to compensate for. My research expands on Falk and Dierking's (2000) suggestion on the existence of two sociocultural means in the museum (narration and modeling) and also including the means of reference, especially under such institutional constraints.

## 1.5. Key findings

Three patterns of performances have been identified: **attracting an audience; animating through “displaying doing” and, telling and tagging.** “Attracting an

audience” includes those performances used to attract someone’s attention and subsequently broaden a personal encounter by inviting others. “Animating the exhibit through ‘displaying doing’” refers to the embodied performances of visitors that bring aspects of the exhibits into life and movement, aiming at seeing the exhibit in a more vivid and very specific way. “Telling and tagging” respectively refers to the pivotal performances of narrating and showing something to someone else. My analysis revealed two additional dynamics of performing in the museum: “arriving at the exhibit second” and “seeing through another person’s eyes”, reflecting upon the entailed sequence and dynamics of visitors’ performances.

## **1.6. Overview of the Thesis**

A major shift in understanding the museum experience comes from the adoption and implications of the sociocultural theory in learning in formal and informal settings. Chapter 2 discusses the main points made by the sociocultural theory of learning, also detailing its implications in understanding the museum experience. Chapter 3 introduces the building blocks of shared meaning-making regarding the joint museum experience and hence presents the key concepts of my research. Chapter 4 introduces the three case studies, contextualising the galleries and the history of each one of these three institutions while it also details the seven exhibits and the rationale for choosing them. Chapter 5 outlines the methodological framework, the methods, the emerging limitations, and ethics applied to all the three case studies while also detailing the processes of data collection and coding. Chapters 6 to 8 provide the in depth analysis of visitors’ performances through detailed examples, reflecting the three categories of performances identified through the analysis. Chapter 9 discusses the findings of my research, contrasts and compares the performances emerging in front of the seven exhibits selected, and explores the influence of each context in the shaping of visitors’ performances. Chapter 10 concludes this thesis by revisiting the key findings, discussing the contributions of my research and its implications for museum practice and further research, while also referring to the limitations identified, respectively, concerning the theory and methodology implemented in my research.

## 2 | THE MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

This chapter builds on understanding, interpreting, and implementing past research undertaken in the fields of Education, Anthropology, the Social Sciences, and Museum Studies. It discusses the influence of the **sociocultural theory** in the understanding of the museum experience and links it with the notion of **communities of practice**. The framework suggested by Falk and Dierking (2000), the **Contextual Model of museum learning**, is briefly discussed, exploring the three intertwined contexts in which the museum experience is situated. Additionally, the influence of a fourth context on the shaping of the museum experience is suggested, that of the institutional context.

This chapter brings forward the contextualised character of the museum experience, and subsequently the situated character of visitors' encounters with the exhibits. This chapter sets the theoretical framework on which my research was based while it introduces the next chapter, Chapter 3, in which the key concepts of my research are presented and detailed.

### 2.1. Sociocultural theory

Based on the work of Vygotsky (1978), who argued on the socially mediated nature of learning and the active participation of learners, sociocultural theory triggered a pivotal shift in the direction and authority of communication and learning initially in the formal settings of schooling. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is one of major innovations in the history of learning, as it underlines the existence of an active participant who interacts and interchanges with a skilled peer in a specific sociocultural context. Learning is achieved through participation and interaction and thus is not formed by individuals, but instead by groups.

ZPD's fundamental difference to previous learning theories such as behaviourism and constructivism is the active participation and interaction of learners in the process of learning and the dismissal of the linear transmission of information from the

teacher to the students (Vygotsky 1978). Sociocultural theory made authoritative one-way communication obsolete and allowed the passive –until that point- receiver, the learner, to gain an active role by participating and interacting with the authority, the teacher.

Additionally, sociocultural theory emphasizes the situated, mediated, and ongoing negotiation of learning rather than treating learning as a final and fixed product. Learning is an active co-construction of meaning, constantly reflecting upon learners' prior knowledge and experiences. Learning is a social and mediated activity through which aspects of the personal and collective background of the participants are expressed, shared, and refined. Learning is shaped by the context, culture, and artefacts situated within the learning situation. As Wertsch (1991, 8) argues, within the sociocultural framework “human beings are viewed as coming in contact with, and creating their surroundings as well as themselves, through the actions in which they engage”. It is action that becomes the focus of analysis, and not the participants or the physical context in isolation.

Matusov and Rogoff (1995, 101) suggest that museums offer a unique opportunity for people to “bridge different sociocultural practices and [...] different institutions and communities”. Additionally, Schauble, Leinhardt and Martin (1997) encourage the application of the sociocultural framework to museum learning, as it supports meanings made within social contexts, while also including the mediating means used within these contexts (Schauble *et al.* 1997).

## **2.2. The museum experience through the sociocultural lens**

By virtue of being a destination for social outings, museums are considered an informal setting where sociocultural learning takes place. A sociocultural perspective frames learning “as socially and culturally constructed through people's actions within a specific community of practice” (Ellenbogen *et al.* 2004). ‘Communities of practice’ is a term coined by Wenger (1998) to refer to groups of people who share history and at least one interest, which they develop through regular interaction and participation in the same group. In Wenger's words (2006, 1) “communities of practice are formed by

people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavor”.

Each community of practice has three dimensions, as follows: the domain of knowledge, a notion of community and, a practice (Wenger *et al.* 2002). *Domain* refers to the shared area of interest for the members of the same community. Domain is responsible for setting the members' common ground and identity. *Community* functions as the social bond among the members of the same group, as it enhances the sense of belonging to a group, a factor considered fundamental for the process of learning. *Practice* is the knowledge and repertoires that the community shares and develops through its long-term interaction and joint cultural and social encounters.<sup>5</sup> Practice, in Wenger's terms, is not an abstract entity; it rather “exists because people are engaged in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another” (Wenger 1998, 73). The difference between the domain and the practice stands on the fact that the domain sets the subject matter of the shared interest and knowledge while the practice is the specific knowledge developing through the member's interaction (Wenger 1998; Wenger *et al.* 2002).

The idea that learning involves an ongoing process of participation in a community of practice has gained significant ground in recent years. Visitors have been brought to the centre of the museum experience, taking an active role in the shaping of meaning, which is not based anymore on predetermined categories and outcomes (Allen 2002; Roberts 1997; Rowe 2002). Instead, making meaning was treated as “a process [...] and a joint activity of a group” (Allen 2002, 262), during which visitors make meaning by constantly interacting with each other, the context, and the content (Ellenbogen 2002; Greeno 1997; Salomon and Perkins 1998). Therefore, learning becomes better understood as meaning-making, a social process where situation, knowledge, action, and language co-exist and meet (Silverman 1995).

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<sup>5</sup> “Practice” was previously coined by Wenger (1998) as *shared repertoire* including, in addition to the activities, symbols and artefacts, words, tools, stories, and gestures that all members of a community share.

For Wenger and his colleagues (2002), the world is seen to be composed of a range of different communities of practice, each being characterized by specific practices and repertoires of doing things that are particular to that community. The members of each community learn to use these practices and repertoires as part of their membership, which they develop through their constant participation to and interaction with the specific community of practice. These shared practices and common ground among the members of the same community of practice facilitate their inner communication, which gradually takes a shorthand form as members of the community become more familiar with each other through their constant interaction. Additionally, the social interaction emerging among the members of the same community of practice seems to be a factor inducing, or even reducing, their motivations to engage with a domain (Piaget and Inhelder 1969).

Wertsch (1991, 8) argues that “human beings are viewed as coming in contact with, and creating their surroundings as well as themselves, through the actions in which they engage”. This suggests the need to explore meaning-making by studying the members of these communities of practice while they act in specific contexts rather than decontextualized and individually. **Action** comes from the background into the forefront of attention as it “provides the entry point into analysis” (Wertsch 1991, 8).

The concept of the communities of practice has also been used to describe collaborative learning while it has found a number of practical applications in organizations, associations, social sector’s dynamics and so forth (Wenger 2006). Learning is a social and “ubiquitous and ongoing activity, though often unrecognized as such” (Lave 2009, 201). Rather than focusing on the relevant cognitive processes, Lave and Wenger “ask what kinds of social engagements provide the proper context for learning to take place” (Hanks 1991, 14). For Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1999), learning involves active participation in the practices of communities and construction of identities relevant to these communities. Identity is a social process, developed and refined through member interaction and negotiation of their membership to the specific communities. In other words, identity is not a fixed entity, but rather it is constantly constructed through what people do and say (Ellenbogen *et al.* 2007). The shaping of identity is influenced not only by the community but also by the

institution in which the community situates its membership and action. Even when meaning-making is initially individual, personal interpretations are mediated through the membership in a community of practice (Hooper-Greenhill 2000). Newcomers to a community of practice initially learn at the periphery while gradually moving from legitimate peripheral participation into “full participation” (Lave and Wenger 1991, 37). Learning in this framework is not an individual acquisition of knowledge; instead, it is a social participation process.

Although there have been studies devoting considerable attention to the different roles members of groups may adopt while interacting in the museum and the role of gender (Crowley 2000; Crowley *et al.* 2001b), I decided to treat all group members as collaborative participants, whose actions and interactions aim for the joint advancement of their meaning-making. This decision concurs with the main concern of the sociocultural framework; that is, focusing on the processes and treating what happens at the museum as an interpretive act of meaning-making and a joint activity of a group of interactants. For this reason, I do not analyse the performances of individuals, but instead collaborative performances in front of the exhibits.

Treating visitors in groups like communities of practice is a useful analytical tool for a number of reasons. Firstly, it allows the interconnection of collective and individual experiences and thus, it allows for individual and collective meanings. Secondly, it affirms that visitors claim space in the meaning-making process for themselves, but also for their community. Thirdly, it implies the existence of power and dynamics between the members of the same community of practice that may influence the social dynamics of the museum encounter and the roles that each member may take. Fourth, it places the focus on shared practices and means visitors use as they participate within their specific communities of practice.

### **2.3. Capturing visitors' experiences**

Looking through the sociocultural lens, the museum experience is framed as a dialogical, mediated, multimodal and social process, situated in specific contexts. By treating the experience in terms of meaning-making, its dynamic and mediated nature

concurs with the basic principles of the sociocultural theory in the sense of creating and recreating meaning rather than authoritatively transmitting information (Rowe 2002; Silverman 1995).

Through the sociocultural lens, a number of studies have been undertaken in order to develop a detailed idea on what visitors' experiences look like and entail. Although we know a lot about what visitors' experience looks like, we know surprisingly little about what they actually do and say when they encounter the exhibits. Therefore, we do not yet fully comprehend the processes involved in the shaping of meaning-making at the exhibit-face (Allen 1997). Even though the use of "tracking and timing" methodologies allow researchers to capture the holding power of the exhibits, these fail in capturing the actual interaction emerging among the visitors, as well as and between the visitors and the exhibits (Allen 1997).

To explore this active interaction, a few researchers have undertaken the capturing and analysis of visitors' conversations. Visitors' conversations have been explored as public expressions of personal ideas and concepts during the museum visit as well as long after it ends (Allen 1997; Blud 1990a; Leinhardt *et al.* 2002; Leinhardt and Knutson 2004). As conversations allow "first person experiences to be communicated to others" (Haywood and Cairns 2006, 127), they reveal a sense of visitors' personal context, linking the past with the present and even the future (Leinhardt and Crowley 1998). Therefore, meaning-making develops gradually, in a process of "conversational elaboration" (Leinhardt and Knutson 2004) during which each participant's understanding is developed through the verbal exchange of opinions, narration, and the expansion of his/her pre-existing knowledge.

The adoption of the sociocultural theory in the museum allows for the understanding of learning in terms of both an active process and meaning-making, and points towards the necessity to combine visual observation of visitors' activities in the museum by listening in on their conversations (Allen 1997). Admittedly, meaning-making in museums is a joint, social, situated and cumulative process through which visitor(s) and context are in a constant interchange (re)creating meaning (Falk and Dierking 2000; Heath and vom Lehn 2004; Rowe 2002; Rahm 2004). For these reasons,

the negotiation of meaning is constituted through different modes such as physically interacting with the exhibits, exchanging comments and information with each other, participating in activities and so forth (Meisner *et al.* 2007; Rahm 2004; Wells 1998). These modes all fall under the category of *performance* in my research (see section 3.2.).

My research additionally draws on and integrates knowledge and expertise from various disciplines such as sociology, social semiotics, cultural anthropology and cultural psychology. My interest in social interaction and its practices as occurring at the exhibit-face directed me towards theories and methodologies related to the study of social interaction, especially those exploring the webs of interaction among people and material objects such as Actor Network Theory, Discourse Analysis, Symbolic Interactionism and Critical Discourse Analysis. Each one of these branches of sociology highlights and encourages different perspectives on the use of language, context, identity, action, and interaction with Actor-Network Theory (ANT) being particularly interested in the relationship between people and technology.

ANT might have been a useful approach for my research project as I share with this theory its concern with the role that ‘objects’<sup>6</sup> have in interaction. ANT, among others, placed the concepts of ‘object’ and ‘materiality’ in the agenda of sociological debate, an area that called for intensive research as it had been previously overlooked. Specifically, ANT encourages scholars to think of objects as “actants” and seeks to explore how these actants participate in social situations (Latour 2005) as “everything in the social and natural worlds” is “a continuously generated effect of the webs of relations within which they are located” (Law 2009, 141). ANT shares fundamental principles with other qualitative approaches, especially with ethnography, and although our shared concern in materiality, ANT is not interested in the fine details of the production and design of action, nor in the ways through which ‘objects’ gain relevance and meaning in interaction that my thesis seeks to explore.

Instead, by drawing upon Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis, my thesis investigates how participants socially organise their talk and bodily conduct in a

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<sup>6</sup> Objects include both people and material ‘objects’ that can be extended to machines, animals, ideas and so forth.

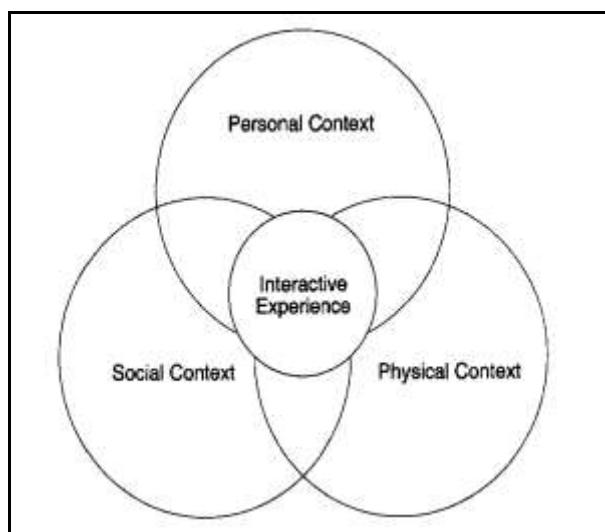
social setting as a museum gallery, unveiling the interactional, sequential, indexical and reflective dynamics (Garfinkel 1967) of talk and bodily conduct while approaching those as closely intertwined activities. Based on the key principles of Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis, I argue that meaning is indexical, i.e. objects and actions do not have meaning independent from the context in which they occur as well as that this context is not unitary and invariant but instead, both a project and a product of what takes place in and through interaction. Actions are considered to be "context-shaped and context-renewing" (Heritage 1984, 242). Even though sociolinguistics initially treated context as a notion influenced by the speakers' social attributes (such as age, class, gender and ethnicity), it became soon clear that these social attributes and their relevance to the ongoing interaction depended upon the setting in which the interaction occurred and the activities in which people were engaged (Drew and Heritage 1992; Goffman 1964). Therefore, participants' identities are not fixed but instead "inherently locally produced" (Drew and Heritage 1992, 21).

Furthermore, by drawing from social semiotics, my thesis treats action as a socially organised, multimodal and sign-making activity (Hodge and Kress 1988; Kress and van Leeuwen 1996) which brings "meaning into being rather than translating meaning into action" transforming the body into "a meaning-making resource" (Franks and Jewitt 2001, 208). By doing so, my thesis underlines the necessity to include more modes in the analysis of social interaction apart from that of language (Flewitt 2006; Kress *et al.* 2001; Meisner *et al.* 2007; Norris 2004). Additionally, the sociocultural and multimodal framework allows for a wider perspective of communication and meaning-making during which different modes interplay for the construction of meaning (Flewitt 2006, Kress *et al.* 2001). Therefore, meaning-making is a multimodal process during which a selection of semiotic resources that are available in specific contexts interplay such as talk, gaze, gesture, posture and the like (Goodwin 2000a, 2003). Combining these frameworks offers new insights into how visitors coordinate different semiotic resources and modes as they jointly (re)construct meaning in different contexts.

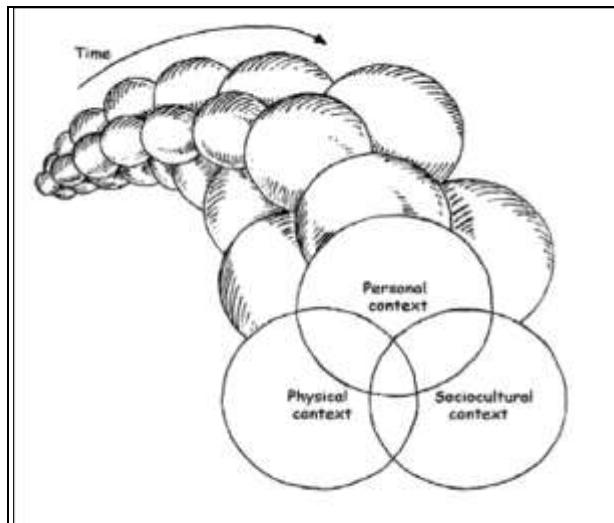
## 2.4. The Contextual Model of Learning

Falk and Dierking introduced the **Interactive Experience Model** (1992) (Figure 1), later renamed the **Contextual Model of Learning** (Falk and Dierking 2000) (Figure 2), a framework stemming from constructivism, as well as cognitive and sociocultural theories of learning (Falk and Storksdieck 2005). Foremost, the Contextual Model of Learning argues that learning is contextualised at all times.

The Contextual Model of Learning permits an analytical description of the dynamics involved in the museum experience. According to their framework, the museum experience is a complex and interactional phenomenon situated in the following three contexts: the **personal**, the **sociocultural**, and the **physical**. These three contexts and their continuous interaction over time shape the museum experience (Falk and Dierking 2000; Falk and Storksdieck 2005; McClafferty 2000). Specifically, the choices a visitor makes are always “filtered through the **personal context**, mediated by the **social context**, and embedded within the **physical context**” (Falk and Dierking 1992, 4) of each encounter.



*Figure 1. The Interactive Experience Model (Falk and Dierking 1992, 5)*



*Figure 2. The Contextual Model of Learning (Falk and Dierking 2000, 12)*

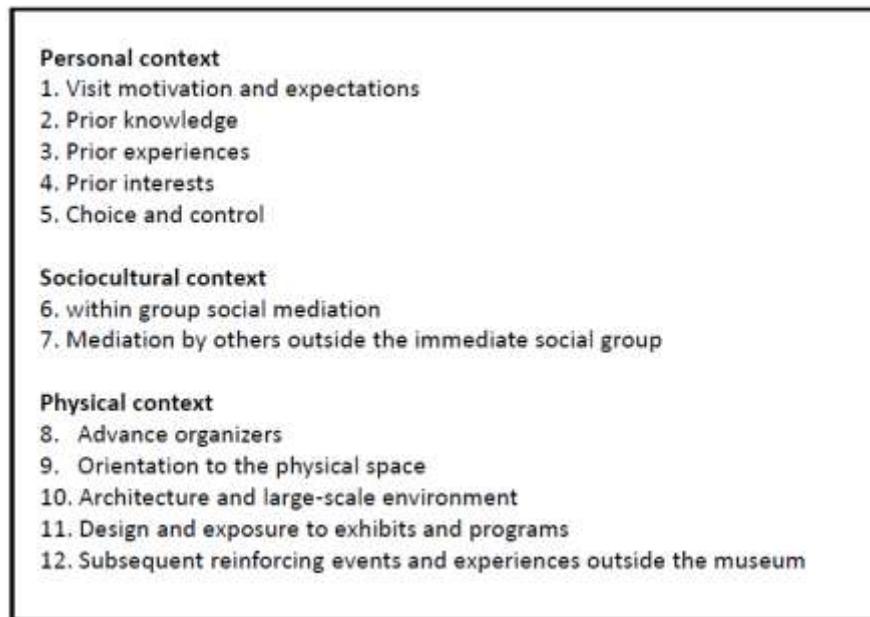
The personal context is defined by the individual's identity. It is, therefore, unique to each visitor as it includes his/her personal agenda (social and cultural background, interests, motivations, expectations and concerns) and his/her previous experiences and knowledge (social, personal and physical) (Falk 2009; Falk and Dierking 1992; Falk *et al.* 1998; Moussouri 1997; Roberts 1997). The personal context encourages and sustains visitors' personal curiosity, interest, motivations, specifically when it comes to paying a visit to the museum, their expectations linked to this decision and the strategies/agenda employed during their visit (Csikszentmihalyi and Hermanson 1995; Falk and Storksdieck 2005; Moussouri 1997, Rennie *et al.* 2003). Doering and Pekarik (1996) coined the term "entrance narratives", a type of "internal story line" (Doering and Pekarik 1996, 20), to refer to visitors' personal context, including the previous experiences, knowledge, and attitudes that visitors bring with them upon entering the museum. These "entrance narratives" drive and shape visitors' expectations, behaviours and hence, the processes of meaning-making before coming to and while being in the museum. When visitors' "entrance narratives" are being confirmed during their visit, the experience is considered a positive one (Doering and Pekarik 1996; 1997).

As human beings are social creatures, the Contextual Model of Learning acknowledges the essence of the interactions and collaborations emerging in the museum by including them in its social context. Therefore, the social context includes interactions between the visitor and the members of his/her own social group, other

visitors, and members of the museum staff (Borun *et al.* 1997; Crowley and Callanan 1998; Ellenbogen 2002; Falk and Storksdieck 2005; Schauble *et al.* 1996). Especially in the light of relevant research placing social interaction among the basic motivations and expectations visitors have when coming to the museum (Blud 1990a; McClafferty 2000), it is evident that a personal agenda is influenced and continually reshaped by the individual's group agenda. Members of the same group constantly interact and tailor their behaviours and meanings according to the unit's needs and desires. This presupposes the efficient negotiation of attention from the exhibits to the co-visitors and vice versa (Blud 1990a, 1990b; Falk and Dierking 1992).

As visitors interact with each other, they expand their understanding of themselves as well as of each other (Allen 2002; Leinhardt and Crowley 2002; Paris 2002). Differences in group composition and cohesion seem to affect the “social climate and reactions” (McManus 1987, 264) as different members contribute in different ways, share different stories and raise different expectations and motivations (Bitgood *et al.* 1993; Tunnicliffe 2000).

Finally, the physical context of the museum includes the material perspective of the museum, treating it as an architectural setting. Additionally, properties such as space, lighting, colour, labelling, crowding, collection of exhibits and sound are also included in the physical context. Relevant research has argued that museum learning is also influenced by how easily visitors find their way in the galleries (Falk and Balling 1982) as well as by the framing of the collection; that is, the labelling (Bitgood and Patterson 1992, 1993; Serrell 1996). Neither the physical nor the sociocultural context is a predetermined entity (Duranti and Goodwin 1992). Instead, both of these contexts are dynamically reshaped socially, through the ongoing activities that take place in them. Recently, Falk and Storksdieck (2005) came up with twelve factors included in the three contexts identified in the Contextual Model of Learning (Figure 3).



*Figure 3. The twelve key factors influencing the museum learning experience (Falk and Storksdieck 2005, 747)*

#### 2.4.1. The institutional context

The encounters with the exhibits take place in specific physical and institutional contexts within the limitations, conventions, and potentials for action afforded by these contexts, such as layout, size as well as the spacing created by the juxtaposition of the exhibits. Apart from being a physical setting, museums are highly ordered institutions, following a carefully considered logic in both the presentation and the framing of their collections. Therefore, the museum is **an institutional context** with unique norms and practices, a stage where “the architect, the designers, and the management of the museum produce representations through objects and so produce a space and subjectivity for the spectator” (Patraka 1996, 99).

The museum is a place where “the authority of the curator, the sanctity of objects, and even the prestige of the institution itself” (Roberts 1997, 132) are sources of knowledge to visitors themselves. Baxandall (1991) described the museum exhibition “as a field in which at least three distinct terms are independently in play -the makers of objects, exhibitors of made objects, and viewers of exhibited made objects” (1991, 36). Visitors can be seen being engaged in asynchronous conversations with the curators and

the institution through the display, juxtaposition, and framing of the collections (Stainton 2002), and in synchronous conversations with their co-visitors and museum staff, transforming the museum experience into a “play between the public narratives of the museum and the private narratives of the viewers” (Garoian 2001, 234). An exhibition can be seen as a *text* (Kress 2011), constitutive of a social institution, produced and initiated for social reasons, while further shaped by the visitors.

Duncan (1995) likens the art museum to a temple in order to describe the rituality observed in such a place. Duncan suggests that the museum, especially the art museum, is not only a ritual setting but also a cultural artefact itself. She argued that the emerging rituality is determined by the often hidden political agenda of the museum that is displayed alongside the exhibits. As exhibits displayed in the museum are usually objects of great value, visitors’ interactions with such objects fashion and conventionalize the objects and at the same time the interactants into “ritualised actions” (Franks and Jewitt 2001, 213).

According to Babon (2006), the context in which an artefact is situated plays an integral role in its reception and meaning-making. Babon coined the term “place expectations” (2006, 156) to refer to the pre-existent ideas, values and knowledge about a place/institution that people bring with them when entering it. Specifically, people learn how to behave in various contexts by interacting in and being exposed to them, their “past experiences with places create future expectations of them” (Babon 2006, 174). Among these place expectations, there are aspects of the physical context such as the lighting, the design of the exhibitions, crowding, architecture of the space and building (Serrell 1996). These place expectations can influence but not predetermine the shaping of meaning. Instead, meaning-making seems to be a mixture of activated place expectations, the performer’s personal context and the social interaction between the people sharing the same space. The ongoing social interaction takes particular forms when it comes to groups of visitors who share a long history, a characteristic that transforms these groups into “communities of practice” (Wenger 1998, 2006; Wenger *et al.* 2002).

## 2.5. Conclusions

This chapter discussed the **sociocultural** theory of learning, the notion of **communities of practice**, and the **Contextual Model of Museum Learning** and its implementation in capturing the essence of visitors' performances in the museum, reflecting upon the research questions posed in Chapter 1. By doing so, Chapter 2 situated the museum experience within four contexts (personal, sociocultural, physical and institutional), in which visitors are considered to be actively interacting with each other, other visitors, curators, as well as members of the museum staff (Ellenbogen 2002; Rosenthal and Blankman-Hetrick 2002; Wolins *et al.* 1992), constantly reshaping what takes place at the exhibit-face (Ellenbogen *et al.* 2004; Granott 1998). These four contexts and their influence on the shaping of visitors' performances are discussed in Chapters 6 to 9, answering back to the research objectives and questions.

By situating visitors' encounters within these four contexts while discussing the existent approaches to explore these encounters, this chapter also highlighted the need to include modes other than language for a better and more holistic understanding of what takes place in the museum. These modes, presented and discussed in the next chapter (Chapter 3), are parts of visitors' "building blocks of meaning-making" (Silverman 1990) which they may develop through their participation in the same "community of practice" (Wenger 1998). This chapter set the theoretical framework of my research, the basis on which the key concepts of my research are developed and further explained in Chapter 3.

### 3 | THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF MEANING-MAKING

*“Understanding how a group’s activity unfolds in a museum involves exploring how these actions are jointly negotiated, appropriated, and deployed”*  
Rowe (2002, 22)

*“[...] the proper study of interaction is not the individual and his psychology, but rather the syntactical relations among the acts of different persons mutually present to another”*  
Goffman (1967, 2)

The third chapter focuses on the key concepts of my research, elaborating the sociocultural underpinnings of my theory as discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter introduces the building blocks of shared meaning-making reflecting upon the different modes enacted through this process. It addresses telling, the specific type of discourse that occurs in the museum, especially expanding on one of its branches, the text-echo (McManus 1989a). Then, the term performance is explored, bringing together verbal and non-verbal modes deployed during the joint encounters with the exhibits. The concepts of joint attention and visitors’ common ground are also discussed, leading visitors’ need for minimal collaborative effort when they interact with each other. All these blocks are part of the identification process, one of the most pervasive communicative functions of visitors’ performances, which is explored further.

Silverman (1990) uses the term “building blocks of meaning” to refer to visitors’ verbal interpretive acts; the responses of visitors in pairs who socially constructed meaning in an art and a history museum. Silverman groups these verbal interpretive acts into five categories, namely: establishment, absolute object description, relating competence, relating personal experience, and evaluation. As my research adopts a multimodal and sociocultural approach, these “building blocks of meaning” were further elaborated by including the non-linguistic interpretive acts that visitors use to reach a joint meaning-making. The following sections present these building blocks in detail, elaborating on their use in visitors’ shared meaning-making.

### 3.1. Telling

Falk and Dierking (2000) argue for the existence of two sociocultural means for carrying out visitors' shared meaning-making, especially when it comes to science centres and interactive exhibits. These are the *narrative* or *story form*, that is described by the term *telling* in my research, and *modeling*, bringing into the foreground the sociocultural nature of language and imitation while in the museum. Concerning the use of language, it is the socio-cultural perspective that treats discourse (parole) as the means through which meaning is mediated and identities are communicated.

As aspects of visitors' personal contexts are enabled while encountering the exhibits, these aspects become reflected through the sharing of stories and previous experiences with each other. This telling reinforces visitors' common ground, and especially in the case of families their family history (Falk and Dierking 2000). Members of the same community of practice normally share knowledge and common experiences, *practice*, in Wenger's (1998) terms, by constantly interacting with each other. Every piece of information is specific to each community of practice and by sharing through telling, the members of a community carry out their distributed meaning-making.

Telling is a social mechanism, mediating learning (Wertsch 1985) in both formal and informal learning environments. (Leinhardt *et al.* 2002; Vygotsky 1978). Specifically, telling within the sociocultural framework is treated as an interpersonal, social, contextualized, coordinated and thoughtful (cognitive) action (Holtgraves 2002) through which not only is information communicated, but also the social identities of the participants (Gee 2005). Language constitutes a potential window to the person's mind and hence to his/her personal context, his/her prior knowledge and experience and his/her interests. However, the verbal mode is not the only available window to thought; **gestures** are also vehicles of thought (Resnick *et al.* 1997).

Gee (2005) argued on the use of language in everyday life (**discourse**) that comes along and is elaborated by **Discourse**, a term coined to describe the use of language

and all the extra-linguistic modes that are enacted while people interact with each other and the world. Within Discourse, multiple situated identities can be involved and enacted as people in interaction enact different identities in different contexts and activities. Gee's Discourse highlights the necessity to study the use of language by shifting from context to language and vice versa. In other words, meaning is always situated and "an image or pattern that we assemble 'on the spot' as we communicate in a given context, based on our construal of that context and on our past experience" (Gee 2005, 94). Therefore, Discourse bridges the current context with the participants' personal context, linking the past with the present, extending it to the future. In my study, Gee's Discourse is part of the category of performance for a number of reasons explained in the next section (3.2.).

Through Discourse, participants design their utterances and carry out their daily activities. Discourse is an "active building process" through and within which activities, participants' identities and relationships come together and develop (Gee 2005, 10). Therefore, Discourse is at the same time a social practice, a mental entity and a material reality. Additionally through Discourse, meaning is attached to 'things' while links to aspects of the 'context' are also created, in a "who-doing-what" (Gee 2005, 23) relationship.

Expanding upon the aforementioned communities of practice (2.4.), members of such communities develop a shared **practice** through their ongoing interaction with each other. Among the most pervasive tools developed to accomplish things in these communities of practice is the shared Discourse among their members. Discourse facilitates the members of the community to establish meaning and common identities.

The primary use of the concept of communities of practice has been in learning theory, initially considered to mainly apply to the formal learning but later referring to a more complex set of social relationships, especially in informal settings (Wenger 2006). Specifically, studies in museums following the sociocultural theory reflect upon the shared resources of practice used by the visitors, especially their discourse. Visitors' discourse has been considered one of the pivotal sociocultural means used during and after a museum visit, as well as an essential scaffolding mechanism of visitors' meaning-

making (Allen 2004; Falk 2007; Roberts 1997). Their discourse, as part of the practice, is a means of building social bonds between the members of a community of practice, and often takes elliptical form as members develop specific discourses in terms of time through their ongoing interaction (Allen 2002; Resnick *et al.* 1997).

“Discourse is publicly embodied in speech, [hence] it is easy to interpret as action. [...] discourse is situationally specific, adapted to the material and to social affordances of the environment” (Resnick *et al.* 1997, 2), reflecting upon the diversity of telling and the influence of the sociocultural and physical context on its shaping. Further driven by participants’ personal context (Adams and Moussouri 2002; Allen 2002), telling may take the form of text-echo (McManus 1989a) when visitors read the interpretive text provided by the museum aloud as it is, and rephrasing when they adjust the interpretive text and quote it while filtering it momentarily. Although the framing of the exhibits is an institutional choice, their on-going ‘consumption’ is negotiated by the visitors who use labelling to inform their identification processes as well as to indicate others around them how they should look at the exhibits. One’s choice to select specific passages from the text, or even all of it, most of the time allows the exhibit to be seen in a combination of the authoritative and the personal point of view.

Text-echo is a specific discourse-related category in the museum, which is an institution, making ‘text-echo’ an institutional discourse. Three major characteristics pertain to the use of text-echo; firstly, it unfolds in an institution -the museum-. Then, each one of the visitors deploys a specific discourse related to the ones expected to be performed in the specific institution, and thirdly, through this specific discourse, visitors pursue their institutional goals and personal agendas (Mayr 2008).

Throughout my study, I prefer to use the term **telling** to refer only to the verbal exchanges taking place while visitors are at the exhibit-face, following and refining Diamond’s (1986) major categories of “telling” and “showing”. These mainly referred to visitors demonstrating the use of hands-on exhibits to others. Telling is part of visitors’ practices and at the same time functions as a means of achieving and sustaining

attention, as well as for allowing members to participate in the shaping of the ongoing meaning-making. Text-echo is part of visitors' telling performances.

### 3.2. Performance

*“Often what talkers undertake to do is not to provide information to a recipient but to present dramas to an audience. Indeed, it seems that we spend most of our time not engaged in giving information but in giving shows”*

Goffman (1974, 508)

*“[meaning-making is] what visitors inevitably do in museums”*

Hein (1999, 15)

The notion of performance and especially performativity has been discussed extensively by Butler (1990; 2004), among others. Performativity was developed based on the act-speech theory introduced by Austin (1962), who argues that by saying something, we act it. The concept of *performance* has been used by a range of scientific fields, thus attributing a number of distinct dimensions to its function. Firstly, Linguistics treat discourse as a performative act, because it is through language that people carry out actions that produce events (Bauman 2001). In Anthropology, participation becomes essential in the production of meaning which becomes realised through performances. In the theatre, performance reflects dynamism, as different people undertake different roles (Pavis 2003). Among the most prominent scholars, Goffman (1959) uses the term performance in order to portray social action in his dramaturgy and frame analysis theory, considering all social interaction as performance while seeking to explore its norms and processes. Specifically, he was concerned with “all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants” (Goffman 1959, 26). For Goffman, performances are always directed at an audience, just like in theatre. Hence, another reason for my selection of the term *performance* is the involvement of both a **performer** and an **audience** for its occurrence. Therefore, *performance* can be defined in two ways: as explicitly staged expressive interactions by actors, dancers, and artists in front of an

audience and, as something more implicitly staged, during which users present and perform their everyday social interactions in a public setting such as a museum (Reeves *et al.* 2005).

Acting comes to the foreground of performativity, allowing the intrinsic inclusion of the **verbal** and **non-verbal** mode to emerge. Meaning-making engages both the mind and the body of the visitor and hence it involves and is expressed through **language** and **embodiment**. This duality is the primary reason for choosing the term *performance* to refer to “what visitors inevitably do in museums” (Hein 1999, 15) where the verb ‘do’ includes both what they do and what they say. Apart from this duality, Duncan linked the museum to “a stage setting that prompts visitors to enact a performance of some kind” (Duncan 1995, 1-2), arguing that all museums are ritual sites where visitors shift into “a certain state of receptivity” (Duncan 1991, 91) just like they do in churches. The ritual character of the museum, as described by Duncan (1991), is linked to specific place-related behaviours and practices, which in my research all fell under the term *performance*.

Although until now conversation was explored to reveal the ways individuals are accustomed to making meaning and sharing experiences, performance was introduced in the museum studies field as a form of shared experience. Meissner and her colleagues (2007) scrutinise the ways visitors interact with and around computer-based exhibits; they treat each participant's interaction as a performance and they note that quite often these private and individual performances are further shared with others sharing the same space (Meissner *et al.* 2007). The advantage of treating physical interaction as a performance is that it adds a responsive and situated perspective to its nature, acknowledging the sociocultural dynamics of the museum visit (Rowe 2002, 22).

Sharing the same concerns with the above researchers on the responsive and reflective nature of the performances, my research investigates visitors' performances at selected exhibits by taking into consideration what precedes and what succeeds each performance. The responsive nature of performances in this research means capturing

the ways visitors discover the exhibit, how they make their discovery public and how they move to the next exhibit of their choice.

### 3.2.1. Negotiating the museum floor through visitors' performances

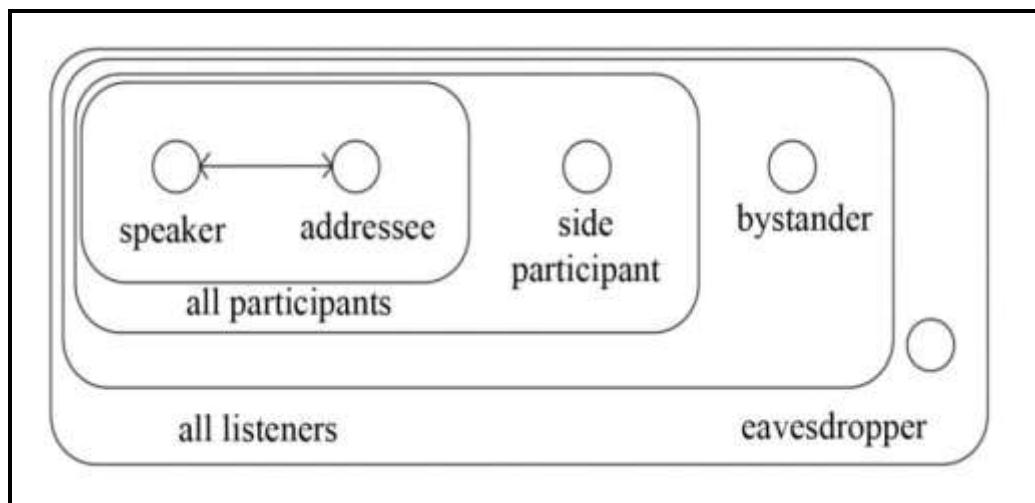
*“When a word is spoken all those who happen to be in perceptual range of the event will have some sort of participation status relative to it”*

Goffman (1981, 3)

This research started with the premise that the core of the museum experience is to make meaning. Meaning-making is treated as a social, situated, active process and above all a joint activity in which visitors and context play a central part. Following up Kress (2010), my research argues that the interaction emerging in the museum is a multimodal process, especially in such a visually stimulating context. Interaction is triggered, always coming as a response to a prompt -like an answer to a question- and unfolds on the museum floor where different people enact different roles.

In the museum, as well as in ordinary life, performances always take place within a context. Those who participate in the same social action are members of the same “participation framework” (Goffman 1981, 226) while those who just happen to be in the same spatial and temporal context are part of the “perceptual range” of the event (Goffman 1981, 3). Goffman (1964) argues that cultural rules are responsible for regulating and ratifying the conduct of those participating in a social situation such as the museum visit. Within this social situation, **proximity** and **orientation** are of crucial importance as participants orient themselves to others in order to include them in the ongoing encounter, whereas they position themselves away from those who happen to be present but do not officially participate in the ongoing encounter. Goffman (1964) also suggests that the exclusion of those who are not ratified members of the encounter is further achieved by a regulated sound level and physical orientation that shows respect to those excluded.

Therefore, performing involves three major roles (1) the performer, (2) the spectator(s), who is the audience and (3) the bystanders (Goffman 1981), that is, any individual present who is “not a ratified member of the particular encounter” (Goffman 1963, 91). These roles are acquired through social interaction; the participants interchangeably adopt different roles as the interaction unfolds through turn-taking. The constant change of roles reveals the social dynamics of the performances as well as the importance of the physical context for the detailing of the performances. In addition to that, the interaction among the participants does not always unfold in discursive mode. Instead, Goffman argues that even when two people are together but do not constantly exchange a verbal or gestural mutual activity, this constitutes “a kind of lapsed verbal encounter” (Goffman 1963, 103). Clark (1996) schematized the participation framework of using language in public spaces (Figure 4) which is also considered to portray the reality of performing in the museum space. It is apparent that spectators of one’s performance may be at the same time a spectacle for others sharing the same space, bearing a twofold sociality.



*Figure 4. Participants in conversation (Clark 1996, 14)*

Performances are given when people interact face-to-face in a context. According to Goffman (1963), face-to-face interaction has two basic characteristics: it is rich in embodied information, while each participant in the interaction has a twofold role at the same time; that of the giver and of the receiver of the embodied information. In my research, the giver is the **performer** while the receiver is the **audience**.

During each performance, the performer needs to monitor whether his/her performances are attended as well as if they are easily and properly interpreted by his/her audience (Clark and Schaefer 1989). This monitoring happens during the **acceptance phase** that follows each performance; that is, when the audience acknowledges attendance or understanding of what has just happened. Acceptance can be displayed by new turn-taking in talk as well as through acknowledgment tokens, nods, proximity, and smiles. Because of this monitoring sight and visual access in receiving, accepting and regulating given performances are pivotal.

Whyte (1979) observed people in the streets of New York, arguing that the movements a person makes are a type of “social communication” (Whyte 1979, 77) as even a slight movement can be seen as a performative way to acknowledge other people’s presence as well as an expressed intention not to impose on their experience. Through body shifts and silence, participants form a type of “involvement shield” (Goffman 1963, 38), excluding those who are not considered members of their group. Specifically on the museum floor, Burke (1957, 9) refers to this phenomenon as “dancing an attitude” while Rounds (2006) compares it to a choreography, a “mutual conspiracy” (Rounds 2006, 142), in which every performer is aware of the others’ co-presence, showing constant respect of the ongoing aesthetic experience that everybody longs to enjoy. ‘Shushing’ others, offering brief grins or apologising for stepping on each other are some of the means that visitors use while participating in this mutual conspiracy, what Goffman called “body gloss” (Goffman 1971, 129).

**Proximity** is one of the factors occasioning visitors’ physical and visual access to a forthcoming attention prompt. The way people place their bodies when interacting with one another has been shown to be important for processes such as facilitating a common focus of attention (Kendon 1990). Depending on the distance between the performer and the audience, a different social unit is formed and a range of different performances is likely to emerge to carry out social sharing. Proximity and distance among the participants are two sociocultural means through which people convey their willingness to either participate in or be excluded from a given interaction. Goffman, discussing everyday encounters in public spaces (1963), introduces the term ‘social

situation', which he defines as "an environment of mutual monitoring possibilities" (1964, 135) with at least two participants, who are "in one another's immediate presence, which comes to an end when "the next-to-last person leaves" (1964, 135). Goffman suggested that whenever the participants maintain a mutual attention and orientation, this social situation should be called *encounter* or *face engagement* (1963; 1964).

In my thesis, visitors' performances at the face of the exhibits come under Goffman's category of *encounter* or *face engagement* as visitors align themselves next to each other and towards the focus of their mutual attention as well as away from those who are not ratified members of their encounter. Sustaining their mutual attention even for a short amount of time has been a key aspect for shared meaning-making, a building block of meaning-making, and it will be discussed in detail in next section (3.3).

In addition to Goffman, Hall (1959; 1966; 1974) coined the term *proxemics* to refer to "the study of man's transactions as he perceives and uses intimate, personal, social and public space" (Hall 1974, 2). Hall gives specific dimensions for each one of these spaces, measuring the in-between distance of the participants: intimate (0 to 18 inches), personal (1.5 to 4 feet), social (4 to 10 feet), and public (10 feet and beyond). Furthermore, Hall categorises space into three subcategories: micro, meso, and macro. Microspace is the private sphere of each individual while mesospace is the sphere within the individual's reach. Macrospace refers to the widest sphere of all, extending into large spaces such as cities. Hall also defined as *informal* or *dynamic* the space within which a person rearranges the spatial features, his/her surrounding or interpersonal distances.

Museum space allows visitors to constantly move and rearrange the distances between them, the exhibits, and other visitors, negotiating their micro-space moment-by-moment. Shifts in posture, gaze, deictic verbs and spatial adverbs, pointing and showing, questions and discussions raised by looking at exhibits or reading the labels, as well as unrelated conversations, glances, and touches (Falk and Dierking 2000; vom Lehn 2002) all 'dance' on the gallery floor for this negotiation. An encounter is initiated by someone making an opening move, while engagement begins when this opening is acknowledged by the other. This concurs with Kress' (2010) perspective of

communication as a response to a prompt, discussed in Chapter 2. Opening and engagement moves are often carried out via eye glances and shifts in posture.

Visitors' shifts in posture and slight movements may result in revealing and seeing the exhibit in specific ways. Specifically, visitors' positioning and proximity allow for the negotiation of access to the forthcoming attention hook. Visitors carefully shape the joint perceptual range of a forthcoming encounter with the exhibit, allowing or blocking access to the surrounding contextual aspects. How visitors position themselves, which aspects of the exhibit they point out and comment on are some of the means they use to shape their joint perceptual range.

### 3.3. Attention

*“We cannot take an interest in or enjoy or think about or in any way perceive something without giving it at least momentary attention; awareness, consciousness and noticing are all closely related to this notion”*

White (1963, 103)

Human communication demands, most of the time, **an object** to be present and **attention** to be anchored on this object. Thompson (1990) argues that reception is socially, spatially and temporally organised, emphasising the fact that reception involves “varying degrees of skill(s) and attention, which are accompanied by differing degrees of pleasure and interest, and which intersect in complicated ways with other activities and interactions taking place” (Thompson 1990, 238) in the same reception region.

The negotiation and regulation of attention among the members of the same community of practice is of critical importance for reaching a common understanding and having an enjoyable social experience. Especially in the museum, visitors bridge their personal context with the social context of their visit, constantly regulating their attention, flicking it among visitors and between visitors and exhibits (Galani 2003), in

an attempt to accommodate their personal and social needs. The negotiation and regulation of attention in the museum becomes feasible through the deployment of specific resources, such as verbal and visual cues, shared content and proximity (Galani and Chalmers 2003).

Visitors are peripherally aware of each other even though they often address different exhibits. Keeping close **proximity** to each other and having **visual access** to each other allows visitors to negotiate effectively their agendas at all times during their visit. However, close proximity is not the first presupposition for social interaction; instead, participants in interaction “must actively align themselves to what is happening as an audience” (Goodwin 1986, 285). That means that visitors should actively display their attendance to what is taking place on the museum floor. Therefore, **attention structure** is as central to the organisation of a performance in a conversation as it is in the theatre. Focussing attention and remaining attentive in multidimensional and complex environments like museums are among the most difficult aspects of the museum visit, as visitors tend to be perceptually distracted (Bitgood 2000; Dierking 1987; Melton 1935; Rounds 2004). During the museum visit, attention seems “a scarce resource -perhaps the most precious scarce resource there is” (Csikszentmihalyi and Hermanson 1999, 148)

Recently, Bitgood extended his previous studies in visitors’ attention while in the museum (2000) by introducing his attention-value model (Bitgood 2010; 2011). Following a behaviourist perspective, Bitgood argues that effective visitor experiences manage attention successfully, normally elaborated in a sequential process, consisting of the following three stages: capture, focus, and engage. This model represents a progression from unfocused attention to deep interaction and processing of information (Bitgood 2010). In the engage stage, Bitgood refers to the distractions that can cause shifts of attention and disengagement. Distractions include environmental and social stimuli, caused by people sharing the same space. Even though Bitgood comes from a different theoretical background, his categories appear to be very relevant to my research, as these are the stages for anchoring attention and subsequently progressing to mutual attention, which is of great importance to my analysis. My study

does not name the stages of attention; it rather intends to explore how visitors manage to negotiate and achieve shared attention.

One of the basic arguments of my research is that all attention in the museum is anchored to an object, which is present and visually accessible to all participants in interaction. **Physical co-presence** is of pivotal importance for the transformation of the personal to the joint sphere along with **visual accessibility**. Assuming that something is visually accessible and easily salient for all the participants is what Clark and Marshall call “locatability assumption” (1981, 39). Once this locatability assumption is reached, visitors can progress their meaning-making through a series of performances.

There is a sequence in reaching joint attention as a performance starts with a displayed arousal of **interest** and a new focus of **attention** and **choice** (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson 1990), which in many cases engenders individuals to share their experience with others. For this social sharing, **mutual orientation** and **joint attention** among the participants in the same encounter are of pivotal importance. Mutual orientation and joint attention is anchored when two or more participants confirm, through salient events such as gazing or use of language, that they are referring to the same “object” (Bangerter 2004; Clark 1996). Joint attention foregrounds joint actions performed by “an ensemble of people acting in coordination with each other” (Clark 1996, 3). Indeed, “two or more persons in a social situation [...] [need to] jointly ratify one another as authorized co-sustainers of a single, albeit moving, focus of visual and cognitive attention” (Goffman 1964, 135). The dynamic range of means of reaching joint attention allows for a range of different ways for structuring interaction between the performer and the audience. The relevant semiotic resources, the sequential organization of interaction, the activity, and the coordinated actions of the participants to gain mutual orientation towards the relevant objects (Goodwin 2000a; Hindmarsh and Heath 2000), all come to the foreground of achieving joint attention.

Regulation of attention is possible through relevant **turns-in-talk** and by giving out **positive evidence** (Clark and Brennan 1991). Turn-taking and adjacency pairs reflect the sequential organisation of conversation while they constitute the primary means for establishing a joint understanding of the actions and events taking place

through conversation. Positive evidence is given through *acknowledgement tokens* (Jefferson 1985) or *back-channel responses* (Clark and Brennan 1991) such as *uh*, *huh*, *yeah* and *m* (Schegloff 1982) and *continuers* (Schegloff 1982; 1993) such as *gosh*, *really*, *good God* (Goodwin 1984), gestures (Goodwin 1981) and through displays of continued attention such as gazes and shifts in posture (Clark and Brennan 1991). These tokens somewhat assert that the speaker has understood the previous turn-taking and imply encouragement for the previous speaker to continue his/her performance, sustaining in this sense the ongoing interaction (Clark 2001; Schegloff 1982). When difficulties arise in conversations, **repairs** take place: the speaker goes back and changes or repeats something he/she just said (Schegloff *et al.* 1977; Schegloff 1997). Repairs refer to an organized set of practices through which participants are able to address and potentially resolve troubles or problems of speaking, hearing or understanding in talk (Sidnell 2011, 110).

In the context of the museum in particular, previous studies have underlined the importance of **identification** for visitors' learning (Borun *et al.* 1996; Feinberg and Leinhardt 2002). Identification seems to be the first stage during which visitors render public their attention hooks through a range of sociocultural means, which are explored in the following section.

### 3.4. Identification

As discussed in Chapter 2, there has been an ongoing interest in exploring visitors' learning based on their discourse in the museum, especially in science centres. An output of this branch of research is the outlining of a number of categories of visitors' talk, with that of **identification** being essential across all these studies (Allen 2002; Borun *et al.* 1996; Feinberg and Leinhardt 2002).

Identification, even when it is described with a different term in the research, refers to the kind of talk visitors use to identify their attention hooks while in the museum, regularly by naming the exhibit or referring to one of its aspects. Researchers seem to agree on the function of identification as the first step to visitors' joint

meaning-making, as it broadens their personal encounters by rendering their attention hooks public.

For example, Borun *et al.* (1996) identify three levels of family learning based on visitors' conversations at particular exhibits as a) identifying, b) describing and c) interpreting and applying, starting from the most basic and heading to the most complex ones. *Identification* is defined as pointing out nonverbally or naming aspects of exhibits, *describing* refers to connections between prior parts of the exhibition or visitors' experiences, and *interpreting* and *applying* refers to the attempts visitors made in order to explain the concepts related to the exhibits. They also listed a number of behaviours related to learning that can be used as performance indicators; "asking and answering questions, talking about an exhibit, pointing to sections of an exhibit, reading label text, engaging in hands-on activities, and even 'gazing' at an exhibit" (Borun *et al.* 1996, 135).

In their research, Feinberg and Leinhardt (2002) conclude that there are three levels of learning talk: **identification**, **evaluation**, and **expansion**, which bear similarities to the categories of talk identified by Borun and her colleagues (1996). To elaborate, identification includes those statements related to aspects of the exhibits, evaluation are the comments on the aesthetic value of the exhibits, positive or negative, and expansion refers to those more complex statements that mainly drew comparisons and connections to the collections and the exhibits.

Allen (2002), working with families visiting the Exploratorium in San Francisco, avoided categorising talk in levels but instead identified five main categories with sixteen subcategories of learning-talk. The main categories are the perceptual, connecting, conceptual, strategic, and affective. Specifically, **perceptual talk** includes all the types of talk visitors use in order to refer to and share an exhibit or information with others. Therefore, perceptual talk is of great interest to my research. Perceptual talk comprises four subcategories as seen in Figure 5.

1. **Identification:** pointing out something for others to attend to. Usually accompanied by deictic gestures, deictic terms and adverbs.
2. **Naming:** uttering the name of the exhibit.
3. **Feature:** pointing out specific aspects of the exhibit, verbally or nonverbally.
4. **Quotation:** reading aloud part of the interpretive text in order to refer to an exhibit -in McManus' (1989a) terms, *text-echo*.

*Figure 5. Perceptual talk (Allen 2002)*

Allen (2002) argues that the identification of exhibits comprises the most common subcategory within perception, while it was less common for visitors to make connections to other parts of the exhibition or to their prior experiences. This means that visitors tend to identify, whereas interpreting and making meaning come second, implying that engagement -here performance- succeeds identification. Despite the obvious differences in the naming of these categories across the museum field, it is evident that there is wide agreement on identification preceding both interpretation and engagement in the museum setting (Figure 6).

Nature of talk	Borun <i>et al.</i> (1996)	Feinberg & Leinhardt (2002)	Allen (2002)
Identifying or naming aspects of an exhibit	Identifying	Identification	Perceptual
Commenting on the aesthetic nature of the exhibit		Evaluation	Affective
Comparing aspects of the exhibits		Expansion: Analysis	
Suggesting or referring to possible uses of the objects and organising the visit in general			Strategic
Making connections between other parts of the exhibition or prior experiences	Describing	Expansion: Synthesis	Connecting
Proposing explanation of concepts behind exhibit	Interpreting and applying	Expansion: Explanation	Conceptual

*Figure 6. A summary of the identified categories of talk*

### 3.5. Common ground and minimal collaborative effort

Taking into account the fact that museum visitors arrive in their majority as part of a wider group, the attention structure and its negotiation become an essential part of the museum visit as visitors coordinate their attention between the content and the process of their joint experience. Additionally, as mentioned in section 2.2., visitors' telling follows elliptical forms and patterns based on their group's common history of interaction. During their common history of interaction, visitors build upon their common ground of practice; the history, knowledge and means shared among the members of the same community of practice through their constant interchange and

interaction (Clark and Brennan 1991; Clark and Marshall 1981; Clark and Schaefer 1989).<sup>7</sup>

Common ground facilitates communication between people as they take certain things for granted while interacting, making the construction of presuppositions as well as deductions possible (Thomas 1995). Gumperz (1992, 231) coined the term ‘contextualisation cue’ to refer to “speakers’ and listeners’ use of verbal and non-verbal signs to relate what is said at any one time and in any one place to knowledge acquired through past experience, in order to retrieve the presuppositions they must rely on to maintain conversational involvement and assess what is intended”. Therefore, contextualisation cues facilitate the establishment and expansion of the participants’ common ground (Clark and Brennan 1991).

Based on their common ground, participants use seemingly elliptical, shorthand or meaningless formats of telling (Gee 2005; Leichter *et al.* 1989). These shorthand formats include ephemeral active confirmations such as gazing, gestures, verbal exchanges, and tokens such as *uh hub* and *mm hm* that indicate momentary attendance both towards the performer as well as to the subject matter (Stubbe 1998). These elliptical formats, which save time and effort in the phases of presentation and acceptance of a performance, aim at minimizing the collaborative effort among the participants in interaction. The term “minimal collaborative effort” (Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs 1986; Clark and Brennan 1991; Sacks and Schegloff 1979; Schegloff 1972) refers to the process when speakers utter the shortest noun phrases and use gestural modes for enabling their addressees to pick out the referent in context without making considerable cognitive effort. For this minimal collaborative effort, the existence of a common ground facilitates the members of the same community of practice to reach common understandings (Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs 1986).

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<sup>7</sup> In Museum Studies, common ground has often been referred to as visitors' personal agendas including visitors' previous knowledge, experiences, bias, beliefs, and so forth.

### 3.6. Reference and referring expressions

According to Yule (1996, 17), reference is “an act in which a speaker, or writer, uses linguistic forms to enable listener, or reader, to identify something”. Yule’s definition has been refined in my research as to also include the non-linguistic forms that enable the listener, or reader, to identify something in and through social interaction. Reference then refers to the action (verbal and non-verbal) through which interactants identify something and subsequently render it public by making it relevant to their ongoing interaction. When reference takes the verbal form, referring expressions are formed to identify the identity of the referent, whereas, in the case of the non-verbal, pointing gestures are performed towards the object of attention. Referring expressions can be either performed using **feature description** or **location description** (Bangerter 2004; Clark 1996; Louwerse and Bangerter 2005). Feature description identifies the target of attention by its attributes while location description identifies the referent by giving its position (Bangerter 2004). These means contribute to the identification of the referent, allowing participants in interaction to put minimal collaborative effort while achieving mutual orientation and joint attention (Goodwin 2000a; Hindmarsh and Heath 2000; Rendle-Short 2006). For example, when a feature description is accompanied by either a deictic gesture or a deictic expression, accuracy in target identification increases. Further information on the referring expressions and pointing gestures is provided in the following two sections (3.6.1. and 3.6.2.).

According to Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs (1986), referring to objects is a collaborative process for which specific rules apply, such as the “collaborative theory of reference” that deals with the establishing of the mutual belief among participants that they have identified the attention hook correctly. Reference should be correctly identified by the addressee so as to comprehend what has been indicated verbally or non-verbally. Specifically, Clark and Brennan (1991, 136) coined the term “referential identity” to refer to the mutual acknowledgment between the participants in interaction that they have correctly identified the referent.

To establish the referential identity, participants use (1) descriptions, especially when the specific name/identity of the referent is uncertain, (2) indicative gestures

(pointing), and (3) shifts in gaze and posture (Clark and Brennan 1991). When Moore (2008) observed face-to-face interactions at a quick print shop's counter, he highlighted participants' tendency to initially attempt to name and then, proceed to pointing or depicting what they wanted done. It seems likely that there is a hidden sequence in referential identity, suggesting that naming precedes the use of pointing.

Reference is considered a tool for social action, the dynamics of which can be understood once we carefully examine naturally occurring social interaction (Moore 2008; Sidnell 2006). Reference is a way to indicate something in one's surroundings while establishing an intrinsic connection between the performer and the indicated attention hook that subsequently leads the addressee to focus attention on it (Moore 2008). Thus, reference is a way to gain joint attention and mutual orientation among participants. Additionally, the use of reference forms visual or verbal links (vectors) among the participants in interaction as well as to the indicated entity in the same way eye-lines or gestures do. These links, according to visual semiotics (Jewitt and Oyama 2001; Kress and van Leeuwen 1996), demand that "the viewer enter into some kind of [...] relation with him or her (the performer)" (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996, 118) while, being strong indicators of active participation and interaction, like "a vector is a line [...] that connects participants. [...] [and] expresses a dynamic, 'doing' or 'happening' kind of relation" (Jewitt and Oyama 2001, 141).

Upon applying these theories in the setting of the museum, the usability of reference, especially in the gestural mode, comes to the foreground as visitors shift their attention from an exhibit to another and between each other and the others sharing the same space. Using reference to identify their attention loci is a ubiquitous performance while in the museum and a pivotal aspect and matter of the sociocultural context of the visit. The next sections introduce and describe each of the two modes for performing reference; the first (3.6.1.) presents the verbal mode, deixis, while the second (3.6.2.) the non-verbal, specifically pointing gestures.

### 3.6.1. Referring expressions: using deixis

The verbal mode of using reference comes in the form of **referring expressions** and specifically, **deixis**. Deixis is “pointing *via* language” (Yule 2006, 155) while any linguistic form used to accomplish this “pointing” is called “deictic expression”.<sup>8</sup> Deixis is among the clearest examples of how language is embedded in a context and how it is constantly informed by the context in which it unfolds (Hanks 1992; Levinson 1983; Manning 2001). Especially for Ethnomethodologists, deixis is “what constitutes language as [...] context-bound, interactively organised phenomenon” (Duranti and Goodwin 1992, 44). The use of deixis usually involves “two indices and two referents [...] a chaining of indices [where] [...] the primary index (often a gesture) locates the immediate perceptual object, which serves as a secondary index that locates the ultimate referent” (Clark 1996, 168- 169) (Figure 7).

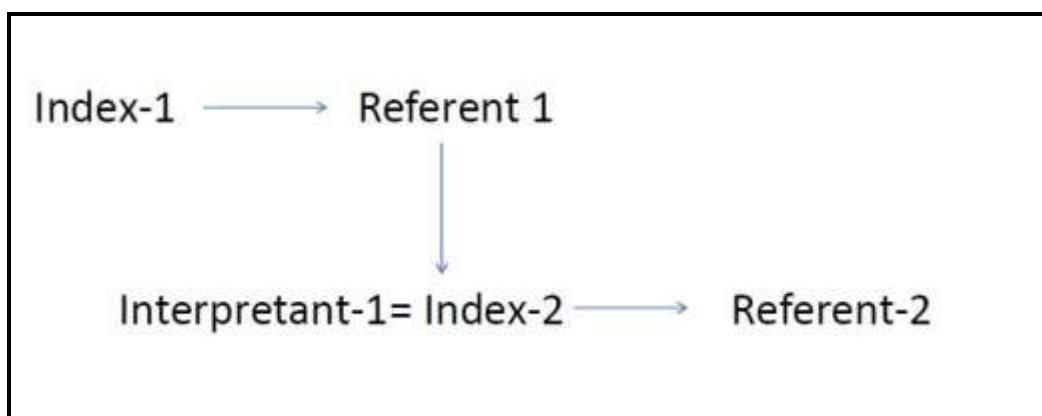


Figure 7. References with two demonstrative adjectives (Clark 1996, 169)

There are three categories of deixis; (1) personal deixis, indicating people (e.g. “*me*”, “*you*”), (2) spatial deixis, when indicating location (e.g. “*here*”, “*there*”), and (3) temporal deixis, when indicating time (e.g. “*now*”, “*then*”) (Yule 1996). Temporal deixis and person deixis generate links to the time of the action and the person respectively. As my research focuses on the links visitors make between themselves and the exhibits, temporal deixis is excluded. Spatial deixis is preferred, as it includes both demonstrates

<sup>8</sup> Deictic expressions are also sometimes called indexicals following Peirce’s identification of signs (Corazza 2006; Ponzio 2006; Yule 1996).

such as here, there, this, that, these, those as well as motion verbs such as come, go, check, look. Moreover, these motion verbs hold a secondary sociocultural function; Katz (1996) has argued especially on the use of the verb *look* by children that can be seen as an invitation to someone's experience of seeing something. It seems that verbs of motion are implemented within emerging joint performances in order to invite others to share the same locus of attention and experience to what the inviter had just experienced. Additionally, the visual complexity of a museum setting sparks further interest in exploring spatial deixis as a verbal means used by visitors to carry out their performances with minimal collaborative effort.

It can be argued that spatial deixis has a twofold communicative function. Firstly, encourages the collocated participants to search for and look at a specific locus in their co-located context while, at the same time, it indicates the moment when the participants in interaction are aware of each other's orientation and direction towards an object in their relevant environment (Hanks 1992; Hindmarsh and Heath 2000). Most of the time, using deixis requires and implies close physical proximity and orientation between interactants as deictics are highly situated and their interpretation is always relevant to the context of discourse (Hanks 2005; Yule 1996). By context, I also refer to the extra-linguistic context such as the previous actions and gestures of the speaker, the time and place of utterance and so forth. The above categories, called "shifters" or "referential indexicals" (Hanks 1992), aim at making specific objects or their aspects salient in relation to their current context. Their use is directive and referential; they facilitate participants to navigate each other.

### **3.6.2. Pointing gestures**

Pointing gestures have been a focus of attention for diverse scientific fields such as neuroscience, anthropology, social science, linguistics and semiotics, since they are a ubiquitous part of human behaviour that a person acquires as early as the age of eleven months (Kita 2003). Pointing and index-finger pointing in particular, "is characterized by an arm and index finger extended to the direction of an interesting object, with the other fingers curled under the hand and the thumb held down and to the side" (Masataka 2003, 69). Besides the index finger as a vector indicating a locus of interest or

reference, the head, lips, eyes, arms, gaze, torso shifting, voice elbow or/and foot can be also used (Clark 1996; Kendon and Versante 2003). Kendon and Versante (2003) have further argued that choosing a vector to carry out a pointing gesture is not a random occurrence but rather, a choice based on the performer's explicit desire to indicate the locus in a specific way.

Pointing depends on at least two participants: the sender attempts to communicate a meaning to the addressee and establish a particular space for cognition and action to take place (Goodwin 2000b; Goodwin 2003). The addressee should first attend the sender and follow his/her gestures or verbal cues in order to locate the indicated "demonstratum" (Clark *et al.* 1983). Once the addressee locates the demonstratum, his/her orientation normally changes, as he/she shifts to the indicated locus of attention. Therefore, pointing can be seen as a social and communicational act, functioning as a prompt calling for a response from the participants involved in interaction (Kita 2003). This argument reflects upon the performative dynamics embedded in pointing; that is, always requiring an audience to single out the demonstratum. Pointing, as all referential practices, needs an indexical ground (Hanks 1992) within which it will be interpreted by the participants in interaction. One of the factors defining the efficiency of the indexical ground is the **contiguity** between the index and the referent.

Pointing is a means of referring to, indicating, declaring, or asking something by establishing a locus of mutual orientation at the same time (Clark 2003; Masataka 2003; Rendle-Short 2006). Research in children's learning has underlined the twofold function of pointing gestures; it has been considered a **social** tool establishing joint attention between children and adults (Schaffer 1977) and, a **referential tool** as it allows an object, or an aspect of it, to stand out (Bruner 1983).

Pointing can be seen as an alternative means to the verbal referential expressions of *location description* or *feature description* as it involves minimal collaborative effort and less or almost no involvement of naming, which can be extremely difficult in the museum when encountering unfamiliar objects. Specifically, pointing gestures seem to speed up the pivotal process of the identification at the face of the exhibits while they

also function as an alternative to naming the forthcoming hooks of attention. Moore (2008) noted that pointing gestures are deployed especially when naming the attention hook fails. Additionally, research conducted at science centres by Stevens and Martell (2003) brought under attention the fact that visitors often amplify their talk with gestures in order to refer to an exhibit's function as an alternative to naming it. Furthermore, pointing gestures do not only indicate the location or object of the focus of attention, but also coordinate the attentional focus of participants leading to joint attention (Levinson 2004). As Franco (2005, 139) argues, pointing is "the quintessential tool for initiating joint attention" as it foreshadows the forthcoming performances which subsequently lead to visitors' shared meaning-making in the same way identification does.

Therefore, pointing can be seen as real-time annotation; it requires that pointer and interlocutor jointly attend one another but also that they jointly share attention with some third entity. This implies both an ability and a desire to draw the other's attention to something and modify the interlocutor's knowledge or understanding of the world, it implies a sense of importance and a sense of others as potentially intentional agents. However, pointing's own nature poses a few problematic issues for research such as the limited temporal duration of the actual gesture as well as the more limited span of mutual accessibility to the gesture for the interactants. This shortcoming had been addressed and minimised with the implementation of video-based research for the collection of my data.

Goodwin argues (2003, 218) that "pointing is not a simple act" but instead "an action that can only be successfully performed by tying the point to the construals of entities and events provided by other meaning making resources". In this sense, pointing allows the investigation of a range of semiotic modes in a single interactive act: the visible body performing the act of pointing, the talk emerging before, along or after the act of pointing, the context or the properties of the reference, the joint orientation of the participants, and the larger activity within which the act of pointing is situated (Goodwin 2000b; 2003). The use of pointing, alongside other communicative resources, plays an essential role in the understandability of socially structured interaction. Consequently pointing is considered a crucial part of the network designed to generate

meaning (Goodwin 2000a; Goodwin 2003) which is the subject matter of my research. Extra precautions have also been taken in order to distinguish pointing gestures from ‘abstract deixis’ (McNeill *et al.* 2003), which involves a gesture representing a locus, an imaginary representation of something, and not a concrete object or aspect of it.

Pointing is a social process that enables joint attention and hence, pointing is a practical basis for collaboration (Stahl 2003). By investigating pointing, an understanding can be achieved on the natural ways visitors interact with and relate to each other through museum content. Pointing can be performed through gestures towards the exhibits, or aspects of these, and the text as well as through alternative means of gesturing such as taking pictures, using leaflets, maps, and umbrellas instead of the finger, the direction of gazes, and visitors’ positioning of themselves or others in front of the attention hook.

### 3.7. Conclusions

This chapter presented the building blocks of meaning-making, expanding on the solely verbal building blocks suggested by Silverman (1990) when she explored the interpretive acts that visitor pairs make in two different museums (an art and a history museum) and the social functions of such acts.

The essence of ‘telling’ was discussed first while highlighting the pervasive use of its branch named “text-echo” (McManus 1989a), followed by the concept of performance. Everything that a visitor does and says while at the exhibit-face falls under the category of performance, allowing its sociocultural dynamics to be reflected as visitors through their performances negotiated on the museum floor. The pivotal importance of attention was also argued, further elaborating on the essence of common ground and joint attention for visitors’ shared meaning-making. A brief discussion followed on identification, a museum-related category of talk whose function for anchoring attention on an exhibit has been highlighted in relevant studies of visitors’ conversations in the museum. Then, the sociocultural means used for carrying out identification were explored, reflecting upon the need for visitors to keep a minimal collaborative effort while performing. These means were reference, referential

expressions, deixis and pointing gestures, all aiming at facilitating visitors in carrying out the pervasive process of identification. These building blocks will be micro-analysed in Chapters 6 to 8, through the detailed analysis of visitors' joint encounters in front of seven exhibits across the three case studies presented in the next chapter (Chapter 4).

## 4 | INTRODUCING THE INSTITUTIONAL AND PHYSICAL CONTEXTS

The previous chapter presented the key concepts of my research, extending the list of the building blocks of meaning-making suggested by Silverman (1990). The situated nature of visitors' performances and subsequently, their meaning-making was reflected throughout chapters 2 and 3, with emphasis on exploring visitors' performances *in situ*, as they unfold. This chapter offers an overview of the three case studies where collection of data was undertaken in order to introduce the physical structure of the exhibitions, and the institutional character of each case study through detailing their history to the reader. The thick descriptions of the physical and institutional contexts aim at better justifying the methodological choices and limitations discussed in the next chapter (Chapter 5).

### 4.1. Making choices on the case studies and the exhibits

Based on the Contextual Model of Learning (Falk and Dierking 2000) (see Chapter 2), three different contexts were considered to shape the museum experience coupled with the institutional context, influencing visitors' performances. In my thesis, the **physical** context is explored by selecting three different museums and hence three different physical settings and exhibitions. Additionally, by selecting exhibits from the same exhibition space, the influence of the physical context is challenged further, allowing the development of an understanding that differences exist even within the same exhibition space, through the different modes of interpretation and framing selected by each museum. Secondly, each museum represents a different type of organisation that is defined by its collection, galleries, "user-language" (Bradburne 2000, 26) and its scheduled events and activities. User language is a "collection of constraints that helps shape the variation generated by an actor into patterned behavior" (Bradburne 2000, 26).

The institutional context represents and challenges different "place expectations" (Babon 2006, 156) which may encourage visitors to approach the exhibits in different

ways based on the **type of the museum** that they visit (Silverman 1990). Hence, the selection of three different types of institutions allows for the exploration of the influence of the **institutional** context on visitors' performances. Choice was further driven by the fact that over the last decade there has been an increased interest in research on learning in science museums and interactive exhibits leading to an emerging disciplinary matrix (Allen 1997; Allen and Gutwill 2009; Borun *et al.* 1996) whilst many aspects of visits to different types of museums have remained relatively unexplored (Leinhardt and Crowley 2002).

Towards this direction, while also taking up the suggestions made during the PhD Upgrade in 2010 to include non-national museums instead of nationals so as to help smaller institutions to understand their audiences, the researcher visited a number of non-national museums in London and attempted to draw links between them based on the similarities among their exhibits. Twelve museums were contacted, with eight of them declining mainly for health and safety reasons, while four of them accepted. From those four, three were finally selected based on the number of days they are open to the public and the number of visitors they receive: the Wellcome Collection, the Courtauld Gallery, and the Horniman Museum and Gardens. Additionally, by including an art gallery -the Courtauld Gallery, my personal interests were further triggered as this institutional context fosters, at the same time, deep aesthetic, individual connections with the paintings as well as social public experiences (Silverman 1995).

## **4.2. The Wellcome Collection: The Medicine Man gallery**

The Wellcome Collection advertises itself as “a free destination for the incurably curious, where you can explore what it means to be human through an extraordinary mix of galleries, events and a library” (Wellcome Collection 2010). The Wellcome Collection, created in 1932, was the dream of Sir Henry Wellcome, founder of the Wellcome Trust, UK’s largest charity (Wellcome Collection 2010). An international businessperson, philanthropist, patron of science, archaeologist, pioneer of aerial photography and tropical medicine and one of the world’s greatest collectors, Wellcome created one of the world’s great museums on medicine, health, and wellbeing (Arnold and Olsen 2003).

Nowadays, the Wellcome Collection hosts four exhibitions, two of which are temporary. The collection of data was undertaken in the permanent exhibition *Medicine Man*, located on the building's first floor and interconnected with *Medicine Now*, the other permanent exhibition (Figure 8).

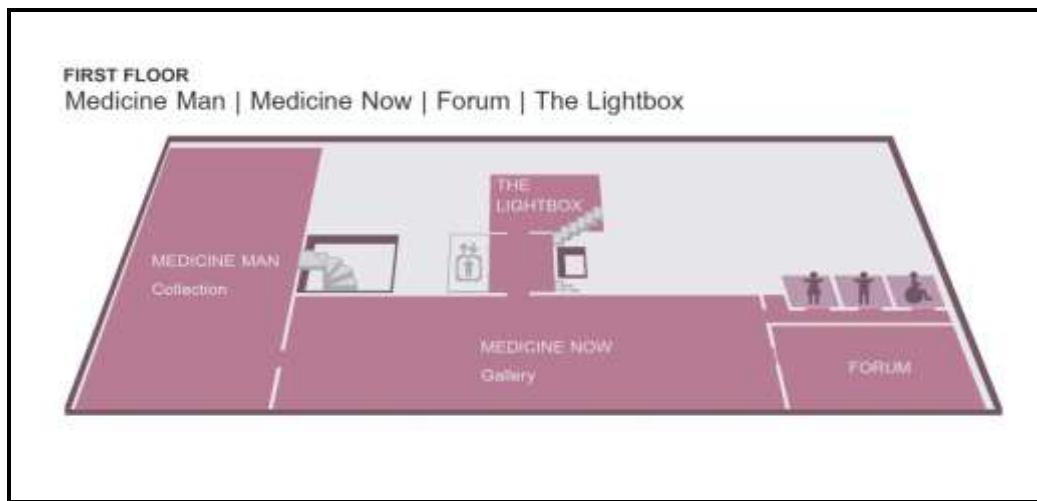
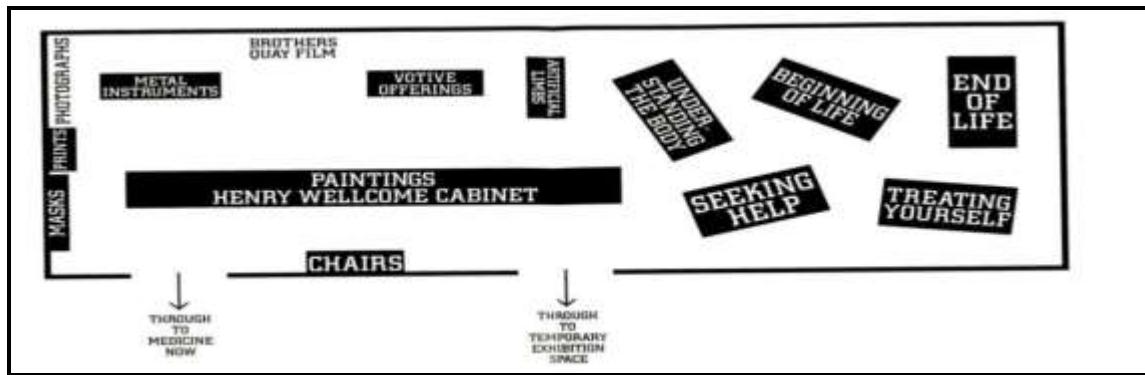


Figure 8. The Wellcome Collection; First Floor Plan

The design of the *Medicine Man* gallery draws references upon historical modes of display, such as cabinets of curiosity, the anthropological museum, and an art museum (Siple 2008). Exhibits are presented through four different modes of looking at things: individual objects with accompanying narratives, grouping of heterogeneous objects as a broader theme, grouping of homogeneous objects, and film animation (Arnold and Olsen 2003). Specifically, seven objects are presented individually and examined by a variety of commentators from different backgrounds, reflecting on the diversity of meanings attached to and generated by one exhibit. The rest of the exhibits are presented in two radically different ways: grouping heterogeneous objects under thematic categories and grouping homogenous objects by type. There are five thematic showcases that explore “broad narrative themes through the arrangement of heterogeneous elements” which “take deliberately diffuse topics around which to group objects from across history and around the globe” (Arnold and Olsen 2003, 374). These narrative themes are the following: *beginning of life; end of life; seeking help; understanding the body; and treating yourself* (Figure 9).



*Figure 9. Medicine Man Gallery: Floor Plan*

The grouping of homogeneous objects comes under the following categories: glassware, surgical metalwork, terracotta votive offerings, ex-voto pictures and oil paintings, masks, photographs, prints, artificial limbs, and chairs. This particular arrangement reflects upon Wellcome having collected not only objects, but also collections of objects (Arnold and Olsen 2003). There are also three videos; one commissioned by the Quay Brothers animating the stored objects kept by the Science Museum in their West London storerooms, and two excerpts from “The Story of the Wellcome Foundation”.

### 4.3. The Courtauld Gallery

The Courtauld Institute of Art is the result of the common vision of two men, Viscount Lee of Fareham and Samuel Courtauld, to improve the understanding of the visual arts in England (Courtauld Institute Galleries 2007). Viscount Lee, a former politician, was a collector himself, and extremely interested in the art world and education. He was among the few people in his time concerned with the display of their collections, and their usefulness for art history students in the UK. Samuel Courtauld was the chairperson of Courtaulds Ltd., a company dealing in textiles and chemicals, who had a special interest in the work of the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists.

Courtauld’s particular interest led him to acquire from 1922 to 1929 a spectacular private art collection with a remarkable number of artworks by Cézanne, and to

establish in 1923 funds to buy French paintings on behalf of the nation (Courtauld Institute Galleries 2007). His vision to broaden public participation in the Arts inspired him to open the Courtauld Institute of Art in October of 1932, a college of the University of London, specifically located at Home House. The Courtauld Gallery was founded as part of the Courtauld Institute of Art.

In 1958, the Courtauld Institute of Art moved to Woburn Square galleries with financial support from Sir Robert Witt, Roger Fry and other patrons. In 1989, the collection finally moved to Somerset House, in the heart of London, where it constitutes an unsurpassed research resource and a vast learning opportunity, still offering the public a wide range of events in collaboration with the Somerset House's Learning Department until today (Courtauld Institute Galleries 2007).

Visitors at the Courtauld Gallery enjoy its collection free of admission on Mondays, from 10 am to 14 pm, except for Bank Holidays. Upon arrival, visitors are handed a free floor map of the gallery rooms. There are three floors; the ground floor, first floor and second floor. Each room is numbered in ascending format, starting from the ground floor where only Room 1 is located. The first floor features six rooms while the second floor has eight rooms as seen in Figure 10.

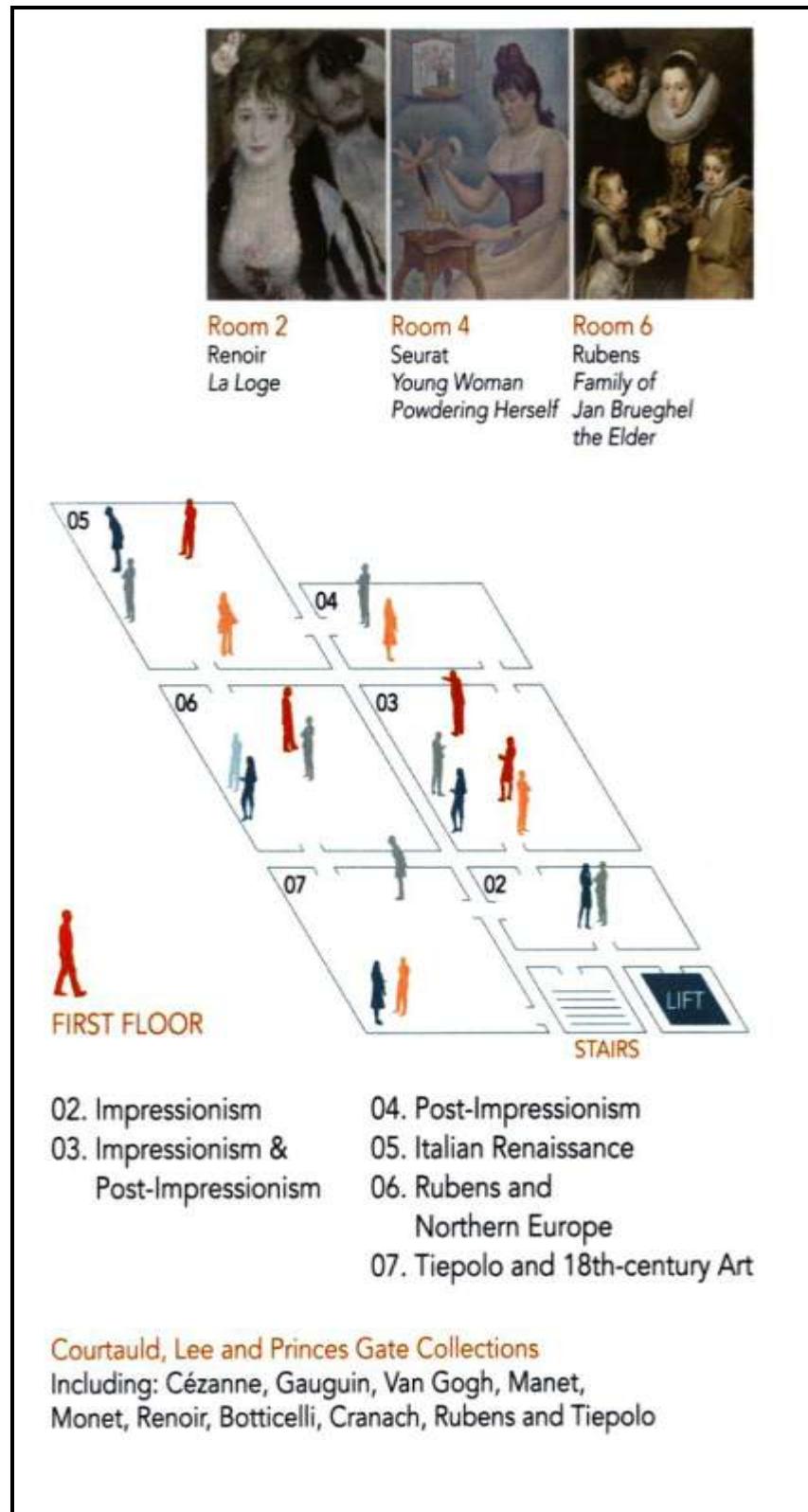


Figure 10. Courtauld Gallery: Floor Map of the first floor

#### 4.4. The Horniman Museum and Gardens

In the 1860's, Sir Frederick Horniman was a tea trader and private collector whose collection ranged from natural history and archaeology to anthropology and musical instruments (Golding 2009). As his tea merchants were commissioning objects while travelling abroad to trade, Horniman acquired a remarkable number of objects within a few years. In addition to these acquisitions, his personal collection was further expanded by purchases from auction houses in the UK, as Horniman himself had never left Britain before he was 60 years old. This was the exact reason that prompted Horniman to envision a place where those unable to travel themselves could see other beautiful worlds (Golding 2009). Although Horniman initially opened his own house to the public, in 1898 he decided it was about time for his collection to find a new home. Charles Harrison Townsend was commissioned as the architect and designer of the new building, which finally opened its doors to the public in 1901 introducing Forest Hill to the world (Figure 11). Horniman's vision was continued by his son, Emslie, who managed to extend the museum buildings and establish the Horniman Museum and Gardens among the major funding scholar organisations in the UK.<sup>9</sup>



*Figure 11. Horniman Museum and Gardens: Clock Tower*

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<sup>9</sup> For more information, visit <http://www.therai.org.uk/awards/research-grants/emslie-horniman-anthropological-scholarship-fund/>

Frederick Horniman offered the museum as a gift to Londoners for “recreation, instruction, and enjoyment” as the words inscribed on the façade of the original Horniman Museum building testify. Spanning more than a century of history, the Horniman Museum and Garden still serves the public by combining a free, educational and recreational destination situated within sixteen acres of gardens.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4.4.1. The *African Worlds* gallery

“*You are not a country, Africa. You are a concept... You are a glimpse of the infinite.*”  
Ali Mazrui

The *African Worlds* gallery is the first permanent gallery in Britain that displays African cultural and artistic history. This was due to the 17,000 Africa- related objects in Horniman’s collections, the growing African immigrant population in South-East London and the lack of a permanent exhibition- gallery devoted to the African culture (Shelton 2000; 2003). The aim of this gallery is to “celebrate diversity, history and creativity” (Arnaut 2000, 13) by developing close relations to and across the community, other institutions and universities and the curatorial team. Among the most interesting outcomes of this collaboration was the **thematic** display of the objects, the implementation of the **Voice Project**<sup>11</sup> and the reservation of an area within the gallery where temporary exhibitions are held by community groups, artists and the like. A visit to the gallery aims at challenging visitors’ feelings and beliefs through the limited use of

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<sup>10</sup> Entrance to the Museum and Gardens is free. A charge applies for some major temporary exhibitions and the Aquarium, for which a charge has been applied since the 4th of January 2011.

<sup>11</sup> The outcomes of the Voice Project framed the interpretation of the exhibits. Specifically, 36 different ‘voices’, personal memories and stories are shared through the interpretive text, all accompanied by photographic portraits of those narrating the stories. The narrators were a selection of artists, diviners, anthropologists, elders, and those forced into exile. Oral history ‘animates’ the objects on show by drawing associations to their real context of use as recalled by their actual users. This specific method of framing the interpretation does not apply to all the objects exhibited in this gallery. For example, the four paintings and the Egyptian glass case do not use oral quotes in their interpretive text. In addition, the two African wooden statues lack interpretive text entirely.

lighting, the use of opposite colours, textiles, and the juxtaposition of the objects (Shelton 2003).

The *African Worlds* gallery, located on the lower ground floor of the South Hall of the Horniman museum and Gardens, opened its doors to the public in March 1999 (Figure 12) (Shelton 2000; 2003). The gallery's exhibits include objects from Mali, Ethiopia, and Zimbabwe attempting to show Africa's contribution to the American and British cultural heritage, shrines from Africa, the Caribbean and South America, the *Ijelu mask* -the largest mask in Africa, standing over three metres tall, Benin bronzes, and *vodou altars* from Haiti, Benin and Brazil (Golding 2009). Through the collection of these diverse objects and places, the visitor is invited to a journey into the cultural world of Africa that crosses its own continental borders. The visitor is invited to see the dimension and influence of this cross-bordering through the careful choice and interpretation of the exhibits (Shelton 2003; Houmphan 2008). The exhibition, in addition to reflecting on the broad cultural history of Africa through time, also features some contemporary artefacts, such as paintings and statues, so as to "encourage a wider appreciation of the World, its peoples and their cultures, and its environments" (Horniman Museum and Gardens 2010).

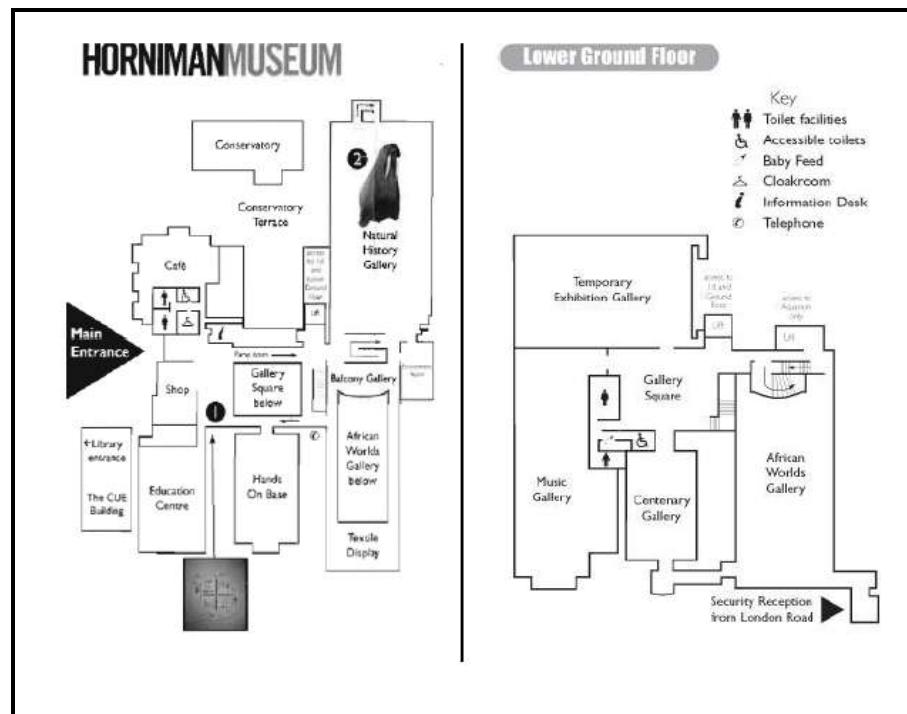


Figure 12. Horniman Museum and Gardens: Ground and Lower Ground Floor Maps

Specifically, the *African Worlds* gallery exhibits the following works by contemporary artists from Africa and its diaspora: four paintings, a pair of wooden statues, a pair of cement statues, the Blue Earth sculpture, and a cement lion sculpture. Further information on these contemporary pieces of art is provided through a six-page leaflet titled *Contemporary African Art* (Figure 13), offered upon entering the *African Worlds* Gallery from Door 1 (Figure 14).



**A Celebration of African Art**  
**Ademola Akintola**

Ademola Akintola has been described as having "the angel of colour" in his head, a reference to the vibrancy of the colours and the strength of images in his paintings. His subjects cover a wide range drawn from everyday life, yet his African heritage remains an important palette for him. In this work Ademola Akintola depicts the worship and celebration of Shango, the Yoruba deity of thunder and lightening. The work is dominated by a circular Ifa divination tray, used by diviners to mediate between the world of the spirits and that of the living.

**Cement Sculptures**  
**Sunday Jack Akpan (1940-2010)**

One of the leading artists in Nigeria, Sunday Jack Akpan creates life-size cement sculptures that commemorate revered ancestors or important departed figures. While his images and his media may be new, Akpan's sculptural tradition falls within a long tradition of funerary and commemorative sculptural tradition associated with the Ibibio people.

**Eating my Own Eggs**  
**Bernard Matemera (1946-2002)**

**Counting the Age**  
**Lazarus Takawira**

The two stone sculptures in our Gardens were created by artists from the world renowned Tengenege Art Sculptor's Community. These works are part of a continuing sculptural tradition in stone that has been part of Zimbabwean culture for centuries. The artists draw inspiration from daily experiences as well as traditional stories.





**Boats on a Lagoon, Anthill**  
**Rufus Ogundele**

Rufus Ogundele was born in Oshogbo, Nigeria in 1941. He was a member of the important Oshogbo Artist Movement that emerged in Nigeria in the 1960s. Like many of the other artists in the movement, Ogundele's work is not confined to traditional Yoruba aesthetics; nor was he working within a strict European tradition. Ogundele, however, acknowledges the importance of Oshogbo sacred traditions to his work.

*'...I believe that Ogun is helping me with everything in life - even with my art.'*  
Rufus Ogundele, 1991



*Figure 13. The Contemporary African Art leaflet (Horniman Museum and Gardens)*

The layout of the exhibition allows for a variety of routes, as there are two entrances to the *African Worlds* gallery (Figure 14). While the interpretative text was initially also provided through booklets placed in slots next to the glass cases, their only traces left today are just the slots.

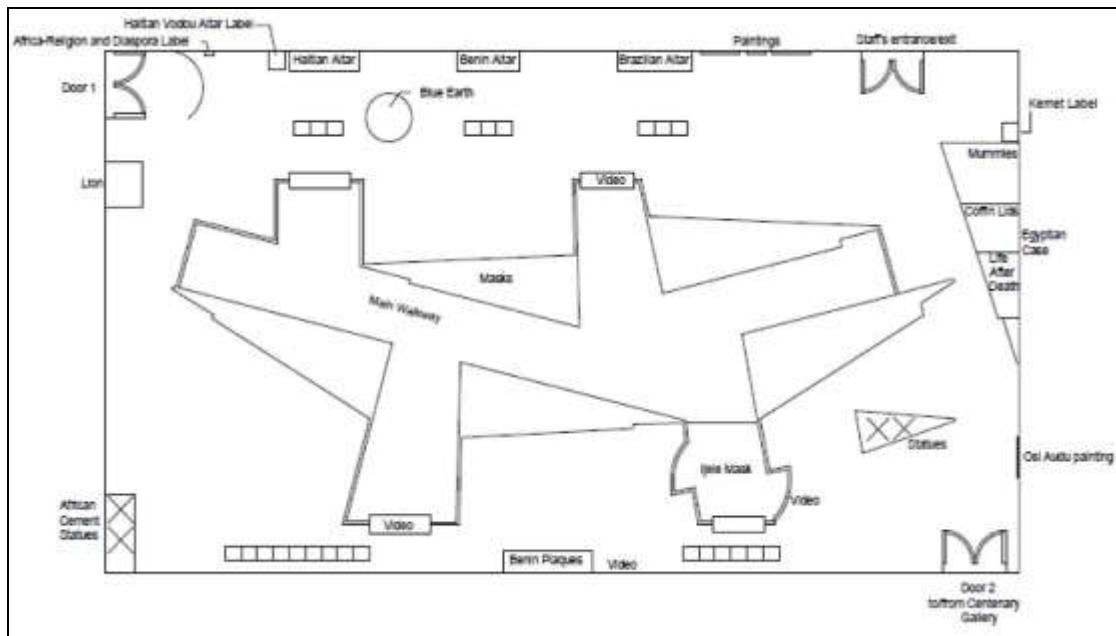


Figure 14. African Worlds Gallery: Floor Plan

#### 4.5. Selecting the exhibits

Initially, three exhibits were selected, all of different type to each other, across the three case studies, totalling nine exhibits. These objects were three paintings, three glass cases and three sculptures. The museums were informed on these choices, and I was in constant communication with the liaison person appointed by each one of the three museums, who checked upon issues raised by the visitors or members of staff concerning my research project.

Although the three museums expressed almost the same concerns, mainly on the health and safety of their visitors, the Wellcome Collection did not allow for extended collection of data in its galleries due to a large number of daily visitors and the numerous student requests for carrying out research projects in its galleries.

Therefore, only one exhibit in the Wellcome Collection's case was explored while data collection for the Courtauld Gallery and the Horniman Museum and Gardens involved three exhibits respectively, totalling **seven exhibits**, two less than the aforementioned intended choice. Specifically, the exhibits selected were non-interactive, providing a fixed framing of information available and visible to all visitors at all times. Specifically, three paintings were explored, two glass cases (one displayed in the Courtauld Gallery and in the Horniman Museum and Gardens), and a pair of statues/sculptures (again in the Horniman Museum and Gardens and the Courtauld Gallery) (Table 1).

Type of object	Wellcome Collection	Courtauld Gallery	Horniman Museum and Gardens
Painting	<i>Painting number 3</i>	<i>Woman Powdering Herself</i>	<i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i>
Glass case		<i>Maiolica</i>	<i>Life after Death</i>
Statues/sculptures		<i>Two sculptures by Degas</i>	<i>Two African wooden statues</i>

**Table 1. Summary table of the seven exhibits across the three case studies**

Apart from their difference in type, the diversity in the distance (or in deictic terms “spatial distinction”) between the exhibits and the visitors was further considered as a pivotal factor shaping visitors’ performances. Hence, exhibits that allowed visitors to approach them from different distances were selected, with some allowing visitors to have a close-up, while others keeping the visitors and the exhibits spatially distinct. It should also be noted that the exhibits selected were also recommended by museum staff as interesting, challenging, and popular to visitors or were highlighted by the museum’s resources, such as labels, leaflets, website, and activities. The affordances of the physical space around the exhibits for good quality video and audio footage, as well as precautions for the health and safety of visitors were also taken into consideration for the final choices.

The next section presents each of the seven exhibits along with the respective interpretive text or relevant activities, accompanied by pictures of both the exhibit and

the text. The exhibits are grouped based on their material type with the three paintings presented first, followed by the two glass cases and the two sculptures.

#### 4.6. Daniel Lambert: *painting number 3*

The painting selected for the case study of the Wellcome Collection was the portrait of Daniel Lambert (Figure 15). This painting is part of the Young Explorer's trail available free of charge to families visiting the Wellcome Collection (Appendix 3.1. p. 386).<sup>12</sup> The painting is displayed on a wall together with 27 paintings (Figure 16).



*Figure 15. Painting number 3: Medicine Man gallery in the Wellcome Collection*

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<sup>12</sup> The Wellcome Collection features a free-of-charge trail for young visitors, the *Young Explorer's Pack*, a bag containing the Young Explorer's Guide and materials required to carry out the suggested activities. There are twelve activities in the Young Explorer's Guide, pertaining to twelve exhibits selected from both of the first floor galleries, *Medicine Now* and *Medicine Man*.



Figure 16. The painting section: the Medicine Man gallery: Wellcome Collection

Each painting is addressed by a number in ascending order (1-28), starting from left to right (Figure 17). No information is provided on the wall, apart from the indicative number, mounted next to each painting. Instead, the interpretive text is provided in the available leaflets, placed at the left and right sides of the section, as well as in a cabinet placed above the leaflets at the left side of the section. The interpretive text on *painting number 3* can be read in Figure 18.

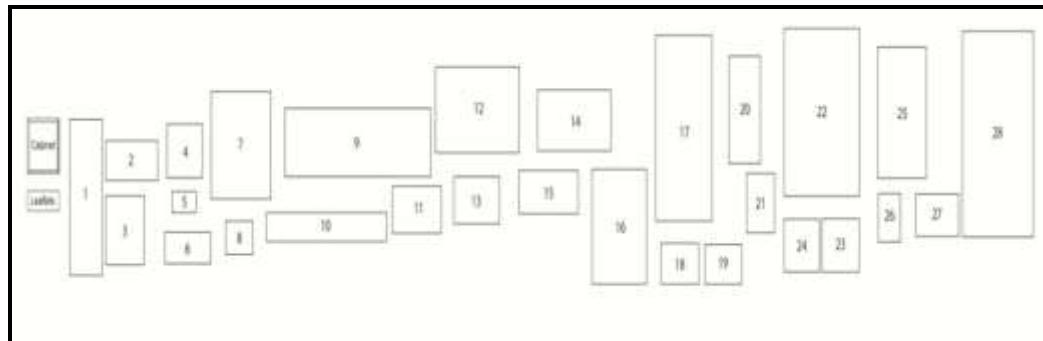


Figure 17. The painting section numbered: the Medicine Man gallery

Daniel Lambert, weighing almost 40 stone

Oil on canvas

British, 19<sup>th</sup> century

Daniel Lambert was born the son of a Leicester gaoler in 1791. Despite claiming to only drink water and eat in moderation his size and weight increased enormously so that by the age of 36 he weighed over 50 stone and measured 9 feet 4 inches round his body. He turned his bulk to profit by exhibiting himself all over England, charging people a shilling to see him.

*Figure 18. Interpretive text for painting number 3*

#### **4.7. *Woman Powdering Herself* painting**

Room 4 in the Courtauld Gallery exhibits paintings by the Post-Impressionists. Specifically, in this room one can view the following exhibits when entering from Room 3 and walking clockwise: a painting by Renoir above the fireplace, titled Portrait of Ambroise Voillard; a painting by Van Gogh, titled Self Portrait with a Bandaged Ear; another painting by Van Gogh, titled Peach Trees in Blossom; a painting by Seurat titled The Bridge at Courbervoie; another painting by Seurat titled Woman Powdering Herself and a painting by Modigliani titled Female Nude (Figure 19). In front of the Modigliani's painting, there is a table that dates from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, attributed to James Moore the Elder, while in the middle of the room there is a glass case with two bronze statues by Aristide Maillol and one by Renoir. Each exhibit is accompanied by a label giving the title of the exhibit, the artist, the date, and further information focused on either the subject matter and the technique, or the social and cultural context in which the artist created each piece.

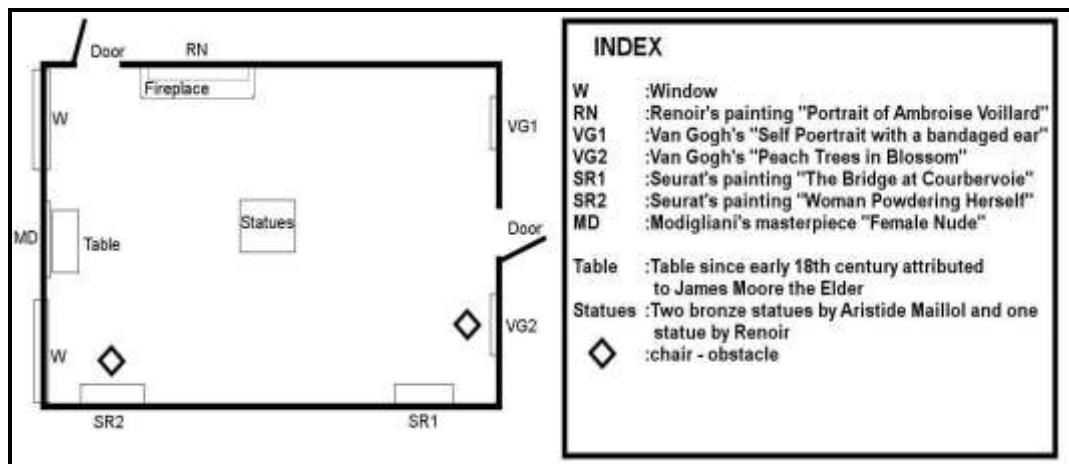
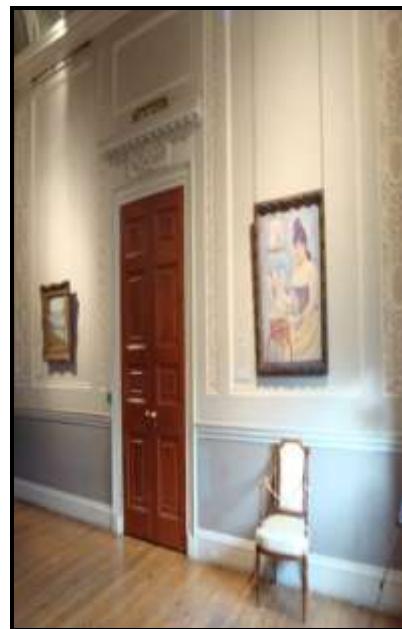


Figure 19. Courtauld Gallery: Floor map of Room 4

In the case of the Courtauld Gallery, the painting titled *Woman Powdering Herself* by Seurat in Room 4 was selected. The rationale behind this choice was in concord with the research questions. Firstly, the thematic juxtaposition of the Post-Impressionist paintings in a small room (Room 4) as well as the juxtaposition of two paintings by the same artist in close proximity seemed to be part of the “user-language” (Bradburne 2000, 26) adopted by the Courtauld Gallery. Additionally, the interpretive text of these two paintings by Seurat provides prompts for visual contrast between the two pieces. This is an aspect of the “user-language” provided by the museum. Furthermore, and in accordance with the choices at the Wellcome Collection and the Horniman Museum and Gardens, the exhibit is a two dimensional object mounted on a wall, chosen to allow the inter-institutional comparison to emerge amongst these three museums.

To be more explicit, the specific painting is displayed in a room where only Impressionist and Post-impressionist works are exhibited. It is juxtaposed in close proximity to another work by Seurat (Figure 20). Relevant research on joint attention and the use of reference has underlined the fact that the people rely more on pointing and less on language as the distance decreases (Bangerter 2004). In Room 4, the two paintings by Seurat are in close proximity and can be both seen upon entrance from Room 3. Additionally, Room 4 is one of the smallest rooms of the Courtauld Gallery and displays six paintings around three statues and a table.



*Figure 20. Courtauld Gallery: the two masterpieces by Seurat in Room 4 (left is Seurat1 and right Seurat2)*

Furthermore, the labels on Seurat's masterpieces provide information that facilitates the viewing of the paintings in sequence (Figures 21 and 22). The label of Seurat's *Woman Powdering Herself* underlines in its first sentence that this painting is the "only painting [...] which refers to the artist's private life" (Figure 21). The framing of this information provides a reflection of the institution's intentions to contrast this information to the other painting by Seurat, prompting the visitors to consider their differences and similarities. It is hence considered that reference -especially pointing- can be used to mark the shifting from one painting to the other while it can also be a means of drawing links and comparisons between the paintings in this room.

Georges Seurat (1859- 91)  
WOMAN POWDERING HERSELF,  
Around 1888-90  
Oil on canvas

This late masterpiece is the only painting by Seurat which refers to the artist's private rite. The woman is Madeleine Knobloch, Seurat's mistress, who at the time had just given birth to their first son.

Seurat's divisionist technique of painting with small dots of colour has been extended here to the dark border which frames the composition. The subject, a woman at her toilette, seems to be a return to the themes of nature and artifice, and public and private life, which Seurat had earlier explored in his scenes of outdoor recreation. The imbalance between the robust figure and the delicate domestic objects seems intentionally ironic, as does the contrast between the gravity of her classical pose and the frivolity of her actions.

*Figure 21. Label for the Woman Powdering Herself painting*

Georges Seurat (1859-91)

THE BRIDGE AT COURBEVOIE, around 1886-87

Oil on canvas

This view of the River Seine is taken from the island of La Grande Jatte in the north-west suburbs of Paris. Three figures stand quietly by the water's edge. A boat is visible drifting under the bridge. The smoking chimney stack in the distance provides a reminder of industrialisation and urban life.

This is one of the clearest examples of the divisionist Painting technique which Seurat developed in 1885-86. The separation of the paint into carefully controlled dots was intended to provide a more scientifically precise depiction of colour and light than had been achieved by the Impressionists.

*Figure 22. Label for the Bridge at Courbevoie painting*

This contrasting information is reinforced by data provided by the label “Seurat had earlier explored in his scenes of outdoor recreation”, which in this case can be seen in the light of The Bridge at Courbevoie. Another informative detail in the label prompts the visitor to view these two paintings in chronological order (“earlier explored”). The Woman Powdering Herself is a later painting (The Bridge at Courbevoie was painted nearly two years earlier as the dates in the title also suggest). The label of The Bridge at Courbevoie provides more information on the technique used by Seurat (“the separation of the paint [...] by the Impressionists”) and can be seen as complementary to the Woman Powdering Herself painting as the technique is identical. Additionally, the word “divisionist” underlines the use of a similar technique in both of these paintings.

#### **4.8. *Yoruba: a celebration of African art*: painting**

In the case study of the Horniman Museum and Gardens, the painting selected was the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* (Figure 23) by Ademola Akintola, exhibited next to two other African paintings (Figure 24). Each painting is addressed by a label providing the title of the painting, the name of the artist and the year of creation (Figure 25).



*Figure 23. Yoruba: a celebration of African art painting*



Figure 24. *African Worlds* gallery: The painting section

This painting was considered, for the purposes of this research, as the most relevant to Africa in comparison to the other three exhibited in the *African Worlds* gallery, which are more abstract and contemporary. The painting is colourful and vivid, depicting African people dancing and drumming. This painting is also included in a leaflet activity provided by the museum for families visiting during February, March, and April of 2011 (Appendix 3.2, p. 387). It was asking participants to count how many dancers and musicians comprise the painting.

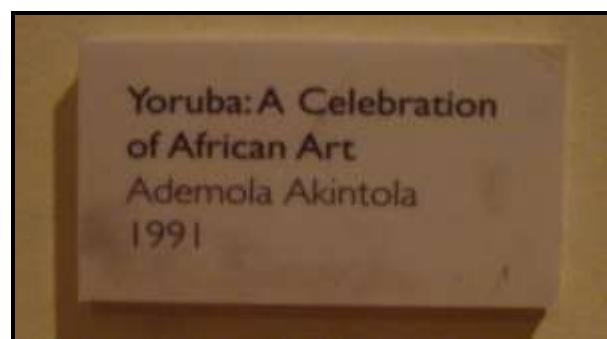


Figure 25. Label for the *Yoruba: A Celebration of African Art* painting

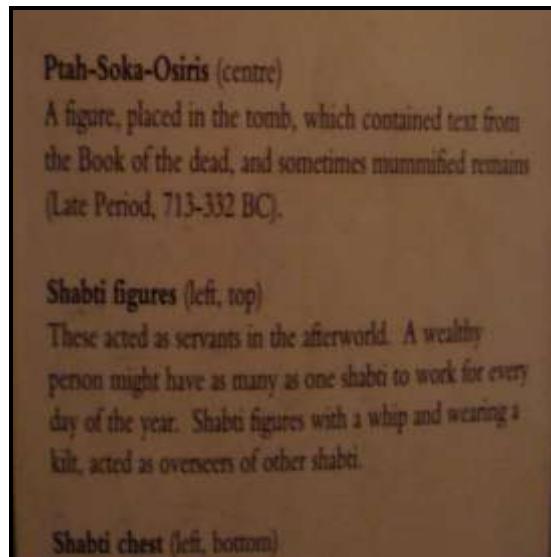
#### 4.9. *Life after Death*: glass case

Part of the Egyptian section, the *Life after Death* glass case is third in sequence, presenting an aspect of death in ancient Egypt. The *Egyptian glass case* is addressed by a thematic label, titled *Kemet*, providing information on the death and burial techniques used in Kemet (Ancient Egypt). Each one of the three glass cases is individually addressed by a different label providing information on the specific objects that each glass case displays (Figure 26).



Figure 26. African Worlds gallery: the Egyptian glass cases

The *Life after Death* glass case is a dense display of objects with six exhibits featured in the same case. The interpretive text provides information on the exhibits by using *location description*. (Figure 27) (See section 3.6.2.). It frames the glass case twice; one copy of the interpretive text is mounted inside the glass case and the other one on its right, outside the glass case, mounted on the wall (Figure 28). The information provided is the same on both of these labels.



*Figure 27. Location Description: passage from the label on the *Life after Death* glass case*



*Figure 28. African Worlds gallery: *Life after Death* glass case*

#### 4.10. *Maiolica: glass case*

The key reason for choosing this exhibit was to select a glass case just like the *Life after Death* glass case at the Horniman Museum and Gardens to juxtapose the research findings. The exhibit selected for the Courtauld Gallery was the *maiolica glass case*, located in Room 2, *Renaissance Europe*. The *maiolica glass case* bears additional similarities to the *Life after Death glass case*: it is a complex display of twenty (20) artefacts, with items 1-11 located on the upper side of the glass case, while items 12-20 are at the bottom. All the exhibits are addressed by a number and placed in numerical order, starting from the top of the glass case. Visitors are invited to link the label text to the specific exhibit by means of numerical reference. Contrarily, in the *Life after Death glass case* at the Horniman Museum and Gardens, the items were addressed by *location description*.

There is a thematic introduction to the glass case (Figure 29) followed by interpretive text individually addressing each item (Figure 30). This interpretive text is provided in random sequence, mixing the sequence of numbers (Figure 31). The exhibits on the top of the glass case are not referred within the case, but instead addressed numerically on a sketch mounted on the left side of the glass case (Figure 32).

All the objects in this case are examples of *maiolica*, the tin-glazed earthenware produced in Italy in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is characterized by its light weight and saturated colour schemes, deriving from cobalt (blue), copper (green), antimony (yellow), iron (orange) and manganese (purple-brown). The shiny metallic glaze of lustre was sometimes added to catch the light. A few fine examples of a style known as *istoriato*, meaning 'with a story', are displayed in this case. Depicting scenes from classical literature, history or the Bible these were luxury pieces for the collector and the used only rarely.

Figure 29. Thematic label on left side of the maiolica glass case



Figure 30. The interpretation panel for the maiolica glass case

<p>1. A large, lustred dish known as <i>piatto da pompa</i> or magnificent plate depicting one of the Magi, or wise men, who came to pay homage to Jesus. Based on a design by the Italian Renaissance painter Pietro Perugino, whose pupils include Raphael. Deruta, around 1520</p>	<p>2. Two lustred ewers of similar design. Deruta, around 1520</p>	<p>20. Salt cellar with an unknown coat of arms, inscribed on the reverse 'DO. PI.' for the workshop of Leonardo Bettisi of Faenza, better known as Don Pino. The exposed white tin-glaze was known as <i>bianchi di Faenza</i>. Around 1570-80</p>
<p>14. Scalloped dish or <i>taggia</i> illustrating the classical story of Hasdrubal receiving the baton of commander from the rulers of Carthage, inscribed on the reverse. Fontana workshop, Urbino, around 1540-1545</p>		

Figure 31. Passage from the maiolica interpretive text



*Figure 32. The maiolica glass case: the numbered sketch for the upper side*

#### 4.11. Two African wooden statues

In the same exhibition as with the *Life after Death glass case* and the *Yoruba: a celebration of African Art* painting, the *two African wooden statues* were selected to explore how visitors occasion their performances when it comes to life-size exhibits which they can explore from all sides and possible angles (Figure 33). The *two African wooden statues* are life-size statues that stand on a wooden base, surrounded by three Plexiglas sheets rising up to the height of the statues' necks. There is no label addressing the specific exhibit and thus, the museum staff, refer to it as “the African wooden statues”, a name also used in this thesis. The statues represent a male and female adult, their gender identity based on their anatomy and the objects each of them holds (an umbrella and a mirror for the female adult and a musical instrument for the male adult).

Visitors can encounter the statues arriving from three possible routes: a) entering *African Worlds* from Door 2, b) arriving from either the *Benin plaques* or arriving from the main walkway and the side of the vodou altars.



*Figure 33. African Worlds gallery: the two African wooden statues*

#### **4.12. Two sculptures by Degas**

The *two sculptures by Degas* are among the highlighted objects of the Courtauld Collection as indicated in the floor map distributed to all the visitors upon entering the museum. These two sculptures are displayed in room 6 on a podium in front of a big window and have no glass case protection. Room 6, the “Gallery Marshal” room, is bigger than Room 4 where the painting by Seurat is displayed. The podium allows visitors to walk around the two sculptures and look at them from different angles and perspectives, as in the case of the *two African statues* at the Horniman Museum and Gardens (Figure 34).



*Figure 34. Courtauld Gallery: two sculptures by Degas*

Each of the sculptures is addressed by its own label (Figure 35). The lack of a glass case welcomes visitors to approach the sculptures and look at them in detail, still under the constant surveillance of the gallery guards. Visitors are further reminded to not touch the exhibits by a “please don’t touch” sign written on the podium.

Edgar Degas (1834-1917)  
DANCER LOOKING AT THE SOLE OF HER  
RIGHT FOOT  
Wax model around 1895, later cast in plaster. Bronze  
cast around 1919-20.

One of the very few sculptures of ballet dancers known to be cast in plaster during Degas' lifetime, it demonstrates the artist's ability to capture and give dignity to a fleeting moment of effort. In an interview after his death one of Degas' regular models, Pauline, described the difficulty of holding this pose.



Edgar Degas (1834-1917)  
DANCER READY TO DANCE, RIGHT  
FOOT FOREWARD  
Wax original around 1885-90  
Bronze cast after 1919, A. A. Hebrard  
Foundry, Paris.

Almost half of Degas' output of paintings and pastels consisted of depictions of dancers, such as the oil of *Two Dancers on a Stage* in this room. His prodigious sculpting of ballet subjects in wax was an essentially private activity and formed part of Degas' research into the nature of movement. None were cast in bronze, or with one exception, exhibited until after his death.

Figure 35. Labels for the two sculptures by Degas

#### **4.13. Conclusions**

This chapter introduced the three case studies by giving contextual information on each one. Additionally, the reasons for choosing these case studies were elaborated, leading the discussion to the selection and presentation of the seven exhibits and their respective interpretive text across these case studies. This chapter aimed at facilitating the reader to achieve a better understanding of the physical and institutional contexts of my research's three case studies while detailing the seven exhibits explored in each case study, reflecting upon the methodological choices and limitations discussed in the next chapter.

## 5 | METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

*“[...] depend more on what people do than what they say in response to a direct question, [to] pay close attention to that which cannot be consciously manipulated, and [to] look for patterns rather than content”*

Hall (1968, 83)

The fifth chapter discusses the methodology and research methods employed in my research. Specifically, it details the choices of the **methodology** and **methods**, the **methodological** and **ethical challenges** intertwined with these choices, the **limitations** occurring in each one of the three institutional contexts, the **selection of the participants**, and the processes of **collecting, coding** and **(re)presenting data**. Additionally, a brief summary is provided of the technical **equipment** used throughout this research as it was considered important to inform the reader on the technical issues that each choice of equipment raised in order to facilitate researchers in the conduct of video-based research in the future.

### 5.1. Methodology and methods

The focus of this thesis is the study and understanding of the sociocultural means visitors use at the face of diverse exhibits in different institutions, in order to share aspects of their context with each other. The exploration of reference, and specifically, pointing gestures in the context of visitors' joint encounters is considered central to this analysis.

Specifically, the research questions set in Chapter 1 were:

- How do visitors' performances initiate, prompt, and lead to shared meaning-making?
- How do visitors render their personal interests public both to each other and possibly to non-members of their group?

- How does context affect performance and hence meaning-making? Specifically, how do the three dimensions of context (physical, personal, and sociocultural), along with the institutional, shape the emerging performances and vice versa?
- Which communicative functions are mainly addressed by visitors' performances? How do visitors' performances unfold to address these functions? Which practices do group members use in order to share their performances with the other members of the group and other people that share the same space? How do members of the same group use reference and how does the use of reference affect the museum experience and the performance that arises?

To explore the sociocultural means and the performative dynamics entailed in the ephemeral joint encounters in front of the exhibits,<sup>13</sup> my research was **qualitative** in nature, adopting “an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. [...] attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them” (Denzin and Lincoln 1998, 3). Being qualitative, my research acknowledged the diversity and pluralism existing of possible meanings and accordingly, the diversity, and versatility of today’s society (Daly 1992). The details of this diversity have not been the prime aim of this thesis; nonetheless, this thesis acknowledges the diversity of possible meanings and performances visitors make in front of the seven exhibits. The analysis draws on Goffman’s (1963, 1971) studies of behaviour in public places, Ethnomethodology (Garfinkel 1967) and Conversation Analysis (CA) (Sacks 1992), answering back to the aforementioned research questions. The focus of analysis is on the making of meaning, rather than on the meaning itself or other structural factors that may influence the emerging interaction such as gender, age, race and so forth. That is, the analysis examines the processes of making meaning rather than the outcomes of these processes such as measuring learning.

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<sup>13</sup> In a study at over 100 exhibitions, Serrell (1997; 1998) found that visitors typically spent less than 20 minutes in exhibitions regardless of the topic and size.

By adopting Ethnomethodology, an area in sociology originating in the work of Harold Garfinkel (1967), the methods used by the ‘members’ in everyday interaction come to the fore while setting aside the macro patterns of social ‘structure’. That means, Ethnomethodology explores social interaction as an emergent achievement of the conduct of people in everyday interaction, while underlying the reflexivity and indexicality of the occurring interaction and the means employed within and through interaction. Additionally, CA, being fundamentally concerned with the rules, norms and practices underlying the organisation of social interaction, allows the examination of the discourse adopted by the participants in interaction in everyday settings as well as institutional contexts. For CA, the meaning and understanding in interaction is highly organised and orderly and thus, CA does not solely explore “talk-in-interaction” but “talk-and-other-conduct-in-interaction” and “practices-in-interaction” such as turn-taking, adjacency pairs, sequences, repairs, absence in response, tag questions, gaze directions, intonation, and intersubjectivity (Goodwin and Goodwin 1986; Heritage 2008). To explore these fine details of “talk-and-other-conduct-in-interaction” in the natural context of the museum, **audio** and **video recordings** have been implemented (Cameron 2001).

By combining the key principles of those approaches, the focus of analysis is on the ongoing interaction, linking visitors’ talk, visual and material conduct, and not on the outcomes of their interaction or the participants’ structural factors such as gender, age, and so forth. The analysis focuses on the **sequential** and **indexical** character of participants’ conduct and the ways in which they coordinate their examination of exhibits with others, both those they are ‘with’ and others who happen to be in the ‘same space’. Additionally, it highlights the inextricable relationship between action and ‘context’ where “any speaker’s communicative action is doubly contextual in being both context-shaped and context-renewing” (Heritage 1984, 242). Everything that takes place in and through social interaction is emergent and contingently accomplished with regard to what preceded and what succeeded, produced by the participants in interaction moment-by-moment (Heath and Hindmarsh 2002; Meisner 2007; Schegloff 1968).

Ethnomethodology and CA treat social action, referred to as *performance* in my thesis, as situated/contextual, emergent, conditional, and sequential to the preceding and

succeeding actions, allowing the context, action, and intersubjectivity to become the focus of my analysis (Goodwin and Heritage 1990) whereas setting aside “the effects of the participants’ idiosyncrasies and their socio-demographic or educational background” (vom Lehn 2002, 41). The principal data of these methodological frameworks are video/audio recordings of naturally occurring social interaction.

The “world represented on tape” (Jordan and Henderson 1995, 41) provides a window to visitors’ performances as it manages to efficiently capture the momentary nature of the ongoing interaction as well as aspects of the physical context while causing minimal obstruction to the participants (McClafferty 2000 quoting Lucas 1985) (Figure 36). Additionally, video and audio recordings are a cheap, relatively easy and reliable medium to capture and examine repeatedly the fine details of naturally occurring social interaction (Knoblauch *et al.* 2009; Lomax and Casey 1998; Meisner 2007; Schnettler 2008; Silverman 2001; vom Lehn *et al.* 2002).<sup>14</sup> Video and audio data is transposed into detailed transcripts that facilitate the microanalysis of interaction emerging in front of the exhibits. The systematic analysis of the collected data highlighted specific visitor performances while it also drew attention onto the differences in interactional patterns among the participant museums and within the same exhibition. The combination of the systematic analysis and microanalysis of strips of interaction facilitated the researcher in “zooming in” and “zooming out” of the analysed data and, additionally, helped to contextualise what took place at the face of the exhibits. Through the systematic analysis of the strips of interaction, an understanding of how typical or atypical each event is, compared to the larger corpus of collected data, became possible. The few methodological challenges that arose are discussed in the following section.

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<sup>14</sup> In contrast to the fleeting nature of the social interaction, video recordings provide repeated access to the captured data and thus, a degree of reliability (Goodwin and Heritage 1990; Hindmarsh and Heath 2003; Lomax and Casey 1998; Meisner 2007; vom Lehn *et al.* 2002). I say “a degree”, because video recordings capture data from one angle and thus only one perspective, that of the camera’s.

Methods of Obtaining Information about  
How People Learn from Museum Sources (adapted from Lucas, 1985)

Research Procedure	Path of Visit	Research Area			
		Interaction with Exhibit	Thought Processes	Short Term Knowledge Gained	Long Term Knowledge Gained
Unobtrusive Methods					
Audiotaping	(+)	X	(+)	(+)	X
Videotaping	+	+	X	X	X
Tracking & observation	+	+	X	(+)	X
Obtrusive Methods					
Written measures	(+)	(+)	(+)	+	+
Structured interviews	(+)	(+)	(+)	+	+
Open-ended interviews	(+)	(+)	(+)	+	+
Stimulated recall	(+)	(+)	(+)	(+)	(+)
Children's drawings	(+)	(+)	(+)	+	+

Note. + = direct evidence; (+) = indirect; X = no evidence. Adapted from "Investigating how science is learned from informal sources" by A. M. Lucas (1985), in M. B. Dynan & B. J. Fraser (Eds.), *Informal learning of science* (p. 5), Monograph in the Faculty of Education Research Seminar and Workshop Series, Western Australian Institute of Technology, Perth, WA. There is no judgement implied in the table about the reliability or validity of the evidence obtained.

*Figure 36. Methods of Obtaining Information about How People Learn from Museum Sources (McClafferty 2000, 67)*

## 5.2. Methodological challenges

*“If we are to make an empirical case for the effects of recording on interaction, then we need to demonstrate an orientation by the participants themselves to the production of their action and activity to some aspect of the recording equipment”.*

Heath (1986, 176)

As mentioned in the introductory chapter of my thesis, my research aims to capture visitors' naturally occurring performances at the face of the selected seven exhibits. By characterising the nature of the data as *natural*, I do not intend to diminish the complexity of the museum experience, but rather to align this research and analysis with Sack's desire for a natural observational sociology (Sacks 1992; Silverman 1998). Additionally, the natural occurrence contrasts mainly the “laboratory life” where social conduct takes place under controlled conditions in a laboratory environment. What visitors performed at the face of the exhibits was not scripted, rehearsed, or staged by the researcher (Schegloff and Sacks 1973). Instead, the data comprises of spontaneous and unsolicited reactions of the visitors to the presence of the exhibits and, sometimes the camcorder. In this sense, the data collected is natural (Lynch 2002).

Although the use of film and photographs for collecting data has a long tradition in the field of social sciences especially in Anthropology, Psychology, Education, Linguistics and Sociology (Collier and Collier 1986), visual data has been treated with relative scepticism by a number of researchers considering its “trustworthiness and authenticity” (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, 184). For them, the necessary presence of the researcher in the field seems to affect the participants' behaviours. This section is by no means exhaustive, but it is meant to be illustrative of what has been a matter of debate. It also justifies the researcher's choice to use video as a data source by being critical to the on-going arguments against video-based research.

From the very first moment of introducing the use of camera as a medium for capturing snapshots of reality, there has been a debate on its **reactive effect** on research participants. Campbell (1957) argues that everything not expected to be found in a given

context, such as the camcorder, might prompt a reaction which subsequently alters the natural character of the data. Additionally, this reactivity to the camera, according to Gottdiener (1979), alters the reality and the social life initially intended to be explored as participants become aware of being observed and consequently change their behaviours. This reactivity effect, also known as the *Hawthorne effect* (Jones 1992), often leads to participants performing better.

On the contrary, Speer (2002) argues that researchers use the term *natural* quite loosely to refer mainly to data not provoked by the researcher. Additionally, Speer and Hutchby (2003) suggest that the distinction between *natural* and *contrived* data is unnecessary and instead recommend using the analysis of incidents when participants orient themselves to the research equipment as an indicator of measurement of the importance of the phenomenon of reactivity. Speer and Hutchby (2003) go even further, proposing that even when participants actively orient themselves to the camcorder, their reactivity can be viewed as an incident of “natural interaction involving a tape recorder” (Speer and Hutchby 2003, 318). In the same direction, Heath (1986) addresses the question of what counts as reactive by arguing that researchers should spot the actual, rather than the imagined performances in which participants actively oriented to the camcorder at the time of filming. As we cannot predict reactions, it has been suggested to scrutinize those incidents where participants actively orientate towards the research equipment (Heath 1986; Speer 2002; Speer and Hutchby 2003). Furthermore, Lynch (2002) questions the value of debating on the reactivity of the camcorder as it attracts our interest to the quality of data, when it really should be on the practical order and activity, as these are the primary concerns of Ethnomethodology. Additionally, Drew (1989) argues that even though participants behave differently under the presence of the camcorder, it is consequential only when someone attempts to measure the frequency of these behaviours.

By treating reactivity to the camcorder as part of the general “participant-observer paradox”, Duranti (1997; 2009) argues that any kind of data collection involves in some ways the researcher’s presence in the field and thus affects the occurring behaviours. Silverman (2001) also argues that there is no point in debating on the natural character of the data since “no data are ever untouched by human hands” (2001, 159).

Silverman (2001) and Duranti (1997) expand upon the “participant-observer paradox” effect upon our daily social life in the sense that human beings are social actors participating in and hence affecting social situations. Others have argued that participants are not expected to alter or tailor their normal performances or discourse for the sake of participating in a project especially when they are engaged in activities important to them (Becker 1974; Callanan *et al.* 2007; Duranti 1997; Jordan and Henderson 1995).

Specifically, when video recordings are applied in the museum field, especially in research in Visitor Studies (McClafferty 2000; Meisner 2007; Morrissey 1991; Philips 1995; Rahm 2004; Stevens and Hall 1997), researchers have argued on the minimal effect the camcorder has posed on visitors. For example, Callanan *et al.* (2007) argued on the reactivity to the camcorder in children’s museums, which had a surprisingly minimal effect on visitors’ self-consciousness, compared to human observers. Concerning this minimal effect, vom Lehn *et al.* (2001) suggest that the daily interaction and omnipresence of CCTV cameras, especially in public places, may make participants less reactive to the presence of a camcorder in the gallery rooms. On the same basis, King (2009) suggested that the familiarity of the participants with electronic devices, gadgets, and interactive exhibits as well as with the museum security cameras minimised the reactive effect of the presence of one more camcorder.

To address these concerns in my research project, I had to take some precautions. Filming was conducted without anyone handling the camcorder, apart from setting it on and off and changing tapes. As suggested in the relevant literature review, not having a person constantly present next to the camcorder minimises the possible reactivity to both the researcher and the camcorder (Jordan and Henderson 1995; Callanan *et al.* 2007; vom Lehn 2002). Additionally, as there was no person manipulating the camcorder, no zooming and panning action occurred in an attempt to preserve as much contextual information as possible. The researcher was constantly present close to the equipment, identified by a name badge. The relevant literature review has underlined the importance of informing participants of the value of the ongoing research and of the importance of their own contribution as a way to minimise reactivity (Becker 1974; Copeland and White 1991; Jordan and Henderson 1995). The signs mounted in each gallery room

informed visitors on their rights and aims of the research while the researcher was always present to answer any questions.

During the pilot study carried out for each one of the three case studies of my research, the researcher spent time in the galleries and remained close to the specific exhibits, observing and taking notes of the performances emerging at the exhibit-face by using pen and paper. The time spent in the galleries allowed the researcher to take note of a range of possible performances that seemed likely to occur within the specific contexts. Most visitors did not directly orientate to the camcorder, neither did they refer to the research equipment in their discourse. Although the presence of the camcorder is not considered to challenge visitors' performances, it, sometimes and under specific circumstances, became the subject matter of their interaction. This was especially the case when young children were present.

It was realised after the first pilot study at the Wellcome Collection that the longer the distance between the exhibit and the camcorder, the less reactive behaviours were recorded. Therefore, I chose to mount the camcorder far away from the exhibits when possible (see the *Yoruba: a celebration of African Art* painting, the *Life after Death* glass case and the *two African wooden statues* at the Horniman Museum and Gardens and *painting number 3* at the Wellcome Collection). This distance necessitated the use of an external microphone, an addition that was not allowed in the case of the Courtauld Gallery. Apart from the inability to mount an external microphone at the case of the Courtauld Gallery for all three exhibits, there were two additional restrictions in the two *Degas' sculptures*. These were the lack of physical space in Room 2 and the need for the researcher to be at a relevant distance from the equipment as the only available space was to be at the bench in front of the sculptures. The combination of these three factors was considered among the basic reasons why visitors attempted to touch the camcorder at the specific exhibit-face. There were only three incidents involving visitors' active manipulation of the camcorder, identified as non-native English speakers.

In the case of Seurat's painting *Woman Powdering Herself*, the camcorder was placed next to the exhibit, in the corner, not to obstruct visitors' flow. During the collection of data, no reactive behaviour was noticed apart from a child waving at the CCTV camera

upon entering the gallery room and then once again, on noticing the research equipment. In the case of the *maiolica glass case*, no active reaction to the camcorder was recorded.

Selecting which incidents should be included in the research was a decision which involved taking into account a few behavioural indications performed by the visitors as well as aspects of the physical and institutional context. The methodological problem of what constituted a unit of analysis was tackled with meticulous scrutiny. Incidents involving behaviours such as waving or smiling to the camcorder before and after the given performance were excluded from further analysis, as these performances indicate an active acknowledgement of the presence of the camcorder. Although this type of behaviour did not occur very often as well as not in the case of every exhibit, it was considered an obvious indicator of reactivity to the presence of the camcorder.

One may wonder whether these incidents analysed in the next three chapters (Chapters 6 to 8) are all examples of naturally occurring performances. For example, there are two incidents in Chapter 8 in which visitors dance in front of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting. Apart from the painting's subject matter, which is a drumming and dancing celebration, there are four video installations in the African Worlds gallery, most of them being accompanied by African music. Visitors of this gallery were observed performing dancing behaviours irrespectively of where they stood in the gallery, when one of the video installations was on. Incidents with visitors referring to personal aspects of their lives may further be considered as an indicator of non-reactivity to the camcorder. Additionally, throughout the data collected careful attention was paid to visitors' shifts in posture when it came to approaching the exhibits. In the majority of the cases analysed, visitors spontaneously changed their position towards the exhibits, while in a few cases the location of the camcorder was noticed well after their encounter with the exhibit.

Apart from reactivity, there has also been a concern on the extent of 'reality' that the camcorder can record, especially when it comes to capturing the sequential nature of social interaction. Although this drawback was acknowledged, it was further realised that the sequential, fleeting, and complex nature of social interaction made it impossible to

take detailed notes, especially by only one person (Collier 2003; Dufon 2002; Heath and Luff 1993).

It has already been mentioned that the implementation of video recording equipment allowed capturing the fine details of social interaction while keeping it situated in its physical context. The analysis of the data is provided and discussed in Chapters 6 to 8, however allowing only “a close-up view of a moment [or two] in time” (Falk 2007, 9) partially accommodating the temporal, social, personal and physical context of the visitors' experiences.

### **5.3. Limitations of the exhibits and the physical context**

This section accounts for the restrictions posed by each institution, the limitations posed by each exhibit's framing and the physical context of the galleries. Each case study is presented individually, with the case of the Wellcome Collection coming first, followed by the Courtauld Gallery and the Horniman Museum and Gardens.

#### **5.3.1. The Wellcome Collection**

When access to Wellcome Collection was granted, a pilot study was conducted to identify any problematic issues in advance. The pilot study took place for three days in March 2010 and a total of 10 hours, while issues on audio quality were addressed. In particular, the paintings are exhibited near the video installation of Brothers Quay making the ambient noise significantly loud, while the space around them is occupied by three glass cases, minimising possible locations for the tripod. On account of these circumstances, it was further decided to keep a relative distance from the video installation, attaching an external audio recorder below the target exhibit while positioning the camcorder on the right of and at a distance from the painting.

The museum allowed the conduct of the project for a couple of months during 2010 during which only one exhibit was explored due to the small number of visitors entering the gallery. The researcher decided to turn on the camcorder whenever a small

group of people entered the gallery, and turning the equipment off during scheduled tour times.<sup>15</sup>

### 5.3.2. The Courtauld Gallery

A one-hour pilot study was conducted for each one of the three exhibits displayed in the Courtauld Gallery. During the pilot study, the safest location for the camcorder was located, taking into account its proximity to the exhibits for the purpose of audio recordings. One of the restrictions posed by the institution was to avoid attaching external microphones on the walls or the exhibit labels. For this reason, the researcher only used the camcorder with an external microphone attached on it.

Although the camcorder was in close proximity to the exhibits, the physical context of the galleries allowed visitors to perform in a wider perceptual range, experiencing the exhibits from a range of angles and distances (Figure 37). On account of this diversity, the microphone attached to the camcorder did not always successfully capture visitors' conversations clearly. Especially during the collection of data on the *maiolica glass case* and the *Degas sculptures*, it was almost impossible to capture visitors' discourse in its entirety, as visitors were constantly moving around the exhibits. Visitors' ability to walk around the sculptures' podium restricted the audio-visual recording of their flow as the camcorder was fixed at a specific location next to the podium and could not be handled accordingly while recording.



Figure 37. Courtauld Gallery: Examples of possible distance between visitors and the *maiolica glass case*

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<sup>15</sup> There is a free half-hour tour in the *Medicine Man* gallery every Sunday from 2.30 to 3 pm.

### 5.3.3. The Horniman Museum and Gardens

Upon the initial visit to the *African Worlds* gallery, it was realised that the physical context of the gallery poses a number of limitations on securely locating the camcorder. Specifically, the uneven floor of the main walkway brought forward issues of health and safety for the visitors. Additionally, poor lighting throughout some parts of the gallery limited the quality of footage and hence, these specific areas were avoided. Furthermore, the presence of four video installations -two on the main walkway and two more at the side of the *Benin plaques*- generated a high level of background noise, affecting the quality of audio recording. The final locations for the camcorder may be seen in Appendix 4 (p. 388).

One of the major concerns throughout data collection at the Horniman Museum and Gardens was finding a secure location for the camcorder. As the majority of visitors to the museum were adults with young children, there were three problematic issues concerning the safe conduct of this research. Visitors' health and safety was considered, as well as ensuring no obstructions to visitors' flow, and of course, the avoidance of damage to the glass cases from the camcorder.

Apart from addressing technical issues, the pilot study, undertaken in late June of 2010, along with repeated visits throughout the year allowed for observation of the visiting patterns in the *African Worlds* gallery and increased knowledge of its physical space. The collection of data for the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting took place during February 2011 and for the *two African wooden statues* on Fridays and weekends of March and April 2011. For the *Life after Death* glass case, research took place for 14 days, in late July and October 2010, amounting to 57 hours of filming. The museum was a popular destination during summer due to its gardens, attracting a great number of visitors, something that changed completely upon the arrival of autumn.

Even though the same methodology and methodological tools were consistently applied for the collection of data in all three museums, the nature of the physical context of each museum posed a different range of needs and issues that was addressed accordingly and in advance. For instance, as in the case of Wellcome Collection, an

external microphone was attached next to the painting under investigation at the Horniman Museum and Gardens, facilitating the recording of visitors' verbal exchanges.

Furthermore, in comparison to the other two museums, the Horniman Museum and Gardens is a noticeably busier and noisier setting. Having four video installations in the *African Worlds* gallery renders it a place where visitors are expected to interpret the provided information more vividly, for example, by dancing along with the video on the *Ijede Mask*. The nature of the exhibition's content and context prompts more carefree and playful responses, as the collection seeks to also promote visitors' corporal responses.

#### **5.4. Choosing the participants**

A literature review on the definition of *family* revealed differences among scientific fields (Ellenbogen *et al.* 2004; Beaumont and Sterry 2005) as "currently, there is not one universally accepted definition of family, and it is not likely that we will progress toward one soon" (Segrin and Flora 2005, 6). Indeed, contemporary society is multifaceted and families are no exception to this (Beaumont 2004; Elliot 1986; Moussouri 2003).

According to Whitchurch and Dickson (1999, 687) "a family constitutes itself through a process in which people differentiate themselves from non-family members by interacting together as a family, thereby constructing a definition of themselves as *family*". This definition bears similarities to the one by Lentell (1998) who treats families as groups consisted of "two or more individuals who define themselves as a family and who over time assume those obligations to one another that are generally considered an essential component of family systems" (Lentell 1998, 236).

As sociocultural theory is the backbone of this research, family is considered "a social object constituted through interpretive practice" (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, 894) where interpretive practice refers to the "situationally sensitive procedures through which experience is represented, organized, reproduced, and understood" (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, 896). In addition, following Granott's definition of ensemble, family can be seen as "the smallest group of individuals who directly interact with one another during developmental processes related to a specific activity context" (Granott 1998,

42).<sup>16</sup> The museum visit is considered to be a developmental process situated in the aforementioned contexts: the social, physical, personal (see Chapter 2; Falk and Dierking 1992; 2000) and institutional. All actions by ensemble members' are interrelated and interdependent with the context; "during their interaction, their activity context defines and gives meaning to their activities" (Granott 1998, 50). Each member's actions "are interpreted by members of their group, allowing them to construct meanings specific to the group through their conversations" (Ellenbogen *et al.* 2004, S50).

Therefore, in my research, family is considered to be any ensemble of at least two people in interaction, including grandparents with toddlers, divorced and separated fathers with visiting children, young couples, siblings of different ages, cohabiting couples, same sex couples, single parent families, and bi-nuclear families (Sterry and Beaumont 2006). This definition comes a lot closer to the reality of families, especially in the UK where common type of household is a family without children; comprising 38% of all households (Walker *et al.* 2001). This definition also fits in with the concept of communities of practice discussed in section 2.2.

## 5.5. Research Ethics and data collection

*"Ethics is a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others"*

Bulmer (2001, 45)

For research projects, UCL requires the researcher to acquire a Data Protection Registration Number as well as an approval from the UCL Ethics Committee.<sup>17</sup> Apart from a UCL official requirement, the researcher acknowledged that it was her responsibility to "protect the [participant's] right to privacy by guaranteeing anonymity or confidentiality" (Singleton and Straits 1999, 524) as well as from any potential physical or

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<sup>16</sup> The ensemble's activity context includes "the symbol systems that the ensemble uses; the objects (e.g. tool, artifacts, or materials) that are directly involved in the activity; and socioculturally based layers of interpretations, norms, and conventions that are reflected in the activity" (Granott 1998, 50).

<sup>17</sup> This project is covered by the UCL Data Protection Registration; reference No Z6364106/2009/11/30, Section 19, Research: Social Research. Application approval number 2158/001.

emotional harm. In addition, the research was preceded by collaboration with the three institutions to address all emerging issues on health and safety and ethics.

All three institutions shared similar ethical codes and health and safety concerns. Visitors were informed on the ongoing research through A3 signs displayed in the gallery rooms and an information sheet available upon request (Appendix 1, p. 381). The signs followed similar formats and provided similar information, apart from the Wellcome Collection, where a sign was suggested by the institution. All the signs invited visitors to participate **implicitly** in this research; the participants' acceptance to collaborate was judged on their decision to approach the exhibit (Gutwill 2002).<sup>18 19</sup>

**Anonymity** was granted, as there was no personal identification involved in the data collection. Additionally, participants' faces are blurred whenever research data is used in publications and conferences. Whenever a participant is named in the video segments analysed in this thesis, his/her name was altered (Singleton and Straits 1999).

Specifically, the signs used at the Courtauld Gallery and the Horniman Museum and Gardens informed visitors on the conduct of filming, along with information on the nature and purpose of this study (Bulmer 2001). Furthermore, they provided visitors with the researcher's contact details and stated their right to opt out of the research at any time as well as their right to have footage erased at any time they choose (Derry *et al.* 2007; Gutwill 2002; 2003). Contrarily, the signs used at the Wellcome Collection only informed visitors on the presence of a researcher and a camcorder in the galleries, as well as of their right to opt out from the project (Appendix 2.1, p. 382).

Two signs informed the visitors of the ongoing audio and visual recordings in each museum. For the Courtauld Gallery, one A4 sign was placed on the reception desk

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<sup>18</sup> There are two ways for visitors to give their consent to being observed or video and audio-taped; explicitly and implicitly. The first comes in written format, where visitors are asked to sign a form that asks them to participate in a study while the secondary is based on consent given based on "their behaviour in a situation of choice" (Gutwill 2002, 232); that is to enter or not the exhibition area where the research is taking place or not.

<sup>19</sup> Schools as well as college students were excluded for ethical reasons, as written permission is required from the parents or carers of underage individuals.

and an A3 sign in Room 4, at a stand next to the entrance/exit of/to Room 3 (Appendix 2.2a. and 2.2b., p. 383 & 384). The reception desk location was considered as crucial as it is where visitors first go to pose any inquiries, while the entrance/exit from/to Room 3 was used by the majority of the visitors while exploring the galleries. The placement of another sign, near the door to Room 5 was not approved, as there are a number of other signs throughout the galleries, and any additional notices were deemed as obtrusive. Furthermore, additional signage stands could possibly raise a health and safety issue. For the Wellcome Collection, two A4 signs (Appendix 2.1, p. 382) informed visitors of the ongoing audio and video filming, placed at the two gallery entrances to the *Medicine Man* gallery. Finally, for the Horniman Museum and Gardens, two A3 signs were hung on the two doors leading to the *African Worlds* gallery (Appendix 2.3, p. 385). A summary of the data collection and the signs used is provided in Table 2.

	Dates	Hours Filmed	Signs
<b>Wellcome Collection/the <i>Medicine Man</i> gallery</b>			
Painting number 3	03/07/2010-30/05/2010	74	Two; one at each entrance to the gallery
<b>Courtauld Gallery/Rooms 2, 3 and 4</b>			
Woman Powdering Herself painting	29/03/2010-20/12/2010	75 Only on Mondays	Two; one mounted on the reception desk and the other next to each of the exhibits
Maiolica glass case	06/06/2011-04/07/2011	20	
Two sculptures by Degas	18/07/2011-08/08/2011	9	
<b>Horniman Museum and Gardens/<i>African Worlds</i> gallery</b>			
Yoruba: a celebration of African art painting	05/02/11-26/02/2011	57	Two; taped on both entrances to the gallery
Life after Death glass case	27/07/2010-06/11/2010	60	
Two African wooden statues	19/02/2011-10/04/2011	42	

**Table 2. Summary of data collection**

## 5.6. A note on the technical equipment

Before the launching of the project, a few recent theses were reviewed to acquire technical insights on commonly used video-based practices. A lack of information was

identified in the museum field, leading the research to other scientific fields, such as Linguistics and Education. Derry and her colleagues (2010) provide practical advice on the technical aspects of conducting audio-visual research, suggesting using a high-definition camcorder with a wide-angle lens, a long-life battery, a tripod and headphones for checking the audio quality while data is being recorded.

For this project and during the first year (March 2010 to December 2010), a Sony Mini-DV camcorder with an external microphone attached was used. An additional external Sony mp3 audio recording device was used when the physical space posed limitations. In early December 2010, the Mini-DV camcorder was replaced by a Sony digital camera with a wide lens that filmed ten-minute time-lapse videos.

## 5.7. Representing interaction: a multimodal perspective

The adoption of the sociocultural perspective is a choice reflected in every single aspect and phase of this research project. The focus of attention has been on the **encounter as a collaborative event** and not on individual, internalised, or cognitive processes. Interaction has been the unit of analysis, with each participant's performances reflecting his/her personal context. It has already been mentioned in Chapter 2 that museum encounters, and hence meaning-making in museums, are a multimodal event underlining the occurrence of different modes at the same time. To study the naturally occurring interaction between visitors and the selected exhibits, audio and video-based research was conducted, allowing the data captured through the camcorder and the microphone to be transposed from the visual to the written format. Detailed transcripts were produced for each incident to facilitate the micro-analysis of the different modes enacted during each encounter.

Although transcripts have been used in scientific research for a long time, Derry *et al.* (2010) as well as Jordan and Henderson (1995) have shed light on the **incompleteness of transcripts**. According to them, transcripts are never complete, as the transposition of the visual and verbal to the written is always reductive. Therefore, transcripts are, in a sense, another type of data, that fails to preserve all the contextual details entailed in the visual mode (Lemke 1998). It seems that transcripts are what maps

are to the world they represent (Derry *et al.* 2010). In addition, the transformation of the original multidimensional data into one mode (Flewitt 2006; Kress *et al.* 2001; ten Have 2007) sets aside the multimodal nature of social interaction that my research acknowledges as fundamental.

These arguments raise additional methodological issues for my research. In the Video Data Analysis seminars at the Institute of Education, University of London, the use of more than one mode of representation, such as still frames and behavioural descriptions was suggested. By reinforcing my representation of data in such ways, the transcripts in this thesis include richer contextual information (Lemke 1998).

Apart from this change in medium, from action to words, transcribing the multimodality of meaning-making (Jones and LeBaron 2002) was further addressed. Although there is a long tradition in the use of conventions for transcribing verbal behaviours (Jefferson 1984; Jordan and Henderson 1995), there is no such tradition for the inclusion of non-verbal behaviours. There have been some attempts to include the non-verbal mode in transcripts (Bourne and Jewitt 2003; Goodwin 2000a; Rahm 2004), with each following its own rules and conventions, according to the subject matter and nature of research questions (Jefferson 1985). In their majority, these attempts detailed the non-verbal mode in a separate column after the verbal (Figure 38). This representation may fail to reflect the simultaneity of the different modes enacted during each encounter as the verbal and the non-verbal mode appear independently from each other when depicted in such a way.

EXCERPT 1			
		Dialogue	Comments
1	Researcher:	So what did you do you learn trying that?	Tracer walks away.
2	Tracer:	Huh?	Tracer returns.
3	Researcher:	What did you learn trying that stuff?	Holds polarizers.
4	Tracer:	Different light if we have different colors different color windows change	Demonstrates effects with polarizers.
5		the light it's a different color. It gets	
6		darker each time.	
7			
8			Manipulates and observes effects.
9	Tracer:	Blue <i>sky!</i>	Reads exhibit label.
10		Because it says, why is the sky blue? it's because of this!	Points to polarizer.
11			
12	Researcher:	And and what's that what's that represent in in nature?	Tracer manipulates polarizers again.
13			
14	Tracer:	The sky! Because, I mean the water reflects on the sky that's why it's blue	Faces researcher, no interaction with the exhibit.
15			
16	Researcher:	OK.	

*Figure 38. Transcript of verbal and non-verbal interaction: an example (Rahm 2004, 231)*

Concerning the inclusion of the non-verbal mode in their transcripts along with the verbal, vom Lehn (2002) and Meisner (2007) map out the non-verbal actions vertically on graph paper and aligned them with their simultaneously occurring utterances. They present incidents of interaction on a timeline of bars, where each bar represents one second. Each participant's activities are marked on one side of the line (above or below) while bodily behaviours are signified by arrows and gaze is indicated in italics. When a verbal exchange occurred, it is placed in-between the timeline bars, indicating the starting point of each utterance (Figure 39).

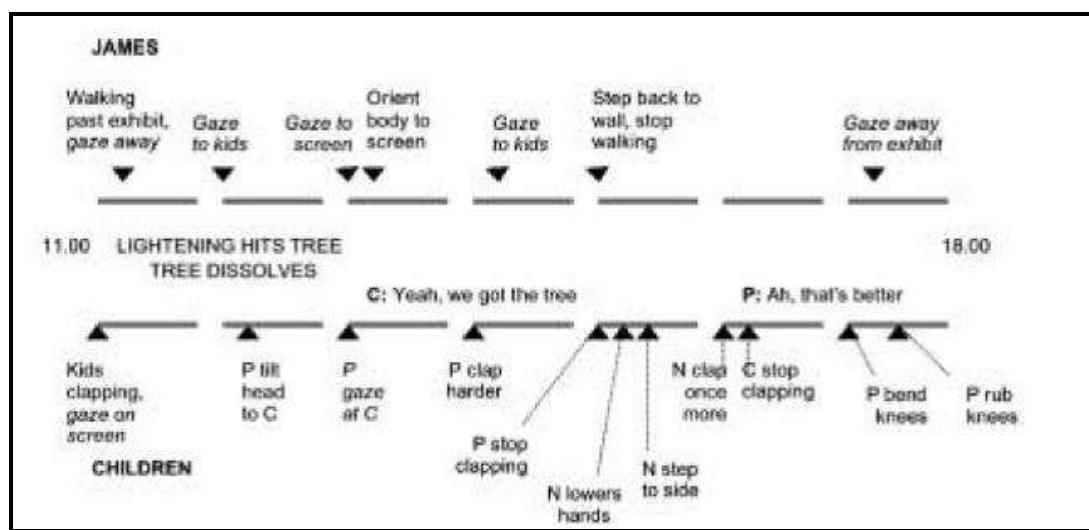


Figure 39. Mapping out interaction: an example (Meisner et al. 2007, 1540)

To address the objectives of my research and to transcribe the performances of visitors, the transcript was mainly informed by the work of Jefferson (1984), Atkinson and Heritage (1984), and ten Have (2007). Additionally, to address multimodality within the transcripts, four-way division suggested by Bourne and Jewitt (2003) is included as it details verbal exchanges, gaze, gestures, and posture of the participants in interaction. As this research focuses on gestures and vectors shaped by gaze, hands, language and posture, each one of these modes was linked to the word or sentence during which it occurred, the time of occurrence and its duration. Furthermore, the transcripts are always accompanied by their relevant screenshots. The transcripts were produced as a complementary tool to the audio-visual data, allowing the video to be the prime source of information (vom Lehn 2002). The transcript conventions used in this research are provided in table 3. In all transcripts provided in Chapters 6 to 8, visitors' discourse is given in **bold** lettering.

Capital letters	to indicate raised intonation.
(laughs)	to indicate laughing.
(.)	to indicate a pause less than a second, less than taking a breath.
(0.5)	to indicate a pause of 5 seconds. Numbers in parentheses indicate elapsed time in silence in seconds.
=	when utterances are one after the other with no interval in-between them.
(-)	to indicate inaudible words.
( )	to place nonverbal behaviours simultaneously occurring.
M	male participant.
W	female participant.
D	female child (up to 18 years old).
S	male child (up to 18 years old).

**Table 3. Transcript conventions based on Jefferson (1984)**

## 5.8. Insights of CA and Ethnomethodology in analysis

This research's methodological choices offer a number of insights and inputs in the focus of analysis. Drawing upon both CA and Ethnomethodology (Goffman 1981; Goodwin 1981; Goodwin and Heritage 1990; Sacks and Schegloff 1979; Schegloff *et al.* 1977), a range of aspects of interaction were revealed during the creation of the transcripts. It became apparent that the noticeable sequence of ordered utterances produced by two different speakers, called **adjacency pairs** (Goodwin and Heritage 1990; Sacks and Schegloff 1979), is of utmost importance for the revealing of the sequence entailed in visitors' performances. Ethnomethodology and CA provide the primary resources for establishing a joint understanding of actions taking place while performing in the museum, especially on turn-taking and sequence.

Specifically, adjacency pairs are used as calls for the embedded next action, allowing them to also function, apart from entry points into a conversation and interaction, as means of establishing mutual availability among the participants in interaction (Goodwin 1981; Schegloff 1968). Although, according to the data, the adjacency pairs of question-answer, and invitation-acceptance are very often performed

at the exhibit-face, incidents also occurred when the next turn-taking was embodied rather than verbally performed. Adjacency pairs follow the rules of *conditional relevance* (Schegloff 1968, 1083); that is, the second pair should be relevant to the first one for each action to prompt and foreground the next one in such ways that even the absence of the subsequent action is considered as a noticeable event.

When an adjacency pair fails to be performed within a sequence, a number of recycling, restarts, repairs and pauses are implemented to prompt the interaction further. Restarts, repairs and recycling aim at engaging inattentive hearers by repeating or correcting the performance just given, requesting a sign of attendance by the audience, normally through gazing (Goodwin 1981; Schegloff *et al.* 1977). Pauses and lengthy gesturing allow for time for both the performer and the audience to attend previous performance and design the next one (Silverman 2001).

Chapter 3 brought into the foreground the essence of attention, and especially monitoring attention and attendance. Sociocultural means such as gazing, nods, acknowledgment tokens, tag questions, slight rises in intonation and elongation of syllables came to the spotlight of the analysis, all being means through which participants in interaction socially request or confirm attendance. Especially the use of **person reference** was identified among the most pervasive means utilised by the performer to identify his/her audience (Schegloff 2007). Person reference may be performed through personal pronouns, calling someone by name or surname, and/or referring to the audience's relation to the performer (e.g. "mum", "dad").

## 5.9. Coding

The large corpus of audio and video data collected at the three museums from March 2010 to August 2011 was initially segmented and indexed using time and date markers, along with the name of the exhibit. The segmenting of data was "event-based" (Leinhardt and Knutson 2004, 80); that is, based upon the use of language and actions. A segment in my research is considered to start when a visitor starts heading towards the specific exhibit, while it ends when interest and visitors shift away.

For each incident to be further analysed, there has to be:

- An “objective and clearly identifiable” (Granott 1998, 42) social group, whose form may change during the activity, which approaches and stops in front of the selected exhibits (Ellenbogen 2002; Ellenbogen *et al.* 2004; Moussouri 2004; Wenger 2006).
- The members of the groups have to speak English as their first language, to ensure that their discourse is understandable in order to be coded.

A number of software programmes were tested in order to find the most appropriate and convenient for the researcher and the type of data collected for the purposes of this research. The qualitative analysis software QSR NVivo 8 was finally preferred as it, in comparison to the others such as Atlas.ti, Coding Analysis Toolkit (CAT), Transana and HyperRESEARCH, allowed “character-based coding” and offered “rich-text capabilities” (Ozkan 2004, 590) based on multimedia data that were easily embedded and transcribed while watching the transcript scrolling in synchronization with the video data. Organizing the data became an easy task as NVivo 8 enabled the sorting of complex sets of data by highlighting points or keywords, using “nodes”- like virtual filling boxes they allow you to see all information on a theme summarized together, and annotations or memos to capture detailed observations.

Despite the long tradition in the transcription of verbal data, especially in museums (Borun *et al.* 1996; Feinberg and Leinhardt 2002; Silverman 1990), there is a noteworthy gap in a standardised coding schema for the transcriptions as well as the analysis of social interactions. For this reason, a ‘top-down’ analysis concerning the verbal data has coupled with a ‘bottom-up’ analysis, concerning the non-verbal modes (Meisner 2007; Miles and Huberman 1994; Silverman 2001). The data was systematically coded using a coding schema developed in a series of iterations wherein theoretical codes (top-down) were supplemented by codes emerging from repeated views of the data (bottom-up analysis) (Miles and Huberman 1994). This combination of theory-driven and data-driven codes allows the unfolding of the finer details of visitors' performances and their entailed sequences.

Most of the categories below come from the relevant research in visitors' conversations in museums (Borun *et al.* 1996; Feinberg and Leinhardt 2002; Silverman 1990). The majority of these studies seek to ascribe levels of learning to visitors' talk and hence they suggest a succession entailed in learning (Borun *et al.* 1996; Feinberg and Leinhardt 2002). For these studies, visitors' conversations serve as indications of cognitive processing. On the contrary, my study does not intend to identify learning or levels of learning, but to explore the different modes enacted, especially the non-verbal modes (posture and pointing gestures), during visitors' meaning-making in and through social interaction.

The coding schema utilised in my study was applied to the entire transcript, as every action is linked to its previous and its next action. "Utterances are not indifferent to one another, and are not self-sufficient; they are aware of and mutually reflect one another" (Bakhtin 1986, 91) and hence, every mode enacted during interaction mutually reflects the ones proceeding and succeeding it. Sequential analysis can therefore be considered a suitable method for exploring what takes place during visitors' encounters with the exhibits.

Repeated viewing of the video data led to the identification of sociocultural verbal and non-verbal means of visitors' performances, such as use of spatial deixis (verbs of motion and adverbs), pointing gestures, text-echo (of labels and/or leaflets), tag questions, repairs, affective comments, nods, shifts in posture and gaze. Further attention is given to the sociocultural function of each of these means. These sociocultural functions are, respectively: identification; tagging (verbally and corporal through photography and visitors' bodies), telling (text-echo), attracting someone as an audience (pointing gestures, repairs, effective comments, spatial deixis) and embodiment (using the body to imitate an aspect of the exhibit). The coding schema can be seen in the next table (Table 4) while the definitions of the analytical categories of my research are given in Appendix 5 (p. 389-390).

<b>Iconic gestures</b> (McNeill 1992)	They are in close formal relationship to the semantic content of speech (McNeill 1992, 12). These gestures imitate, mime and are similar to an image of the signified part.
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<b>Tag questions</b>		A declarative statement or an imperative is turned into a question by adding an interrogative fragment (the "tag"). Used to address the next speaker, opening up the conversation, functioning as invitations for the next turn-taking.					
<b>Person reference</b>		Person reference may be performed through personal pronouns, calling someone by name or surname, and/or referring to the audience's relation to the performer (e.g. "mum", "dad") (Schegloff 2007).					
<b>Repairs</b>		Repairs refer to an organized set of practices through which participants are able to address and potentially resolve troubles or problems of speaking, hearing or understanding in talk (Sidnell 2011, 110).					
<b>Nodding</b>		is a gesture in which the head is tilted in alternating up and down arcs along the sagittal plane. It functions as a non-verbal acknowledgement to the previous performance.					
<b>Telling</b>	<b>Perceptual talk</b> (Allen 2002)	<b>Identification</b>	<b>Tagging</b>	<b>Pointing out something to attend to, verbally and non-verbally.</b>	Pointing gestures		
					Spatial deixis	Spatial adverbs	
		<b>Naming</b>	Stating the name of the exhibit.				
		<b>Feature</b>	Referring to a specific feature of the exhibit.				
		<b>Text-echo</b>	Reading aloud part of the interpretive text.				
		<b>Storytelling</b>	When visitors detail their telling with personal information.				
<b>Questioning</b>		Asking a question to another person or even talking to oneself by using a question ("oh, what's that all about?").					
<b>Reading Labels silently</b>		Reading a label or the supporting materials provided by the museum silently.					
<b>Answering</b>		Orally replying to a question.					
<b>Arguing</b>		Giving one's opinion and reasons, justifying a point of view.					
<b>Interpreting/ Explaining</b>		Orally replying on the content, meaning and/or intention of the object. Explaining requires questioning and answering.					
<b>Affective Talk/Comments</b> (Allen 2002)	<b>Pleasure</b>	Positive expressions of feelings of an exhibit, or one of its aspects.					
	<b>Displeasure</b>	Negative expressions of feelings about an exhibit, or one of its aspects.					
	<b>Intrigue</b>	Fascination or surprise about an exhibit, or one of its aspects.					
<b>Attracting someone as an audience</b>		All the sociocultural means that visitors use to	Pulling someone physically over	Beckon to someone	Person-reference		
			Deictic verbs	Shifts in posture	Shifts in gaze		

	invite others to join them in their personal encounters with the exhibit (Gammon 2003; Meisner <i>et al.</i> 2007).	(verbs of motion)		
		Pointing gestures		
<b>Animating</b>	Includes those performances which bring to life aspects of the exhibit. Performances that fall under this category have been embodied, adding a sense of motion to the exhibit.			

**Table 4. Coding schema**

### 5.10. Conclusions

This chapter looked at the methodological details of my research, arguing on the advantages and disadvantages of **video-based** research while highlighting the relevant **ethical** and **technological** challenges emerging from its implementation. Further information was provided on the **selection of the exhibits** and the **limitations** encountered during the collection of data, the **coding** of data, the **key areas** of analysis based on Ethnomethodology and Conversational Analysis. Details on the **technical equipment** were then provided, informing researchers on the technical aspects of conducting video-based research, followed by a brief discussion on the **representation of interaction** in transcripts. As it with all kinds of research, my thesis constitutes “an effort to tell a persuasive and coherent story within constraints” (Falk 2007, 3). The following chapters (Chapters 6 to 8) frame the analysis of a number of examples for each of the seven exhibits across the three case studies. Firstly, the case of the Wellcome Collection is presented, followed by the case of the Courtauld Gallery and the Horniman Museum and Gardens.

## 6 | THE CASE OF THE WELLCOME COLLECTION: THE MEDICINE MAN GALLERY

This chapter presents the analysis of a range of visitors' performances at the face of *painting number 3* displayed in the Wellcome Collection's *Medicine Man* gallery. Individual incidents reflecting the identified phases as well as representing examples of the most commonly emerging visitors' performances in interaction with *painting number 3* are presented and analysed.

The analysis of the data from the Wellcome Collection identified three characteristic performances mainly used for anchoring joint attention and subsequently sharing visitors' personal interests with other visitors. It became apparent that the dynamics of the social interaction emerging moment-by-moment situated in the specific physical context occasioned the "constitution" of the exhibits. In most cases after rendering the locus of attention public, the exhibit became a social object (Simon 2010) that sparked conversation and interaction. In addition, the three identified patterns of performances at the face of *painting number 3* allowed the entailed performativity of meaning-making in museums to become evident.

### 6.1. The identified categories of performances

The analysis of incidents in front of *painting number 3* revealed three major categories of performances addressing different aspects of visitors' social sharing as follows: attracting an audience, telling and tagging, and animating through "displaying doing". Firstly, there is "**attracting an audience**" which includes all those performances that visitors carried out to invite others to join them in their personal encounters with the exhibit. Putting effort to attract someone as an audience is considered the most representative example of a performance given to reach joint attention and subsequently, shared meaning-making.

The second category, titled "**telling and tagging**", allowed these two pivotal sociocultural means to be micro-analysed. Diamond (1986) argues that telling and

showing have been intensely used by adults with children at the Exploratorium in San Francisco, with ‘showing’ referring mostly to adults demonstrating to their children how the hands-on exhibits should be manipulated. Diamond’s showing category made an important breakthrough in museum studies as it included some of the non-verbal means visitors use at the face of the exhibits. In my research *showing* has been replaced by *tagging* which refers to the means visitors use to make an exhibit, or one of its aspects, salient to their co-visitors. The need for this change in the terminology became apparent during the analysis of the incidents from the three case studies.

“Tagging” is a term borrowed from the emerging field of social media; a tag is an index term, an annotated keyword (Voss 2007).<sup>20</sup> According to Cosley *et al.* (2009), tagging bridges the social (people) and semantic (things -in our case, exhibits) context together by offering to its users the function of putting labels on things, places and so forth. That is exactly what pointing or performing at an exhibit does; it bridges the visitors and the exhibition content together even if it only lasts a few seconds. Tagging comes with telling, as each one seems to elaborate on the other in the process of making meaning. The analysis hinted at the fact that both of these sociocultural means of reaching shared meaning-making are, most of the time, detailed by either the authoritative voice of the museum or the voice of the visitor. Tagging and telling are means of initiating and prompting visitors’ collaborative exploration while, concomitantly, seeing the exhibits in the light of the authoritative voice of the museum.

Specifically, telling can take the form of “text-echo” when visitors directly quote passages from the provided interpretive text (McManus 1989a) while it takes the form of “storytelling” when visitors detail their telling with personal information. Storytelling allows visitors to develop complex and more personal relationships between them and the exhibits as well as with the other members of the same community of practice, often incorporating information, which may span objects encountered across different contexts. Moreover, storytelling is a means used by members of the same community of practice through which explanations and evaluations shared by others are established.

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<sup>20</sup> Tagging is also referred to as “social classification”, “social indexing”, and “folksonomy” (Voss 2007).

Therefore, sentence completion and repairs can be treated as social resources (Resnick *et al.* 1997).

On the other hand, the analysis revealed that the use of tagging can also be detailed by the formal voice framing the exhibit while also being driven by each visitor's personal interests. Examples of these variations will be explored in the following sections.

The third category is titled **animating through “displaying doing”** as it includes those performances visitors carried out to bring to life aspects of the exhibit. Performances that fall under this category have been embodied, adding a sense of motion to the exhibit. In the next figure (Figure 40), the three categories are presented along with the sociocultural means accompanying them in most of the incidents analysed for the Wellcome Collection case study. The following section presents clear examples for each one of these categories as well as some variations identified within each category.

<b>1. Attracting an audience</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Calling over by person reference, deictic verbs, beckoning and pointing gestures</li><li>- Proximity; shifts in posture and in gaze</li></ul>
<b>2. Telling and tagging</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Text-echo</li><li>- Pointing gestures; shifts in posture and in gaze; using leaflets and pencils</li></ul>
<b>3. Animating through “display doing”</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Using iconic gestures (imitating the subject matter of the exhibit)</li></ul>

Figure 40. Summary of the performances identified in front of painting number 3

## 6.2. Performing in front of *painting number 3*

Twenty incidents were analysed for the Wellcome Collection case study. The following section presents the analysis of visitors' encounters with *painting number 3* through nine examples, reflecting upon the typical and atypical performances occurring at the exhibit-face. Each one of the three aforementioned categories is presented

through typical examples indicating the ways in which these performances may shape visitors' shared meaning-making.

Specifically, these examples reflect on the possible sociocultural ways and means with which visitors through their given performances initiate, prompt and share meaning-making with their groups and possibly with others that share the same perceptual range. Furthermore, these examples allow for a better understanding of *what* happens at the exhibit-face, indicating the interwoven interaction of the personal, physical, institutional and social context as well as their subsequent occasioning on each performance. The analysis reflects upon the means visitors use to shape their experiences, including the resources the institutional context provides them with, along with those emerging through the social encounters with other visitors.

### 6.2.1. Attracting an audience

The first incident involves two women (W1 and W2) standing in front of paintings number 8 and 9. W1 is walking ahead while holding the leaflet with the interpretive information on the painting section. She notices *painting number 3* and flicks her gaze from the painting to the leaflet and vice versa. W1 decides to render public her interest in the painting; she stands in front of the painting and gives out a **surprise token** ("Oh my God") followed by a **deictic verb** ("look") while **naming** the locus of her attention ("this man") by using **feature description**. However, her performance however fails to catch the attention of W2, who is looking at painting number 6.

According to van Kraayenoord and Paris (2002), comments like "*look at that one*" transform the exhibits into social and cultural objects by inviting others to participate in the perceptual range of the commenter's personal encounters. Therefore, using deictic verbs such as *look*, *come*, and *check* manage to open up the perceptual range of an encounter by inviting others to join in. These deictic verbs are accompanied by pointing gestures demarcating the area of attention as well as with text-echo, infusing the experience by suggesting ways to look at the exhibits to the co-visitors.

The latter was what occurs in the next turn-taking between W1 and W2: W1 acknowledges her failure to catch her friend's attention and immediately repaired her invitation by using text-echo ("He claimed only to drink water and eat in moderation"), followed

by a short laugh. This selection from the excerpt is quite surprising as the man portrayed in the painting used to be the largest man in England. By choosing this information, W1 enforces her previous performance and attempts to encourage W2's interest anew. However, her second performance comes to no avail. Then, W1 performs for a third time in order to secure joint attention: she repairs her previous two performances by moving slightly to her left, shifting her hand and pointing at *painting number 3*. This slight movement of W1 to the left is a further encouragement for W2 to come and see the painting.

This example reflects upon the essence of proximity and positioning at the exhibit-face as these are means of negotiating, encouraging, or limiting the participation of others to the ongoing encounter. Here, the personal encounter was broadened through W1's invitations, which were part of her performances and transformed into mutual attention and engagement through the enactment of different modes.

Immediately afterwards, W1 repeats the previous use of text-echo ("He claimed only to drink water and eat in moderation") but this time she repairs her performance by using the personal pronoun "he" twice in the beginning of her sentence ("He (.) He (.) He claimed only to drink water and eat in moderation"). Her utterance elaborates the pointing gesture that in return elaborates the utterance. Specifically, the gesture seems to animate the pronoun, as these both are linked to each other, clarifying to whom the pronoun refers. Telling and tagging work in tandem to anchor attention to the specific painting as well to clarify any ambiguities generated through the given performance. The small pauses between the twice repeated personal pronoun ("he") may be also considered a performance, as they allow time for W2 to approach W1. Once W2 starts approaching, W1 finishes her repetition of text-echo ("He claimed only to drink water and eat in moderation") making the third performance successful in attracting W2 as an audience.

Apart from repairing her performances to attract the inattentive addressee towards the exhibit, the repetitive use of deictic pronouns along with the pointing gesture is a means used to clarify the focus of attention, especially in such a visually complex context as this particular wall, which features 28 paintings placed next to each other.

Additionally, W1's performance prompts W2 to actively participate in the shaping of their joint encounter. Upon hearing W1's text-echo, W2 expresses her surprise, repeating the same evaluative comment given earlier by W1 ("oh my god"). These tokens function as *continuers* (Schegloff 1982), prompting for the next turn-taking which comes from W1. This time, W1 elaborates her telling again with text-echo ("and he exhibited himself around Europe trying to get a shilling for people to see him"). Immediately afterwards, W2 repeats her evaluative token once again ("oh my God") followed by a question directed to W1 ("What weight was he?") seeking further elaboration. W1 turns to the leaflet she is holding to find the answer to W2's question.

The answer comes from W1 in the form of a question ("40 stone?"). The use of a question as an answer prompts W2 to approach W1 and actively search for the answer to her own query. W2 approaches W1 and they share the leaflet for a while, until W2 finds a different answer ("50 stone"). Her answer causes a debate, as W1 immediately repeats her previous answer ("40 stone") followed by W2 insisting on hers ("50 stone"). The reason for this small disagreement is the fact that the leaflet provides "weighing almost 40 stone" as a caption for the painting, while in the text it states that when Daniel was 36, he weighed over 50 stone (Figure 41). The discrepant numbers frustrate the two women. The debate ends once W1 acknowledges that the difference is almost trivial ("this is similar"), followed by W2's performance which shifts their interest to *painting number 7*. This incident may be seen as a negotiation of power among visitors, a reflection of "owning" the exhibit by talking about it even when someone arrives second.

Daniel Lambert, weighing almost 40 stone  
 Oil on canvas  
 British, 19<sup>th</sup> century

Daniel Lambert was born the son of a Leicester gaoler in 1791. Despite claiming to only drink water and eat in moderation his size and weight increased enormously so that by the age of 36 he weighed over 50 stone and measured 9 feet 4 inches round his body, He turned his bulk to profit by exhibiting himself all over England, charging people a shilling to see him.

*Figure 41. Interpretive text for painting number 3*

In this incident, the locus of attention was revealed through the use of deictic verbs and terms, gaze, tagging, telling and shifts in posture. The person who arrived first, W1, performed to attract the other and detailed her subsequent performances to allow W2 to see the painting in the light of her own performance. W2 accepted the invitation by approaching W1 and posing a question, acknowledging in this way her attendance. In this incident we have an interplay of what Stainton (2002) suggested as the means of prompting meaning-making: looking at an exhibit, reading the interpretive text and/or responding verbally or nonverbally to comments made by others.

0:02.6	W1 and W2 are looking at the painting section, moving from right to left. W1 walks ahead, holding the provided leaflet.
0:03.7	W2 stops in front of painting number 6 and examines it. W1 gazes at <i>painting number 3</i> , stops and reads the leaflet in front of <i>painting number 3</i> .
0:10.6	W1 comes closer to <i>painting number 3</i> .
0:14.7	W1 is gazing at <i>painting number 3</i> . <b>W1: Oh my God! Look at this man!</b> W2 is still standing in front of painting number 6 and looking at it, something that W1 acknowledges as an indicator of W2 being inattentive to her performance. 

0.17.8	<p>W1: <b>He claimed only to drink water and eat in moderations</b> (laughs).      W1 moves slightly to her left.</p>		
0:19.8	<p>W1: (pointing at <i>painting number 3</i> for one second) <b>He (.) he (.)</b>      W2 approaches W1.      W1: = <b>He claimed only to drink water and eat in moderation.</b></p>		
0:21.3	<p>W2: =<b>Oh my god!</b>      W1: = and he exhibited himself around England trying to get a shilling for people to see him      W2: <b>Oh my god! What weight was he? [sic]</b>      W1: (looks at her leaflet) <b>40 stone? (.)</b>      W2 approaches W1 and they share the leaflet.      W2: <b>50 stone!</b>      W1:= <b>40 stone!</b>      W2: <b>=50 stone!</b>      W1: = <b>This is similar.</b>      W2: = <b>Number 7. The Black Madonna.</b></p>		
0:30			

**Example 1 [2010-03-13 14:29:03]**

The next incident involves one female adult (W1) and two young girls (D1 and D2). These three people are in the middle of their gallery exploration, following the Young Explorer's pack. D1 is searching for the exhibit that their next activity features. D1 scans her Young Explorer activity leaflet (Appendix 3.1., p. 386) and approaches *painting number 3*. When D1 reaches the painting, she scans the leaflet again in order to check whether this is the right exhibit featured by the next Young Explorer activity. Meanwhile, W2 has approached the painting section and takes a leaflet, starting walking from left to right.

When D1 confirms her choice, she turns her head to left where W1 and D2 are. As W1 and D2 are still at a distance, D1 calls W1 over (“mommy?”). Calling upon someone by using his/her name or his/her personal identity, something that Goffman calls “cognitive recognition” (1963), is a way to link the provided information to a specific person, socially or personally identifying them. Meanwhile, W2 walks towards D1’s direction, behind D1, shifting her gaze from the painting section to the leaflet and vice versa.

At the same time, D1 points at *painting number 3* with her pencil, a gesture that lasts for seven seconds. Her head is turned to the left, where W1 and D2 are. Her choice to sustain the gesture for seven seconds is considered in the context of her attempt to direct the other two towards *painting number 3*. Specifically, she extends the duration of her pointing gesture for the other two to catch up with her and at the same time, D1 holds the floor for the others to listen and attend her performance. While holding the floor for the members of her community of practice, D1 turns to her right and looks over towards W2. Her turning towards the unratified member (W2) is seen as a means of “monitoring co-presence” (Cahagan 1984). This monitoring behaviour allows interacting participants to monitor those who are present and possibly to adjust their behaviours accordingly while still sustaining the interaction with the ratified members of theirs group (Goffman 1963).

D2 arrives first with W1 following, when D1 uses the deictic verbs “*come*” and “*look*”, accompanied by a short feature description of the subject matter of the painting that drew her attention (“*Come, look at this man on his own*”). W1 and D2 acknowledge D1’s performance and approach her in front of *painting number 3*. The attention is now joint, something displayed through W1 and D2’s posture, gaze and the acknowledgement token given by W1 (“*yeah babe*”). The painting in this case provokes a memory, a life connection (“*it used to be a (.) a picture of him in my (.) in my Guinness book of World Records*”). Her storytelling does not expand further, but this excerpt demonstrates how a pointing gesture and an invitation to look at something can be the first step to starting a conversation. Pointing here is a means of initiating and prompting meaning-making.

This memory is abruptly interrupted by D2's question and pointing gesture to the adjacent painting. D2 notices painting number 6 and starts walking towards it. She positions herself in front of her attention hook and makes an evaluative comment ("*this is disgusting*"). The clarification of the used term "*this*" becomes possible through her shift in posture; her change of positioning from *painting number 3* to painting number 6 works in tandem with the deictic term "*this*" elaborating each other. W1 answers D2's performance ("*this is not disgusting. It is just a moment*").

In this incident, D1 invites the others to come and look at *painting number 3*. Even if this is done as part of the Young Explorer's Pack, one can see the means D1 uses in order to make her attention shared. Firstly, D1 names her addressee by using person reference displayed through the word "*mommy*" which indicates a specific social relationship between D1 and W1. In addition, D1 uses two deictic verbs ("*come*" and "*look*") as well as her posture and pointing gesture to direct the other two towards the specific painting. These three practices elaborate her performance of "attracting audiences". Being placed between other paintings, D1 is aware of how difficult is to discern one painting from another. Thus D1 uses all the modes she has available: her posture, voice, and pencil to facilitate the anchoring of attention to the specific painting.

0:1	D1 approaches the painting section and looks at <i>painting number 3</i> from a short distance. She is holding the Explorer leaflet and a pencil. W2 is standing in front of the leaflet cabinet, starting to explore the painting section from left to right.
0:3	D1 scans her Explorer leaflet and starts approaching <i>painting number 3</i> .
0:7	D1 turns her head to the left, where the other two members of her group are. 

0:9	<p>D1: <b>Mommy?</b> (lifts her right hand and points at <i>painting number 3</i>)      W2 walks ahead, passing by D1, standing behind D1's back, flicking her gaze between the painting section and the leaflet.</p> 
0:15	<p>D1 turns and looks at the space behind her which is occupied by W2.</p> 
0:16	<p>D1 turns back again to continue to look at <i>painting number 3</i>.</p> 
0:17 0:17.8	<p>D2 stands next to D1.      D1 puts her hand down.  <b>D1: Come look at this man on his own.</b>      W1 stands next to D1 with D2 in front of her.</p> 

0:21	<p>W1: <b>Yeah babe, it used to be [sic] a (.) a picture of him in my (.) in my Guinness book of Records</b>  D2 approaches <i>painting number 6</i>.</p> 
0:27	D2 faces <i>painting number 6</i> .
0:29.2	<p>D2: <b>This is disgusting.</b>  D1 turns to her right, looking at D2's indication.  D2 turns to her left, looking at W1 and D1.</p> 
0:31.3	W1: (laughs) <b>It is not disgusting, it is just a moment.</b>
0:35	<p>D1 approaches D2 in front of <i>painting number 6</i>.  They go on exploring the other paintings.</p> 

**Example 2 [2010-03-20 13:34]**

Past research has underlined the dynamics of “**arriving second**” at an exhibit (vom Lehn 2002) as it allows the person who arrived first to reveal the exhibit to the others in the way he/she just saw it. This infusion can be further elaborated as seen in the previous example through questions, comments and evaluative tokens. In the next incident, the negotiation of joint attention is carried out by the person who arrived at the exhibit first. A woman (W) is exploring the painting section, moving from left to right.

She looks at painting number 1 for a couple of seconds, steps back and looks at the bottom of the same painting. While W is discovering the paintings alone, also reading the relevant leaflet, we can see M approaching her.

M is facing the painting section as he walks closer to W, with his hands in his pockets. M stops walking behind W, a shift in his posture that W acknowledges by turning towards him. W, faces M, and shifts her leaflet, showing it to M. Her performance is seen as an invitation for M to get involved in discovering the painting section, while it also is an indication on *how* to get involved; that is, by reading the leaflet. M does not respond to her invitation. He approaches the cabinet and opens it. M then reunites with W, who is still exploring *paintings number 2, 3, and 4*, as indicated through her body posture. He stands to her left, scans W's leaflet, and almost immediately utters “40 stone”, quoting from it. His performance is acknowledged by W, who shifts her gaze from *painting number 2* to *painting number 3*, the painting indicated by M. Once M finishes his short performance, he moves to the right side of the gallery leaving W to continue her exploration of the painting section on her own. A few minutes later, W is still engaged in reading and looking at the painting section while M is walking around the right side of the gallery.

As M is walking around without focussing on any exhibits for long, his performance can be perceived as waiting for W to finish her viewing. On the contrary, M's small pause while standing behind W and his use of text-echo are two means of displaying his attendance to W's encounter and an attempt to include himself in her encounter.

	W is walking in front of the painting section, moving from left to right. She looks at painting number 1 for a couple of seconds and then steps back and looks at the bottom of the painting.
0:26	W steps to her right and looks at the <i>paintings number 3 and 4</i> .
0:28	W turns her head to the left and approaches the cabinet.
0:30	W picks up a leaflet from the cabinet and turns towards the painting section again, while looking at her leaflet
0:35	W positions herself in front of paintings 2 and 3 while still looking at the first page of the leaflet.
0:43	W turns the first page. M approaches W from the right. M walks quickly towards W with his head turned towards the painting section and both hands in his pockets.

		
0:50	M pauses for a second in front of paintings number 4, 5 and 6. W turns to her right where M is standing, facing and showing him the leaflet she is holding.	
0:53	M turns his head to the right, shifting his gaze from <i>paintings number 4, 5 and 6</i> to the other paintings. W turns to the painting section again.	 
0:57	M turns his head to the left (0.1), then to his right and finally turns and faces the painting section, where W is standing.	
1:01	M starts walking left, approaching the cabinet.	
1:05	M opens the cabinet, while W is still engaged in reading her leaflet.	
1:07	M closes the cabinet and turns to his right, where W stands. M starts walking towards W, facing the painting section.	

1:11	M stands next to W's left, facing <i>painting number 3</i> and scanning the leaflet W is holding.
1:13	<b>M: 40 stone.</b>
1:15	W flicks her gaze between <i>paintings number 2, 3</i> and then 2 again. 
1:16	M walks behind W, looking at <i>painting number 2</i> (0.7) M shifts his gaze away and starts walking to his right, looking around at the rest of the exhibition. W stays in place, still engaged in exploring the painting section. 

Example 3 [2010-05-22 13:07]

The next example allows us to reach a better understanding of the dynamics entailed in an ‘arriving second’ performance. In this incident, the person who arrived second is the one who initiates the shared interaction. Specifically, W2 arrives second at the face of *painting number 3*. As W2 approaches, she performs acknowledging her rejoining and co-presence as well as her intention to socially interact with W1. Her displayed intention to collaborate with her companion is one aspect that is crucially different to the latter incident (example 3), in which the person who arrived second did not engage in interaction with his co-visitor. Here, once W2 approaches W1 and stands to her left, signalling their reunion, their shared meaning-making is initiated by performing anew.

Specifically, W2 displays her intention to interact with W1 through her shifts in posture and shifts in spatial proximity towards her co-visitor. Additionally, W2 poses an open-ended question to W1 about her locus of attention (“*who are you looking at?*”) This question is a means of directing and successfully anchoring W2’s attention to the same

exhibit. W1 attends W2's performances and in response she points towards her locus of attention while elaborating her pointing gesture with a spatial adverb ("*up there*").

Once W1 rendered her attention hook public, W2 approaches the cabinet and attempts to find more information on the same exhibit. Specifically, W2 picks up a leaflet and approaches W1, repeating her previous given performance: W2 stands to W1's left and repeats her question ("*who are you looking at?*"). This functions as a means of anchoring joint attention between W1 and W2; W2 is aware that attention flicks from one painting to another and hence, seeks directions each time. W1 performs by using her gaze, followed by a deictic verb ("*look*") and a feature description as well as an evaluative comment ("*at this man*", "*he's disgusting, isn't he?*"). Her evaluative comment takes the form of a tag question ("*isn't he?*"), which can be seen as a call for the next embedded action, requesting W2 to perform the next turn taking. W2, taking the next turn, searches for an answer to W1's question by scanning the leaflet she is holding. The answer is finally given ("*Daniel Lambert*") by W2, bringing their joint encounter to an end.

	<p>W1 arrives at the painting section from the right, exploring the paintings slowly W2 is exploring the glass cases.</p> 
0:41	<p>W2 approaches W1, standing to her left.</p>  
0:43	<p>W2 says something inaudible to W1. W1: <b>What?</b> W2: <b>Who are you looking at?</b></p>
0:45	<p>W1: <b>up there</b> (pointing with right hand at <i>painting number 2</i> for a second).</p>

		
0:48	W2 starts walking behind W1 for a second, when turns to her left, noticing the cabinet.	 
0:54	W2 walks towards the cabinet, opens it and takes a leaflet, while reading the text inside the cabinet.	 
0:58	W2 closes the cabinet while looking at her leaflet. W1 starts approaching W2.	
1:00	W2 approaches and shares the recently acquired leaflet with her. They are standing in front of <i>paintings number 2 and 3</i> .	
1:02	<b>W2: Who are you looking at?</b> <b>W1: Look at this man! He is disgusting, isn't he?</b>	

	<p>W2 scans the leaflet.</p> <p><b>W2: Daniel Lambert.</b></p> <p>W1 looks down at the leaflet re.</p>
1:17	<p>Both W1 and W2 flick their gaze from <i>painting number 3</i> to <i>number 2</i> and then, to the leaflet.</p> <p>W1 shifts her head and looks to her right.</p> <p>W1 points at <i>painting number 2</i> for two seconds.</p> 

**Example 4 [2010-05-22 15:19]**

In another incident, we join two women (W1, W2), who start viewing the painting section together but disperse and reunite later. The incident starts earlier, with W1 and W2 looking at *painting number 9*. W2 moves away, approaching the glass case with the votive offerings, while W1 walks towards the cabinet on the left side of the painting section. While W1 is walking towards the cabinet, turns and looks at W2 on her left. W1 decides to approach W2.

W1 walks past the glass case with the artificial limbs and heads to the cabinet on the left side of the painting section, which she opens. W2 starts walking towards W1. When approaching, W2 shifts her hand and points towards *painting number 3* while turning to her left, facing W1. By doing so, W2 identifies her addressee while also using a personal pronoun (“*you*”) which serves to underline her previous shift in posture. W2’s pointing gesture towards the painting is elaborated by the deictic adjective “*this*” (“*this painting?*”) and hence both these performative actions work in tandem, anchoring attention on *painting number 3*.

W2 expresses her interest by using pointing, shifts in posture and a question addressed to W1. The question posed prompts a response from W1, who in turn asks another question. As W1 is standing in front of the cabinet and has access to the leaflets, she immediately grabs one and asks her friend to clarify which painting she is referring

to (“*number 1 or number 3?*”). Here, we see how these two women use the specific framing provided by the museum to find the relevant information; that is, by using the relevant numbers. Their common ground is only the numbers provided next to the paintings. This question may reflect the fact that W1 has not attended W2’s non-verbal indication and hence she needs more information. W2 answers by quoting the relevant number (“*number 1*”), which in this case is wrong as the painting in question is *painting number 3*. W1 approaches W2 and shares the leaflet with her, while both of them start reading it silently.

Almost immediately, W1 and W2 use the same text-echo (“*40 stone*”) while W2 expands hers with another (“*claiming to only drink water and eat in moderation*”). As in the previous examples, the use of text-echo encourages visitors’ affective comments. In this example, the affective comment is given by W2, who after quoting the text, comments on the uncertainty of his claim (“*Yeah I’ve done that!*”). Immediately afterwards, W2 shifts the interest onto *painting number 2*. Even though W2 arrived at *painting number 3* second, attending W1’s interest in the paintings, we see how the meaning-making process is being prompted by W2: through asking questions, using text-echo, pointing gestures and affective comments, W2 attempts to contribute to W1’s expressed interest. Although W1 attempts to participate in W2’s inquiries, she has lost the ground, as W2 steps in and takes the lead, holding the ground while W1 is listening and attending to her performances.

	<p>W1 and W2 are looking at <i>painting number 9</i>.      W2 turns and walks towards the glass case with the votive offerings. W1 is still looking at <i>painting number 9</i>.</p>
0:5	<p>W1 starts walking to the left, towards the cabinet.      W1 stops and looks towards W2, who is at the glass case with the votive offerings.</p>
0:10	<p>W1 stops looking at W2 and returns to the painting section.</p>
0:20	<p>W1 approaches and joins W2.</p>
0:36	<p>W1 walks past the glass case with the artificial limbs, and heads to the cabinet, on the left side of the painting section, which she opens.</p>
0:39	<p>W2 approaches W1.      W2: (points at <i>painting number 3</i> while facing W1) <b>Hey</b> (0.6) <b>have you any information on this painting?</b> [sic]      W1 grabs the leaflet.      W1: <b>number 1 or number 3?</b>      W2: <b>number 1.</b></p>

		
0:45	<p>W1 approaches W2. They share the leaflet, reading silently.</p> <p>W1: <b>40 stones!</b></p> <p>W2: <b>= 40 stones!</b></p> <p>W2: <b>claiming to only drink water and eat in moderation (.) Yeah I've done that!</b></p> <p>W1 and W2 both look at the leaflet they share.</p> 	
1:10	W2: <b>What's wrong going in number 2?</b>	
1:40	W2 points at painting number 6.	

**Example 5 [2010-03-12 17:22:36 pm]**

### 6.2.2. Tagging

The next incident elaborates the use of tagging through a joint encounter of one male adult (M) with a young boy (S). S, having arrived from the right, has his right hand extended, pointing at each painting at eye level that he passes by. When S notices *painting number 3*, he slows down and starts walking towards the painting. S uses the deictic verb “*look*”, followed by a short laugh, indicating his amusement. He immediately repeats the same deictic verb (“*look*”), enhancing it with a pointing gesture towards the locus of attention, followed by a feature description of the subject (“*he is fat*”).

This time, his pointing gesture is performed with his left hand whereas a few seconds ago his right hand had been pointing at every single painting he was passing by. This change in hand choice can be seen in the context of the whole performance: S stops in front of the painting and looks at M, who is at his right. Changing hands facilitates S’s pointing to become more obvious to the addressee, M. As soon as M attends S’s performance, he approaches and stands in front of *painting number 3*. His shift in posture can be considered as a display of joint attention. M expands his attendance to

S's performance by giving a descriptive and at the same time affective comment ("He is *VERY fat!*"). While M is performing, there is a slight rise in intonation when uttering the adjective "*very*", indicating emphasis. M attempts to disengage S from the painting by pulling him away physically, turning him towards the other side, towards the artificial limbs. While turning, M expands his previous descriptive utterance by providing his reasoning, which also elaborates S's previous comment ("He was eating too many pies!").

In this specific incident S is attracted to *painting number 3*, something that prompts him to stop and look at the exhibit. In addition, S's performance attracts M as an audience. Specifically, S turns to his right and calls M over by using a deictic verb ("*look*") followed by a further expansion as a description. The subject of the painting, Daniel, is "*fat*" as S argues, and "*very fat*", as elaborated by M who joined S, a piece of information reflecting aspects of their personal diet. Again, what M sees is a choice of S; a respond to his invitation to come and look at what he had noticed. Interest in the painting is declared by his pointing gesture, S's posture, and the deictic verb "*look*". These three performative practices lock the target of attention for the other members of the community of practice, as it is through these practices that the locus of attention is rendered public.

	S walks in front of the painting section, pointing with his right hand at each painting he passes by
	S stops in front of <i>painting number 3</i> and turns to the right facing M
0:06	S: <b>Look!</b> (laughs) (stops walking) (lifts his left hand and points at <i>painting number 3</i> ) <b>Look, he is fat.</b> 
0:15	M approaches S M: (laughs) <b>He is VERY fat!</b>

	
0:19	M grabs S physically pulling him towards the glass case with the artificial limbs 
0:21.6	M: <b>He was eating too many pies!</b> (laughs)
0:23	M and S walk away.

**Example 6 [2010-03-28 16:15:44]**

Past research has underlined the fact that a visit to an exhibition usually lasts around twenty minutes (Serrell 1996; 1997; 1998). As visitors shift from one exhibit to another, they deploy a range of sociocultural means that facilitate this ephemeral duration of their attention. Among those means, *tagging* facilitates the anchoring of attention even when words fail.

In the next incident we joined a male adult (M) and a young boy (S) discovering *painting number 3*, after following M's indication. M is wandering around, walking from the right side of the gallery to the left. As M is walking in front of the painting section, he stops walking and turns to his right, where S is. M calls S over by using person reference twice; that is, calling S by his name twice ("Chris").<sup>21</sup> Additionally, M elaborates his summoning by using the deictic verb "*come*", further elaborated by the spatial adverb "*here*". As S starts approaching, M walks closer to *paintings number 4, 5 and 6* and then steps to the left, where *paintings number 2 and 3* are displayed. M turns to his right where S is and points towards *painting number 3* while using a deictic verb ("*look*") to invite S to

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<sup>21</sup> The reader is reminded that all names have been altered to secure anonymity.

look at it. M' second performance elaborates his first summoning; it specifies the location of attention to S and justifies his summoning. Building on the second performance, M describes and evaluates the painting, broadening his perceptual range to S (“*look at the fat man*”).

S reaches M and stands next to him, giving out a short laugh in response to his previous summons. M physically pulls S over to the other side of the gallery and points at the glass case with the artificial limbs while also using the same deictic verb (“*look at this stuff*”). This performance by M is accepted by S, who is pushed to look at M's new attention hook.

	M approaches the painting section, walking from the right side of the gallery room.
0:8	M stops walking, turns to his right, where S is. 
0:8.4	M: <b>Chris, come here (0.8) Chris?</b> M approaches <i>paintings number 4, 5 and 6</i> .  
0:22	M approaches <i>paintings number 2 and 3</i> again.
0:25	M turns to his right, where S is, and shifts his left hand pointing at <i>painting number 3</i> (0.2). S walks towards M. <b>M: Look at the fat man.</b> S stands next to M, giving out a short laugh.  

0:30	M turns to his right, looking at the rest of the collection. M shifts his right hand while turning to his right, pointing at the glass case with the artificial limbs while, physically pulling S with his left hand to come along with him.
0:31.6	M: <b>Look at this stuff</b> 

Example 7 [2010-04-02 14:35 pm]

### 6.2.2.1. Telling

Two women (W1 and W2) are looking at *paintings number 2 and 3*, when W1 quotes an excerpt from the leaflet she is holding (“*weighing almost 40 stone*”). This text-echo entails a surprising piece of information that seems appealing to visitors’ curiosity and attention as it manages to attract W2 over. Their close proximity is an additional factor occasioning their joint viewing and meaning-making as it enables them to be aware of each other’s performance, allowing each performance to occur without applying a number of repairs.

W1’s text-echo prompts an affective comment by W2 (“*I think he looks kind of stupid*”), followed by an acknowledgement token by W1 (“*yeah*”). W1 expands her elaboration with a deictic verb (“*look*”), followed by a short laugh and an additional text-echo (“*Despite claiming to only drink water and eat in moderation*”). The use of this text-echo, seen in relationship to the previous (“*weighing almost 40 stone*”), encourages those visitors’ curiosity and interest as realised in the next performance given by W1. Specifically, W1 does not only quote from the leaflet but also expands on the information by using an evaluative comment (“*his head looks like double*”), concerning the subject’s physical appearance. This performance encourages W2’s curiosity who asks W1 whether she thinks Daniel was lying or that drinking only water was irrelevant to his condition. The information provided in the leaflet about Daniel Lambert claiming to only drink water and eat in moderation, makes W2 wonder (“*so was he lying or his actually only drinking water is irrelevant*?”). This question cannot be answered as there is no evidence in the leaflet or derived from personal knowledge. In the end, it is assumed by W1 that he was sick (“*maybe he is having some kind of condition*”).

It is interesting that W2 restarts herself when she opens her question by repeating the beginning twice (“*so was he (.).So was he lying or his actually only drinking water is irrelevant?*”). By doing so, apart from gaining some time to think, she expresses her hesitation to accept his claim to only drink and eat in moderation, and she also delays the progression of the turn-taking until the gaze of the addressee has been obtained (Goodwin 1980).

In this case, the participants’ turn-taking facilitates the progress of their shared meaning-making, especially through the use of text-echo. The constant turn-taking along with the intriguing information provided by the informative text reflect upon the sustained interest in *painting number 3*. This incident is among the few in which visitors progressed from simply **identifying** the subject matter to **explaining**, which is a more complex level of learning and engagement (Borun *et al.* 1996). We can see here how joint attention, initiated by text-echo and hence, perceptual talk, leads to expansions on the subject matter and prompts visitors’ shared meaning-making further. This concurs with Borun and her colleagues’ (1996) finding that the stage of ‘interpretation’ and ‘applying’ comes after those of ‘identification’ and ‘description’ (see 3.4.).

	W1 and W2 are talking while walking in front of the painting section, moving from right to left. W2 is holding a piece of paper.
0:09.6	W1 stops and points at <i>painting number 3</i> and then 2 for a second.
0:10	W2 stands next to W1 and attends to her performance.
0:12	W1 moves to her right, looking at the rest of the paintings, then steps back, closer to W2.
0:15.5	W1 shifts her left hand and points again (0.2) at <i>painting number 2</i> twice, pointing out two different aspects of the painting
0:23	W1 moves to her left and right, trying to find something. W1 turns towards the researcher and then W1 turns and faces the left side of the gallery.
0:31	W2 notices the leaflets to her left and alerts W1 of their existence by using the piece of paper that she is holding. W2 starts walking towards the case with the leaflets, while W1 turns and faces W2.
0:33.6	W2 approaches the case having the leaflets. W1 moves closer to W2.
0:37	W1 steps in front of W2 and takes a leaflet.
0:39.6	W1 opens the leaflet while turning, facing the paintings, and standing next to W2, who is standing to her right. They are both standing in front of <i>paintings number 1</i> and 2.
0:41	W1 lifts her head, gazing at <i>painting number 2</i> . W1 turns the first page of the leaflet.
0:46.7	W1 starts reading aloud the relevant text to <i>painting number 2</i> . W2 is standing next to W1 and reads the leaflet that W1 is holding silently.

0:56.2	W1 steps to the right. W2 does the same. They are now standing in front of <i>paintings number 2 and 3</i> .
1:11	W1: <b>Weighing almost 40 stone.</b> 
1:21.5	W2: <b>I think he looks kind of stupid.</b>
1:23.5	W1: <b>Yeah! Look! (laughs) Despite claiming to only drink water and eat in moderation, his head looks like double.</b> 
1:29	W2: <b>So was he (.) So was he lying or his actually only drinking water is irrelevant?</b> 
1:35	W1: <b>I don't know (0.4) Maybe he is having some kind of condition.</b>
1:42.4	W1 turns a page.
1:44.9	W1 lifts her head and looks at <i>painting number 4</i> .
1:46.5	W1 steps to the right. W2 follows her. They stand next to each other. W2 is at W1's left.
1:48.6	W1 points at <i>painting number 6</i> .

Example 8 [2010-03-28 17:18:22]

### 6.2.3. Animating through “displaying doing”

In the next incident we join a male (M) and female adult (W) who are wandering around the gallery. In this incident we see how M's funny comment prompts W to look

at *painting number 3*. Specifically, M notices the painting first and approaches it. He stands in front of the painting while giving out a deictic verb (“*check out*”), followed by a description (“*it's your boyfriend*”), a comment that bears a lot of personal meaning to this specific group, as their holding each other's hands hints at them possibly being a couple. Additionally, M gives an iconic performance: M approaches the painting and imitates Daniel Lambert's posture by placing his hands in his pockets while standing in front of *painting number 3*. His iconic gesture and posture animate the painting by infusing it with his personal style.

This performance encourages W to question his behaviour (“*what are you doing?*”), expressing a sense of embarrassment while also displaying her attendance to what just took place. Immediately, W performs anew, expressing her interest in the specific painting; W poses a question, which she immediately elucidates (“*how does this really happen in these old times? They didn't have so much food then!*”). It seems likely that her second performance functions as a means of rationalising the painting which subsequently makes M stop his animating performances. W transformed M's animating into a “mental handle” (Silverman 1990, 97), on which she based her subsequent performances, attempting to make meaning of their shared encounter. Her performance does not prompt a new performance by M, making her take the lead and the next turn-taking. This time W performs to shift her interest to *painting number 2* by using the numbering provided by the museum (“*number 2*”), which is an example of location description, followed by an evaluative comment (“*that one is scary*”).

	W and M are walking in front of the painting section while holding hands. M is closer to the painting section. W is holding M's left hand and she is looking at the glass case with the votive offerings on the left.
0:6.6	M notices <i>painting number 3</i> while walking.
0:7.5	M turns towards <i>painting number 3</i> , and starts approaching it while holding hands with W. 
0:09	M: <b>Check him out! It's your boyfriend.</b>

0:14	W: <b>Excuse me?</b> (.) (turns and faces M who approaches the painting and places his both hands in his pockets, imitating the subject-matter's posture) <b>What?</b> (0.3) <b>What are you doing?</b>
	
0:20	W: <b>How does this really happen in these old times? They didn't have so much food then! Number 2?</b> (.) <b>What?</b> (0.5) <b>That one is scary!</b> "
0:24	M steps in front of W and then goes to her left. W is still looking at the painting section.
0:34.3	W turns towards the glass case with the artificial limbs. M attends her shift in posture.

Example 9 [2010-03-28 15:58:49 pm]

### 6.3. Conclusions

The incidents mentioned above reflect the dynamics of visitors' encounters with the specific exhibit, *painting number 3*. Anchoring a shared attention while at the exhibit-face seems to be a pivotal aspect of museum encounters and shared meaning-making. The successful **anchoring of attention** can be seen as “a kind of spotlight” (Beun and Cremers 1998, 129) controlled and negotiated by the visitors through interaction and moment-by-moment collaboration while also influenced by the situated context which further informs and is being informed by these particular visitors at that particular day and time. As visitors detail their performances by selecting aspects of the physical context, such as other exhibits, labels and so on, the dynamic influence of the physical context and its use among those resources that visitors employ for detailing their performances and subsequently their shared meaning-making becomes apparent. Apart from using the physical context as a resource, visitors shape their own personal physical

space, the perceptual range for themselves and others whom they “attract as an audience” or may just happen to be nearby. Additionally, in the wider physical context of their visit, visitors shape their own smaller context as they perform in front of the exhibit.

These incidents revealed how the physical and institutional context reflected through the juxtaposition of the specific painting with others mounted on the same wall, as well as the use of a leaflet to provide more information on the exhibit, all occasioned visitors’ performances in specific ways. Visitors, through their performances, shared information and comments with their co-visitors through a range of means that were mainly chosen based on their physical and visual access to the next attention hook. In addition, the curatorial choices of having printed out leaflets available at each side of the painting wall led, as seen in the aforementioned examples, visitors to spatially-bound and context-bound performances such as having one “**designated reader**” (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60) who reads and shares the information with the others.

Another aspect that seems pivotal in the progress of the joint encounter as reflected in the examples was the negotiation of **spatial distance** between the visitors. Visitors performed in different ways so as to allow enough time for others to approach, as **proximity** seemed to be a primary factor allowing visual access and joint attention to secure between those in the same perceptual range. For instance, as seen in example 2, D1 maintains her pointing gesture for seven seconds, allowing the members of her group, who were a few steps behind her, enough time to approach and join her. In the same way other sociocultural means seem to be used to allow time for the others to catch up and successfully anchor joint attention among the ratified members of the encounter. Such means are the **small pauses** visitors use within their discourse along with **restarts**, especially when using text-echo (example 1: “*He (.) He (.) He claimed only to drink water and eat in moderation*”). These findings link to and expand these by Galani and Chalmers (2002; 2004) on the social constitution of visitors’ pace and the resources visitors use for the production of pace.

Apart from adopting the aforementioned means in order to engage with their co-visitors, the visitors tended to disengage their co-visitors in similar ways. In examples 6 and 7, which both involve adult-child groups, visitors performed by **pulling** members of

their group away physically so as to disengage them from their ongoing encounters. This type of performance may be linked to what Galani and Chalmers have coined “embodied pace management” (2004, 1419), which refers to visitors' gestural behaviour that implicitly informs change of pace. In my case, these two visitors are not only informing others of a change of pace but demanding their agreement for the achievement of this movement, as they change the latters' orientation without asking for implicit permission to do so.

Visitors were careful in shaping up the joint perceptual range of a forthcoming encounter with the exhibit, positioning themselves in such ways that either allow, or limit access to the surrounding contextual aspects. Through their shifts in posture, visitors allowed others to know the shifts in their attention and hence, their interest. As seen in example 1, the visitor, who performed in order to attract the other as an audience, made a small shift in posture and position, leaving the space at the face of the indicated painting unoccupied for her coVisitor. **Monitoring co-presence** allowed visitors to negotiate, regulate, and refine their performances to achieve joint attention. As illustrated in example 2, the performer turns and faces her coVisitor, a stranger, to make sure that she was not blocking the other person's viewing, as well as that she gains a considerable distance, preparing her own perceptual range for the forthcoming performances on *painting number 3*. Additionally, in example 3, the performer turns and faces her coVisitor as she notices him approaching, monitoring in this sense his co-presence in order to invite him to join in by showing him the leaflet she holds. Furthermore in example 4, the visitor who arrived at the painting section second, poses an open-ended question to her coVisitor, demonstrating in this way her desire to be included in the other person's perceptual range. She specifically uses the question “*who are you looking at?*” which, according to Leinhardt and Knutson (2006, 244), demands “perspective-taking on all of the participants”.

In addition, visitors used **deictic verbs, person reference, pointing gestures along with deictic terms** to direct attention to *painting number 3*. Once they attracted the others as audience, visitors detailed their performances with quotes from the printed leaflets or information deriving from their personal ground. Whichever resource the visitors decided to use in order to elaborate their invitation to the others to join them,

the given performances in front of *painting number 3* led to “seeing” the exhibit “through another person’s eyes”. When the performance is detailed by the formal voice of the museum, then this ‘seeing’ gains a stronger authoritative and institutional character. By adopting aspects of the institution’s language into their own discourse –through direct or rephrased text-echo- visitors do not only discover the exhibit in the light of their co-visitor’s performance but also in relationship to the institution’s authoritative voice. In this sense, the personal context bridges with the physical and institutional and becomes rendered through the social context of each museum visit.

While implementing the institutional language within their own performances, visitors gave a few personally driven comments at the face of *painting number 3*. Specifically, in example 2, the painting brings a memory of seeing “*this picture of him*” in a “*Guinness book of Records*”, while, in example 6, the indication of the painting draws parallels to everyday lifestyle and eating habits (“*He was eating too many pies*”) and maybe a more personal relation to the performer’s diet. Additionally, as seen in example 9, the encounter with the painting engendered personally driven comment by one of the two visitors (“*Check him out! It’s your boyfriend*”) that prompted another very personal driven comment by his co-visitor (“*how does this really happen in these old times? They didn’t have so much food then!*”). These findings concur with past research underlining the power of exhibits to awaken visitors’ memories which aim at building stronger bonds between the members of the same community of practice (Crowley and Knutson 2005; Feinberg and Leinhardt 2002; Leinhardt and Knutson 2006; Stainton 2002). Performances upon encountering the exhibits allowed visitors to bridge the present, the past and the ongoing contexts in a three-way connection (Leinhardt and Knutson 2006).

A sense of personal experience is also reflected in example 5, when one of the participants gave her personal touch by accompanying a text-echo with an affective comment (“*claiming only to drink water and eat in moderation. Yeah I’ve done that*”), questioning the trustfulness of the text-echo she just used. A sense of questioning and an elaboration of the text-echo also takes place in example 8, in which a turn-taking takes the form of a question on the text-echo by her co-visitor (“*so was he (.) so was he lying or he actually only drinking water is irrelevant?*”).

## 7 | THE CASE OF THE COURTAULD GALLERY

This chapter presents the patterns identified in visitors' performances at the Courtauld Gallery in front of and around three different exhibits; Seurat's painting *Woman Powdering Herself*, the *maiolica glass case* and *two sculptures* by Degas. Each of the exhibits is presented separately so as to explore the identified patterns, discussed based on selected fragments of interaction at the face of each exhibit. By doing so, the reader is exploring the sociocultural aspects of the visitors' joint encounters at the face of these exhibits while focusing mainly on the means used for achieving shared attention and meaning-making. The chapter recapitulates with a brief discussion of the patterns and the comparisons drawn among these three exhibits.

### 7.1. Introduction

This section presents the three major identified patterns, which are analyzed through representative examples of naturally occurring interaction in front of and around three exhibits at the Courtauld Gallery. The selected examples are representations of what is happening in front of the specific exhibits among groups of visitors consisting of at least two members who approach and position themselves in front of, or around, the exhibits. As argued in Chapters 2 and 3, social interaction is performed and prompted through a range of both verbal and non-verbal modes. The following examples support this argument. As in the case of the Horniman Museum and Gardens, three exhibits were explored for investigating the role of the institutional context as well as the role of different types of exhibits within the same gallery space in the shaping of the visitors' performances. These comparisons are outlined in Chapter 9. The next section presents the painting, followed by the *maiolica glass case* and the *two sculptures*.

## 7.2. Seurat's *Woman Powdering Herself*<sup>22</sup>

Data was collected for the *Seurat painting* on Mondays between late March 2010 and late December 2010. From the 75 hours of constant filming, incidents were segmented and saved on tape only when visitors performed about the painting, spoke English and their performances were captured clearly by the camcorder. Based on visitors' repetitive performances, **twenty two** incidents were selected, reviewed and analysed, representing atypical or typical examples of the range of performances occurring in front of the specific exhibit based on specific terms used in visitors' discourse and their non-verbal behaviours. Through their detailed analysis as well as constant comparison and contrast, specific patterns of performances were identified, allowing the researcher to bring under the same category of performances those twenty two examples. Ten examples were further selected as representative examples, reflecting different combinations and means used to carry out visitors' shared meaning-making while falling under the main three categories of performances identified.

Six out of ten examples involved adults in pairs, while the rest four examples involved respectively three female adults, two male children with a male adult, a couple of adults with a male child, and a pair of a male and female child, summing twenty three individuals.

### 7.2.1. Findings

The analysis of the incidents at the face of the painting came under the same three categories also identified in the Wellcome Collection (see section 6.1.). The first one is the “attracting audiences” including all those performances visitors carried out for inviting others to join them in their personal encounters with the exhibit. The second category is the “telling and tagging” including the sociocultural means and performances of pointing something out and sharing or telling stories either based on personal interpretations and recollections or the formal voice of the museum. In the latter case it takes the form of text-echo (McManus 1989a). The third category is the animating

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<sup>22</sup> Seurat's painting *Woman Powdering Herself* is referred to as *Seurat2* and *Seurat painting* throughout this document while his second painting as *Seurat1*. In addition, Van Gogh's paintings are addressed as *VG1* and *VG2*, while Modigliani's painting as *Mod*.

through “displaying doing” as it includes those performances visitors’ carried out for bringing aspects of the exhibit into life. The performances falling under this category have been embodied, adding a sense of motion to the exhibit.

### 7.2.2. Attracting an audience

The category of **attracting someone as an audience** includes visitors' performances aiming at drawing more visitors to the exhibit. Through social interaction, visitors either intentionally, through a range of means such as pointing and beckoning gestures, person reference and deictic verbs as well as naming the exhibit, or unintentionally, likely through their shifts in posture and gaze, managed to attract others towards their attention hook.

The following example is typical of anchoring attention and attempting to reach meaning within a group of more than three people as it involves a group of four visitors consisting of two adults (M and W) and two children (S1 and S2). Attracting an audience becomes essential when it comes to visitor groups bigger than two people, as members of those spend more time in negotiating their attention among the members of their group and the exhibits (Galani 2005). Rejoining the group at certain points throughout the visit is a performative way for visitors to demonstrate joint attention and attendance.

S1 enters Room 4 first. Upon entering, he is drawn to Seurat's paintings: he flicks his gaze between the two masterpieces while standing in front of *Seurat2*. Having noticed these two paintings, he returns to his group and rejoins them while making his interest public by referring to the specific technique used for those two paintings (“*Those paintings, painted with lots and lots of dots*”). The members of his group, M and S2, attend S1's performance and start approaching the indicated painting. S2 is walking closer to *Seurat2*, indicating his attention and interest by his direction of torso and gaze, which he further augments by giving a pointing gesture towards the painting. He immediately “recycles” the reasons why this particular painting is of interest (“*Look (.) painting with lots of dots*”). He uses a deictic verb (“*look*”) to invite S1 and M over, elaborated further with a pointing gesture and a feature reference/description (“*painting with lots of dots*”).

S2 wants to highlight the similarities between the two paintings he had previously noticed and starts flicking his gaze almost immediately between *Seurat2* and *Seurat1*. S1 starts approaching *Seurat1* after a few seconds, a shift in S1's posture acknowledged by S2, who also starts walking closer to S1. However, M is still engaged with *Seurat2*. Upon reaching the other painting, S1 beckons towards M while summoning ("daddy") and facing him. Calling someone by a noun bearing your relationship to him/her is a way for verbally constructing *person reference* (Schegloff 2007). By choosing to do so, the boy secures his summon to be acknowledged by the specific person, namely his dad. S1's performance is acknowledged by M who then turns and faces towards S1 and S2's direction.

S1 then beckons to M but again this comes to no avail as M approaches *Seurat2* instead. Here we can see how the absence of an answer from M to S1's summons has been noted by S1, by the latter's repetition of summons until the desirable response was obtained. Once the latter occurs, S1 proceeded to a further performance. This is what Schegloff (1968) has called *conditional relevance* referring to the participants' expectations in turn-taking.

Immediately S1 summons ("daddy"), a use of person reference, while beckoning to M once again, who then successfully approaches S1 and S2. When M starts approaching, S2 rephrases what he has heard S1 say a couple of seconds ago while pointing at *Seurat1* ("that one, lots of dots") and then he turns away, closer to *Seurat2*. After a couple of seconds, M stands next to S1, who then points at *Seurat1* and turns towards *VG2*, facing the painting. M turns to his right, looking at *Seurat1* for a second, and then turns and faces *VG2*. S1 starts pointing out elements of the *VG2* painting.

0:06.9	S1 approaches <i>Seurat2</i> . He turns his head slightly, looks at <i>Seurat1</i> and then <i>Seurat2</i> .
0:09.2	S1 turns his head back, facing S2 and M.
0:09.7	S1 turns and walks closer to them.
0:15.8	S1 can be heard at a distance. S1: Those paintings, painted with lots and lots of dots.
0:20	S1 approaches <i>Seurat2</i> with his right hand pointing at the painting. S2 and M are following. They all face <i>Seurat2</i> .
0:21.9	S1: Look (.) painting with lots of dots. (Pointing with his right hand)(Turns his head to his left, looking at <i>Seurat1</i> ) 
0:24.9	S1 turns to his left and walks towards <i>Seurat1</i> .
0:25.7	S2 attends S1's performance. M is still standing and looking at <i>Seurat2</i> .
0:28.5	S1 and S2 are approaching <i>Seurat1</i> . S1 beckons, inviting M and S2 over. 
0:29	S1: Daddy::? (Facing towards M's side) M turns and looks towards S1. S1 beckons M to approach again. 

0:31.5	M approaches <i>Seurat2</i> . S1's attempt comes to no avail. S1: Daddy::? (Facing towards M's side while beckoning again)
0:34	M turns to his left and starts walking towards S1 and S2.
0:35.7	M is standing next to S1. S2: That one! Lots of dots (Turns towards <i>Seurat1</i> ).

#### Example 10 (25.10.2010, 13:58 pm)

In another incident, W1 and W2 are standing in front of and talking about Modigliani's painting. W1 takes the lead in their conversation while W2 sustains the verbal interaction acknowledgement tokens, such as "yeah" and nodding her head. While being engaged in their conversation, W1's head is turned towards *Seurat2*.

W2 acknowledges W1's shift in posture as W2 also turns towards *Seurat2*. Upon finishing her sentence, W1 has already turned towards *Seurat2*, facing the painting. W2, who is also facing *Seurat2*, shifts her right hand and points at the painting while naming the artist ("*Seurat*"). Her performance of pointing and naming the painter belongs to the "identification" category of performances and it is viewed as part of her prior knowledge. Upon encountering the painting, W2 uses a deictic gesture to secure joint attention, and names the painter since she recognises him. After doing so, W2 approaches *Seurat1* while W1 lingers for two seconds looking at *Seurat2*. When W1 finishes looking at *Seurat2*, she gives out an acknowledgement token ("yes") while raising

the intonation of her voice. The slight raise in intonation here can be seen as a way for W1 to secure being heard by her friend, as the latter has now moved away and closer to Seurat. It also displays a relevance of the hearer, W2, to the meaning and detailed construction of the previous utterance of the speaker, W1 (Goodwin 1980). W1's performance can be seen as a confirmation of W2's previous performance and hence of their common ground. W1 immediately starts approaching W2, who is standing in front of *Seurat1*. As they are standing in front of this painting, W2 shifts her hand and points at it again.

	W1 and W2 are standing in front of <i>Mod</i> , talking about his technique. W1 seems to be talking while W2 is listening and giving acknowledgement tokens.
	W1 turns slightly towards <i>Seurat2</i> before she finishes her sentence.
	W2 attends W1's shift in posture.
	W1 finishes her sentence while both of them are looking at <i>Seurat2</i>
	
00:17	W2 shifts her right hand and points at <i>Seurat2</i> . W2: <i>Seurat</i> .
	
00:19	W2 turns and starts walking towards <i>Seurat1</i> . W1 is standing slightly further away, still looking at <i>Seurat2</i> .
00:20	W2 is walking in front of W1 W1: YES (turns towards <i>Seurat1</i> )
00:21	They walk together, standing next to each other in front of <i>Seurat1</i> .
	

Example 11 (22.11.2010, 13:28 pm)

The possible ways in which the exhibit gains meaning within social interaction are exemplified in the following incident (example 12), which demonstrates the variety of modes in which the initial display of personal interest by a member of the group is rendered public. These are pointing gestures, gazes, shifts in posture and verbal deixis. Additionally, it highlights the dynamics of social sharing as the exhibit, once shared, becomes a loci of joint attention for the rest of the group and this anchoring of joint attention sparks the conversation and interaction among the members of the group, leading to their joint meaning-making.

Specifically, as seen in example 12, W is looking at *Seurat1* along with M and S while standing in front of this specific painting. S turns to his right and notices *Seurat2*, which he approaches after five seconds. His shift in gaze and posture indicate his shift in interest, that is now elaborated with a pointing gesture towards *Seurat2* while giving an evaluative comment (“*the same as that*”). The pointing gesture works in tandem with the deictic term “*that*”, elaborating his talk that in turn elaborates his pointing gesture. Additionally, the adjective “*same*” hints at his addressees to draw links between what is indicated by S's shifts in posture, gaze direction, pointing gesture and verbal deixis, aligning S's viewing with that of his addressees.

Although S has made an observable attempt to draw attention to these two paintings, the two adults are instead more immersed in their interaction with *Seurat1* as they can be seen performing a few pointing gestures along with iconic gestures of “doing dots”.<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, S has reached *Seurat2*. Upon reaching the painting, S turns to his left and faces M and W who are still immersed in their speculation of *Seurat1*. S stands in front of *Seurat2* and uses the deictic adjective “*this*”, a performance that falls unnoticed, prompting S to recycle it.

Specifically, S summons M by using *person reference* (“*dad*”). As M can identify himself as the person being summoned, S has secured M's attention, which is reflected in M's turning towards S. This recycled performance given by S is a repair occurring during an adjacency pair; that is, a correction of a previous utterance or performance

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<sup>23</sup> The prevalence of the iconic gesture prompted the researcher to coin this animating performance as ‘doing dots’ as the hand imitated the making of dots.

carried out by S, while making a request/summons to M to attend. This recycled performance manages to also draw W's attention, who manifests her attendance by turning towards S. Their attendance is acknowledged by S, who immediately extends his performance by using spatial verbal deixis ("this"), along with a pointing gesture to indicate his focus of attention. Again, his pointing gesture works in tandem with the deictic term "this", elaborating his indication and hence the process of identification. His second attempt manages to catch the adults' attention, as manifested by their approaching him and *Seurat2*. Furthermore, S's latter performance prompted them to perform individually since M takes the lead and performing first by walking closer to the specific painting while W follows him slowly.

M gives out an iconic gesture by opening his hands as he approaches S. M accompanies this iconic gesture with a verbal account ("big one"), which works in tandem with the gesture. M also expands his shared attention by verbally underlining the unique technique used for the painting ("you got lots of dots in there, haven't you?") along with the iconic gesture of "doing dots" while also positioning himself next to S. Goodwin (1980) argues that participants in interaction constantly monitor their joint attention, which they further regulate through gazing and shifts in posture towards the referee or, the participant. Specifically, Goodwin (1980) argues that a participant may request his/her co-participant to look at him/her by slightly raising his/her intonation, elongating the syllable being spoken or using a tag question. Here, the use of a tag question ("haven't you?") calls for the next action, this time coming from S. Even though S issues no response, both of M and S stay in front of *Seurat2*, looking at the painting. The next turn-taking is performed by W, who has approached the painting and started reading its interpretive text, when she points at it while uttering "must have taken him a year, oh no, two!". Her index finger points at the dates provided in the title of the label ("1888-90"), a performance that expands those previously given by S and M concerning the existence of "lot of dots".

W suggests one year as the time required for making all these dots but when she reads the interpretive text anew, she repairs herself by suggesting two years instead. While contradicting her initial estimation on the time required to produce all these dots, she points at the label, indicating the specific line where the date of the painting is

displayed. This last performance is seen as a confirmation of her contradicting her initial estimation as she linked her performance to the authoritative voice of the museum; that is, the interpretive text. Then, W approaches the other two members of her group and, while standing next to M, she utters “*two years to make it*”. Even though the information used refers to the year of creation and not the duration of the actual process, this example demonstrates the interconnection of the four contexts in her use of reference as follows: the physical and institutional context through the use of the interpretive text, the personal context reflected through her own interpretation, and the social context emerging through the interaction among those visitors.

After a few seconds, M approaches the painting and points at it, indicating in a falling intonation that they need to look at its whole composition by stepping backwards. They start walking backwards, while facing the painting, when M turns to the members of his group and asks them if they still can see only dots. He immediately provides the answer (“*still dots*”) and turns his back to the painting, moving on to Room 3 while being followed by S and W.

From this incident, we can also track down the resources visitors use to detail their performances. Specifically, S draws upon the framing of the specific gallery and sees the painting in the light of the previous one, also by the same artist and painted in the same technique. Here, as Ross (1999) argues, objects’ juxtaposition “to some degree guide our attention, making salient the traits shared by juxtaposed items” (Ross 1999, 27). On the other hand, M uses his previous knowledge to suggest a way for others to look at the painting and appreciate its whole composition, whereas W uses the sources provided by the museum, that is the interpretive text.

Particularly M’s indication to step backwards is one of the most commonly occurring patterns of visitors’ looking at the specific painting; almost in half of the twenty two episodes visitors walked backwards in order to look at the painting in its whole composition. This performance did not occur with the paintings at the Horniman Museum and Gardens nor at the Wellcome Collection, although they provide enough space for visitors to move back. Even though a few visitors looked at the paintings in both of these case studies from a short distance, they did not step backwards so as to

appreciate their composition. It seems likely that this performance is closely tied to the specific painting and its painting technique, and may reveal a different range of practices related to visiting an art gallery.

W's performance involved the pervasive performance of reading the interpretive text or aspects of it aloud or silently (Leinhardt and Knutson 2004; McManus 1989a). Furthermore, her performance can function as a hook of attention for visitors who happen to be in the same perceptual range and may eavesdrop. In addition, the interpretive text is not only a means of providing information on the exhibits, but also means of indicating how to look at them. Choosing to refer to specific aspects of the exhibit -here the painting- can be seen as an indicator of how to look at it.

	M, W and S are in front of <i>Seurat1</i> . M is closer to the painting while W and S are some steps behind M, looking at the painting.
0:01.9	S turns his head and looks at <i>Seurat2</i> 's direction.
0:02.4	S steps towards <i>Seurat2</i> and points with his left hand at <i>Seurat1</i> . S: <b>The same as THAT</b> (approaching <i>Seurat2</i> ) 
0:05	M approaches W, stands next to her and, while they are both facing <i>Seurat1</i> , M lifts his right hand and performs the 'doing dots' gesture for a second.
0:06.9	W lifts her right hand and performs the doing dots gesture for four seconds. M stands to her right while S has reached <i>Seurat2</i> . S stands in front of <i>Seurat2</i> and turns his head to his left, where W and M are.
0:09	S: <b>This is (-) (.) Dad? (.)</b> M and W turn towards S.
0:10.9	W stops gesturing.
0:11	S: <b>This one is (.) to exaggerate</b> (points with right hand at <i>Seurat2</i> while holding the floor map in the same hand for five seconds).  M and W have turned slightly towards S.  

0:14.3	M and W are walking closer to S. M: <b>Big One!</b> (Opening his hands wide) <b>Yeah, you got lots of dots</b> (lifts his right hand and performs a 'doing dots' gesture) <b>in there, haven' you?</b> M is standing next to S, on his left side.	
0:17.9	W approaches <i>Seurat2</i> and starts reading the label.	
0:19.4	M steps back and looks at the painting from a distance. S is looking at the painting with his head a little shifted.	
0:20	W steps fast closer to painting's label. W: <b>Yes, it must have taken him a year (.) oh no two!</b> (lifts her right hand and points to the label, to the dates provided)	
0:22	M approaches S. W puts her hand down and turns slightly towards S and M. M is approaching and stands next to S.	
0:23.4	W steps backwards and approaches M's left side. W: <b>two years to make it.</b> W, M and S are facing <i>Seurat2</i> .	
0:26.4	M steps in front of them, lifts his left hand and points towards <i>Seurat2</i> .	
0:39.8	W joins M and S. They look at the painting from the door to room 3.	
0:53.7	M: <b>still dots? (.) Still dots!</b>	

**Example 12 (25.10.2010, 13:34 pm)**

The following example illuminates the influence of a scheduled event on the shaping of visitors' performances. This example reflects the dynamics of social interaction intertwined with the physical context in the shaping of visitors' performances

and specifically, on the design of a forthcoming “**attracting an audience**” performance. It reinforces the argument that the shaping of meaning-making at the face of the exhibit depends on the intervention of the institution (through the exhibition design, the curatorial choices and the interpretive text), the visitor and random events.

Specifically, example 13 explores how visitors adjust to the physical context and the sociality emerging in it as a pre-scheduled event -the Lunch Talk- is taking place at the time the two visitors enter Room 4. In this example we can see how events such as gallery talks or the presence of tour groups or people congregating in front of the same painting affect the other encounters that take place at the same time and shape visitors’ encounters and, therefore, their performances. Especially, in a small gallery room such as Room 4, people’s presence may attract, hinder, or change the visitors’ flow and encounters.<sup>24</sup>

In example 13, a couple, M and W1, enter Room 4 while the Lunch Talk is taking place. As such, there is a significant number of people attending the talk in this room. This Launch Talk is focused on the painting by Renoir displayed in Room 4, and hence the crowd is facing that specific painting, leaving the space in front of *Mod*, *Seurat2*, *Seurat1* and *VG2* unoccupied. M is walking fast ahead. W1 is following him slowly, carefully looking at the paintings she passes by. Upon facing Seurat’s painting *Woman Powdering Herself*, she decides to approach it. Her companion is standing in front of the *Seurat1* and *VG2* paintings, facing the crowd gathered to his left.

W1’s initial interest, along with the physical and social context of the particular moment, prompted W to design her “attracting” M as “an audience” performance in a really specific way. Specifically, W initially beckons to him but, as he is facing to his left, her calling comes to no avail. As she does not want to impose on the others attending the Lunch Talk, she immediately snaps her fingers twice to attract his attention. This gesture is situated within such a special occasion, that of a public talk in a small, crowded room. Her choice to repair her first invitation is self-initiated as she did not secure her

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<sup>24</sup> While conducting the data collection, I noted that when 12 or more people were in Room 4, the gallery space seems quite occupied, allowing for the occurrence of queuing in front of some paintings. Due to the high number of people that happened to be in Room 4 at the same time, apologies to others were commonly uttered while encountering the *Seurat2* painting.

addressee's attention. Furthermore, her choice to snap her fingers is seen as an alternative way to call M over while causing the minimum level of noise and hence disturbance and W can thus be viewed as a visitor being sensitive to the social and physical context of her visit.

W1's design of "attracting an audience" performance is seen as part of the "dancing an attitude" (Burke 1957, 9) behaviours, through which visitors display their intentions actively and publicly in order to participate or avoid an encounter with the others sharing the same space. W1 seems aware of the others' co-presence as displayed through her choice to beckon M as well as to snap her fingers to draw his attention. Beckoning gestures and snapping fingers belong to the category of "body gloss" (Goffman 1971, 129) and are means of regulating and negotiating the flow and the encounters with the exhibits.

Upon catching his attention, W1 extends her previous performance of snapping fingers by giving out another gesture, beckoning with her left hand. As M is walking closer to her, she positions herself in front of the painting allowing him space to her left side. While he is approaching, another visitor comes and positions herself at the space left unoccupied at the right side of the painting. When M is in close proximity, his partner lifts her right hand and points at *Seurat2* while facing him. She immediately names the technique used by Seurat ("*pointillism*") for this specific painting. The term *pointillism* is not mentioned in the interpretive text and therefore, its use should be treated as a recall from W1's prior knowledge that now becomes shared. This may be also seen in her elaboration of the specific identification as she goes on explaining what pointillism is ("*it is tiny tiny*"), which she repeats immediately after a second ("*it is tiny tiny*") while choosing to perform another pointing gesture but this time by using her left hand pointing at the painting's bottom left corner. Silverman (1990), who preferred the term "establishment" instead of "identification", argued that there are two different types of establishment: identification and recognition. The first is when visitors name an exhibit, or aspects of it, drawing upon the provided interpretation resources, while the latter is when visitors use their own personal context to identify the exhibits, or aspects of these. Therefore, in this example, W recognises the exhibit as she uses a term to name it which is not provided in the interpretation resources.

M, who is standing next to her, confirms his attendance through an acknowledgment token (“*yeah*”), followed by another performance from W1. This time W performs the iconic gesture of doing dots, a publicly observable performance, which in this case draws the attention of W2, who turns and faces the couple for three seconds. Although W2 is not a ratified member of the couple’s encounter, she happens to be in their “perceptual range” (Goffman 1981, 3). Meanwhile, W1 continues her turn talking (“*he is the one*”) while pointing again at the *Seurat2* painting, facing the interpretive text. This performance can be seen as a real-time annotation of her discourse to the actual exhibit. She elaborates the personal pronoun “*he*” by using a pointing gesture towards the painting. Although the portrait in this painting is of a female, the masculine personal pronoun refers to the painter and links to the previous reference; the technique used. During this performance, the intonation of W1’s voice is falling. This may happen due to her realising that there are some others in the same perceptual range. Hence, intonation is another means belonging to the category of “body gloss” behaviours (Goffman 1971, 129).

The couple then reads the interpretive text. Five seconds later, M turns and faces W1 and gives out another acknowledgment token (“*yeah*”). This token demarcates the end of his attendance as he turns his back to the painting, facing W1. She demarcates her disengagement with the painting by turning towards M after two seconds, which is further acknowledged by M as they start walking away together.

	<p>The Lunch talk is taking place. Room 4 is full with people. M is walking ahead, towards the empty space left in front of <i>Seurat1</i>. He keeps walking ahead when W1, upon approaching <i>Seurat2</i>, immediately turns towards her left where M is.</p> 
0:07.3	W1 lifts her left hand while turned towards M's side. She beckons, inviting him over, but he is not attending her performance.
0:09	She snaps her fingers twice when M attends her signal and turns towards her. She lifts her left hand and beckons to M again.

0:11	M starts walking towards W1 while she places herself in front of the painting. 
0:12.3	W2 approaches <i>Seurat2</i> as the visitor before her has moved away. She now occupies the space to the right side of the interacting couple. 
0:12.7	As M is walking towards her, W1 lifts her right hand and points at <i>Seurat2</i> while facing M. 
0:13.8	W1: <b>So this is</b> (faces <i>Seurat2</i> ) <b>pointillism. It is tiny tiny.</b> 
0:15	M is standing next to W1, looking at <i>Seurat2</i> . W1 points with her left hand at <i>Seurat2</i> . W1: <b>It is tiny tiny.</b> (Pointing at <i>Seurat2</i> 's left corner while leaning towards the painting) M: <b>Yeah.</b> 
0:18	W1 steps backwards, lifts her right hand and performs a <i>doing dots</i> gesture for a couple of seconds. 
0:18.3	W2 turns to her left and gazes towards M and W1. 

0:19.6	<p>W1: <b>He is the one (-) (-)</b>          (Pointing with her right hand while looking at the label)</p> 
0:21.7	<p>W1 places her right hand down while still standing next to M.          M and W1 are reading the label.          W2 has shifted her eyes away, looking at the painting again.</p>
0:26.7	<p>M turns and faces W1 while having his back to <i>Seurat2</i>.          M: <b>Yeah.</b></p> 
0:28.8	<p>W1 turns towards M and they walk away together.</p> 

Example 13 (15.11.2011, 13:18 pm)

Expanding further the negotiation of the “participation framework” (Goffman 1981, 226) and the moment-by-moment shaped reality of the “perceptual range” of each encounter (Goffman 1981, 3), the next incident reflects the ways three visitors who just happen to be in the same perceptual range negotiate and encourage the social interaction among them. It was mentioned in Chapter 2 that social interaction emerges not only among members of the same social group, but also among others, total strangers, including museum explainers, curators, performers, guides and the people standing next to them (Falk and Dierking 2000; Hein 1991). Most of the times, performing for attracting someone as an audience is not sufficient for anchoring joint attention; the audience somehow has to accept the invitation. If someone accepts participating in the perceptual range of the encounter and the performances occurring within it, then the perceptual range is transformed into a “participation framework” or, as vom Lehn (2002,

108) calls it, an “ecology of participation”. This framework or ecology not only occasions the ways the members of the group will experience the exhibit but also how the people who just happen to be there will experience it, as they share the same spatial space with the interacting group.

The next incident is a clear example of the ongoing negotiation of the “participation framework” (Goffman 1981, 226) among three visitors who share no previous history. We join a woman (W2) approaching *Seurat2*. There is already another visitor, a female adult (W1), standing in front of *Seurat2* reading the floor map provided by the museum upon entrance. W2 is approaching from *Seurat1* and positions herself at W1’s left side, standing to the left of the label of *Seurat2* painting. W2 flicks her gaze between the label and the actual painting for a few seconds and then steps closer to the label. W2 starts reading the label text and moves to the right side after thirty seconds, standing now in front of *Seurat2*’s right side. W1 is at W2’s left now. When W2 reaches the right side of the painting, she quickly faces again the label text and then the painting when she finally turns and faces W1 on her left. W2 observes W1 for three seconds and then asks her opinion on the painting (“*what do you think of that?*”). Upon uttering the personal pronoun “*you*”, W2 shifts her hand and points at the painting till she finishes her sentence by uttering the deictic term “*that*”, referring to the painting. W2’s gesture can be seen as a vector linking W1 to *Seurat2* painting. This vector connects the participants, linking them together either to each other or to other entities like objects (here exhibits) or contexts.

When W2 finishes her question, W1 turns and faces W2 rendering public her acknowledgement of being invited to participate. Upon W1’s turning, W2 rephrases her question by repeating her invitation (“*you like it?*”). For her second performance, W2 lifts her hand again and points at *Seurat2*, now linking the two deictic pronouns (*you* and *it*). W1 approaches W2, manifesting a sense of attendance, which however is accompanied by an absence of response. This absence prompts W2 to repeat her performance (“*did you like that?*”), this time linking the personal pronoun (*you*) by pointing at W1 with the deictic term (*that*) by pointing at *Seurat2* and thus creates a visual and verbal connection between these two.

W1 attends the performance given by W2, as she turns and faces W2 once she finishes her sentence. Almost immediately, W2 repairs her previous performances by simplifying her language use while elaborating her performance by pointing gestures. W2 rephrases her questions (“*is that good?*”) while pointing at *Seurat2* and facing her addressee (W1), linking the deictic term ‘*that*’ to the painting but also to spectator of her performance (W1).

This performance prompts W1 to face the painting and point at it without exchanging a word, a movement understood as a non-verbal way for W1 to indicate attendance and understanding. W2 attends W1's performance and follows her indication towards the painting as W2 flicks her gaze from W1 to *Seurat2*. At the same time, another woman (W3) arrives at their perceptual range from *Seurat1* and leans closer to the label at the left side of the painting. The presence of the newcomer is acknowledged by W2, who now shifts her gaze from the painting to W3. W2's shift of gaze is further elaborated by a performance given by W2 in the form of an evaluative question (“*do you like that?*”) along with a pointing gesture which further elaborates the deictic term “*that*”. This performance indicates a change of the interaction statuses of the hearer and the addressee; W2's performance is changing the addressee from W1 to W3.

W3 notices the emerging performance as she turns to her right, facing W2, and then approaches her, positioning herself between W2 and W1. Once there, W2 faces W3 who then turns and faces W1. W3 repeats W2's question (“*do you like that?*”). As no answer comes again from W1, W3 approaches the painting and turns facing W2, extending the simple evaluative question to one asking for reasons (“*why? You like it?*”). It can be seen here how the status of the participants keeps shifting as they take turns in talking. W3 has transformed from a simple spectator of the performances given by W1 and W2 into an active speaker.

W3 approaches the label on the left side of the painting and, as she reads the text, she immediately recognises the artist as the one who also made the painting next to this one, that is the *Seurat1* painting (“*the other one is there*”). While saying so, W3 points at *Seurat1*, linking the deictic adverb ‘*there*’ to the location of attention. W2 successfully attends W3's performance as manifested by her body and gaze direction. The new

location of attention prompts W2 to extend her previous performance and express herself about this painting as well (“*I love this one too*”) while also pointing towards *Seurat1*, rendering public her acknowledgement for shifting the locale of attention (linking the deictic term ‘this’ to the actual painting). Her new indication and performance is attended by W3 who then walks closer to the indicated location along with W2. Upon reaching *Seurat1*, W2 again points at the painting as well as to the one next to it (*VG2*). This case is among the few where extended interaction arises among strangers. W2 successfully attends W3’s performance and subsequently gives her reasons for her preference (“*I think it is lovely. Look at it. All painted in dots*”). While giving her reasons, W2 points at the painting while saying “*I think it is lovely*”, pausing for a while saying (“*look at it*”) to hold the ground as she approaches the painting, and then points again while giving her reasons (“*all painted with dots*”).

0:44	W1 is standing in front of <i>Seurat2</i> , reading a leaflet provided by the Courtauld Gallery which she holds in her hands. W2 is approaching <i>Seurat2</i> from <i>VG2</i> .	
0:47	W2 is standing in a distance from the painting, looking at <i>Seurat2</i> .	
0:52.8	W2 shifts her gaze to the label and steps forward (0.4) closer to <i>Seurat2</i> .	
0:59.3	W2 approaches the label and starts reading the interpretive text.	
1:30	W2 walks behind W1, positioning herself in front of <i>Seurat2</i> .	
1:43	W2 gazes towards the label and then the painting	

	
1:48.8	W2 turns and looks at W1. 
1:52	W2: <b>What do you think of that?</b> (lifts her right hand and points at <i>Seurat2</i> with the leaflet she holds for two seconds).
1:54	W1 turns and looks at W2.
1:54.7	W2: <b>You like it?</b> (points at <i>Seurat2</i> again with her right hand while holding the leaflet). 
1:56.5	W1 approaches W2. 
1:57.7	W2: <b>Did you</b> (points at W1 with right hand) <b>like that?</b> (points at <i>Seurat2</i> with her right hand) W2 places her right hand down. They face each other.
1:58.9	W2: <b>Is that good?</b> (Points at <i>Seurat2</i> with her right hand while facing W1, who looks at <i>Seurat2</i> and then W2).
2:03	W1 faces the painting, lifts her left hand and points towards <i>Seurat2</i> . 

2:05	W2 shifts her gaze and looks at <i>Seurat2</i> . W3 has approached and looks at the label.	
2:10	W2 looks at W3.	
2:10.4	W2: <b>Do you like that?</b> (Points at <i>Seurat2</i> with her right hand). W3 turns and faces W2 and then W1.	
2:11.6	W3 approaches W2.	
2:14.5	W3 stands next to W2 and looks at <i>Seurat2</i> .	
2:15.2	W2 faces W3.	
2:15.5	W3: <b>Do you like that?</b> (facing W1)	
2:20.4	W3 steps forward, closer to <i>Seurat2</i> .	
2:21.9	W2 shifts her right hand and points again at <i>Seurat2</i> with her leaflet.	
2:23.3	W3: <b>Why? You like it?</b> (points with left hand)	

		
2:24.3	W2 (while still having her right hand shifted pointing) <b>I think it is lovely.</b> (puts her hand down) <b>Look at it.</b> (approaching <i>Seurat2</i> ) <b>All painted with dots</b> (shifting right hand, pointing at <i>Seurat2</i> ).	
2:30	W3 leans towards label and reads.	
2:32.4	W3: <b>the other one is there</b> (points at <i>Seurat1</i> ).	
2:32.9	W2 turns and looks at W3's indication.	
2:34.8	W2: <b>I love this one too</b> (points towards <i>Seurat1</i> ) W3 turns and looks at W2's indication.	
2:36.6	W2 and W3 walk towards <i>Seurat1</i> .	
2:42	W2 and W3 are close to <i>Seurat1</i> .	
2:42.2	W2 points at <i>SEURAT1</i> and then to <i>VG2</i> . 	

Example 14 (02.08.2010, 12:21 pm)

### 7.2.3. Arriving second and seeing through another person's eyes

While visitors can expand or limit their “participation framework” (Goffman 1981, 226) as they wish, they also negotiate their attendance and joint attention throughout their visit. Through the analysis of the incidents in this case study it was realised that visitors tend to give out a performance whenever they re-joined their group. This performance was considered as a **public display of** them **re-joining** with the members of their community of practice.

The following incident unveils the dynamics entailed in re-joining the group after having dispersed at an earlier point. We join a male and female adult while they are both looking at *Seurat2*. M is whispering something to W and starts walking closer to the painting. After 3 seconds, W follows him in approaching the painting. Upon her re-

joining M, she gives out a description of the painting by saying “*this is all small dots*” while augmenting her performance with the iconic gesture of ‘doing dots’. Her co-visitor attends her performance as he turns and faces her once she has finished performing. M also chooses to give out an acknowledgement token (“*yeah*”) followed by him approaching W. M then names the painting’s technique twice (“*pointillist*” and “*pointillism*”), a term not provided by the interpretive text and hence is considered part of his previous knowledge. After he has finished his performance, they stand and read the label. Six seconds later, M quotes from the text he has just read that this woman in the painting is “*his mistress*” while pointing at the same time at the painting. His performance catches W’s attention as she turns and faces him while he is looking at the painting. After a second, they both move away towards *Seurat1*.

	M and W are standing and looking at <i>Seurat2</i> . M is saying something inaudible to W.
0:03	M walks ahead slowly towards <i>Seurat1</i> . 
0:06	W follows M.
0:07	W: <b>This is all small dots!</b> (W lifts her right hand and performs a doing dots gesture) M turns and faces W. 
0:09.5	M: <b>Yeah</b> (.) (Approaches W, stands next to her while turning and looking at <i>Seurat2</i> ). 

	<p><b>M: Pointillist! (.) Pointillism!</b>  (Lifts his left hand and performs a gesture while facing W).  M stops gesturing and looks at <i>Seurat2</i>.</p> 
0:13.5	M and W are looking at <i>Seurat2</i> .
0:15	<b>M: This is his mistress</b> (pointing with his left hand).
0:17.5	<p>W turns and looks at M.  M is looking still at <i>Seurat2</i>.</p> 
0:18.6	They start walking towards <i>Seurat1</i> .
0:20.9	M points at <i>Seurat1</i> from a distance while approaching it.

**Example 15 (15.11.2010, 12:02 pm)**

Additionally, previous research has raised the fact that visitors who arrive at an exhibit may experience it through the person who has been at the exhibit just before them (vom Lehn 2002), or this person's input, especially when it comes to hands-on or interactive exhibits. The following incident, which involves two visitors, is of great interest as it elaborates the ways and means that the person who arrived second has employed in order to confirm attendance. Furthermore, as she arrives second and accepts the other's invitation, this visitor sees the painting through the other's eyes; in the light of the other's performances. Additionally, this example also reflects the ways engagement is negotiated and sustained through spatial arrangements and shifts in

posture as well as through the pivotal sociocultural performances of ‘telling’ and ‘tagging’ as well as animating the painting through the use of iconic gestures.

We join M and D as they are entering room 4 from room 3. They approach the Modigliani painting and, as they turn away to face the other side of the gallery where the Van Gogh paintings are, M turns to his right and recognises Seurat’s *Woman Powdering Herself*. While D initially does not acknowledge M’s pause and turn to his right as an indicator of a shift in his interest and attention, M augments his performance by giving out a verbal referential utterance. He calls D over and invites her to look at *Seurat2*. He uses spatial deixis for locating the object of attention (“*that, that*”) and a deictic verb (“*Look*”) for inviting his companion over. In addition, his body faces the painting to indicate the direction in which D should look. Moreover as D’s torso direction is still towards the other side, one can argue that M’s performance has somehow ‘forced’ the shift in D’s gaze, as she stops looking at the other side of the gallery and looks at *Seurat2* instead.

As M is approaching the painting and attempting to finalize his previous utterance, he turns back for a second, facing D and checking her attendance. Upon reaching the painting, he situates himself on the painting’s right side while leaving space for D to occupy on his left. D has heard and noticed M’s performance and reaches him in front of the painting, occupying the space he has left for her. By publicly performing in this way, D acknowledges her attendance and subsequently acknowledges their sharing of the same visual and physical locale. Her momentary attention to the painting has been intensified through M’s performance as well as through their relationship status.

When D stands next to M, he turns and faces her to secure again her attendance and close proximity, which foregrounds the performance he gives immediately afterwards. When he secures joint attention -as displayed by their common position in front of the painting and D’s facing of the painting, he lifts his hand and starts giving out the iconic gesture of ‘doing dots’. This iconic gesture of ‘doing dots’ animates the technique used by Seurat and, at the same time, highlights the importance of this technique for the performer as it is the first aspect of the painting he is referring to. The repeated occurrence of the word ‘dot’ eight times within the same sentence is given out

simultaneously with the iconic gesture. Apart from making this gesture more vivid by accompanying it with its actual sound, the wording is also referring to the term used for addressing the technique Seurat has used for this painting. M's performance is seen as an indication for D to look at the painting while at the same time he elaborates the reasons behind his choice to perform; that is, the technique used for the painting.

M consults the label in silence for a while when he finishes reading, his gaze flicks between the label and the actual painting before he concludes his performance by saying "*they paint in small dots*". His utterance repeats the information he has previously given and somehow summarises the label's content, that is, what he found interesting and worthwhile enough to mention to D. He then reinforces his performance by indicating to D a specific way to look at the painting so as to unveil the millions of dots it features. He says and shows to D what to 'do' in order to see what he wants her to see, simultaneously verbally and non-verbally.

Here, we can see how visitors explore the exhibits in the light of their own perception. M instructs D both verbally and non-verbally on how to look at the painting; he says "*if you squint or look in the long way, I feel it's all painted with water*" while squinting as he walks backwards. D attends his performance; she squints and looks at the painting in the way he just suggested and performed. By imitating M, D sees the painting in the light of his performance. Furthermore, this example also brings forward the interconnection of the wider social context of their visit and the micro-social context of the visitors at the face of the exhibit. A noise and a few new visitors to Room 4 distract M's attention. He attempts to summarise his performance by giving out an utterance expressing an evaluation of his ("*The painting (-) ways of capturing the feelings rather than (-)'*) and then he moves on as more people have gathered nearby. While he is moving away towards the other side of Room 4, D lingers for a while, looking to her left. He then turns back and looks at D. His shift in posture and gaze can be viewed as two ways to reconfirm her attendance. D notices his pause and starts walking closer to him. A new discovery is awaiting her on the other side of the gallery space.

Interestingly enough, throughout this small interaction, one of the participants -D- has not said anything at all. Instead, she has been constantly confirming her attendance

by being physically present and in close proximity to M, following his indications and listening to him. Social interaction and social bonds between those two participants have led them to see the painting and also to choose where to go next. In addition, social interaction between those participants and the people happening to be in the same room at the same time is considered critical in shaping the duration of this couple's interaction in front of the painting under investigation. D was not only drawn to and drawn away from the painting by M's performance but has also seen the painting in and through his performance, which has shown her a specific way to actually look at the painting.

It can be argued that “**arriving**” at the exhibit “**second**” may not only lead to discovering the exhibit or aspects of it in the light of the performance of the person who had arrived there first, but it also requires in a way a public display of re-joining given by the person who arrived later, signalling the beginning of sharing attention with the members of his/her group once more. Therefore, performances at the face of the exhibits are also means of facilitating members of visiting groups who had dispersed earlier to catch up with their companions.

0:08.3	M and D enter Room 4 and start walking towards <i>Mod</i> . As they are in front of <i>Mod</i> , D turns her back to the painting and starts walking straight towards <i>VG2</i> and <i>Seurat1</i> . M: <b>That one! Look at that one.</b>
	D turns to her left and locates <i>Seurat2</i> .
	
0:10	M starts walking towards the painting. He holds a leaflet in his left hand and points it at the painting while approaching. M: <b>Look at the::</b> (turns his face towards D while walking towards <i>Seurat2</i> )
	
0:12.4	M turns and now faces <i>Seurat2</i> , while his body is slightly turned to the right, leaving space for D to the left.
0:12.9	D starts approaching <i>Seurat2</i> .

0:13	D stands on M's left side. M faces D and starts lifting his right hand.
0:14.4	M's right hand is making the <i>doing dots</i> gesture. M: <b>Dot, dot dot dot dot dot dot dot.</b> 
0:16.4	M stops gesturing. M and D both face the painting. M is reading the label silently. His body is slightly leaned towards the label's location.
0:25.1	M: <b>They paint in small dots</b> (0.2). 
0:28.3	M shifts his gaze from the label to the actual painting. He leans towards the painting.
0:28.6	M: <b>And when you squint or look in the long way</b> , (M starts stepping backwards while squinting with his right eye), <b>I feel it's all painted with water</b> . (D squints with her right eye). 
0:32	D steps backwards, to view the painting as indicated by M. M is approaching <i>Seurat2</i> and looks at it closely. 
0:34	M turns and looks at D. M steps towards D.

		
0:37	M and D are standing next to each other. M has D on his left side.	
0:39	Some noise and an incident with a flashlight distract M's attention. He turns his head towards the place where the incident occurred -that is to his left -as he is standing with his back to the window and <i>Seurat2</i> on his right.	
0:45.7	M: <b>The painting (-) ways of capturing the feelings rather than (-).</b>	
1:10.8	M starts walking away towards <i>VG2</i> and <i>Seurat1</i> . D is looking to her left while staying still.	 
1:17	M stops halfway. There are people in front of these paintings. D turns her head ahead. M turns his head backwards to D's direction. D starts walking towards M.	

1:19.8	<p>They stand next to each other.</p> 
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**Example 16 (02.08.2010, 11:11 am)**

The next incident reflects how the person who arrived second discovers the painting drawn by her co-visitor while also seeing the painting in a very specific way designed by her co-visitor. Her experience unveils the dynamics entailed when a visitor arrives second at the exhibit.

We join M and W upon encountering Seurat's *Woman Powdering Herself*. W is standing at M's right side, looking at the painting from a short distance. M approaches first and takes a close look at the painting from its left side. After some seconds, W approaches M and stands next to him, facing the painting's label. She almost immediately comments on the technique used for this painting ("it's like dots dots dots") which she reinforces by giving an iconic gesture demonstrating her verbal comment, the gesture described as "doing dots".

M extends her performance by giving her a hint on how to position herself and look at the painting for unveiling the millions of dots. By suggesting W to come and take his place, to the painting's left side, M uses his performance as a way to make W see the painting through his eyes. W accepts this invitation and approaches him, taking his place, looking at the painting as suggested by M. Meanwhile, M steps backwards and looks at the painting from a distance. After a few seconds, W returns to her previous position and scans the label text silently. After just a second, she turns and faces M to her left and another visitor arrives at the painting. M then moves away, followed by W.

In this fragment, we see how body posture may indicate a locus of attention and interest and hence, function as a means of drawing others to the indicated direction. The same applies to direction of gaze. M has publicly shown his interest in the painting by

approaching and looking at it in close detail. His attention-shifting behaviour was acknowledged by W, who reached him and the painting after a while. Upon her encounter, she verbally and nonverbally highlights the technique used for this painting; she utters the word ‘dots’ three times, while performing the iconic gesture of doing dots so as to animate the technique. Her performance is in the “perceptual range” (Goffman 1981, 3) of M, who then prompts her performance further by giving out another one. He indicates to her a way to look at the painting by placing her body closer to the wall and looking at the painting from its left angle. By doing so, he suggests that she “*can see the dots*”. Furthermore, M points to the right side of the painting, directing W’s attention and gaze so she can see the dots as he just seen them. She then follows his indication and leans towards the wall, looking at the painting from the right side.

In order to allow her to do so, M has moved back slightly to leave his space free for her to occupy. When he is finished with looking at the painting, he waits for the indication that she has also finished her encounter. The indication finally comes through the shift of her gaze from the painting onto M. They finally leave together.

0:05.6	<p>M and W arrive at <i>Seurat2</i>. M has W on his right side.</p> 
0:23.9	<p>M approaches <i>Seurat2</i>.</p> 

0:26	M leans closer and looks at <i>Seurat2</i> from its left angle. 
0:29.7	W starts approaching M and <i>Seurat2</i> . 
0:31.5	W stands next to M and reads the label W: <b>it's like dots dots dots</b> (lifts her left hand, holding a floor map and performs a doing dots gesture) 
0:33.9	M: = <b>Stay here and you can see the dots.</b> (lifts his left hand and points at <i>Seurat2</i> ) 
0:36.4	W approaches him and leans as indicated. 

0:40.9	M moves backwards and looks at the painting from a distance.
0:42	W takes his place.
0:44	W moves back to her previous position, facing the painting.
0:45.6	W leans closer to the painting.  
0:52	W regains her previous posture.
0:55.4	W reads silently the label.  
0:56.6	W turns to her left and faces M. 
0:58.7	W moves to the left slightly and reads the label. Another visitor approaches the painting and takes pictures.  
01:21	M moves away.
01:24.5	W follows him. 

Example 17 (29.03.2010, 12:00 pm)

#### 7.2.4. Telling and tagging

A couple, M and W, enter Room 4 from Room 5. This incident reveals how the personal context (previous knowledge and personal interests) interacts with the physical context (the label and the painting itself) and through social interaction blends together, building upon the visitors' previous knowledge and expanding it to an active and shared meaning-making. This bridging becomes feasible through the sociocultural means of telling and tagging.

Upon entering, M approaches *Seurat2* first, a movement justified by him immediately naming the technique used for the specific painting ("pointillism"). The specific term is not mentioned in the label text and hence, is considered part of this visitor's previous knowledge, his personal context. In addition, M turns and faces W before giving his performance, a shift in posture and gaze that can be seen as a means of securing joint attention. The term "pointillism", introduced by M, seems to be acknowledged by W who approaches M. This shift in posture and gaze possibly reflects that this specific term is part of their common ground.

Once their attention is joint, M approaches the label at the left side of the painting and starts reading it silently. Only when he discovers that the subject matter is Seurat's mistress ("it's his mistress"), he chooses to say this aloud and subsequently shares it with W who is still standing next to him, looking at the painting. M shifts his gaze from the label to the painting and gives another performance describing Seurat's technique ("Look at that! Look! Dot!"). For his performance, he uses the deictic verb 'look' twice, in an attempt to draw his friend's attention to the painting. He then gives the reason for his preference towards the specific masterpiece by saying "dot".

After a few seconds, he approaches the label and takes a picture of it with the camera he has in his pocket and after another eight seconds he takes another picture, this time a picture of the painting.<sup>25</sup> They then both position themselves closer to the painting with the man standing on its left when M says while facing the painting: "all this scale; blue and yellow; scale... Like...". This sentence foregrounds his next performance, that

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<sup>25</sup> Photography at the Courtauld is permitted; flash photography is not. See more here: <http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/gallery/visitorinfo/faq.shtml>

of stepping backwards and looking at the painting from a short distance in an attempt to see the scale of the millions of dots.

M looks at the painting for a few seconds and then approaches W, who comments on the '*millions of dots*', while accompanying her comment with an iconic gesture of "doing dots". Her performance can be considered as an acknowledgement of M's previous performances. M answers her performance by giving out an acknowledgement token ("*yeah*"), while extending his performance by highlighting the fact that Seurat has extended his technique for creating a frame for the painting, also made with dots. While he is extending his observations with this utterance, he performs a 'doing dots' gesture. His whole performance and choices should be seen as an answer to W's earlier performance. He immediately gives another performance, coupled with the previous one, as he highlights the fact that Seurat has "*used the same colours all through, but there is just, there is blue...*" which brings to an end their verbal exchanges. W approaches the painting, then the label and they move away together.

In this incident, social interaction becomes essential for visitors' meaning-making. Specifically, M recognises the painting's technique immediately when encountering it, which he performs through naming it aloud ("*pointillism*"). As the co-visitor attends his performance, she gives an acknowledgment not only of their joint attention but of their common ground in art history and aesthetics. Her performance of approaching him can be seen as a confirmation of valuing his previous performance, that of naming the technique, as she seems to share the same common ground with M. As M continues his performances at the exhibit-face, a range of art-related terms enters their discussion - such as the term "scale" and "mixing of colours"- reinforcing the previous argument about them having a common ground in the field.

M is aware of the fact that this painting is important for both of them, something that he renders public through his performances. He lets W know the reasons why he chose the specific painting while her attendance prompts his performances further. Even if in this incident we cannot explore W's verbal performances, we can assume from her non-verbal choices that she values M's performances. She animates the technique used by Seurat by giving out the iconic gesture of 'doing dots', also given by M, reflecting

their joint attention and desire to share their knowledge and experience. This bears many similarities to the concept of “islands of expertise” (Crowley and Jacobs 2002), where adults reinforce their children’s pre-existing and expressed interest in a specific subject matter. In the same sense, M here expands their “island of expertise” through his performances.

0:06	M approaches first and turns and calls W over.
0:07	M:(Turns his head to his right where W is) <b>Pointillism</b> (Lifts his left hand and performs a doing dots gesture) 
0:09.7	M turns and faces <i>Seurat2</i> again.
0:11.3	W approaches M and stands to his right side. M's left hand is slightly lifted.
0:12.8	M's lets his left hand loose while reading the label W is facing the painting.
0:16	<b>M: It's his mistress!</b>
0:21	M turns his head away and faces the painting. W is standing next to him, still looking at <i>Seurat2</i> . 
0:24.6	<b>M: Look at that! Look! Dot!</b>
0:30	M approaches the painting and takes a picture of <i>Seurat2</i> 's label with the camera he is holding. 
0:36.6	M steps back to his previous position, facing <i>Seurat2</i> .

0:38	M takes another picture, this time of the painting.
0:45	M steps slightly forward, W follows him simultaneously.
0:47	M and W both are closer to the painting, facing the painting. 
0:49.7	M: <b>all this scale; blue and yellow; scale like...</b>
0:53.8	M starts stepping backwards. W stands where she is; close to painting, facing it. 
0:55.7	M: <b>(-) distance.</b>
0:58	M approaches W again.
01:00	M stands next to W. W: <b>It's millions of dots.</b>
01:03	W performs with her left hand a doing dots gesture.
01:05	W stops her performative gesture.
01:06	M: <b>Yeah (.) crazy! he made dots a whole frame</b> (0.4) (lifts his left hand, performs a doing dots gesture).  

01:11	M: <b>turned he used</b> (with his left hand, he points at the painting while swinging his hand around to highlight the technique used) <b>the same colours all through but there is just, there is blue.</b>		
01:17	They both step backwards.		
01:21	W takes a picture of the painting from a distance.		
01:27	W takes a picture of the label.		
01:36	They leave the exhibit.		

#### Example 18 (28.03.2010, 12:24 pm)

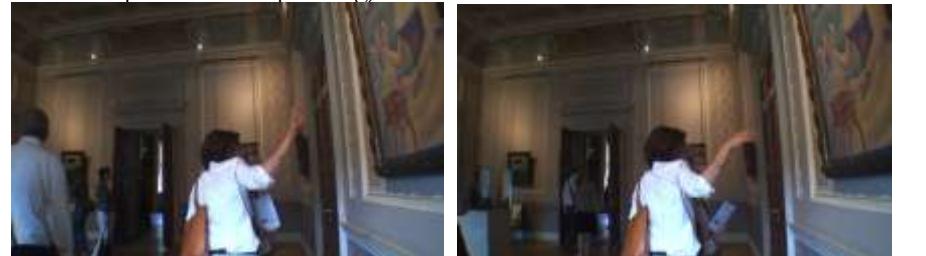
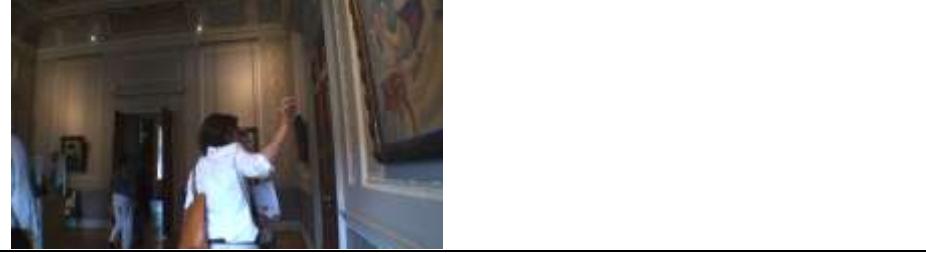
The next incident also reflects upon the dynamics of telling and tagging; this time, telling takes the form of text-echo. What is also interesting is the fact that one of the visitors takes the lead and assigns herself the role of the reader, reading aloud the interpretive text to her co-visitor. Research has highlighted the fact that especially when it comes to families, every family group has its “designated reader” (Dierking *et al.* 2001; Hirschi and Screven 1988). Usually, this person is the adult accompanying the group during the visit. This special identity frequently occurs when members of the same group do not share the same reading skills, which can be due to a variety of reasons such as vision problems or speaking another language. In these cases, one person of the group takes upon the role of the designated reader, which sometimes encompasses the role of the translator, for facilitating the members of their group.

In the following incident one of the two women, W1, is the “designated reader” (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60), reading the interpretive text aloud to W2, who is older in age. While walking from *Seurat1* to the *Seurat2* painting, these two women, already engaged in conversation, are talking about someone who lives in California. As they reach the painting, W1 starts reading the label silently while W2 is standing at her left. Another visitor, M, arrives at the painting and stands behind those two women. When W2 leans towards the label, W1 says “*it’s another of his*”, introducing the painting to W2 by linking it to the one they had just looked at. W1 positions herself closer to the label, followed by W2. The presence of those two women in front of the label blocks M’s view, who then repositions himself in order to have visual access to the label and continue his reading.

W1 starts reading the second paragraph of the label aloud. She animates the text through pointing and iconic gestures in an attempt to draw relevance and attention to what she is quoting. W1 uses her right hand and points at the label text to demarcate that she is reading it. As she is quoting from the text, she gives out an iconic gesture of doing dots while reading aloud the “*small dots of colour*” part of the text. Then, she points at the painting’s frame and rephrases the text (“*he painted far, creating more like a frame*”) moving her hand up and down, right and left to make the frame more salient. Her gesture is noticed by M, who happens to share the same space. He attends her gesture and then he moves away.

As W1 keeps reading, she once again animates the text when she comes across the phrase “*robust figure*”: she points with her right hand towards the painting. Upon reading “*delicate*” aloud, she immediately gives an iconic gesture by extending her hand, folding her three fingers and moving them slightly towards the floor. Then she continues reading and before finishing the paragraph she performs another pointing gesture towards the painting, when she reads the phrase “*frivolity of her actions*”. When W1 finishes her reading, she flicks her gaze on the painting and then moves away. W2 lingers for ten seconds, looking at the painting and the label and then moves away, joining W1.

	<p>W1 and W2 are walking towards <i>Seurat2</i> arriving from <i>Seurat1</i>.      W1 is looking at <i>Seurat2</i> while she is walking. W2 is looking at W1 while talking to her.</p> 
0:06	<p>W1 and W2 are close to <i>Seurat2</i>'s label. W1 is facing the label.</p>
0:06.9	<p><b>W2: She is up, to California.</b>      W1 is reading the label.      W2 is standing next to W1 on her left.      M is standing behind W1 and W2, facing <i>Seurat2</i>.</p> 
0:09.5	<p>W2 is approaching the label.</p> 
0:10.5	<p><b>W1: It's another of his.</b></p>
0:12.9	<p>W1 approaches W2 in front of the label. Shifts her right hand and points at the label.      M tries to read the label but W1 shifts her posture and blocks his view.</p> 

0:13.7	<p>W1: <b>Seurat's divisionist technique of painting</b> (points with right hand at the label text) <b>with</b> (doing dots gesture) <b>small dots of colour has been extended here to the dark border</b> (points with right hand at the label text).</p>
M walks to the left side of the painting in an attempt to read the label. M stands behind W2, reading the label.	
0:20.3	<p>W1: <b>He painted far (-) creating more like a frame</b> (pointing at the frame of <i>Seurat2</i>). She starts pointing from the bottom left corner to the right, then top right, top left corner, ending at bottom left corner.</p> <p>M shifts his head and follows W1's hand.</p>
	
0:24	<p>M moves away</p> <p>W1: (pointing hand is now lifted and close to her face) <b>The subject, a woman at her toilette, seems to be a return to the themes of nature and artifice, and public and private life, which Seurat had earlier explored in his scenes of outdoor recreation. The imbalance between the robust figure</b> (lifts her right hand and points to the painting).</p>
	
00:39.2	<p>W1: <b>= and the delicate domestic objects seems intentionally ironic, as does the contrast between the</b> (her hand now makes an iconic gesture meaning delicate by attaching her fingers together, which immediately shifts to a pointing gesture).</p>
	
0:45.4	<p>W1: <b>=gravity of her classical pose</b> (swings her right hand forward) <b>and the frivolity of her actions.</b> (pointing to <i>Seurat2</i>).</p>
0:49.7	<p>W1 finishes reading the label aloud and turns to face the painting.</p> <p>W2 does the same, looking at the painting.</p>

0:50	W1 steps backwards.
0:51.5	W1 slightly turns her back to W2.
0:53.2	W1 moves away. W2 approaches the label.
0:56.8	W2 shifts her head and looks at painting.
0:58	W2 looks at the bottom side of the painting.
1:01	W2 looks at the label again.
1:03	W2 turns slightly and moves away.

**Example 19 (05.07.2010, 12:50 pm)**

### 7.3. The *maiolica glass case* in Room 2

Data were collected for the specific exhibit on Mondays during June and July 2011. Of the 18 hours of filming, only incidents where visitors were performing in front of the exhibit and spoke English were saved on tape. Based on visitors' repetitive performances, **ten** incidents were reviewed and analysed, through whose detailed analysis as well as constant comparison and contrast, three patterns of performances have been identified. Each of the three categories is presented in the following section through **four** typical examples, reflecting the different combinations in the socio-cultural means visitors use for their social sharing. Visitors in these four incidents are all in pairs, two of them consisted of two female adults and two of them of a male and female adult.

#### 7.3.1. Findings

In contrast to the findings on the painting by Seurat, the majority of visitors' performances at the face of the *maiolica glass case* did not fall under the category of "attracting an audience". To be more specific, visitors did not perform in order to attract others towards the specific display, they rather discovered it together. Visitors were mainly performing "telling and tagging", through which they sustained the interaction with their co-visitors. Through telling and tagging visitors identified their attention hooks and subsequently rendered them public.

### 7.3.2. Telling and tagging

As seen in the following example, two female adults (W1 and W2) approach the *maiolica glass case* while engaged in conversation about the diversity of artists that the Courtauld Gallery's collection holds. W1 approaches the glass case first, followed by W2, who stands on W1's left side. They are engaged in an inaudible conversation as W2 turns her back to the camcorder while facing W1. These two visitors keep shifting from left to right, exploring side by side the displayed exhibits in the *maiolica glass case*. After a few seconds, W2 performs about a specific object. Her attention hook is rendered public through her use of text-echo ("1520") which is the date of the specific object. W2 immediately leans closer to the glass case to locate her attention hook. W2 uses the framing provided by the museum in order to link the interpretive text to the object accordingly; W2 uses the number accompanying the specific passage, in this case, number 2. The reader is reminded that the objects numbered 1 to 11 are displayed on the upper side of the glass case. W2 is not aware of the existence of the numbered sketch on the left side of the glass case detailing the exhibits on the upper side of the glass case, something that is reflected through her subsequent performances.

W2 initially states her frustration ("what's that?") while pointing at the glass case, demarcating her deixis ("that"). As she tries to find the relevant exhibit, she flicks her gaze from left to right while still pointing towards the glass case but finds no success, something that she demonstrates through her evaluative comment ("that's strange"). These performances demonstrate the visitors' need for the identification of exhibits, as well as hint at the possible means visitors use to carry out this function, which is pivotal for their meaning-making. We can see how visitors find it difficult to discern and identify the exhibits in this glass case as the interpretive panel does not provide information in ascending order (section 4.10) and how this difficulty affects their use of reference and the practices they use for their social interaction.

W2, through shifts in posture, flicks in her gaze and verbal accounts, along with a constant pointing gesture towards her attention loci, attempts to share with W1 her difficulty to locate the exhibit. In addition, once W2 tries to find the exhibit but fails, she points to the interpretive text in an attempt to find more information and likely link the

exhibit to the number provided in the text. W2 finds something in the interpretive text which she reads aloud ("Oh salt cellar it is"). Soon enough, W2 realises that the quoted passage does not respond to the exhibit indicated but instead to an exhibit displayed in front of her, a realisation she demonstrates publicly through her discourse and a pointing gesture towards the identified exhibit ("right, no, that's a salt cellar"). Her performance is attended by W1, who gives out an acknowledgement token in response ("yeah"). W2 can be seen returning to the authoritative voice, the text, and reading it aloud, reconfirming in a sense her 'repair' about the salt cellar. The vector created between the interpretive text and the exhibit was 'designed' by W2's pointing gestures and her discourse which are a means of directing attention while also indicating to W1 how to look at the exhibits; that is, getting informed by reading the interpretive text, the museum's provided frame of information, linking the information to the relevant exhibit.

0:6	<p>W1 and W2 are looking at the paintings, on <i>maiolica</i>'s left side.      W1 approaches first and looks at the <i>maiolica glass case</i> while W2 is talking to her.      W2: <b>you just have to show that there are a lot more artists</b>, (approaches W1 and the <i>maiolica glass case</i>) <b>you know (-) (-)</b>.      W2 stands next to W1 and looks at the <i>maiolica glass case</i> while talking with W1.</p> 
0:31	W2 moves to right with W1 doing the same.
0:34	W2: <b>No</b> (looking at the centre of the <i>maiolica glass case</i> and then the interpretive text).
0:39	W2 shifts her head and looks right, towards W1, who is talking to her.
0:42	W1 and W2 move to the right. W2: <b>Oh::!</b> (Looks at the interpretive text) <b>15 20</b> (lifts her head) (looks down again).
0:48	W2: (shifts her right hand and starts pointing at the glass case while flicking her gaze from left to right) <b>what's that?</b> (0.7) <b>that's strange, I</b> (-) (-) (shifting her right hand, pointing).
0:56	W2 moves to her right, closer to W1.
0:57	W2: <b>Oh, salt cellar it is.</b> (0.4) <b>right, no that's a salt cellar</b> (pointing to the glass case).

1:03	<p>W1: <b>Yeah.</b> W2 points again at the interpretive text while mumbling the text.</p> 
1:12	W2 shifts her head and looks at the <i>maiolica glass case</i> .
1:14	W1 moves to her left.
1:17	W2 shifts her right hand and points at the upper side of the <i>maiolica glass case</i> .
1:24	W2 steps forward and looks closer at the <i>maiolica glass case</i> .
1:36	<p>W2 steps to her right, closer to W1, with whom she starts talking. W1 attends her performance. W1 steps to her left, closer to W2 [The analysis ends here as they move away from the camcorder and the distance makes the audio unintelligible.]</p>

#### Example 20 (04.07.2011, 11:29 pm)

The next incident elaborates further the use of tagging and telling at the face of the *maiolica glass case*, while also reflecting the entailed dynamics of “arriving second”. W approaches the *maiolica glass case*, following M. She reaches the left side and puts both of her hands on the panel of the interpretive text. In addition, she shifts her hand and points at one exhibit while forming a question on identifying it (“*is this...*”). The deictic term ‘*this*’ works in tandem with the deictic gesture and reveals a sense of her intrigued curiosity to explore the specific exhibit.

W gives out an evaluative comment (“*I like this*”) which again is further explained by a pointing gesture towards the exhibit. W uses a deictic term and gesture in order to facilitate M in pin-pointing the specific exhibit out of the surrounding ones. M is attending her performance as indicated by his shift in posture; he performs a slight step to his left, closer to W, followed by a pointing gesture towards a specific passage on the interpretation panel’s right side. We see here that W’s indication is followed by another indication by her co-visitors, M, as turn-taking takes place. It seems that each one of those two visitors perform in order to attract the other as an audience towards their personal attention hooks through tagging.

W attends M’s performance as she approaches him, looking at his indication of the text while she is pointing at it. Her performance is a clear indicator of joint attendance.

What follows is an exchange of pointing gestures towards the exhibits and the text from both W and M. They seem to exchange information, as their pointing hands indicate, linking the interpretive text to their preferred exhibits. As M moves away, W performs once more for rendering public her first attention hook. She repeats the same evaluative comment (“*oh, I like that*”) while using a pointing gesture to demarcate the exhibit. Her performance is attended by M, who turns and looks at her indication but keeps moving on to the next exhibit. Her performance can be seen as an attempt to engage M again with the glass case as he is seen walking away towards the next exhibit. W follows him as they approach the *wedding chest*.

	M and W are walking closer to the <i>maiolica glass case</i> .
0:04	M is standing within a few steps from the case, looking at it. W is approaching the case. M simultaneously follows W.
0:06	W is closer to the left side of the case. M is going to the middle of the case which he explores.
0:07	W: (shifts right hand and points at left side) <b>Is this</b> ?(reaches the case, and puts her hands on the interpretive text, resting while facing the indicated exhibit)
	
0:13	M steps to his left.
0:14	W: <b>I like this</b> (pointing to the left side).
0:16	W steps to her right. M points at the interpretive text for a second and starts walking to his right.
0:20	W, standing next to him, is looking at the indicated part of the interpretive text. W shifts her right hand and points at the same passage of the text while reading it silently.
	
0:23	W shifts her head and looks at the case. She has her left hand shifted, pointing at the case while putting her right hand down.
0:25	W puts her hand down and returns to reading the text.
0:27	M steps backwards and walks behind W.

0:30	M stands next to W's right side. W flicks her gaze from text to the case and she shifts her left hand, pointing at the displayed exhibit. M shifts his left hand and points at a passage of the interpretive text in front of W.
	
0:31	W attends his indication and looks down at the text. M puts his hand down and reads the text. W shifts her hand and points at the same passage of the text for six seconds.
0:38	M stoops down and performs a few shifts in posture while reading the text.
0:40	M turns and faces the other side of the gallery room. He starts walking away.
0:41	W shifts her left hand and points at the case while facing the display.
0:42	M stops and says something to her which is inaudible.
0:43	W shifts her right hand and points at the right side of the case. M continues walking away. W: <b>Oh, I like that</b> (-) (pointing at the case while turning towards M).
0:45	M stops and turns looking at her indication.
0:47	W stops pointing and turns towards M. W starts walking away, approaching M at the <i>wedding chest</i> .
	

Example 21. (20.06.2011, 13:21 pm)

In the next incident we further explore how visitors use tagging and telling, especially text-echo as well as the framing provided by the museum, in order to anchor joint attention. We join W1 and W2 as they jointly discover the *maiolica glass case*. Once they arrive closer to the glass case, W2 points at the thematic label while turning towards W1, saying something inaudible to her. Then, W2 points again at the upper side of the display case, followed by a few pointing gestures indicating different attention hooks to W1 either within the glass case or the interpretive text.

In the middle of their joint encounter, W2 names her attention hook by using its number ("6"), which she tries to locate within the display. W1 points out to her the sketch on the left side which depicts the exhibits in the upper part. W2 attends W1's performance as she turns towards the left side and gives out an acknowledgment token ("ahd"). W2 approaches the sketch and scans it quickly. We see here how these two visitors attempt to make meaning of the displayed objects together while also facilitating each other's viewing. They use the resources provided by the museum, which in this case comes in the form of *location description*, in order to achieve joint attention.

W2 steps to the right, trying to locate the relevant interpretive text for exhibit number 6. W1 attends W2's performance and joins her, standing next to her while reading the text. W2 returns to the left side, in order to have a second look at the sketch 30 seconds after her first scan. Then W2 turns back to find another display on the right side of the glass case while W1 goes to the opposite direction to explore the left side of the case on her own, bringing their joint encounter to an end.

0:04	W1 approaches the <i>maiolica glass case</i> and looks at it from a short distance.
0:05	W2 comes closer and stands next to W1. W1 says something inaudible to W2, who turns and looks at the same glass case.
0:08	W1 turns to her right and looks away for a second. W1 turns her head straight ahead, and shifts her hand pointing towards the case. 
0:10	W2 starts walking closer to the case, reading the interpretive text on the left side. W1 stands next to W2, looking at the panel and the exhibits in the middle of the case.
0:16	W2 steps to her right and then immediately to her left, shifts her left hand and points to the thematic label. She then steps to her right, standing next to W1, looking at the text W1 is looking at.  
0:21	W1 steps to her right. W2 follows her, standing next to W1.

0:25	W2 steps to her left, turns and faces W1.
0:28	W2 shifts her left hand and points an exhibit in the upper side (0.2)
0:30	W2 puts her hand on her head and slightly turns to her right.
0:34	W2 shifts her left hand again and points to the right side (0.2) W1 attends her indication.
0:36	W2 places her hand on her chest. They both look straight ahead at the case.
0:39	W1 stoops down and forwards and steps to her right. 
0:42	W2 follows W1, and looks where W1 is looking at.
0:44	W2 steps to her left, shifts her left hand and points out a passage from the interpretive text.
0:47	W2 shifts her pointing gesture to another passage on her right while stooping forward, looking down on the panel.
0:48	W2 stands up and turns to her right, facing W1.
0:50	W2 turns and looks towards the case while still pointing at the label text. W1 approaches W2.
0:52	W2 shifts her left hand and points from the text to the right side of the case.
0:53	W2 shifts her pointing gesture from right towards the part of the display case, just in front of her.
0:55	W2 also shifts the right hand and points towards the right side while simultaneously pointing at the left side.
0:56	W1 stops pointing, shifts her left hand now and points at one of the items displayed in the glass case (0.3) and then, at the panel while starting reading a passage aloud (0.8).
1:07	W2 takes her hand away.
1:09	W2 points at the panel again. W2: <b>six</b> (points at the exhibit in the centre very briefly). W2 puts her hand on her mouth and shifts her head, looking at the upper side of the case.  
1:12	W2 points at the upper side of the glass case but she is not sure if she is pointing at the right exhibit so she stops her pointing half way.

1:14	W1 then points at the sketch. 
1:15	W2 attends her gesture. W2: <b>Aha::</b>
1:17	W2 steps to her left and looks at the sketch. W1 approaches her.
1:19	W2: <b>six::</b> (looks at the panel). They both step to the right. As they walk by the panel, W2 is looking down on the text while W1 is looking around, towards the wedding chest and then again the maiolica case.
1:23	W2 shifts her left hand and points at the panel on the right side. W1 stands next to W2, on her right side.
1:25	W2 lifts her head and looks at the upper side of the case, then down on the text,
1:29	W2 flicks her gaze from text to the upper case (0.2), to the text (0.3), again to the upper case.
1:41	W2 steps to her left, approaching closer to the sketch. W1 follows W2 slowly.
1:46	W2 starts walking to the right side, walking in front of W1, who now steps backwards leaving some space unoccupied for W2.
1:48	W2 stops while walking and looks down on the panel in the middle of the case.
1:49	W1 stands next to W2, on her left, and slightly leans forward to read the panel. W2 turns towards W1 side and looks down on the panel.
1:51	W2 flicks her gaze from the left side to the right, looking down at the interpretive text W2 shifts her left hand and points to the text
1:52	W1 moves to the left, looking down to the panel, scanning the text. W2 moves to her right, looking down to the panel, scanning the text.
2:07	W2 turns and faces the rest of the gallery behind her and moves towards the <i>wedding chest</i> .

**Example 22 (04.07.2011, 11:19 am)**

### 7.3.3. Attracting an audience

The negotiation of attention is of pivotal importance to the social dimensions of the museum experience. In example 23, two visitors address different exhibits while in the same perceptual range, with W exploring the right side of the glass case while M is looking at its left side. This is a typical example of the means visitors use in order to negotiate their joint attention as well as start their shared meaning-making when compared to other examples across the three case studies. It is the only example that involved a visitor physically calling the other over but, when contrasted to examples 20 and 21, it can reinforce our understanding of the range of means visitors use in order to attract the others and successfully achieve joint attention.

As they both approach different sides of the glass case, W almost immediately points towards her attention hook. M, however, is engaged in his own explorations, something that prompts W to repair her initial performance by turning to her left, facing M, while still pointing at the same exhibit. Her shift in gaze from the glass case on her co-visitor aims in monitoring his attendance while also functioning as a request for his gaze. While W repairs her performances in this way, M is still not paying any attention. For a third time, W turns towards M and shifts her left hand towards M while facing him, stepping to her left, extending her hand and grabbing M's right hand. Then W steps to her right and points at the-already twice indicated- exhibit. Her repaired performance creates a visual vector between M and W and in extension, with the glass case. Her attempt to grab her addressee belongs to the same category of performances visitors have used, in other analysed examples, such as snapping fingers and whistling (see examples 13 and 25). These performances constitute attention devices that facilitate, if not force, the anchoring of attention. Even now, after W's third performance, she fails to attract M as an audience.

W stops performing for nine seconds. Instead, she is standing and looking at the right side of the case. After these seconds, W points towards the right side of the glass case again. This time, M is closer to her but still not attending her performances. Instead, M is now looking at the centre of the glass case. W repairs her performance by stepping to her left, closer to M, turning towards him and starting to talk. Her repair is again seen as a request of an embedded new action from M; W requests M to display some level of

attendance, even just momentary. This time, M seems to attend W, an acknowledgment displayed through his shift in posture. Once M shows attendance, they disperse addressing different exhibits again. W's performance manages to rejoin her with M for a moment and then they continue their encounters individually. M moves away, signifying his disengagement, followed by W. As they move to the adjacent painting, M is heard expressing his frustration, as he could not find the object described in the second part of the interpretive text. His performance attracts W's attention as she then approaches the glass case's right side, looking at the interpretive text, pointing at it as she is reading the provided information. She seems to understand what M meant and then moves away again towards the paintings.

0:04	M is approaching the <i>maiolica glass case</i> , looking at the upper side of the display.
0:06	W approaches M and stands next to him, on his right side, looking at the glass case.
0:09	M points at the upper right side of the wall, W attends his performance, turns to her right and looks above.
0:11	M stops pointing. W shifts her gaze from right to left upper side of the ceiling.
0:12	W shifts her head and looks at the glass case.
0:13	M starts approaching the case, looking at its lower left side.
0:14	W attends his performance and starts walking closer to the right side of the case
0:17	W shifts her left hand and points towards the right side of the case. M stands and looks at the left side of the case. W walks closer to the glass case. 
0:18	W turns to her left, where M is, and looks towards him while extending her left hand, pointing towards the glass case. M is still looking at the left side of the glass case. 
0:19	W turns towards M and shifts her left hand towards M while facing him. W steps to her left and extends her left hand, grabbing M's right hand.

0:21	W steps to her right and uses her left hand to point to the case again It cannot be seen whether M is attending as he is out of the camcorder's angle	
0:25	W puts her hand down as M has stepped to his left. W steps to her left looking at the case.	
0:30	W extends her left hand again and points at the same direction while slightly turning to her left where M can be seen (he is walking towards W).	
0:32	M stands closer to her, looking at the case but not at her indication. W leans to her left, closer to M while pointing at the same direction. M leans to his right, closer to W, attending to her performance.	
0:35	W puts her hand down. W and M stand close to each other, facing the same glass case but different objects.	
0:45	W steps to her left and slightly leaning forward in order to read the interpretive text. M steps to his left, looking at the displayed objects	
0:48	M moves to his left, walking away	
0:51	W shifts her head, looks at the upper side and then turns to her left, following M.	
0:54	M can be heard saying: " <b>It seems it does not say which one that is</b> ". W: <b>Sorry?</b> M: <b>it does not say which one that is, it doesn't.</b>	
01:01	W returns to the case and approaches the left side. She shifts her left hand and points to the interpretive text (0:2), which she starts reading.	
01:07	W shifts her head and steps backwards, looking at the upper side of the case. W turns to her left and walks towards the adjacent paintings.	

Example 23 (27.06.2011, 11:23 am)

#### 7.4. *Two sculptures by Degas*

Data for the *two sculptures by Degas* was collected during July and August of 2011. From the 16 hours of filming, only incidents when visitors were performing in front of, or around, the exhibit were saved on tape while, of these incidents, a number was rejected due to either poor audio/video quality, or the language of visitors' discourse which was other than English. Based on visitors repetitive performances, **ten** incidents

were analysed by drawing upon the transcription of the verbal and non-verbal behaviours unfolding in each incident. These ten incidents and the embedded performances fall under the three aforementioned categories of performances (attracting an audience, telling and tagging, and animating through “displaying doing”). Four examples are presented in the following sections as these are considered to be typical examples of the range of performances emerging in front of the specific exhibit.

#### 7.4.1. Findings

Visitors shared their interest in the specific exhibit by naming the artist (“*Degas*”) or the type of the exhibit (“*sculptures*”), elaborated further through pointing gestures towards the exhibit and shifts in their posture. Once again, the pivotal importance of identification comes to the foreground of visitors’ shared encounters as visitors tend to name the exhibit or point at it in order to share it with their co-visitors.

#### 7.4.2. Attracting an audience

As has been noted for both the *maiolica glass case* and the *Seurat painting*, visitors performed to attract their co-visitors and secure joint attention. The next example involves W1 and W2 who arrive from the left side of the gallery room to the podium with the sculptures. W1 arrives first, looking at the sculptures and positioning herself in front of the left side of the podium. After a couple of seconds, W1 turns to her left, where W2 is, and calls her over by using *person reference* (“*Maria?*”).

W1 points at W2’s direction and, immediately after that, twice at the exhibit, linking her addressee to her own attention hook by creating a visual vector, which is considered a representation of a dynamic relation between those linked (Jewitt and Oyama 2001). The visual vector enforces the verbal summoning and successfully manages the negotiation of attention. Specifically, the verbal summoning is carried out through person reference, which is an easy and efficient means of identifying who is included in, and who is excluded from their perceptual range. Person reference and gaze are ways for visitors to discern the “regions” (Goffman 1959) of their performances, and therefore distinguish who is involved in or excluded from them.

Next, W1 moves to her left and looks at the exhibit. As W1 steps closer to the left side, she moves out of the camcorder's angle. After a couple of seconds, W1 can be heard naming what she had previously indicated to W2. This second performance may be seen as a 'repair' of her first performance to attract W2 as an audience. For the second performance, W1 identifies her attention hook by naming it ("sculptures") and its artist ("Degas"). The second performance manages to attract W2's attention, as she starts approaching W1. W2 positions herself on W1's right side and looks at the sculptures when W1 starts approaching W2. Once W1 is closer to W2, she extends her previous performances by giving out a verbal comment which is inaudible. W1 can be seen though pointing at the sculpture while addressing W2. W2's attention has shifted to a nearby painting, although W1 is trying to catch her attention. W2 approaches the painting. W1 eventually gives up trying to engage with W2 and follows her.

00:13	W1 approaches the sculptures from left. She positions herself in front of the podium.
00:14.4	W1 turns to her left, looking towards W2.
00:15.3	W1: <b>Maria?</b> 
00:16.3	W1 points with her right hand to W2 and immediately afterwards, twice to the sculptures while turning and looking at them. 
00:17	W1 moves to her left and approaches the sculpture on the left side of the podium, moving out of the camera's angle
00:21	W1: <b>sculptures (.) Degas</b>
00:23	W2 walks in front of the podium with her right hand shifted and stops when she reaches its right corner.
00:24	W1 is looking at the sculptures. W1 approaches W2.
00:25.6	W1: <b>This is (-)</b> (points at the sculpture on the right & walks closer to W2) 
00:27.7	W2 moves to her right and shifts her attention to a nearby painting.
00:31	W1 approaches and stands next to W2, looking at the painting.

Example 24 (18.07.2011, 13:17pm)

The second example of “attracting an audience” allows the exploration of the **alternative means** visitors may use to carry out this specific performance. In the same manner that a visitor snapped her fingers to attract M’s attention in front of the *Seurat painting* (example 13), here the visitor **whistles** to attract his co-visitor’s attention.

Specifically, M1 and M2 walk by the podium with M1 heading ahead fast, followed by M2 who, upon noticing the sculptures, stops and starts reading the interpretive text. Once he finishes reading, M2 turns to his right towards M1 and performs to attract him as an audience; M2 whistles while facing M1. His performance is successful as M2 turns and faces M1. His attendance is acknowledged by M2 as he performs anew by shifting his right hand and pointing towards the right side of the podium. The next performance is carried out by M1, who starts walking towards M2. Once M1 approaches, M2 performs anew to clarify his attention hook and hence, explaining his performance; M2 names the artist (“*Edgar Degas*”) while pointing at the sculptures. M1 offers an acknowledgment token (“*Oh*”), which is also an evaluative token, reflecting surprise and admiration. However, as soon as he gives out the token, he flicks his gaze between the sculptures and the interpretive text and turns his back again to the sculptures, walking away.

The previously mentioned two examples may reflect that visitors attract each other’s attention based more on the social bonds between them rather than on the sharing of information; that is, visitors attending their co-visitors’ performances as a gesture of courtesy rather than as information sources.

0:10.7	M1 approaches the podium, arriving from its left.
0:13	M2 joins M1 and looks at the label on the left side of the podium. 
0:14.5	M1 steps to his right and turns his back to M2, looking ahead to the rest of the gallery. M2 is still reading the label on the left while having slightly stepped to his right.
0:15.9	M1 moves away. M2 looks at the sculpture on the right side of the podium.
0:17	M2 turns to his right and calls M1 over. 
0:19	M2 whistles to M1. M1 turns, facing M2. M2 shifts his right hand and points at the right side of the podium. 
0:19.8	M1 starts approaching M2.

0:21	M2: <b>Edgar Degas</b> (still pointing) (-) (-) (facing M1) M1 stands next to M2, on his right side. 
0:24.8	M1: <b>Oh!</b> (looking at the sculptures) M2 stops pointing. M2 is reading the right label. M1 shifts his gaze and looks at the sculptures. 
0:28	M2 flicks his gaze from the right label to the sculptures.
0:29	M1 turns to his right and looks away. M1 starts walking away. M2 turns to his right and follows M1. 

Example 25 (01.08.2011, 11:45 am)

#### 7.4.3. Arriving second

The next incident explores the ways in which visitors experience the same exhibits only by the virtue of “arriving second” (vom Lehn 2002, 96). It highlights the use of shifts in gaze and posture for visitors to reunite, while acknowledging at the same time

co-presence. As in the case of the painting by Seurat, visitors use their bodies to display joint attendance.

Specifically, W1 and W2 are walking towards the podium. W2 gets distracted by the adjacent painting, which she decides to approach. At the same time, W1 attends the sculptures and reads the relevant interpretive text. After a couple of seconds, W2 approaches W1 and stands next to her, a performance indicating joint attendance and attention. W2 performs a series of shifts in posture that can be interpreted as indicators of engagement with the exhibits (for example, W2 is leaning forward in order to read the label texts). Once W1 moves to her left, W2 follows her and they both move away.

0:05.3	W1 and W2 approach the podium from the right. W1 is looking at the podium while, W2 turns to her right towards a painting.
0:06.9	W2 approaches the painting and looks at it carefully. W1 stops closer to the podium and looks at the label mounted on its right side. W3, a stranger, is also looking at the same label with W1. 
0:08.7	W1 shifts her gaze from the label on the sculptures. W2 takes her eyes away from painting and turns towards W1's direction.
0:11	W2 steps closer to W1 and stands next to her, on her right side. W1 and W2 both look at the podium, and then at the label on its right. 
00:13	W2 stoops forward in order to read the right label. W1 shifts her gaze from the label on the right sculpture and steps to her left.
00:14.5	W2 stands up again and looks at the sculptures.
00:15.8	W2 steps to her left. W1 starts walking away.
00:16.7	W2 follows W1.

**Example 26 (18.07.2011, 13:04pm)**

#### 7.4.4. Telling and tagging

The importance of ‘telling’ in the museum experience has been argued in Chapter 3 along with the essence of ‘tagging’ through pointing gestures to an exhibit. In the following incident, visitors use another medium rather than their hands to perform their tagging, a **mobile phone**.

Due to reasons discussed in Chapter 5, the Discourse of this incident was not fully captured. Despite this limitation, my research is focused on the dynamics of the new medium, the mobile phone’s camcorder. What is important here is the fact that taking pictures is a common behaviour within the gallery space, especially in science centres (Gammon 2003). For this research, taking a photograph is more than an indicator of attention; it is a sociocultural means that indicates visitors’ attention hooks. Taking pictures is considered a pointing device, an alternative way to point and anchor attention on something in the visual locale. It is also a performative means in a twofold way. Firstly, it constitutes an observable and a reflective performance, as other people in the gallery space can see someone taking a picture. In addition, apart from being connected to a person’s identity, taking pictures is also a social performance. According to van Dijck (2008, 62) “pictures become more like spoken language as photographs are turning into the new currency for social interaction”. Photographs are like souvenirs, tools for remembrance and reminiscence, which are subsequently shared with others (van Dijck 2008). Hence, taking photographs in the museum is both a memory tool and a communicational device moving “from sharing (memory) objects to sharing experiences” (van Dijck 2008, 60).

The following three adult women (W1, W2 and W3) are attracted to the podium because of W1’s expressed interest. W1 approaches the podium and takes a picture of the sculptures while W2 and W3 wander around the gallery. W2 walks in front of W1, going straight ahead, when W1 attempts to grab her hand. W1’s performance is seen as an expression of her desire to get the other two engaged with the sculptures. W1 wants to take a picture of W2 and W3 with the sculptures, a desire expressed through W1’s pointing gesture towards the exhibits. What follows is a negotiation between W2 and W3: W2 beckons to W3, who is not yet in the camcorder’s range, prompting W1 to repair her previous performance. W1 points anew towards the sculptures, indicating to them where

they should position themselves. Their performances attract W3's attention as she approaches the podium. Once W3 walks closer, W1 points towards the sculptures again for the third consecutive time. This time, W3 positions herself behind the two sculptures as indicated by W1, and W1 takes a picture by using her phone. W1 starts moving away followed by W2. W3 lingers at the podium for a while, looking closer at the sculptures and the relevant interpretive text.

0:11	W1 is approaching podium from left.
0:12	W1 shifts her phone and takes a picture of the sculptures. 
0:18	W1 moves to her right while still trying to take a picture of the sculptures. 
0:26.4	W1 puts down her phone and turns to her left and looks away. 
0:29.3	W2 is walking in front of W1, looking ahead and yawning. 
0:30	W1 shifts her left hand and attempts to grasp W2's hand while looking at her direction.
0:31.9	W2 moves straight ahead and positions herself closer to the right sculpture.
0:32.7	W1 shifts her left hand and extends it, while pointing to the sculptures

	
0:34	W2 steps ahead while facing W1.
0:34.6	W2 beckons W3 to attend.
0:35.2	W1 turns to her right and points once more to the sculptures while facing W3. 
0:36	W3 walks towards the podium.
0:37	W1 points once again to the sculptures.
0:40	W3 walks around the podium and positions herself where W1 was pointing to. 
0:41	W1 shifts her phone again and takes a picture of the sculptures. 
0:44	W2 is looking at W3 and steps to her left, away from the podium.
0:49.6	W1 puts her phone down and looks ahead. W2 turns and looks at her right.
0:50.7	W1 walks to her right, closer to W2 and the right sculpture. 
0:52.4	W3 is approaching W2. W3 is looking at the right sculpture. W2 is looking ahead where W1 is heading to.
0:53.8	W2 is walking behind W1. W3 is still looking at the right sculpture's back side while walking ahead.

0:57	W3 positions herself in front of the podium, on its right side and looks at the right label.
0:58.3	W3 shifts her gaze from the label text to the sculptures.
1:01	W3 flicks her gaze between the left label and left sculpture.

### Example 27(18.07.2011, 13:15pm)

## 7.5. Discussion

This chapter offered an analysis of eighteen strips of interaction emerging in front of three different types of exhibits within the same institutional context that enriches our understanding of visitors' experiences in an art gallery. Through these strips of interaction, the fact that there is not one type of museum experience even when it comes to the same exhibit becomes salient. Instead, visitors actively and momentarily create different perceptual ranges and "participation frameworks" (Goffman 1981, 226) in which those who are selected to participate are responsible for the shaping of the forthcoming experience.

Visitors' performances in front of an exhibit can initiate, occasion, hinder and sustain their companions' engagement. By choosing to perform when encountering an exhibit of their personal interest or liking, visitors share their attention hooks with their group members. This desire for sharing, as seen in the above examples, is initiated by an "**attracting an audience**" performance.

Visitors invited others to the exhibit by using mainly **person reference** and **deictic verbs** such as "look", "come", and "check". Additionally, as seen in more than half of the forty-two incidents analysed for the Courtauld Gallery case study, visitors used other sociocultural means of attracting their co-visitors over, such as text-echo, snapping their fingers, whistling, beckoning, direction of torso and gaze, physically pulling others over, and pointing gestures.

Co-presence may shape the experience one has while encountering the exhibits by affecting the social context, specifically the perceptual range in which the exhibits are viewed. As seen in the example 19, the pair of two female visitors experience the Seurat painting simultaneously with M, a total stranger to them. The pair is blocking M's

viewing, as he can be seen repositioning himself to read the interpretive text. Visitors' physical arrangement and their orientation towards the exhibits or the interpretive text not only shape their own experience but also the experience of those happening to share the same space. Visitors' physical positioning seems to create possible asymmetries in the access to the exhibits and subsequently, to the ongoing action and interaction (Heath and vom Lehn 2003; vom Lehn *et al.* 2001). These asymmetries are likely to lead to different types of the experience as "participants' orientation to each other and to any artefacts that play a significant role in their joint activity can be expected to affect the nature of their participation" (Wells 1998, 315).

The analysis has indicated the fact that visitors' performances commonly address the following communicative functions: a) **identification** of interest, exhibit, and subject-matter's identity, b) **naming** the artist and the technique c) **description** of the subject matter or technique and d) **evaluation**. These categories concur with those suggested by the relevant literature review (Allen 2002; Borun *et al.* 1996; Hooper-Greenhill *et al.* 2001) while also highlight the fact that visitors' meaning making unfolds gradually with identification, naming and sometimes evaluation as the initial stages for staging a further performance. Which communicative function will foreground the next performance is a choice emerging through the dynamic interconnection of the physical, social and personal context of that particular moment, day and group of visitors.

From the analysis of the three exhibits at the Courtauld Gallery the occurrence of text-echo was a recurring verbal performance, especially in the case of Seurat's painting *Woman Powdering Herself*. Specifically, the vast majority of visitors' performances included and unfolded on a basis of the provided interpretive text, with visitors highlighting the identity of the portrayed woman ("Seurat's mistress") and the fact that Seurat extended his technique to the painting's frame. It was also revealed that visitors' performances in more than half of the examples used either the artist's name or named the technique used (*verbal performance*) to direct and catch attention along with shifts in posture and pointing (*nonverbal performances*) and often, the name of the co-visitors, the addressee (*verbal performance*).

Visitors, when referring to Seurat's technique, used the term *pointillism* or a more descriptive term ("lots of dots"), often accompanied by animating gestures of "doing dots". There is no mention of the term *pointillism* in the interpretive text and hence, its use presupposes a relevant prior knowledge. As the visitor uses this term to refer to the technique, he/she creates a "common ground" on which shared meaning-making is based and successfully prompted. For the two sculptures by Degas, visitors quoted only the name of the artist ("Degas"), the subject-matter ("dancers") and the type of the exhibit ("sculptures") while for the *maiolica glass case*, the date of the exhibits ("1520") and their accompanying number ("number 2", "number 6"). Also, a few performances were considered to have been influenced by the art institutional context. These include visitors stepping backwards in order to appreciate the exhibits' composition, art related terminology detailed visitors' discourse and performances (such as the iconic gestures indicating the technique used for the Seurat's painting) and a range of "body gloss" (Goffman 1971, 129), which facilitates visitors' encounters while in the same space.

## 8 | The Horniman Museum and Gardens: *African Worlds* Gallery

In this chapter, I present the findings from the analysis of the data collected for the case of the Horniman Museum and Gardens. The reader is reminded that three exhibits were selected from one of the gallery rooms exhibiting the *African Worlds* exhibition. The *Yoruba: a celebration of African Art* painting is presented first, discussing the performances emerging at the face of this exhibit, followed by the *Life after Death* glass case and the *two African wooden statues*. For each exhibit, clear examples of visitors' performances are described and analysed, representing each one of the categories of performances identified. The chapter recapitulates with a brief discussion on these patterns and draws the initial comparisons among those three exhibits, leading to the more detailed discussion following in Chapter 9.

### 8.1. Findings

The analysis of the visitors' performances at the face of the three exhibits was based on the patterns identified for the two aforementioned case studies, the Courtauld Gallery and the Wellcome Collection. The three main categories of **attracting an audience; telling and tagging** and **animating through “displaying doing”** formed the three categories for the analysis of the data collected for the Horniman Museum and Gardens, along with the two subtle dimensions of performing in the museum; that of **arriving second** and **seeing through another person’s eyes**.

The aforementioned categories may all apply to the same strip of interaction as visitors progress their ongoing interaction, constantly reshaping their performances and the sociocultural means used in order to achieve joint attention and shared meaning-making. Although visitors keep shifting their performances and change roles through interaction, the “attracting an audience” performance precedes all the others as it opens up the perceptual range to the other co-visitors, triggering the anchoring of joint attention.

The following sections present the ways visitors initiate, prompt, and share meaning-making with their groups and possibly with others with no previous history

through their given performances. The incidents analysed in the following sections are interesting and clear examples that describe common or unique practices visitors use to achieve joint attention and hence shared meaning-making. Furthermore, these incidents provided the basis for the detailed analysis of what is happening at the face of the three exhibits, pinpointing the interwoven interaction of the physical, institutional, personal, and sociocultural context for the occasioning of each performance. Through these examples, the resources and sociocultural means visitors used for detailing their performances were explored, including the resources the institutional context provides them with, along with those emerging through the social encounters with each other.

## **8.2. *Yoruba: a celebration of African art: painting***

Data was collected during February 2011, summing 42 hours of filming. As with the case studies of the Wellcome Collection and the Courtauld Gallery, only incidents involving visitors who speak in English and performed in front of the exhibit were saved on the tape. **Fifteen** incidents were analysed as representative examples of the range of visitors' performances at this exhibit-face based on the repetitive patterns of performances that emerged throughout the dataset. **Nine** of them are presented in the next sections as these are considered to be typical examples of the range of the sociocultural means visitors used in front of the specific exhibit.

### **8.2.1. Attracting an audience**

“Attracting an audience” involves, as previously mentioned, visitors actively inviting others to join them. Apart from actively inviting others, visitors can encourage others to see the exhibit through their shifts in posture and gaze, without verbally constructing an invitation.

In the following example, W1 is walking ahead while noticing the painting section to her left. She approaches the concrete column that stands in front of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting, leans on it and looks closer at the specific painting. W2 is approaching W1 while facing the painting section. Once W2 stands next to W1, they both turn to their right, flicking their gaze to the next painting and subsequently the

third one as they move towards the *Egyptian glass case*. This example provides further insight into the dynamics of co-presence, not only in terms of attracting an audience and jointly encountering the same exhibit, but also of signifying the end of the joint viewing.

0:06.2	W1 is approaching the painting section.
0:09.5	W1 leans on the concrete column and looks at the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting 
0:09.9	W2 is approaching W1, facing the three paintings. W2 stands for a second to W1's right side.
0:10.9	W2 arrives next to W1 and they simultaneously turn towards their right, gazing at the next painting. 
0:11.9	They walk slowly ahead, looking now towards the third painting on the left
0:13.6	They move on to the <i>Egyptian glass case</i> 

**Example 28 (2011-02-05, 15:00 pm)**

In the next incident, two male adults (M1 and M2) approach the painting section mainly by the virtue of co-presence. The analysis of this incident bears many similarities with example 28, as these visitors manage to attract each other to the specific exhibit only by virtue of being co-present. Also, example 29 sheds light on the negotiation of the physical space as visitors linger their pace, allowing time for the other to pass by.

Specifically, M1 walks ahead and approaches the painting section. He stands next to the concrete column and looks at the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting. M2 is approaching him and faces the painting section; specifically, the two paintings next to the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting. M1 notices the *Brazilian altar* and steps to his left, looking closer and in detail at its content. The space in front of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting is left unoccupied for a second, when M2 starts walking closer. Halfway, M1 moves away from the altar and walks backwards, passing by the paintings, making M2 halt his walk and let M1 go through first. Once M1 has passed and moves to the *Egyptian glass case*, M2 approaches and explores the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting, and then the painting next to it. After a few seconds, M2 moves to the *Egyptian glass case* where M1 is and joins him.

	M1 walks ahead towards the painting section. M2 follows M1 slowly.
0:06	M1 is standing next to the column, turns and looks at the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting.  
0:06.9	M1 starts approaching the <i>Yoruba painting</i> .
0:09.4	M2 arrives, stops halfway from the paintings and looks at <i>paintings 2 and 3</i> . M1 is approaching the <i>Brazilian Altar</i> .
0:11.6	M2 turns to his left and looks ahead.
0:12.4	M2 starts walking to the left where M1 is. M1 steps to his right and faces the <i>Brazilian altar's</i> right side. 
0:13.6	M1 steps ahead to his right and starts walking away while facing the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting. M2 stops and waits for M1 to move on.

		
0:15	M2 looks at <i>painting 2</i> and moves on to the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting.	
0:17.7	M2 stands closer to the <i>Yoruba</i> 's label and puts his glasses on. M1 moves away to <i>Egyptian glass case</i> . M2 reads the label.	
0:20.8	M2 takes off his glasses and starts walking to his right, looking at <i>painting number 2</i> .	
0:23.9	M2 moves on and joins M1 at the <i>Egyptian case</i> .	

**Example 29 (2011-02-05, 14:30 pm)**

Apart from discovering the exhibit through shifts in posture and gaze, visitors also actively invited others to the painting. The following example is the only example of visitors making use of their information leaflet captured during my fieldwork and it involved a female adult (W) and a female and male child (D and S) being in front of the *Egyptian glass case* with W reading the exhibit's thematic label aloud to D and S.

S is holding the African Contemporary leaflet. W's telling is interrupted by S when he notices that the pictures in the leaflet he is holding are those displayed at the painting section. Once he realises that, he performs to attract the others as an audience by using a deictic verb ("*look*") which he further elaborates with a deictic adjective ("*that*"), linked by a pointing gesture to another deictic adjective ("*that*") indicating a relevance between those two ("*that's the same thing of that*"). The first deictic adjective refers to the picture in his leaflet and the other one to *painting number 2*. In addition, the adjective *same* bears a

contrasting sense that brings forward identified similarities between those two indicated loci.

His performance catches W's attention as she approaches him and looks at the painting section. S steps to his left, approaching the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting when W utters an acknowledgement token ("yeah") followed by an elaboration on the origin of the exhibits ("it's all African paintings"). S extends his first performance, repairing it in a sense, by bringing the leaflet in front of the relevant painting (number 2), for facilitating the others to draw visual links between the leaflet and the actual painting, as well as to understand his performance. For this performance, S uses a deictic verb ("look") to call his audience and then shifts the leaflet closer to the painting while elaborating his gesture ("mini version"). His performance is attended by W who gives out an evaluative comment ("different colours, beautiful aren't they?") consisting of a tag question ("aren't they?") which calls for the next embedded action. D answers W's question ("the right-hand is") allowing their interaction to continue. W moves on and approaches the *mask glass case*, signalling the end to this interaction.

S repeats his previous performance; that of linking the pictures in the leaflet to the actual paintings by using the same deictic verb ("look"), four deictic adjectives ("this"; "that"; "this"; "that") and four pointing gestures (one towards the leaflet, then at *painting number 2*, then at the leaflet and then at *painting number 3*) while turning to his right where the members of his group are. Once he realises they are no longer paying attention, he moves on and joins them, bringing to the fore the fact that a performer needs to occupy and hold the gallery floor as others attend to his/her performance (Sacks 1992).

	<p>W can be heard reading aloud the text from the <i>Kemet</i> label when S notices that the leaflet he is holding has pictures of the paintings exhibited next to him. S starts walking towards the painting section while looking at his leaflet.</p> <p>S: <b>Hey look. That's the</b> (.) (points at <i>painting 2</i>) <b>the same thing of that and:::</b> (unfolds his leaflet).</p> 
0:11	W approaches him, standing behind him in front of <i>painting 2</i> .
0:12	S steps to his left facing the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting.
0:12.7	W: <b>yeah it's all African paintings.</b>
0:14.7	<p>S: <b>Look (.) mini version</b>          (shifts his leaflet with his left hand, placing it in front of <i>painting 2</i>)</p> <p>W: <b>different colours, beautiful aren't they?</b>          D: <b>the right-hand is.</b></p> 
0:18.4	<p>W turns her back and moves away.</p> <p>S: <b>Oh look</b> (points with right hand to his leaflet) <b>this is that</b> (points at the painting 2) <b>this</b> (points at leaflet) <b>is that</b> (pointing at painting 3 while turning to his right looking at his family side).</p> 
0:21	S turns his back to the paintings and moves away.

**Example 30 (2011-02-11, 13:09 pm)**

From the aforementioned examples, it can be argued that in order to attract someone as an audience, performers either intentionally design a performance or unintentionally invite others over through their posture and gaze. The next example combines both those ways, further elaborated by an animating performance.

We join a group of two adults, a male (M) and a female (W), and three girls (D1, D2 and D3). One of the girls (D1) is exploring the *Brazilian altar* alongside with M when she shifts her hand, pointing towards the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting. She moves closer to the painting while calling for M's attention as she uses person reference ("dad?"). The use of the person reference works in tandem with her pointing gesture in an attempt of using minimal collaborative effort. To be more explicit, the pointing gesture explicates where the person identified through person reference should look at.

After performing for attracting M over, D1 expands her previously given identification with a new performance ("I can see that somebody painted that. I can see brushstrokes"), elaborating the reasons why she directed M's attention to that specific painting. Her elaboration unveils previous knowledge of drawing painting as she uses the term "brushstrokes". At the same time, D1 has approached the painting and while she performs commenting on the brushstrokes she sees, she uses her hand to point these out. Her new performance manages to actually draw M over as he turns towards her side, approaching the painting as well as giving out an acknowledgement token ("yeah"). For confirming his attendance, M uses his body posture and gaze along with a verbal confirmation by giving out a positive acknowledgment token.

His performance prompts D's next turn taking; D asks M if he can 'see', possibly referring to the brushstrokes she mentioned a few seconds ago, inviting him again to see what she just saw, asking M for the next embedded action. M gives out an evaluative comment ("what a beautiful painting") on which D1 bases her next performance ("I could easily paint that"). M once again gives out a token ("I see") which signals the end of their interaction. D1 withdraws her pointing gesture while the other two girls of the group join them in front of the painting. It is once more evident how co-presence can attract others simply by the virtue of being engaged with an exhibit. The presence of M and D1 in front of the painting pulls the other two girls over, followed by W. Upon their approach, D1 imitates small strokes with her hand, a performance attended by the two girls (D2 and D3). D1's iconic gesturing animates the painting for her spectators and belongs to the third category of **animating through "displaying doing"**.

A few seconds later, W rejoins her group facing the painting while D1, D2 and D3 display their inattentiveness by turning their backs to the painting section. They show their interest in the next exhibit as D2 asks W if “*we are going to be wrapped up*” when M joins them and they move all together to the *Egyptian glass case*.

	D is approaching the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting, arriving from the <i>Brazilian altar</i> . M is standing, looking at the <i>Brazilian altar</i> .
0:05.7	D shifts her right hand and points at the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting. <b>D: Dad? I can see that somebody painted that, I can see brushstrokes.</b> M approaches her and stands in front of the painting. M: <i>Yea::h:</i> D: <i>See?</i> M: <b>What a beautiful painting!</b> D: <b>I could easily paint that</b> M: <b>I see.</b> 
0:08.8	D puts her hand down.
0:10	D2 and D3 are running, getting closer to M and D1.
0:10.8	D1 shifts her right hand and points at the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting, making small short indications, lifting her hand towards the top side of the painting. D2 and D3 look at D1's indications. 
0:12.7	D1 puts her hand down. W is approaching them in front of the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting
0:15.9	W is standing next to M and behind D1, D2 and D3.

0:17.3	D1 turns to her right and walks away. W shifts her gaze from the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting on <i>painting 2</i> . 	
0:20	D1, D2 and D3 turn their backs to the painting section.	
0:22.5	M turned his head to his right, looking at the other two paintings. D2 turns to W. D2: <b>so are we going to be wrapped up?</b> 	
0:24	M approaches his group and looks at <i>painting 2</i> .	
0:26	They move all together to the <i>Egyptian case</i> .	

**Example 31 (2011-02-24, 13:37 pm)**

The example that follows also reflects on the dynamics of co-presence. This time the interaction is encouraged through co-presence and it extends further through telling and tagging. We joined a group which consists of a male (M) and a female (W) adult and two boys (S1 and S2). The group is in the same spatial locale but not in a very close proximity. M is at the *Brazilian altar* when he moves on and passes by the painting section. His attention is drawn to the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting, which he approaches and stands in front of. Meanwhile, W, who is standing a few steps behind M looking at the *Brazilian altar* from a short distance, also moves and faces the painting section while standing next to the concrete column. Upon M's shift in posture and

positioning in front of the painting, W starts walking closer and approaches him. M is actively displaying his interest in the painting through his shifts in posture and gaze as he leans to his left to read the respective label and then turns his gaze and attention to the actual exhibit.

The two boys are approaching M in front of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting with S1 approaching first and occupying the space on M's left, in front of the painting. S2 is walking slower than S1 and stops a few steps behind S1, looking at the same painting. Upon approaching the painting, S1 turns to his right, where M is, and asks him about the nature of the exhibit ("*dad, what's that?*"). S1 uses person reference ("*dad*") to elaborate his shift in posture and clarify who his addressee is while demarcating his new attention focus by using the deictic adjective "that" to refer to the painting. This way, S1 creates a vector between him, M and the painting, indicating a temporary interconnection between the three. By doing so, S1 attracts M as an audience who then carries out the next turn taking.

M rephrases the label text he has read earlier ("*it's a picture, celebrating African art of the Yoruba?*") while he further extends its information by adding more information ("*in Nigeria?*"). M's performance reflects the interconnection of personal context with the institutional context; he identifies the painting by rephrasing the formal voice of the museum which he enhances with information derived from his personal context, his previous knowledge.

The performances by M and S1 are attended by S2 who, once M answers S1's question, moves to his right side and immediately gives out a performance ("*that one is made by pastels [sic]?*") which is acknowledged by S1 who gives out an acknowledgement token ("*oh yeah*"). The person who arrived third and was the audience of the performances given from his co-present visitors (M and S1) has performed at the face of the exhibit, and managed to attract S1's attention. His acknowledgment token prompts S2 to approach the painting and repeat his performance by elaborating it with a pointing gesture and a deictic verb ("look") as well as repeating twice in the performance the word *pastels* ("*look, that's made by pastels, pastels*"). Again S1 gives out the same acknowledgement token ("*oh yeah*") which brings their interaction to an end, as M moves

on to the next painting and W to the *Egyptian glass case*. Interestingly enough, S2 stops his pointing gesture only when M has moved to the next painting. We can thus interpret S2's and S1's performances as attempts to capture M's attention, possibly in order to affirm his praise as they repeat their performances in front of the painting.

0:10.7	M is walking in front of the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting with his head turned to his left, facing the painting. W is also moving ahead, but stops behind the concrete column, facing the painting section.
0:11.9	M positions himself in front of the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting while W has also stepped forward, standing next to the concrete column. 
0:13.3	M turns to his left, looking at the interpretive text.
0:16	M shifts his head from the interpretive text to the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting. W approaches M. S1 and S2 are walking towards M.
0:18.2	S1 is seen standing next to M with S2 standing behind M.
0:19.6	S1 approaches the label and steps in front of M, occupying the space on M's left side. 
0:21.6	S1 turns to his right <b>S1: Dad, what's that?</b> <b>M: It's a picture, celebrating African art of the Yoruba, in Nigeria</b> (steps a few steps ahead).

0:22.7	<p>S2 has moved to M's right side and attends their conversation  <b>S2: that's one is made by pastels [sic]</b>  <b>S1: Oh yeah!</b></p> <p>0:26.7  S2 approaches the <i>Yoruba painting</i> and lifts his right hand pointing at it.  <b>S2: Oh look! that's made by pastels, pa:stels [sic]</b>  <b>S1: Oh yeah!</b>  W approaches the <i>Egyptian glass case</i></p> 
0:31.4	<p>M moves on to <i>painting 2</i>.  S2 stops pointing and facing the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting. S2 turns to his right where M stands. S2 walks by M and starts dancing</p> 
0:35	S1 is standing next to M, lifting his left hand and pointing at <i>painting 2</i> .
0:36.5	M turns to his right and moves closer to W, looking at the <i>Kemet</i> label
0:37.9	S2 approaches S1, who is standing in front of <i>painting 2</i> .

### Example 32 (2011-02-24, 12:32 pm)

The intertwined connection of co-presence and attracting an audience can be further explored in the next incident (example 33) when a group of a male (M) and a female adult (W) accompanied by a young boy (S) are wondering in the gallery.

S is walking ahead towards the painting section. S is engaged in a conversation with W when he expresses an evaluative comment ("I like those pictures there") while pointing at the painting section and facing W. Here, S's performance forms a vector linking himself, the paintings, and W. This link is further extended once S approaches these paintings and repeats his evaluative comment ("mum? I like the pictures") which is again elaborated by a pointing gesture. He uses person reference ("mum") to indicate his addressee, followed by the evaluative comment reflecting his interest and the aesthetic

value that he finds in those paintings. His performance, which is an offer and an invitation for opening up an interaction with the painting section, is not taken up by W.

The previous absence of an answer from W prompts S to repeat his performance anew by elaborating this time with a person reference (“*mum*”) and a shift in posture towards her direction. S turns and faces her in an attempt to enhance his performance and successfully manage to address his hearer and catch her attention. This second attempt manages to draw her attention as she approaches him and asks him if he likes a specific painting (“*you like that one?*”). S answers with another performance (“*it’s pictures here*”) for which he uses his hand pointing towards the section. His pointing gesture elaborates the deictic adverb “*here*” and unveils the new locus of attention. As his performance is not considered an answer to her question but rather an attempt to “hold the floor”, W extends his last performance and becomes more specific (“*they’re all African paintings*”). Meanwhile, M joins them.

S approaches the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting and elaborates his shift in posture while indicating the painting with his right hand (“*this one is quite interesting*”). Here, the fact that S maintains his pointing gesture while turning and facing the other two members of his group is of great importance. M, followed by W, turns and looks at S. W starts approaching him after a moment. Only when W approaches S and stands next to him, does he put his hand down. W leans to her left and reads the label, a performance that is attended by S who does the same. Immediately afterwards, W quotes the title of the painting (“*Yoruba, a celebration of African art*”) and looks at the painting. S attends her change of gaze and after a couple of seconds turns to his right, facing M, who has moved on to the other two paintings. They walk together to the *Egyptian glass case*.

S in this example stops pointing only when having confirmed W’s attendance. Similarly, in example 2 involving *painting number 3* displayed at the Wellcome Collection, D holds her pointing gesture towards the painting for a few seconds, allowing time for her co-visitors to catch up with her. Once she confirms their attendance, she puts her hand down.

0:13	S approaches the painting section first while talking to W.	
0:14.3	S: <b>I like those pictures there</b> (facing W) (points towards the paintings for a second).	
0:16.9	S stands next to the concrete column and looks at <i>painting 2</i> .	
0:18	S turns and faces W. S: <b>Mum? I like the pictures</b> (points at paintings). W approaches him.	
0:20	W: <b>you like that one?</b>	
0:20.7	S: <b>it's pictures here</b> (stops pointing). W stands next to him	
0:25.4	W: <b>They're all African paintings.</b>	
0:26.7	M also joins them, standing next to W, facing <i>painting 2</i> .	
0:30	S steps to his left and walks closer to the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting.	
0:32.6	S: <b>this one is quite interesting.</b> (points with right hand at the <i>Yoruba: a celebration</i>	

	<p>of <i>African art</i> painting).</p> 
0:35	<p>S turns towards M and W while pointing at <i>the Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting. M looks at S.</p>
0:35.8	<p>W attends S.</p>
0:37.2	<p>W approaches S and the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting. S stops pointing.</p> 
0:38.4	<p>W leans to read the label. S turns to his left and looks at the label.</p>
0:39	<p><b>W: Yoruba: celebration of African art</b> (looks at the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting) M looks at <i>paintings 2 and 3</i>. S turns away, facing M. W attends S and M and move on to the next exhibit.</p> 

Example 33 (2011-02-12, 12:59 pm)

### 8.2.2. Telling and tagging

In the next example, a male (M) and a female adult (W) are in front of the *Brazilian altar*, moving on to their left, walking by the painting section. M is walking ahead passing by the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting, when W gives out a performance relevant to the specific painting. W shares a personal memory having taken a picture of this painting (“*I took a photo of this before*”). W accompanies her verbal performance with a gestural one, elaborating the deictic adjective ‘*this*’ with a pointing gesture towards the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting, discerning both verbally and nonverbally which painting she is referring to. Her telling functions as attracting M as an audience as it opens up her personal encounter to him by publicly identifying her attention hook through the use of ‘telling and tagging’. Apart from rendering public her attention hook, this type of performance allows a sense of W’s personal context to be reflected.

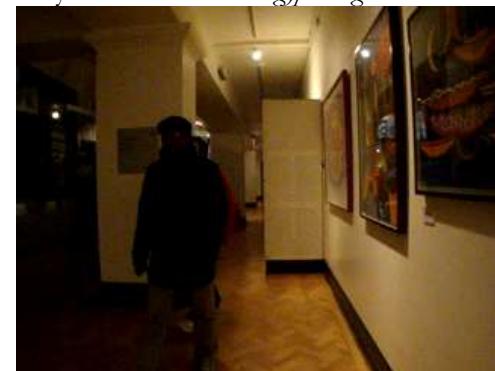
Her performance catches M’s attention as M stops walking ahead and turns looking towards her indication. M steps backwards while facing the painting, a performance also observed at the face of the Seurat’s painting *Woman Powdering Herself* at the Courtauld Gallery. M gives out an acknowledgment token (“*hm*”), displaying attendance and possibly enjoyment as these tokens project but not require the continuation of another speaker’s talk while at the same time display the incompleteness of the talk prior to this performance (Goodwin and Heritage 1990). W is still standing in front of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting and points at it for a couple of seconds while also giving out an evaluative comment (“*it’s beautiful*”). Her pointing gesture shifts from the painting to its label on the left. W repeats her previous verbal performance (“*I’ve got a photograph of that*”) that brings her engagement to an end as she turns to her right and walks ahead, following M. As they are both walking ahead, W comments on the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting (“*this has been here for a long time*”), referring back to the painting as indicated by her positioning and direction of gaze. M gives out an acknowledgment token (“*yeah*”) bringing their interaction to an end. They move on to the *Egyptian glass case*.

	M is walking, passing by the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting. W follows him and pauses while she is in front of the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting.
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0:02.6	<p>W: <b>I took a photo</b> (points at the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting with left hand) <b>of this before</b> (touches with her extended hand the painting and taps on it twice)  M turns and looks at her indication.</p> 
0:05	<p>M: (steps back) <b>hmm.</b>  W is standing still in front of the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting, pointing at it with her left hand, facing M.</p>
0:05.7	<p>W: <b>it's beautiful</b> (points now at the bottom side of painting).</p>
0:07.4	<p>W turns to her left, shifting her pointing gesture from the painting on the interpretive text</p> 
0:09.7	<p>W: <b>I've got a photograph</b> (putting hand down) <b>of that</b> (walks ahead, closer to M).</p>
0:12.4	<p>W turns to her right.  M walks ahead, looking at <i>painting 2</i>.</p> 
0:13.9	<p>W: <b>this has been here for a long time.</b></p>

0:15.3

M: yeah.

They move on to the *Egyptian glass case* with M walking ahead, followed by W.

Example 34 (2011-02-12, 13:42 pm)

In another incident, we join a female adult (W) and a young boy (S) approaching the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting as they move on from the adjacent *Brazilian altar*. They are holding hands and stand in front of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting. S lifts his hand and points towards the painting while giving a verbal evaluation of it (“*is really artistic and is really good [sic]*”). His gesturing facilitates W to secure joint attention, even though they both stand and face the painting- which prompts her to ask the reasons why S likes the painting (“*what’s good about it? What’s going on?*”). The answer to both of these questions comes immediately as S elaborates that he finds good “*all the detail, and they are (.) That looks like one of the god, the god that gives life*”. His performance is attended by W who then comments on his answer (“*and they are all holding hands. There are some people*”) prompting discussion further. S repeats W’s comment in the form of a question (“*holding hands?*”) while being overpowered by her new performance (“*what are the rest of them doing?*”) as indicated by the rising intonation of her voice. In addition, she elaborates her question by pointing out three times at three different aspects within the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting. Her performance functions as a hint to her previous question, facilitating S to give the correct answer. Her pointing gestures are elaborating her talk which is further elaborated by her pointing gestures as she utters “*she is dancing, she is dancing, he is doing what?*” linking her question and performance to the actual subject matter of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting.

S answers her question (“*holding a hand*”) by repeating her previous comment and his previous question, which in this case is a wrong answer. W immediately offers the right answer (“*he is drumming them, they are dancers*”) and turns to face S, who grabs her

hand. Once S has grabbed her hand, W starts dancing, animating the painting with her body, prompting S to shout out loud (“*they dance!*”). As they both move away, W introduces the next exhibits by asking another question (“*and what about these?*”).

0:08	W, holding hand with S, is approaching the painting section arriving from the <i>Brazilian altar</i> . They stop and stand, looking at the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting 
0:19.3	S takes his right hand and points at the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting while stepping closer to the painting. S: <b>is really artistic and is really good!</b> [sic] 
0:20.7	S puts hand down and steps a few steps backwards. W: <b>What's good about it? What's going on?</b> S: <b>all the detail, and they are ...That looks like one of the god, the (-) god that gives life</b> W: <b>And they are all holding hands. there are some people</b> S: <b>holding hands?</b> W: <b>= what are the rest of them doing?</b>
0:33.7	W steps closer to the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting W: <b>She is dancing.</b> (shifts her left hand and points at the painting) <b>She is dancing</b> (shifts her pointing gesture on another detail on the painting) <b>He is doing what?</b> (then on another) S: <b>holding a hand</b> W: <b>= He is drumming them! They are dancers!</b> 

00:40.7	W puts her hand down and turns to her right, looking at S. S grabs W's left hand.	
00:45.7	W performs a dance around S which ends with W facing the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting while standing on S's right side. S: <b>mommy:: they dance.</b>	
00:50	S turns his back to the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting while facing W.	
00:57	W holds S's hand and move away while she is facing the second painting.	
01:00	W stops in front of <i>painting 2</i> . S also stops in front of <i>painting 2</i> while extending his left hand towards the second painting.	
01:06	S moves away.	
01:11	W also moves away. While shifting away <b>W: and what about these?</b>	

Example 35 (2011-02-24, 15:27 pm)

Through their telling and tagging, visitors have so far mainly named either the origin or the subject matter of the painting (e.g. “*African paintings*”) or referred to the subject matter (e.g. “*They are dancers!*”). The next incident elaborates the use of telling and tagging when a female adult (W) and a young boy (S) encounter the painting.

As they move on from the *mask glass case* to the next exhibit, W notices the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting towards which they both walk. Specifically, they stand next to the concrete column from where W points at the *Yoruba: a celebration of*

*African art* painting while naming her focus of attention (“*African drummers*”). S lifts his head and looks at her indication. They move to their right to see the other two paintings when S physically pulls W away and runs closer to the *Egyptian glass case*. As S is running away, W gives out her last performance which is an evaluation of the painting section (“*these are cool paintings*?”) where the deictic adjective “these” is elaborated by a pointing gesture that works in tandem with it and elaborates her whole performance.

00:10	W and S are walking by the <i>mask glass case</i> . W holds her camera while holding hands with S. W turns to her left and approaches the painting section.	
0:12.5	W and S are standing next to the concrete column. S is on her right. W is facing the <i>Yoruba: a celebration of African art</i> painting on her left.	
0:15.6	W shifts her left hand and points for one second towards the <i>Yoruba painting</i> . <b>W: African drummers!</b> S looks towards the painting.	
0:16.6	W turns to her right. S pulls her away while grabbing her right hand.	
0:18.7	As they turn towards the <i>Egyptian glass case</i> , W lifts her left hand again and points at the painting section. <b>W: These are cool paintings.</b>	
00:19	They move on to the <i>Egyptian case</i>	

Example 36 (2011-02-24, 13:03 pm)

### 8.3. *Life after Death: glass case*

Data collection for the *Life after Death glass case* took place during late July, October and early November 2010, summing 57 hours of filming. Based on visitors' repetitive performances, **twenty** incidents were analysed, of which **thirteen** are presented in the following section, representing typical examples of the range of sociocultural means visitors use to detail their performances. Visitors were in pairs in seven incidents out of thirteen groups while there was one multigenerational group consisted of five visitors (M1; M2; D1; D2 and W). Eight out of the thirteen incidents involved groups of visitors with at least one child.

#### 8.3.1. Attracting an audience

In the first example of “attracting an audience”, we join two adult women arriving from the *Egyptian case*. W1 is walking slightly ahead, engaged in a conversation with her female friend, W2. They approach the *Life after Death glass case* with W1 arriving first, followed by W2 after a couple of seconds. While visually engaged with the exhibits, W1 performs to “attract W2 as an audience”; she shifts her posture towards the right side of the case, physically indicating a shift in her interest and visual locale, while also shaping a question (“*what are these here?*”) that requests the next embedded action from her co-visitor. W1 ducks and starts reading the label inside the glass case. W2 turns and looks towards the label mounted inside the glass case for a couple of seconds, when her interest shifts on the adjacent glass case as she steps to her left, looking towards the adjacent case displaying the coffin lids. W1 stands up and notices the second label, mounted on the right side, which she approaches. This shift is attended by W2, who approaches W1.

W1 poses a question on the nature and identity of the exhibit that previously drew her attention (“*is this?*”) while pointing towards the first paragraph of the interpretive text. Her pointing gesture here functions as a visual vector among her, the text and, consequently, the referenced exhibit. While W1 continues her reading of the interpretive text, W2 carries out the next turn-taking; W2 poses another question (“*this is what?*”) that functions as clarification of her friend’s blurred deictic adjectives and adverbs (“*this*”,

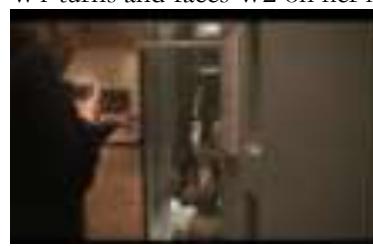
“*these*” and “*here*”). W2 elaborates her question with a pointing gesture towards the glass case. Her performance distracts W1’s attention, which subsequently shifts from the text to her friend; W1 turns to her left and faces W2.

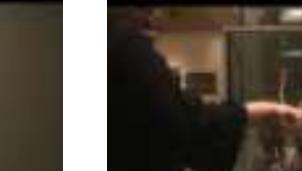
W1 attempts to answer her friend’s question by locating the correct information within the text. W1 points at the second paragraph and then the third one, in an observable attempt to answer. However, the information provided in these two paragraphs does not correspond to the specific exhibit they are looking at, something that becomes evident through W1’s shifting in pointing gestures from one paragraph to another as she scans the text to find what she is looking for. In order to let her friend know what she is doing, W1 accompanies her gestural performance with a verbal one. The elaboration is a text-echo (“*storage chests for Shabti figures*”) which is immediately repaired by W1, who is still scanning the interpretive text for finding the right identification.

W1 continues to scan the text, moving to the next paragraph and finally the last one that corresponds to the specific exhibit. Meanwhile, W2, who is reading the same interpretive text, names the exhibit (“*jars*”) elaborating it with a pointing gesture indicating the source of her answer towards the last paragraph of the label text. W2 takes the lead from W1 and becomes the “designated reader” (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60), as she came up with the correct answer first. W2’s performance is followed by W1 repeating the whole performance; that is, uttering “*jars*” followed by a pointing gesture at the last paragraph of the interpretive text. Through this last performance, it becomes clear that the participants in interaction have a joint focus of attention as their reaction is the same and stems from the encounter of the same exhibit (“*jars*” and pointing towards the last paragraph). As W2 stands next to W1, who is in closer proximity to the label, W2 asks W1 to read and share the information (“*what does that say?*”), prompting W1 to continue reading the text and hence, allowing W1 to become the “designated reader” (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60) again.

W1 keeps reading the text silently, presumably to let her friend know the details once she finishes the whole paragraph. Her performance is interrupted by W2’s performance consisting of an acknowledgment token (“*yeah*”) followed by an elaboration

(“*the Egyptian bodies*”). W2’s use of an acknowledgment token may reply to the text, confirming her agreement with what she had been reading silently. W2’s turn-taking engenders the next embedded action by W1, who pauses her reading and gives out the same acknowledgment token (“*yeah*”). W1 continues her reading in silence for a few seconds while W2 steps backwards, moving away from the glass case. Once W1 finishes her reading, she turns towards W2 and moves away. In this example, W1’s question opened up their joint inquiry, inviting W2 to act and participate in joint meaning-making. Therefore, it was for “attracting” W2 “as an audience” that W1 posed an open-ended question along with a shift in posture, a deictic term (“*these*”) and adverb (“*here*”).

1:06	W1 approaches the <i>Life after Death</i> glass case.
1:08	W2 reaches W1. They are looking at the exhibits in the case.
1:10	W1 leans to her right and looks closer at the right side of the glass case. W1: <b>what are these here?</b>
1:12	W1 stoops forward and gazes straight ahead, towards the label inside the case.
1:14	W2, facing the glass case, tilts her head and looks at its lower side.
1:16	W2 lifts her gaze to the upper side of the case.
1:18	W2 steps to her left side and looks at the adjacent glass case
1:20	W1 stands up again, gazes at the right side of the case, where the other label is mounted, and approaches it.
1:21	W2 turns and faces W1.
1:22	W1 is standing in front of the label W2 stands next to W1.
1:22.8	W1: <b>is this</b> (points for a second at the first paragraph of the interpretive text) W1 stands and reads the interpretive text. 
1:27	W2: <b>this is what?</b> (points at the glass case) W1 turns and faces W2 on her left. 
1:29	W1 points at the second paragraph but then repairs her indication by shifting her pointing gesture towards the third paragraph
1:31.8	W1: <b>storage chests for Shabti figures.</b> (following with her pointing finger the sequence of text)

1:34	W1 shifts her pointing gesture to the next paragraph and then to the last paragraph			
1:38.6	W2: <b>JARS</b> (shifts her hand, pointing from distance at the text) W1: <b>=JARS</b> (shifts her pointing finger and touches the label, placing her finger on the word Jars) W2: <b>what does that say?</b> (puts her pointing hand down) W1 follows the text with her finger, reading it silently. W2 stands next to her and reads it.			
1:43.5	W2: <b>yeah the Egyptian bodies.</b> W1 stops pointing for a second. W1: (starts pointing again at text) <b>yeah and</b> (puts her hand down and keeps reading the text silently).			
1:54.7	W1 lifts her head and looks away. W2 steps backwards and leaves, followed by W1.			

**Example 37(2010-10-01, 14:30 pm)**

Apart from using their hands to point something out, visitors also used alternative means, most of the times depending on what they were holding in their hands, such as leaflets, pens, and umbrellas. The next example explores how two visitors, a male (M) and female (W) adult, discovered the *Life after Death glass case*, focusing especially on the alternative means one of them used for “attracting” the other “as an audience”.

W moves to her right while M starts reading the thematic text. W lingers for a while at the *lids case* and then turns to her right, looking at the *Life after Death glass case*. W turns to her left, facing M, and identifies her forthcoming attention hook (“*oh! [it] is the jar*”). Immediately, W elaborates her naming with a pointing gesture towards the location of the jar by shifting the umbrella she holds while still facing M. Her indication though comes to no avail as M attends the case with the lids.

Her failure in capturing his attention prompts W to repair her performance by elaborating her previously given pointing gesture with a deictic adverb (“*here*”) and a

deictic verb (“*look*”). She immediately starts walking closer to the *Life after Death glass case* while holding her umbrella up, using it to point at the glass case. This time W succeeds in attracting M as an audience; M approaches the *Life after Death glass case*. As he is walking towards W, M narrates something inaudible to W as it occurs while they are both walking towards the exhibit. It seems that M summarizes what he experienced a few seconds earlier, while he was exploring the adjacent glass cases (“*you know the one I have seen was so compound [...] in here, in this museum*”). At the same time, W narrates about a memory of her having seen these exhibits displayed in another gallery of the museum (“*that used to be there. [it] was. They moved that one there [...] is there. They used to*”). Her memory encourages an acknowledgment token by M (“*yeah OK*”). It seems likely that their performance reflects a more personal driven reflection of those visitors as it hints at a previous experience of them being in the same museum, looking at the same exhibits.

Meanwhile, W positions herself in front of the right side of the *Life after Death glass case*. W notices the label mounted on the right side of the case and starts reading it silently. Once she finds the information she is looking for, she turns to M and gives another performance, this time elaborating the function of the jars. Specifically, W uses a deictic pronoun (“*this*”) while elaborating (“*is for the funeral rituals*”), followed by a pointing gesture towards the exhibit. Her gesture elaborates the abstract deictic term, visually linking it to the actual exhibit she has been referring to.

As W notices the existence of two jars instead of one, she performs a double pointing gesture while naming the exhibits; one hand is pointing to the jars on the top part of the display and the other to the jar on the bottom-right. In addition, she uses the plural number in her naming (“*jars*”) as well as for the deictic term (“*those*”). Again here, everything is elaborating each other; the gesture enforces the deictic term and vice versa. Her performance is acknowledged by M who repairs her verbal performance by elaborating (“*in the jars*”).

W then leans closer to the label mounted on the right and starts reading it again. After eight seconds, M moves closer to W, positioning himself on her right side, a shift in posture acknowledged by W that prompts her next performance. W immediately names the exhibit (“*canopic*”) by using the formal voice of the museum while turning to

her right, towards M. Then, W lifts her hand and points at the last paragraph of the interpretive text, and specifically the word *canopic*; visually linking her identification to the actual passage in the interpretive text. The drawing of a visual link between the formal and her own voice functions as a confirmation of her naming as she links it to the authoritative voice of the museum. Her performance prompts M to give out an acknowledgment token ("yes") followed by them reading the text silently for five seconds. M then moves away followed by W.

0:10	W and M are approaching the <i>Egyptian glass case</i> . They approach the first case with the mummy. They are engaged in conversation.
0:10.8	W lifts her left hand, which is holding an umbrella, and points towards the case. Then she turns and faces M and they briefly talk.
0:18	M approaches the <i>Kemet</i> label and the <i>mummy case</i> . W is facing the <i>lids case</i> .
0:19.9	W starts walking closer to the <i>mummy case</i> .
0:23.8	W starts approaching M, who is still standing in front of the <i>Kemet</i> label.
0:25.2	W ducks and reads the mummy's label.
0:28.5	W stands up.
0:36	M ducks and reads the mummy label.
0:52	W turns and looks at the other two glass cases.
0:58.8	M finishes his reading and steps backwards, positioning himself next to W.
1:03.6	W starts walking away, pausing for a second in front of the <i>lids case</i> .
1:06.8	M starts following her.
1:09	W: (turns and faces M) <b>Oh is the jar:</b>
1:09.6	W lifts her left hand, pointing with the umbrella she holds, at the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> . M looks at the <i>lids case</i> . 
1:11	W: <b>is here, look</b> (puts umbrella down) (walking closer to the case) M follows her.
1:12.7	W lifts her left hand, holding the umbrella, pointing at the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> again for seven seconds. 

1:13.4	M: <b>you know the one I have seen</b> (facing W) <b>was so compound.</b> W: = <b>is the</b> (-) (facing M) M: <b>in here, in this museum.</b>
1:27.3	W: <b>that used to be</b> (turns her back to M and points with umbrella towards the other side) <b>there was</b> (gesturing) <b>they moved that one there.</b>
1:36.8	M: <b>Yeah OK</b> (Facing W) W: <b>is there. They used to.</b>
1:38	M gestures and says something inaudible.
1:46	W is looking at the <i>Life after Death</i> glass case which she approaches after 3 seconds, and positions herself in front of the right side of the case. M completes his sentence and stands next to W's left side.
1:51.9	W gazes at the interpretive text and then at the objects in the glass case.
1:52.3	W turns and faces M. W: <b>this is for the funeral rituals.</b> (pointing with her right hand in which she has a leaflet) W turns her back to the camcorder and says something inaudible to M.
2:01.8	W: (turns towards the case, points at the object at the top side and then those on the bottom side) <b>those jars.</b> M: = <b>in the jars.</b> 
2:04.6	W leans towards the label on her right and reads it.
2:12	M moves on.
2:13	W: <b>canopic!</b> (turns slightly towards M to her right)
2:14.3	W shifts her left hand and points at the word canopic in the label, showing it to M, who has positioned himself next to her, on her right. 
2:15.6	W puts her hand down. M: <b>Yes.</b> They both stand and read the label.
2:21.6	M turns his back to the case and moves away. After 3 seconds, W follows him.

#### Example 38 (2010-11-05, 15:48 pm)

In the next example, M initially attracts W as an audience through his shift in posture and gaze. Once he manages to draw W over to the *Life after Death* glass case, he performs a tagging and telling performance for anchoring joint attention with W. These two visitors had separated in front of the *Egyptian* glass case, with W lingering in front of

the case with the mummy, engaged in reading the text silently, while M walked ahead and approached the *Life after Death glass case*.

As M reached the glass case, his attention is drawn to the top right side of the case and then to the label mounted on the right. Meanwhile, W finishes her reading and starts walking closer to M. Upon her approach, she uses text-echo (“*the entire process of mummification took about seventy days::*”). Here, the dynamics of ‘arriving second’ can be explored, specifically how W uses text-echo to recapitulate her experience. Her performance can be viewed as a requisite for re-joining with her co-visitor; she prepared M for her re-joining and subsequent shared attention.

W’s performance is acknowledged by M who opens his perceptual range to her by giving out a performance; he shifts his hand and points out the focus of his attention while naming it (“*the beetle kind of thing*”). His performance is seen as an attempt to facilitate her anchoring of attention on his own attention hook, acknowledging the complexity entailed in this glass case. His performance is attended by W who repairs his naming of the exhibit (“*scarab, that’s how they called it*”). She then shares an evaluation (“*is gorgeous actually*”) followed by a personal memory (“*I used to have a little ceramic scarab of that colour*”). The deictic pronoun is visually linked to the exhibit, as she points at it and hence identifies its colour without naming it. Her performance here facilitated their joint minimal collaborative effort to locate the indicated exhibit. Then they address different exhibits in silence.

	M and W starting viewing together the <i>Egyptian glass case</i> .
0:09.8	M starts walking ahead, approaching the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> .
0:18	M stands in front of the case.
0:20	M ducks and looks closer the objects.
0:20.9	M stands up again.
0:23	M steps to his right and looks at the objects and notices the label.
0:26.8	M steps closer to his right and looks at the label; he stands in front of the label.
	W can be seen still standing at the first case with the mummy.
0:29	W starts walking towards M.
0:31	W: <b>The entire process of mummification took about seventy days::</b>
0:34	W positions herself to the M’s left side and faces the glass case. M shifts his left hand and points at the case.
0:34.8	M: <b>the beetle kind of thing</b> (places hand down).

		
0:37	W approaches case: <b>scarab, that's how they called it (.) is gorgeous actually. I used to have</b> (shifts her right hand and imitates the shape of the scarab) <b>a little ceramic scarab of that colour</b> (points at the scarab's location for a second)	
0:43.5	W looks at the bottom side of the case.	
0:46.5	M looks at the right side of the case and leans towards the label on his right. M points at the label's fourth paragraph with his left hand for second.	
0:47.3	M puts his hand down while reading the text.	
0:50.7	M leans towards his left and looks at the objects.	
0:51.7	M ducks and looks carefully.	
0:53.4	M stands up again.	
0:55.7	M turns to his right and move away, followed by W.	

**Example 39 (2010-10-01, 15:23pm)**

“Attracting an audience” is a means of negotiating and regulating attention while in the museum. Often, this performance is used for smoothing disengagement. As seen in the following example (example 40), visitors (W and M) negotiate and regulate their joint encounters through performing when a member of their community gets inattentive. Interesting in this example is the fact that M has passed by the specific glass case and the given performances by his co-visitor make him approach the same exhibit again, and see it in the light of her performances.

As M and W approach the *Egyptian glass case*, W lingers for a while in front of the lids case while M approaches the *Life after Death glass case*. After a couple of seconds, W approaches M in front of the *Life after Death glass case* and stands to his left, looking at the bottom side of the case. Almost immediately, M turns right and starts walking away, allowing W to occupy the space he just left unoccupied. W moves to her right while turning towards M, asking him a question (“*did you see that scarab?*”). She turns ahead again, facing the case, and she lifts her hand to point at the scarab on its top right side. She elaborates her tagging with a location description (“*is over there*”), further augmented with a shift in posture towards M. W uses a spatial adverb (“*there*”) to locate the exhibit which she enhances with her pointing gesture. The adverb and the pointing gesture work in tandem for elaborating her performance and subsequently her indication. Her performance attempts to attract the inattentive M as an audience.

M approaches the glass case again, looking at it for seven seconds. Immediately afterwards, M turns his back to the glass case and looks away, a shift in posture acknowledged by W, who performs to catch his attention once more. This time W forms a question (“*is this where they kept the?*”) using a deictic adjective (“*this*”), which is further elaborated by the direction of her gaze towards the right bottom side of the case. As there is no answer from M, she approaches the label mounted on the right side of the case and starts reading it silently for another fifteen seconds. When she finishes, she turns her back to the case and moves on, joining M.

	M and W are approaching from the <i>mummy case</i> . W is walking closer to the glass cases, which are on her left, while M is on her right.
0:04	W lingers in front of the case with the lids while M is walking a bit ahead, looking at the bottom of the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> .
0:08	W takes some steps forward, still looking at the <i>lids case</i> . M is standing in front of the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> .
0:12	M is facing the case while W still is at the <i>lids case</i>
0:12.6	W steps forward, looking at the bottom side of the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> as she walks ahead.
0:15.4	W turns her head to her left, looking at the left side of the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> while walking closer to M who is still facing the <i>Life after Death glass case</i>
0:18.4	W is standing next to M's left side, looking at the bottom side of the case
0:20.9	M turns to her right and moves on.
0:24	W steps to her right.
0:25.2	W while turning to her right. W: <b>did you see that scarab?</b>

0:26.7	W turns and faces M. 
0:27.8	W turns her head towards the case, lifts her left hand and points at the scarab's direction.
0:28	W: <b>is over there</b> (turns to her left and faces M). M starts approaching W.
0:29.5	W puts her hand down and faces the cases while M is approaching the case, looking at her indication. 
0:31	W stoops forward and looks at the case, having M standing at her right side.
0:35.4	M turns his back to the glass case and moves on again. 
0:38.5	W: <b>is this</b> (looking at the bottom side of the case where the label is) (-) <b>where they kept the::</b> (moves to her right, closer to the external label, mounted on the wall).
0:42	W is standing in front of the label, looking at it, reading silently. 
0:57.9	W turns to her left, takes a quick look and turns her back to the case, moving on.

**Example 40 (2010-10-31, 13:25 pm)**

In extension to the previous example, in example 41 the person who arrives second at the glass case (W) performs for **attracting** the others **as an audience**. In this case, her performances succeed in drawing the others' attention, and engages them in a collaborative exploration of the *Life after Death* glass case. Specifically W, through a range

of performative actions, manages to draw the attention of the person who had arrived first at and passed by the *Life after Death glass case* (M) a few seconds earlier, while she additionally engages her whole group in interaction with this exhibit (M and D). Furthermore, this example reveals the influence of the specific framing of the glass case, the use of location description in the interpretive text, on the emerging visitors' performances and hence, their shared meaning-making.

M is walking ahead of his group and passes by the *Life after Death glass case*, followed slowly by W and D. W notices the canopic jars upon arrival in front of the case and immediately turns to her right, where M is, and gives out a performance to attract him over. She turns and faces him while using a deictic adjective ("these") elaborated by a deictic gesture towards her attention hook. W then notices the label on her right and approaches it. M rejoins with W, only this time M takes the lead by pointing at the first paragraph of the text. His performance not only confirms his attendance but also his desire to become the "designated reader" (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60) of his group and thus, participate actively in their shared meaning-making. M starts reading the text aloud, paragraph-by-paragraph ("Ptah-Sokha-Osiris. A figure, placed in the tomb, which contained text from") while using his finger to indicate the source of his text-echo, which in this case is the first paragraph of the label text. He stops reading aloud only to share again after a second a comment on the specific exhibit ("that's before Christ"). This information is a rephrasing of the interpretive text, which reads "713-332 BC."

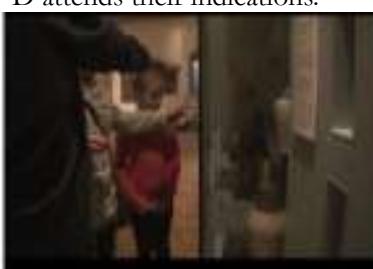
After three seconds, M expands his identification by using the location description provided in the interpretive text ("it says centre"). His performance is attended by W. In return, W, simultaneously with M's performance, points at the centre of the case while elaborating her gesture by using a deictic adjective ("that") for facilitating the viewer in discerning the item in question. D is attending their performance as she is looking at the centre of the case. W then leans closer to the case and D, while still pointing at the centre of the case, and repeats M's quote ("that's before Christ"). W's repetition of M's comment is seen as a means of confirming and securing D1's attention; as an attempt to engage a member who seems inattentive. Then, for a couple of seconds, they all look at the case in silence. When W and D try to say something, W's performance coincides with

the start of D's utterance, and because of that there is no expansion but just a couple of "that's" and "so".

M lifts his hand and points out the exhibits while elaborating them further with deictic adjectives and adverbs that link the exhibits to their specific locations within the case ("left is that" "left bottom which is just there"). W immediately takes the lead and shares the information that she just found in the interpretive text ("had that in coffins, here in the afterworld"), followed by a pointing gesture towards the label on the right. She then puts her hand down, allowing M to take the lead anew, who shifts his hand and points at the interpretive text while using text-echo ("amulets top right, this one and"). Specifically, M shifts his pointing finger from the label to the glass case, linking the location description ("top right") to the deictic adjective ("this one"). W and D simultaneously perform two pointing gestures displaying an active participation in linking the provided information to the actual exhibits. M keeps reading the interpretive text aloud while pointing at it ("centre right top and bottom"), a performance that is further prompted by D's gestural attempt to locate the information she just heard. Specifically, D points at the centre of the glass case while moving her finger around, so as to find the "centre right top and bottom", which is finally indicated by M, who steps in and points at the top right and then, at the bottom of the glass case.

M's performance is acknowledged and confirmed by W, who gives out an acknowledgement token ("yeah") coupled with a spatial adverb ("is down"). M continues his performance by pointing at the last paragraph again. M uses text-echo anew ("and then the jars, right top and bottom") followed by a pointing gesture towards the canopic jars. D lifts her hand and points at the case while asking aloud "is that right?", a question that leads M and W to return to the interpretive text. M performs the next turn-taking by elaborating D's question ("is all the stuff they put in here"). W turns and says something inaudible to D, and then they all leave.

	M, W and D approach the Egyptian glass case. M walks ahead, passes by the <i>Life after Death</i> glass case and moves to the <i>Ijele mask</i> video installation. W and D follow M slowly. As they walk ahead, W turns her face towards the <i>Life after Death</i> glass case. D attends her shift in gaze, and also turns towards the same direction.
0:20.4	W is facing the case. D is a few steps behind her, looking at the case. M moves away.
0:24.7	D turns her face away and leans towards M

0:26	W: <b>These</b> (-) (points with left hand, facing M) 
0:28.7	W places her hand down, faces the case.
0:30.9	W approaches the label text. M approaches W.
0:33.9	M points at the label's first paragraph M: <b>Ptah-Soka-Osiris. A figure, placed in the tomb, which contained text from...</b> (moves his finger along with text)
0:41.6	M: <b>That's before Christ</b> (puts his finger down). 
0:42	D turns and starts saying something to W.
0:44	M lifts his right hand and points at the label. M moves his finger along with text.
0:44.7	M: <b>it says</b> (.) <b>centre</b> .
0:47	D stops talking. W and M point at the centre of the case. D attends their indications. 
0:48	W leans closer the case and says to D while still pointing with left hand. W: <b>that's before Christ</b> . 
0:48.7	M puts his hand down.
0:49.7	W puts her hand down.
0:50.5	W points again with her left hand. W: <b>That's</b> . D: <b>= so</b> .
0:52.6	W approaches M, who is in front of the label. D is looking at the objects.
0:53.9	M lifts his right hand and points at the text.

0:54.5	M: <b>left is that</b> (pointing towards the case) <b>from figurines</b> (points again at the label's next paragraph) <b>left bottom</b> (points towards left bottom side) <b>which is just there</b> (points again in text's next paragraph).
1:02	W: (shifts her left hand and points at the label text) <b>had that in coffins (.) here (.) in the afterworld.</b>
	
1:04.8	W puts her hand down. M is still pointing at text. M: <b>I knew it! Top right</b> (shifts his hand and points at the object) W and D also have shifted their left hands and point M: <b>This one and</b>
	 
1:11	M points again at label, M: <b>centre right top and bottom.</b> (D points at the centre and then moves her finger around while trying to find the centre, right top and bottom).
1:14.6	M points at the top right and then at the bottom
1:16	W: <b>yeah is down.</b>
	
1:16.5	M returns to the label and points the last paragraph. M: <b>and then the jars, right, top and bottom.</b> (points at jars)
	
1:20.5	M puts his hand down. D lifts her right hand and points at something in the case. D: <b>is that right?</b>

1:21.4	M and W are looking at label. M: <b>is all the stuff they put in here.</b> W turns and looks at D's indication and says something while M turns his back to camcorder and talks to the D about the objects and how they link together.
1:31.5	M points at the case. W points at the case. M: <b>I think they (-) to Egyptians.</b> W: <b>I know.</b>
1:34	M moves away, followed by W and D.

**Example 41 (2010-11-06, 14:53 pm)**

“Attracting an audience” performance had also been carried out by visitors posing an evaluative comment relevant to their forthcoming locus of attention. As seen in the next example, W engenders their joint attention by setting out an evaluative comment on an object displayed in the *Life after Death* glass case. Specifically, W starts approaching the glass case, followed by M, a shift in her posture and gaze that manages to draw M over. W’s next turn-taking takes place by shifting her hand, pointing towards the last paragraph of the interpretive text, up and down, stretching the length of her indication, while giving out an evaluative comment of disgust (“*oh that’s disgusting, it’s awful*”). Her pointing gesture elaborates the pronoun “*it*”, linking the verbal information to the non-verbal one.

M attends her performance and approaches her, looking at her indication towards the last paragraph of the interpretive text. After a couple of seconds, he carries out the next turn-taking by asking her to elaborate on her previous performance (“*what’s wrong with this?*”) prompting the next embedded performance. Her response is immediate (“*you know that paragraph is awful*”) while pointing again at the last paragraph. By doing so, W visually links the deictic ‘*that*’ to the last paragraph, once more elaborating her performance by combining both verbal and non-verbal means. Interestingly enough, it is the information that she finds awful and not the exhibit; she finds the use of the canopic jars awful, making M repeat his performance (“*why?*”). His question prompts W to elaborate further (“*well it’s their methods*”) while they both turn towards the label on their right, reading it for ten seconds. M then, followed by W, steps to his left, and looks at the bottom side of the *Life after Death* glass case.

M gives another performance, explaining the reasons why he approached this glass case (“*yeah that goes with the thing that drew me over, that mentions that four jars*”) while pointing

towards the *Kemet* thematic label upon uttering “*the thing*” and “*that mentions*”. This performance reveals to W the fact that the thematic label contains information relevant to the exhibits about which W is performing. As a reply to his performance, W completes his sentence (“*those are the jars that they were putting in*”) while pointing at the case, linking the demonstrative adjective “*these*” to the actual exhibits. M acknowledges his attendance by offering an acknowledgment token (“*yeah*”). W leans forward and names the jars (“*canopic jars*”) while giving out another token of disgust (“*ew*”). M steps back and physically pulls W away while elaborating his performance (“*see this as fun. This is a jar*”) while pointing towards the jar. W immediately performs by giving out an acknowledgment token (“*I know*”), which ends their interaction with the specific exhibit.

0:22.8	M and W are approaching the <i>Egyptian glass case</i> . M goes to the <i>Kemet</i> label, while W approaches the <i>lids case</i> .
0:25.8	W notices the <i>Life After Death case</i> but after a second, she shifts her gaze and looks at the main walkway on her right. Another visitor is passing by her, pushing a pram which makes her slow her pace to let him pass.
0:31.5	W turns slightly to her left, looking at <i>Life after Death case</i> . M is still reading the thematic label.
0:32.8	W is facing the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> .
0:34.8	W turns to her right and looks straight ahead. It has to be noted this at that time African music is playing loud as the video on the <i>Ijele mask</i> , just around the corner, is on.
0:37.3	W turns again and faces the case and after a second, she approaches it, looking at its bottom right side.
0:41.4	W lifts her head and stretches it to her right, looking at the label text which she approaches after two seconds and looks at it for ten seconds
0:53.7	W looks at her right and continues reading the text.
0:55	M turns and faces W, towards whom he walks.
1:00	M stops in front of the <i>lids case</i> .
1:06	W turns to her left and looks ahead for a second.
1:07	W returns reading the label. M is approaching the <i>lids case</i> , looking at it carefully.
1:17	M moves on, looking at the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> and then to his right as he walks closer to W.
1:20	<b>W: Oh! That's disgusting! It's awful!</b> (points with her left hand at the last paragraph, up and down and up again)  M is standing behind W.



1:23	W puts her hand down and M, who is standing behind her, on her left, starts reading the interpretive text.
1:24.5	W turns to her left and faces M.
1:25	M: <b>what is wrong with this?</b> (facing text) W faces the text again.
1:26.6	W: <b>you know: that paragraph is awful.</b> (points with her left hand at its last paragraph)
	 
1:28.5	W stops pointing.
1:29	M: <b>why?</b>
1:29.9	W: <b>well. It's their methods.</b>
1:31	They are both facing the text.
1:47	M turns to his left and looks at the bottom side of the case. W does the same.
1:49	M: <b>Yeah, that goes with the thing</b> (points towards the thematic label side) <b>that drew me over, that mentions that four jars</b> (walks to his left slightly)
1:55	W: <b>those are the jars that they were putting in</b> (points with left hand and turns her face towards the label on her right) M: = <b>yeah</b> 
1:59	W stops pointing and leans forward, closer to the case. W: <b>Canopic ja::rs</b>
2:01	W steps back, making a disgusted face. W: <b>ew!</b>
2:04	M also steps back but he is still looking at the <i>Life after Death</i> glass case. W turns her back to M and walks ahead.
2:04.8	M grabs W with his left hand. M: <b>well</b> (taking his hand off) <b>you can see this as fun</b> (points at <i>Life after Death</i> glass case with his left hand) <b>this is a (-) jar.</b>
02:09	W: <b>I know</b>  
02:12	M turns his back to the case, and moves on to the next exhibit, followed by W.

Example 42 (2010-10-31, 15:21 pm)

From the micro-analysis of the next incident (example 43) we can see how the social interaction emerging at the face of the exhibit manages to attract others over, as well as how through social interaction participants attempt to make meaning, prompting their participation through a range of means such as tag questions, acknowledgement tokens, and deictic gestures and terms.

A male (M) adult and two young female children (D1 and D2) are approaching the Egyptian glass case. M approaches the *lids glass case* where he lingers for a while exploring the display when two other girls (D1 and D2) run behind him, approaching the *Life after Death glass case*. Upon arriving in front of the *Life after Death glass case*, D1 initiates their joint encounter by sharing a question (“*what's that?*”) directed at D2. Next turn-taking comes from D2, who does not answer D1's question but instead broadens their joint encounter by inviting M (“*look at those things daddy*”). D2 uses the deictic verb “*look*” to summon M while also discerning him from the others by using person reference (“*daddy*”). D2 refers to the new attention hook by using the deictic adjective (“*those*”) along with the word “*things*” which reflects her lack of relevant vocabulary.

Upon finishing her performance, D2 shifts her right hand and points towards the left side of the *Life after Death glass case*. Her pointing gesture further explicates the deictic adjective she just used, facilitating the anchoring of joint attention. Her performance catches M's attention as he turns towards the two girls. D1 poses another question on the nature of those on display (“*what's it?*”) which is answered by D2 (“*this one?*”) while pointing towards the glass case.

The performances given by the two girls succeed in **attracting M as an audience**; M approaches them, standing next to the D2's left side. He answers their queries by giving out another performance (“*those are jars*”). His performance is attended by D2, who takes the lead and carries out the next turn taking. D2 elaborates their encounter by attempting to refer to something they all know (“*this is like one of those thingy you know?*”). By using a tag question (“*you know?*”) D2 pushes their interaction further, inviting the other two to perform the next turn-taking. D1 gives out an acknowledgment token (“*yeah*”) which prompts D2 to finish her previous performance by giving out a further elaboration (“*and it looks like*”). D1 takes the lead and finishes D2's performance (“*the*

*Egyptian one*"). The girls move towards the two African statues, while M approaches and explores the *Life after Death glass case* on his own, bringing their joint encounter to an end.

2:14	M stands in front of the <i>lids glass case</i> . D1 and D2 are walking behind him. 
2:18.6	D1: <b>What's that?</b> D2: <b>Look at those things daddy!</b> (points with left hand at the case) D1 is standing on D2's right side. M steps to his left side, closer to the case with the lids, turns and looks at D1 and D2.  
2:20	D1 and D2 are approaching the case's right side and D2 is still pointing at it.
2:22	D1: <b>What is it?</b>
2:24	D2: <b>this one (points) (-) (-)</b> M is approaching them. 
2:26	M stands next to D2's left side and looks at her indication. M: <b>those are jars.</b> D2: <b>this is like one of that thingy, you know?</b> (facing D1)
2:30	D1: <b>=yeah:::</b> (steps backwards) D2: <b>= And it looks like.</b> D1: <b>= The Egyptian one.</b>

2:37	D1 and D2 turn their backs to the glass case and D2 points at the <i>statues</i> . M turns his back to the case and looks at their indication.
	
2:42	M turns and faces the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> again, leans forward and looks carefully.
2:56	M steps to his right and reads the label.
3:16	M steps to his left and tries to find something in the case.
3:23	M steps to his right and continues reading the label.
3:31	M steps to his left and looks inside the case.
3:33	M leaves.

#### Example 43 (2010-10-22, 13:40 pm)

The last example has been among the two longest in duration at the face of the *Life after Death glass case*. It reflects the dynamic effects of the physical and personal context on visitors' social context, as the W attracts D over to the exhibit, a performance based on their personal and shared sociocultural context. W identifies the specific glass case as an "island of expertise" for D, who plays with the Blue Earth at the beginning of the gallery. This enactment of the personal context and their common ground prompts W to turn to her right, walk towards D and call her over by using person reference ("Maria?") followed by a deictic verb ("come") repeated twice. Her "attracting an audience" performance is being further attended by M1 who has now turned his back to the glass case and looks towards W and D. As D does not show a shift in posture indicating attendance to W's performance, after 5 seconds W beckons to D while she starts to walk closer to the case. We can hear the footsteps of D, who is running to approach W.

Once D approaches the two adults, W leans closer to the case and points to the left top side of the case, then the bottom and again the left top one. Her performance is elaborating her previous one; it justifies her "attracting an audience" performance. Additionally, W enhances her tagging with a location description ("that over there") followed by another pointing gesture towards the left side of the glass case. Her elaboration works in tandem with the pointing gesture, elaborating the deictic adjective "that" by positioning it with the deictic adverb "there". These two performances are part

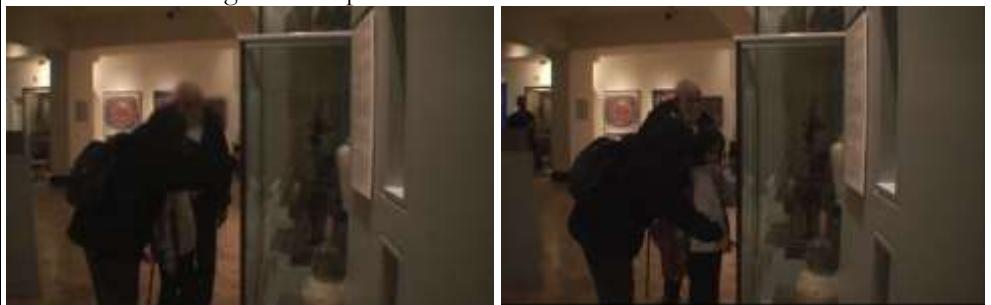
of the first stage of their joint encounter as these managed to attract D over, leading to the second stage of elaboration. Specifically, W takes the role of the “designated reader” (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60), introduced to D through the use of a deictic verb (“*look*”), followed by a pointing gesture indicating the focus of attention, which in this case is the label mounted on the wall, on the right side of the case. W starts using from on heavily text-echo while tagging the text she quotes (“*these acted as servants in the afterworld. A wealthy person might have as many as one Shabti to work for every day of the year*”). Once she finishes, she puts her finger down for a second, then points towards the left top side until M2 approaches them with D2 after a couple of seconds.

M2 speaks with W in another language for a few seconds and then turns to M1 and opens up his encounter by posing a question in English which he restarts (“*have you seen mummies before? (.) Have you seen mummies before?*”) while pointing with his hand towards the *Life after Death glass case*. M1 answers negatively to this question prompting M2 to perform again by posing another question (“*you know what mummies are yeah?*”) which he further explicates by using a gesture pointing towards the glass case while giving out an identification (“*Egyptian mummies*”), visually linking in this sense the exhibit to the word *mummy*. M1 answers to these performances by facing the glass case and giving an acknowledgement token (“*yeah it is*”). This confirmation prompts M2 to perform anew, this time telling a personal story (“*I saw one two three*”) which is overpowered by W’s new performance.

W, while approaching D, shifts her hand and points towards the top right side followed by a deictic verb (“*see*”) and the name of the exhibit (“*there are amulets*”). W immediately restarts her performance by repairing it (“*see? Amulets there?*”). W puts her hand down and approaches the label on the right side of the case. She places D1 in front of her by **physically pulling** her, points at the label and starts reading aloud (“*amulets were charms worn in life, as well as death. The wadjet (eye of Horus) protected against the evil eye*”). When W finishes her sentence, she puts her hand down. D1 immediately poses a question (“*is this, is still the thingy in there?*”) which is answered by W negatively (“*no that’s probably the canopic jars*”) while pointing at the canopic jar. D1 repeats her question while facing W and pointing at the case (“*yeah but is the thingy still in there?*”) which prompts W to attempt to answer again. This time W lifts her hand and points at the last paragraph of

the label text for three seconds while telling D1 to read it (“*read this*”). After six seconds, D1 performs the next turn-taking (“*this is written in my book*”), confirming her attendance to W’s imperative suggestion to read the interpretive text. The specific passage makes D remember having encountered it in her schoolbook, while it also transforms W’s indication into an “island of expertise” for D.

D turns her back to the glass case, signalling an ending to her engagement. W **pulls** D1 back to her previous position, facing the case, and points again at the last paragraph while repeating a deictic verb (“*look, look!*”) employing once more the use of text-echo (“*Bodies were preserved in two main ways, (...) simply had their internal organs liquefied and their body mummified without their organs*”). When W finishes reading, D1 **pulls** W physically **away** and they both move on.

	W approaches the <i>Life after Death</i> glass case first, followed by M.
0:34	W ducks and starts reading the label inside the case. M1 stands to her left side.
0:49.5	W stands up and looks at the objects displayed in the case.
0:50	W turns away, walks to the side of the <i>Vodou altar</i> . W: <b>Maria::::? Come here! Come here for a second.</b> M1 has turned his back to the case and faces W.
0:59	W beckons D to come over and starts walking closer to the case again.
1:03	We can hear D running.
1:08	D approaches W in front of the <i>Life after Death</i> glass case.
1:09.6	W leans towards the case and points at its left top side and, after a second, to the bottom and then again the top. 
1:15.3	W: <b>that over there</b> (points at left side).
1:17.4	W: <b>look</b> (points at the label inside the case) <b>These acted as servants in the afterworld. A wealthy person might have as many as one Shabti to work for every day of the year.</b> 
1:31	W stops pointing and reading aloud.

1:33	W points again at the left top side of the case. M1 attends her indication.
1:34.5	W puts her hand down.
1:36	M2 arrives with D2.
1:39	D2 takes D1's place, points at the left side of the case, and then moves away.
1:44	M2 speaks to W in another language and then turns to M1.
1:45	M2: <b>have you seen mummies before? (.) Have you seen mummies before?</b> (Points with his right hand at the case)(Puts his hand down) M1: <b>No:::</b> M2: (facing M1) <b>You know what mummies are yeah? (.)</b> (facing case) <b>Egyptian mummies</b> (points at the case for a second). M1: (facing case) <b>Yeah it is.</b> 
1:57	W points with her left hand at the top right of the case for a second. M2: <b>I saw one two three....</b>
2:01	W's left hand lifts again and points at the top right. W approaches D1 and stand in front of the glass case. W: <b>See, there are amulets. See? amulets there</b> (puts her hand down) 
2:05	W turns and faces label next to the case.
2:06.9	W points at the label with her right hand as she is holding D1 in front of her. W: <b>Amulets were charms worn in life, as well as death. The wadjet (eye of Horus) protected against the evil eye.</b> 
2:14	W puts her hand down. D1: <b>= is this, is still the thingy in there?</b>

2:18.4	<p>W: <b>no, that's probably the canopic jars.</b>          (points with her right hand for a second to the text and then, to the case)          D1: (facing W, points with her left hand to the case) <b>yeah but is the thingy still in there?</b></p> 
2:23	<p>W lifts her right hand again and points at the last paragraph.          D2 approaches.</p>
2:26	W: <b>read this</b> (points at the label).
2:32	D2: <b>This is written in my BOOK</b> (turns her back to the case)
2:35	W pulls D2 again, making her to face the text.
2:36.8	W points at the last paragraph again.
2:38.7	<p>W: <b>Look. Look</b> (points at the text)</p> 
2:44	<p>W: <b>Bodies were preserved in two main ways, depending on an individual's wealth. If a person was rich, the embalmers were particularly careful in removing the internal organs wrapping them separately, and either replacing them in the body or in Canopic jars. Each of four jars was protected by one of the sons of the god Horus. The less well-off simply had their internal organs liquefied and their body mummified without their organs</b> (Puts her hand down).</p>
3:04	D2 grabs W and they walk together away.

Example 44 (2010-11-06, 15:39 pm)

### 8.3.2. Telling and tagging

A typical example of telling and tagging is example 45 involving a female adult (W) with a young boy (S) passing by the *Life after Death glass case*. S approaches first and stands in front of the case's left side, looking at the exhibits. W reaches him there after 2 seconds, and immediately gives out a performance to make an aspect of the exhibits salient and share it with S.

W starts her performance by using ‘*and*’ which reflects a sense of continuity perhaps to a previous conversation along with the personal pronoun ‘you’ reflecting her addressee and a deictic verb (‘*see*’) inviting him to participate in the next action. She elongates the deictic verb (“*see::*”) for a couple of seconds while she shifts her hand and points towards the locale of attention. The performance of W works in tandem with another verbal performance explaining what is being indicated (“*this is how they used to*”) while repeating the same deictic verb (“*you see [...]*”) to reconfirm attendance and acknowledgement by her addressee. In addition, she directly gives the answer to her previous general description (“*this is how they used to [write] [...] their writing?*”) by using a spatial adverb (“*there*”) which is linked to the exhibit, as she is still pointing at it.

	W and S are approaching the <i>Life after Death glass case</i> with S is walking ahead.
0:20.8	S stops in front of the case and looks at its left side.
0:22.3	W walks behind him and stands to his right side.
0:23	W: <b>and you see::?</b>
0:25	W points with right hand, ducks and leans closer to the case W: <b>this is how they used to (-) (-) you see their writing? There are pictures.</b> <b>Picture so (-)</b> (performing an iconic gesture of writing)
0:40	They move away
	

Example 45 (2010-10-27, 15:00 pm)

There were also a few incidents where the identification of the exhibit was performed through subtle telling and tagging. As seen in example 46, the group (M, W1, W2, and S) just passes by the *Life after Death* glass case upon entering the gallery room from Door 2. M lifts his hand and points at the *Life after Death* case, uses a deictic adverb (“*here*”) elaborated by a deictic adjective (“*that*”) while shifting his torso towards his group members. Immediately after that, he puts his hand down and looks at the glass case for two seconds; then he steps to his left and points towards the mummy case while naming the new target of attention and interest (“*here is the mummy*”). The consistency in M’s performances when it comes to two different glass cases may reflect a sense of the patterns of interaction and experience that this specific group will have during their visit to the gallery.

	M while passing by <i>Life after Death</i> glass case.
0:07.9	M: <b>Here (.) that's the:::</b> (turning towards his group) (Points with left hand)
	
0:10	M puts his hand down and lifts his head up, looking at the glass case. W1 and S are looking at M’s indication.
0:12.4	M steps to his left. M: <b>Here is the mummy!</b> (Points at the case with his right hand) (S turns and faces M and approaches him)
	
0:14.5	W1 and W2 are following.
0:17.4	M points at the <i>lids</i> glass case again.
0:22.5	M moves to his left and points at the mummy’s case, followed by W1, W2 and S.

Example 46 (2010-10-15, 13:43 pm)

Sometimes, this ephemeral telling and tagging gains depth as exhibits encourage personal memories. We joined a female (W) and a male adult (M) with a young boy (S). S starts walking closer to the *Life after Death* case, followed by W, who arrives a few seconds later and stands in front of the case, with S to her right. Once W positions herself in front of the left side of the case, she lifts her hand and points towards the figurines exhibited at the upper left of the case. She elaborates her pointing gesture with a personal memory (“*we have one of these little figures*”) that identifies the exhibits as bearing personal relevance to her and M, and in extent, to S.

This performance is attended by S, who gazes towards her indication. W elaborates her performance while putting her hand down by adding more information to her identification (“*in our, in our cabinet. Someone gave it to grandpa*”). During this verbal expansion, W flicks her gaze from the left side of the case to the right one, and then to the bottom side, a shift in gaze and in posture that S attends as he follows her flicks in gaze. S steps to his right, looking at the right side of the case allowing W to occupy the space he just freed in front of the centre of the case. Once W positions herself in front of the centre of the glass case, she gives out a new performance on a different exhibit (“*these jars here are where they put peoples' insides*”). She elaborates the spatial adverb *here* with a pointing gesture towards the top right side of the case, then at the bottom one, and again the top right one. Her gesture works in tandem with her verbal account, elaborating her talk, which further elaborates the gesture.

Upon her finishing this performance, S, who is facing the case, points at the case, shifting the attention to the next exhibit (“*and that's with the symbols, are the symbols and drawings*”). His performance is answered by W with an acknowledgement token, followed by naming the exhibits at the top right side of the case (“*yes, a scarab, a beetle*”). They both move away to the next exhibit while M starts approaching the *Life after Death* glass case which he explores alone.

0:44	S approaches the <i>Life after Death</i> glass case.
0:50	W joins him and looks at the case from a short distance
0:54	W approaches case. S joins her. S stands to her right.

0:56.9	W: (points with her right hand) <b>we have one of these little figures</b> (S attends her indication) (hand down) (looks at the right side of the case) <b>in our (.) in our cabinet</b> (W looks down at the bottom side of the case. S does the same). <b>Someone gave it to grandpa.</b> (S moves to his right. standing at the right side of the case)
1:05	W steps to her right, occupying the space S has just freed.
1:06	W: <b>these jars here are where they put people's insides.</b> (Points with her right hand at the top right side) (Points at the bottom one and then top again)
1:09.3	W puts her hand down.
1:09.4	S: (faces case) <b>and that's</b> (points with right hand) <b>with the symbols, are the symbols and drawings</b> (puts hand down).
1:14	W: <b>yes (.) a scarab (.) beetle.</b>
1:19.6	S moves on, followed by W.

#### Example 47 (2010-07-29, 15:00 pm)

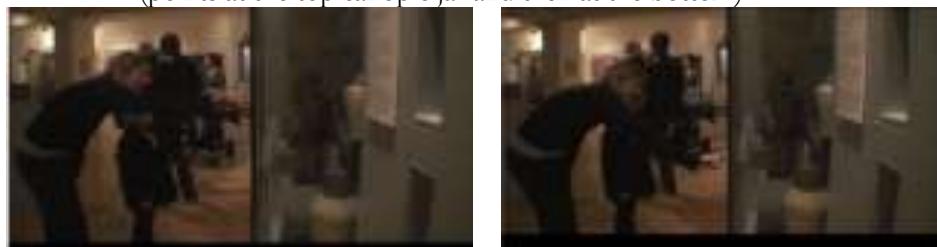
Opening up the perceptual range was also facilitated through telling and tagging. As seen in the next example, the interaction emerging between the two adults (M and W) manages to attract the attention of S, while further detailing the performances emerging between one of the adults (W) with the other members of her community of practice (D1 and D2).

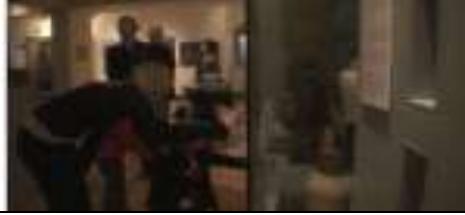
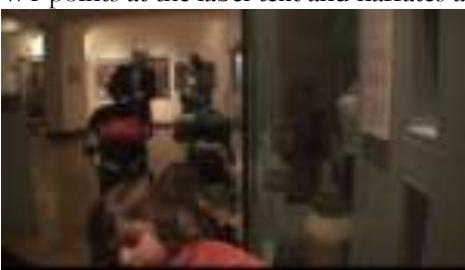
While passing by the *Life after Death* case, M gives out an acknowledgement token (“*oh*”) which he further elaborates (“*this is where they keep the soft tissues*”) while pointing at the exhibit. His performance is attended by W, who, a few seconds later, approaches the glass case with S while rephrasing M’s quote (“*oh that’s where they put their parts in, look!*”).

She further invites S using the deictic verb ‘look’ that prompts the next turn-taking as S immediately asks W to elaborate her indication (“*where*”) to look at. W ducks and points at the jars while answering his question (“*in these things*”). W uses the plural when uttering the deictic adjective (“*these*”), a choice that is further elaborated by her double pointing gesture at the top canopic jar and then the bottom one. W turns and faces D1 who has just approached them, while expanding her initial comment and performance by giving out more details on the function of these jars (“*so when they take parts off, they put?*”) which she finalises with a pointing gesture towards the jars. Her last gesture is seen as a means of facilitating their “minimal collaborative effort”.

Her telling and tagging engenders D1’s interest, who then decides to sit down in front of the glass case and read -or at least try to read- the interpretive text. Her shift in posture attracts the attention of D2, who approaches and joins W and D1 in front of the glass case. W points at the interpretive text and continues her telling (“so they put a figure of the god [...] amulets. A scarab, oh”) and tagging upon uttering the word “god” and after giving out the surprise token (“oh”). D2 stands up and approaches M in front of the interpretive text mounted on the right side of the glass case, and they leave together.

03:12	W1: <b>African Man</b> (points at the statues)
03:14	M: <b>Oh this is where they keep the soft tissues in</b> (facing the <i>Life After Death</i> case) (points for one second at the case) W has moved on to the statues
03:20	W: <b>Oh that's where they put their parts in, look</b> (approaching with D1)
03:23	S: <b>where?</b> W ducks.
03:24.8	W: <b>in these (.) things.</b> (points at the top canopic jar and then at the bottom)



03:26.8	W is facing D. W: <b>so when they take parts off, they put</b> (points at top canopic jar) D1 sits on the floor and looks at the label inside the case. 
03:32	D2 approaches and sits next to D1.
03:37.5	W1 ducks and sits next to the children.
03:37.8	W1 points at the label text and narrates a story about the objects. 

Example 48 (2010-11-06, 15:05 pm)

The last example is analysed selectively, highlighting the different uses and means of carrying out their joint encounter at the face of the glass case, as it is the longest in duration and entails repetitive patterns of performances. In this example, we can explore a clear combination of the different performances identified in the beginning of the chapter.

As W, D and a baby in a pram approach the *Life after Death glass case*, their interaction with each other and the glass case is initiated by W's "**attracting an audience**" performance. Specifically, W uses person reference by calling D with her name ("Jenny") followed by a deictic verb of motion which she uses twice ("come"). W details her invitation with a pointing gesture towards the *Life after Death glass case* followed

by brief description (“*with the Egyptians*”). Everything works in tandem here; the pointing gesture with the description, the use of person reference and the deictic verb all work together in tandem, elaborating each other and subsequently carrying out the invitation successfully, as D approaches the glass case.

Upon her arrival, D lifts her hand, pointing at the upper top side of the case towards the canopic jars. She uses a deictic verb (“*look*”) followed by an evaluative comment (“*that’s strange*”) and two deictic pronouns (“that is, that one”). D’s performance prompts W to take the next turn which she carries out by using an open-ended question calling for the next embedded action, this time by D (“*what do you think they kept in there?*”). According to Barnes and Todd (1995), these open-ended questions/comments prompt conversations to the second phase of meaning-making; that of eliciting. Additionally, Ash (2004, 95) notes that open-ended questions “encourage more conversational activities [...] especially those that do not demand quick or predetermined answers”. Therefore, the open-ended nature of the first phase allows space for contributions from others, functioning as requests for eliciting what has been previously stated. Specifically, here, the invitation to contribute is welcomed by D who offers an answer in the format of a question (“*oh like flowers? Did they have flowers?*”).

0:43	D and W, who pushes a pram, are in front of the <i>Egyptian glass case</i> . D turns and faces the <i>Life after death glass case</i> .
0:45.4	D turns her face away and looks towards the two <i>African wooden statues</i> while W is now facing the <i>Life after Death glass case</i>
0:46.5	W: <i>Jen, come come</i> (pushing the pram and facing the case) D turns and faces W
1:47.2	W points with her left hand at the case. D attends W's indication and faces the case.
1:48	W: <i>with the Egyptians</i> (leaving the pram aside)
	
1:51	D points with left hand towards the <i>canopic jars</i> at the top right side D: <i>Look at that! That's strange! That is (-) that one</i>
1:56	W leans closer to D W: <i>What do you think they kept in there?</i>
	
1:58.6	D puts her hand down D: <i>Oh! Like flowers?</i> W ducks and reads the label which is inside the case
2:01	D: <i>Did they have flowers?</i> (sitting next to W)

Throughout their interaction, W takes the lead and becomes the “designated reader” (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60), detailing her telling with aspects of the formal voice of the museum, either by directly quoting the interpretive text or by rephrasing it. W also prompts their shared meaning-making through open ended questions sparking personal memories and reflecting aspects of their personal context (“*what do you think they kept in there?*”; “*do you remember what is called?*”; “*so where do you think they were kept?*”; “*do you remember what an amulet is?*”), accompanied in most cases with tagging.

2:04.7	<p>W: Hm probably. Do you remember you (points with left hand at the left top side) saw one of those? Look, look (facing D and then case) do you remember what they are? (facing D) (Puts her hand down)</p> 
2:10	D: ah, hm, ornaments called amulets they put in the mummies?
2:20	W: (-) (-) (facing case)
2:22	<p>W: So these (pointing with right hand at label) objects in this case were associated with both funerary rituals and those kept in the pyramid tomb, so (points with left hand) remember those (-) figures placed (facing D) in the tombs? Remember? Yeah? (Puts her hand down and faces the label) (Pointing with right hand at the label text) and the Book of the dead, and sometimes mummified remains. Late Period, 713-332 Before Christ (facing D) (facing text again)</p> 
2:47	<p>D: Look! Look at that one! (Points with left hand while standing up)</p> 

2:49	<p>W: Shabti (.) I think that (points with right hand) that's the head of the dead actually (pointing at text) (D sits down again) Shabti figures. Left top. So they are (pointing with left hand at left top) that's what they called (facing D) yeah, do you remember what's called? (turns towards the label) umm (facing label) these acted as servants (facing D) in the afterworld. (pointing at the sky) so you know they were servants of the afterworld. So, where do you think they were kept? (facing text again)</p> 
3:14	<p>D: They put them they put them in the pyramids?</p> <p>W: whY::? SO::</p>
3:20	<p>D stands up and points with left hand at the left side of the case</p> <p>W: A figure, placed in the tomb that's why (.) which contained text from the Book of the dead, and sometimes mummified remains (D is standing behind W. facing case) yeah? Wealthy person (D approaches case. standing next to W) might have (D sits down next to W) as many as one <i>Shabti</i> to work for every day of the year. <i>Shabti</i> figures with a whip and wearing a kilt, acted as overseers of other <i>Shabti</i>. <i>Shabti</i> chest (lifts left hand and points to the chest) oh (.) (Hand down) The storage chest for <i>Shabti</i> (lifts her hand up again) so you put that (points) in there (points at bottom side) (facing D)</p> 
3:52	<p>D: that's what I was thinking.</p> <p>W nods positively and turns facing the text again while pointing at it.</p>
3:56	<p>W: amulets! (Puts her hand down) do you remember what amulet is? (facing D)</p>
3:59	<p>D nods negatively.</p>
	<p>W: What amulet is? They look straight in your face!</p>
4:02	<p>D stands up.</p>
4:04	<p>D: I will get them (points at the <i>canopic jar</i> for a second).</p>
4:07	<p>W lifts her left hand and points at the top right side.</p>
	<p>W: top right. There you are. Do you remember (stands up) you even held one beetle? Do you remember?</p>
4:12	<p>D nods positively.</p>

4:14	<p>W: Remember they (.) they had beetles (tries to fetch something from the pram)</p> 
4:18	D looks away, turning her back to the case.
4:19	<p>W: what do you think beetles did? ( sitting down looking at D)</p> <p>D turns, facing the case again.</p>
4:22	W: it had something to do with the sun. (facing D)
4:30	<p>D: of the God? (facing W)</p> <p>W: yeah (facing text) (points at text) Amulets were charms worn in life, as well as death. The wadjet (eye of Horus) protected against the evil eye (makes a triangle with her hands) (facing D) remember when I said about the triangle with the eye? That's the evil eye, yeah? (facing text) (facing D) that's the Horus eye, yeah? (facing text) The winged scarab, scarab, was always placed above the heart of the deceased. Hieroglyphs on its underside tell the heart not to speak out against the wearer during the 'weighing of the heart'. Stela. The stone tablet or stela centre right (shifts gaze up) (points with right hand) so here is the tablet, you know they are tablets (facing D) that's what scribes used to use, didn't they (.) do u remember? Their (imitates writing with her right hand) writing is (the baby screams and W turns and tries to make it stop).</p> 
5:19	W turns and faces the case and text.
5:24	<p>W: ehm (.) includes hieroglyphs naming the Persons seated who are depicted smelling lotus flowers. so they did have flowers (facing D) (facing text) The wooden stela shows the falcon-headed sun god (points up) there you go, sun god Crossing celestial waters with three other gods to meet the deceased.</p>
5:44	D points with right hand at the left side of case and says something inaudible
5:51	<p>W: yeah like they (stands up and faces D) nowadays they had in church where they have a (-) I think is coming from Egyptians cause back in Egypt if you had similar to a headcover with a sun up there is called sun god! yeah? (ducks and faces text) and that's where sun god comes from (facing D) yeah? (faces text)</p>

6:12	<p>W: canopic jars (points at right side, facing case) <b>these</b> (-) (facing text) you remember what they do? (D nods negatively) Bodies were preserved in two main ways, depending on an individual's wealth. If a person was rich, the embalmers were particularly careful in removing the internal (facing D and stands up) remember what they used to do with the internal organs? What they used to do with the brains?</p> 
6:34	<p>D: they were taking them out. W: yeah (-)</p>
6:40	<p>W returns to text, ducks and reads loud W: and either replacing them in the body or in Canopic jars. Each of four jars was protected by one of the sons of the god Horus. The less well-off simply had their internal organs liquefied and their body mummified without their organs' (stands up, faces D, moves to her right) I think that's the pictures of those who were less well-off (approaches label next to the case)</p>
7:17	<p>D: what about these? (pointing at the <i>two African wooden statues</i>)</p>
7:23	<p>W: That was interesting, wasn't it? They leave.</p>

Example 49 (2010-10-15, 16:21 pm)

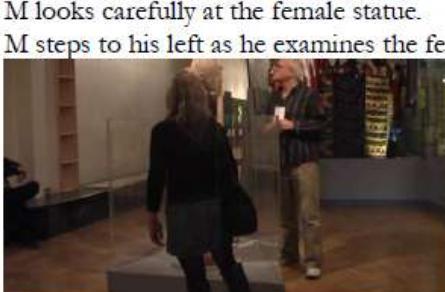
#### 8.4. *Two African wooden statues*

Data collection took place during March and April 2011, summing sixty hours of filming. During this time, the preparations for the forthcoming temporary exhibition on the balcony surrounding the *African Worlds*' gallery were initiated (11/03/2011),<sup>26</sup> causing high levels of noise in the gallery, something that seemed to keep visitors away from the specific gallery room. Based on the repetition in the sociocultural means visitors used throughout this set of data, **fourteen** incidents were analysed based on a detailed transcription, **eleven** of which are presented in the following sections as clear examples of the performances emerging at the face of the specific exhibit.

<sup>26</sup> The temporary exhibition, the *Art of Harmony*, launched on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 2011 and will be on display until the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2013.

### **8.4.1. Attracting an audience**

In the next incident even though there is no verbal exchange between those two visitors, we can see how they direct each other to the statues by virtue of co-presence as M's performance attracts W, the inattentive member, as an audience. Even though they do not interact verbally, M's choices are attended by W as displayed through her shifts in posture and gaze. Once M notices the statues, he approaches and explores them while W wanders in the proximal gallery space, being a few steps ahead. A few seconds later W realises that M is lingering at the statues and she decides to approach the male statue on which she spends the next seven seconds. M moves to his left, exploring the female statue and then looking straight ahead where the *Egyptian glass case* is. He starts moving away and only when he reaches the left corner of the statues does W approach him and they move on together.

	M and W arrive from the <i>Benin plaques</i> and just before the statues, M goes behind the statues while W walks by the statues and approaches the <i>Power Figures</i> .
0:14.5	M approaches the male statue and looks at it. 
0:19	M moves on, facing now both statues, flicking his gaze from the male to the female statue as he walks by. 
0:20.40	W approaches the area, facing and walking towards Door 2. 
0:23.6	W stops walking and turns to her right and faces the male statue. 
0:25.4 0:27.7	M looks carefully at the female statue. M steps to his left as he examines the female statue. 
0:29.2 0:30	M turns to his left, having the statues on his right hand, facing the <i>Egyptian case</i> . M walks away & when at the statues' corner, W turns to her right & walks closer to M.

		
0:32	They both walk towards the <i>Egyptian case</i> 	

Example 50 (2011-04-02 15:05 pm)

To explore the additional sociocultural means of carrying out the “attracting an audience” performance, we turn to the next incident, in which D attracts W as an audience through her **shifts in posture and gazing** as well as the use of a **deictic verb** (“*look*”) along with **person reference** (“*mommy*”) and a **deictic gesture** towards the statues.

Specifically, D turns slightly towards W to confirm her attendance; when this is confirmed D flicks her gaze from W to the female statue. Once D finishes her performance, W gives out a surprise comment (“*ha*”) while additionally turning towards the statues. D has managed to attract W as an audience. D is responsible for drawing W over to the statues; W has discovered the statues in the light of D’s performance. In addition, D’s performance has not only drawn W over to look for a second but instead, as W’s posture and duration of her posture indicates, managed to engage W with the statues. It is only when D physically moves away and performs anew upon her new attention hook, that W shifts her gaze away from the statues, turns, and attends D at the *Ijele mask video installation*.

0:07.8	<p>W and D are looking at the <i>Power figures</i>.      They both start walking towards the <i>Ijele mask</i>. First goes D, followed by W.</p> 
0:08.9	<p>D walks in front of W, approaching the statues.      W is looking at the <i>Ijele mask</i>.</p> 
0:09.7 0:11 0:11.6	<p>D: Oh look at this mommy (points with left hand while turning and facing W)      W turns and looks at D.      D turns and faces the female statue.</p> 
0:12.5	W: HA!
0:13.8	D puts her hand down and turns and faces the <i>Ijele mask video installation</i> .
0:14.3	<p>D walks ahead.      W is still looking at the statues.</p> 
0:15.6	<p>D: Oh what's this? (facing the <i>Ijele mask video installation</i>)</p> <p>W turns towards D and moves to the <i>Ijele mask video installation</i>.</p>



Example 51 (2011-02-19 12:56 pm)

From the following analysed incidents, the performances for “attracting an audience” were prompted by the nature of one of these two statues, specifically the anatomy of the female statue. This specific ambiguity of the statue’s anatomy was the “attention hook”, the visual prompt for opening their personal encounters to their co-visitors. What becomes apparent is the impulse characterising visitors’ performances for sharing their interest on the statues as well as for getting more information or sharing their surprise with them. Talking about the statues’ genders seems to be among the most commonly occurring performances when visitors come across the exhibit, according to the collected data, especially when the group of visitors involved younger members. Discerning the gender of the statues is not always easy for visitors, as the anatomy of the female statue seems to frustrate the vast majority of the visitors while causing comments of surprise and sometimes disgust when encountered by young children. A range of questions, comments, explanations, and gestures unfolded for carrying out the visitors’ social sharing and subsequently led to their shared meaning-making. At the same time the display of the statues allowed for a few incidents where the visitors touched the statues, especially the female one, as they seemed to find touching and feeling the statues as a humorous performance.

In the next example, the “attracting an audience” performance is carried out by using a pointing gesture along with an evaluative comment. We joined three children, two male (S1 and S2) and one female (D), encountering the statues without the presence of an adult. Upon encountering the statues, D points at the belly button of the female statue while giving out an evaluative comment displaying her disgust (“*Oh! That is disgusting!*”). S1 and S2 attend her performance and approach the statues with S1 having S2 on his right. After a couple of seconds, D moves on towards the *Ijele mask* video

*installation* while S2 also starts walking towards the installation. As S2 walks in front his friend, S1 shifts his hand and points at the female statue while using a deictic verb (“*Oh! Look*”), inviting S2 to turn and look at his indication. S2 attends S1’s performance and turns and looks at the female statue, while, a few seconds later, S2 repeats S1’s performance enhanced with a short laugh revealing how S2 perceives S1’s attention hook; that is, as funny.

As S1 and S2 point at the statues and laugh, D walks backwards and approaches them looking at their indication. S1 places his hand down and turns to his right, where D is, to secure her attention. Once he realises her attendance, he lifts his hand and points again at the female statue. In the meantime, S2 unveils another way for making meaning of the statues; he puts his hand in between the glass and touches the female statue. S1 attends his performance while D moves on to the power figures. S1 repeats S2’s ‘touching’ performance so he occupies all the space on the right corner of the statues. S1’s performance leads S2 to move on and repeat the same performance from the other side of the glass, the left corner, touching the male statue this time. After a few seconds, D walks towards S1 and points at the statues while facing him and S2. To enhance her performance, D uses a pointing gesture along with a deictic adjective (“*this*”) followed by a feature description (see footnote number 5) of her new attention hook (“*tummies!*”). The two boys attend her performance and approach the power figures.

It may be argued here that not only did D’s performance manage to attract the other two to the statues but it also infused their encounter in specific ways through her evaluative comment of disgust; S1 approaches the female statue and makes fun of the female statue’s anatomy (“*big big boobs*”) while pointing out her belly button after a couple of seconds (“*Oh, look*”). Therefore through a few deictic gestures, deictic verbs and perceptual talk, specific aspects of the female statue become salient to these three visitors. Additionally, S2 discovers a new way to experience the *two African statues* by placing his hands in the gap formed between the two sides of the protective glass case; a performance observable to S1, who repeats it a couple of seconds after S2. For this type of behaviour, it seems likely that both the object and the display’s affordances are two factors prompting these types of behaviours, ‘touching’ and commenting on the statue’s anatomy while making fun of it. Their interaction and meaning-making comes to an

abrupt end, when D rejoins them and shifts their interest to the next exhibit, the *Power Figures*, through a shift in posture and gaze, a deictic gesture along with a deictic adjective and a feature description (“*this one is (-) tummies!*”).

0:08.2	<p>D approaches the statues, stands in front of them, having her torso facing S1 &amp; S2.</p> <p><b>D: Oh! That is disgusting!</b> (pointing at statues)</p> 
00:10 00:12	<p>D puts her hand down and moves closer to the <i>Ijede</i> video installation.</p> <p>S1 &amp; S2 approach the statues.</p> <p><b>S1: Big big boobs</b> (singing).</p> 
0:13	<p>S2 starts walking towards D, passing in front of S1.</p> <p><b>S1: Oh look</b> (points at the female statue).</p> <p>S2 turns to his left and looks at the female statue.</p> <p>D turns her head to her right and looks at S1 and S2.</p> 
0:14.7	<p>S2 turns, faces the female statue, and points at it while laughing.</p> <p>D approaches them, looks at S2's indication.</p>
0:16.8	<p>S1 turns to his right where D is, puts his hand down for a second and then, up again showing the female statue.</p> 
0:19	<p>S2 has placed his hand in between the Plexiglas and touches the female statue.</p> <p>D moves away to <i>Power Figures</i>.</p>
0:22	<p>S1 approaches S2 and places his hand between the Plexiglas.</p>

		
0:24.6	D turns and joins them while S2 goes to the other side of the statues and touches, this time, the male statue. 	
0:26	Once D approaches S1, she points at the <i>Power Figures</i> and grabs S1's left hand. D: this one is (-) tummies! 	
0:30	They all move towards the <i>Power Figures</i> .	

### Example 52 (2011-03-11, 13:43 pm)

We further join a group of three visitors, a male (M) and a female (W) adult with a young girl (D). As they shift away from the *Egyptian glass case*, W is drawn to the statues, M approaches the stools, and D walks closer to the *Ijede mask video installation*. Even though these three visitors have arrived to the museum together, we can see here how they disperse to address different exhibits while being perceptually aware of each other's presence. Even though these three visitors quickly immerse, W performs **to attract D as an audience**. Specifically, W uses person reference ("Lucy"), followed by an evaluative comment ("that is art"). W shifts her posture and gazing towards her addressee (D) and then the statues, followed by a deictic verb ("see"). D does not respond to W's invitation prompting W to repeat her performance. For her second performance, W points towards the statues while facing D, repeating her evaluative comment ("this is art"). Her

pointing gesture, shift in posture and use of the deictic term ‘this’ form a vector among D, the statue and W, linking all these together and successfully attracting D over.

D turns and approaches the statues while looking at them. Once D reaches the statues, W gives out an evaluative comment (“*amazing*”) which is subsequently followed by M performing anew to attract D over to the stools. M uses a deictic verb (“*look*”) for inviting D over to discover what lies in front of him, the stools, which she successfully approaches. Once D moves next to M, she stays there for a couple of seconds and then shifts away approaching the *Ijele Mask video installation*. The space D leaves unoccupied becomes almost immediately occupied by W who approaches M and discovers the stools in the light of his presence.

0:09.5	W: Lucy that is Art::		
0:12.5	W: see (turning towards D).		
0:14.3	W points at the statues while facing D. W: this is art. D starts walking towards W.		
0:16	They both face the statues.		
0:17	W: amazing!		
0:19	M turns and looks at W and D while standing in front of the <i>stools glass case</i> . M: Look! D moves towards M		
0:21.4	W turns towards D and M		
0:23.7	W approaches M D moves to the <i>Ijede video installation</i>		

Example 53 (2011-02-19 15.55 pm)

#### 8.4.2. Telling and tagging

In the following incident, three visitors (W, M1 and M2) discovered the *two African wooden statues* following a member's indication. As they shift from the *Egyptian glass case*, W

turns towards the *two African wooden statues* while identifying her attention hook (“*these are (-)*”). W and the other two start approaching the specific exhibit.

Even though W arrives and performs first, S2 is the one who seems to explore the *two African wooden statues* in more detail and depth. We can see him approaching, leaning forwards, pointing out details to the others, shifting his gaze from the top to the bottom of the male statue and vice versa. S2, upon approaching and encountering the statues, opens up his individual exploration to the others by posing a question on an aspect of the male statue. Specifically, S2 forms a question on the type of the instrument the male statue holds (“*Is that a (.) flute or something*”), followed by a tag question (“*isn’t it?*”). While making his inquiry public, S2 turns and faces the other two on his right.

His summons followed by a tag question along with his shift in posture and gazing at the other two members of his group are seen as means of inviting them to participate, allowing and preparing the floor for the next embedded action. Although no answer comes, S2 takes the lead once again and answers his own inquiries by naming the indicated aspect of the male statue (“*flute (-)*”) while he points at it again. His second performance comes to no avail again as S1 and W move on to the *Ijele mask video installation*, a shift in posture which S2 acknowledges a few seconds later as he turns and approaches them.

Here, we see that even though the interaction with the statues begun with W prompting her group to approach as her performance attracts them as audience, it is S2 who clearly takes the lead afterwards and infuses their shared encounter through his telling and tagging. His performances do not manage to intrigue the interest of the other two, leading the interaction to an end as they move to the next exhibit.

	<p>W, S1 and S2 are arriving to the statues from the <i>Egyptian glass case</i>.</p> <p>W: these are (-)</p>
	<p>They all approach the statues; W arrives first, followed by S1 and then S3, who stands in front of the male statue.</p>  
0:11	<p>S2 faces the male statue and leans towards it, looking closer at its upper half.</p> 
0:12.4	<p>S2: (points with left hand) Is that a (.) flute or something, isn't it? (facing S1 and W)</p> 
0:13.6	<p>S2 puts his hand down and flicks his gaze from the upper half to the bottom half of the male statue.</p>
0:14.7	<p>S2 points with left hand at the instrument the male statue holds.  <b>S2: flute (-).</b>  S2 steps backwards and looks at the male statue from its bottom to its top.</p>  
0:19	<p>S1 turns to his right where the <i>Ijede video installation</i> is.</p>
0:20	<p>W moves on, followed by S1.</p>
0:21.5	<p>S2 turns to his right and walks ahead, standing next to S1.  W turns to her left and goes around the statues, looking at the female statue's back side.</p>
0:23.8	<p>S2 follows W.  S1 follows S2.</p>

		
0:29	They all leave from Door 2 .	

**Example 54 (2011-04-02 16:47 pm)**

Tagging was not carried out only through deictic gestures or terms. Rather, it was further realised through subtle shifts in posture, small pauses in the visitors' flow and questions of identification. The next example (example 55) demonstrates some of these performances used by visitors to tag their attention hooks, especially the shifts in posture and open-ended questions, while highlighting the ephemeral use of tagging, as visitors' attention shifts from one exhibit to another.

A male (M) and female adult (W) walk by the *two African wooden statues* with W pushing a pram. As they move in front of the statues, W can be heard making a comment on the colours of the gallery ("*there are beautiful colours in here*"), an evaluative comment about the specific gallery, followed by W turning to her left and noticing the statues. Upon her shift in posture, W asks a question ("*what is this*"), which she repeats immediately ("*what is this?*"). M attends her performance as he turns and looks towards the *two African wooden statues*. They stay still, looking at the statues for four seconds when W pushes the pram and they move on together.

	W pushes a pram towards the <i>Ijele mask</i> . M walks along with W, being on her right side	 
0:05	W: <b>there are beautiful colours in here</b> (facing the <i>Ijele mask</i> )	
0:07.6	W: <b>hm (stops)</b> what is this? what is this? (turning towards the statues)	
0:09.4	M turns and looks at the statues	
0:12	W pushes the pram and W and M start walking away	

Example 55 (2011-04-09, 15:44 pm)

To expand on the use of tagging within social interaction at the face of the *two African wooden statues*, we joined two male adults (M1 and M2) and a female one (W). This example reflects the visitors' tendency to use pointing gestures in order to perform tagging, as they constitute a nonverbal, quick way to share their attention hooks without disrupting their flow.

M1 is walking ahead, with W and M2 following him. While walking, W points towards Door 2, possibly indicating an alternative exit to M1. W's performance prompts M to approach closer to the door indicated in order to check whether they can actually go through it. He points towards the other side, where Door 1 is, while walking ahead again, a performance possibly indicating that Door 2 cannot be used. W attends M's shift in posture, as she turns to her right where M is. W moves on, following M1, walking towards the side with the *Benin plaques*. As W walks by the *two African wooden statues*, she

turns to her left and looks at the female statue. Meanwhile, M2 approaches W, who then shifts her hand and, for a second, points at the female statue's belly button with her left hand. M2 attends her tagging as he stops and looks at the statues. W walks away, followed by M2 after a second.

	M1 walks ahead, followed by W and M2. M1 walks by the statues when W points towards Door 2, asking if they can go through it. M1 stops and starts walking backwards, approaching W and looking at her indication. Almost immediately, M1 points towards Door 1.	
0:10.8	M1 turns to his right and starts walking ahead again. W follows him	
0:13 0:14	W turns her head to her left and looks at the female statue W stops and turns to her left, facing the female statue	
0:15	M2 is approaching W	
0:18	W points with her left hand at the female statue	

0:19.2	W stops pointing and moves on M2 faces the <i>two African wooden statues</i>
0:20.9	M2 starts walking away while facing the <i>two African wooden statues</i>
0:22.7	M2 turns and faces the <i>Ijede Mask</i> , and moves away

Example 56 (2011-04-03 16:19 pm)

#### 8.4.3. Animating through “displaying doing”

Visitors attempted to animate the *two African wooden statues* by imitating their posture as well as pretending to be wearing rings around their necks. Two examples for each case are presented, highlighting the similarities and differences among the means visitors used to perform the same iconic gestures.

##### 8.4.3.1. Rings around their necks

The first example involves two female adults (W1 and W2) and one female child (D). As these three visitors explore the section with the stools, W2 turns to her left and moves on to the *Ijede mask video installation*. The other two, W1 and D, linger for a few seconds at the stools and then turn and start moving towards W2. While walking, D's attention is distracted by the anatomy of the female statue which she further renders public by slowing down, shifting her hand and pointing at the belly button of the female statue while enhancing her performance with a question (“*what is that?*”) (Figure 42). For her question, D used the deictic term “*that*”, further elaborated by her pointing gesture and shift in posture, which were in turn elaborated by the deictic term “*that*”.



Figure 42. Female statue: two African wooden statues

In addition, D holds her pointing gesture for seven seconds, allowing some time for W1 to attend her new attention hook. Holding the pointing gesture until it is confirmed by the co-visitors gaze or shift in posture is a sociocultural means encountered also in the case of *painting number 3* at the Wellcome Collection (example 2) and the *Yoruba: celebration of African art* painting at the Horniman Museum and Gardens (example 33). Every small part of D's performance works in tandem with all her choices to elaborate her indication. Thus, the gesture elaborates and is elaborated by the deictic term "that" while her shift in posture is enhanced by her choice to continue her pointing for seven seconds. The primary concern for D is to make her performance observable to the other two members of her group to receive an answer to her question. Finally, W1 turns and approaches D as well as W2.

As no answer comes to her question, D moves to her left and quickly scans the male statue, a shift in posture that prompts another performance by D. This time, D shifts her hand and points at the male statue while posing another question, inquiring once again about the female statue's gender and anatomy ("if this is the male, then (-)"). For

the second performance, which can be seen as a repaired one, D elaborates her question by giving more details as well as forming a conditional question that raises a sense of comparison between the two statues. In addition, D uses a deictic gesture towards the male statue elaborating the deictic adjective “*this*” which is further elaborated by the pointing gesture. Furthermore, the form of her second question invites the others to participate as well as to see the statues in the light of her performance. Every attempt D makes addresses a desire for clarification of her reference for the co-present visitors.

At the same time, W1 attempts a shift in attention by using a deictic verb (“*look*”) accompanied by a feature description (“*at their necks*”). Because W1’s utterance takes place simultaneously with D’s repaired performance and is hence overpowered, a few seconds later W1 repeats her performance. This time, W1 approaches D and the female statue and utters an acknowledgement token (“*yeah*”), reconfirming her attendance to D’s previous performance, followed by a repeat of her prior performance (“*but look at their necks*”). For this repaired performance, W1 elaborates her invitation to shift attention to the necks with a pointing gesture towards the female statue’s neck. Here, we can see how W1 confirms and somehow values D’s performances while performing so as to shift their shared attention and interest to another aspect of the statues, their necks.

W1 manages to secure shared attention as D approaches W1 while W2 stands silent behind D. W1 is aware of D’s shift in posture and therefore, in her interest, something which prompts W1 to expand her indication by giving out a more detailed description and explanation (“*the rings that put around the necks make their necks longer*”). To give her second extended performance, W1 places her hand on her neck, animating the rings around the statues’ necks. W2 simultaneously makes the same gesture, putting her left hand on her neck, animating the rings followed by D, who repeats the same iconic gesture. W1 brings to an end their interaction by giving out an evaluative comment (“*weird*”). Upon finishing her utterance, a member of the staff approaches the group and starts interacting with them. Once the staff member approaches the group, his spatial location and posture in front of the statues hindered the capturing of the group’s performances. For this reason, the analysis of this specific incident ends at the point when the member of the staff approached D and joined the group’s interaction.

	W1 approaches and points at the <i>stools/glass case</i> . D follows and stands next to her. W2 slowly joins them and looks at W1's indication.
0:15.8	W2 starts walking away to the <i>Ijele mask</i> . D starts walking closer to the statues.
0:19	W1 starts walking behind W2 but stops when she notices the statues on her left side.
0:19.4	D stops and approaches the female statue.
0:20	D: <b>What is that?</b> (points at female statue for seven seconds while turning towards W1 & W2). W1 starts walking closer to D. W2 turns and looks at D.
	 
0:21.5	W2 attends their performances and rejoins them
	
0:27	D: <b>if this the male, then (-)</b> (points at the male statue) W1:= <b>Look at their necks.</b>
0:28.9	W1 walks closer to the statues and points at the female statue. W1: <b>Yeah but look at their necks</b> (stops pointing). D approaches W1 and stands next to her, having W2 behind her. D: <b>yeah</b> W1: <b>the rings that put around the necks</b> (puts her left hand on her neck and animates the existence of rings around her neck) <b>make their necks longer</b> W2 repeats simultaneously the same gesture, putting her left hand on her neck, animating the rings, followed by D, who repeats the same gesture.
	 

		
0:36	A member of the staff approaches the statues.	
0:38	W1: <b>mm weird!</b> (facing D) W2 starts walking away, having her head turned to her left, looking at the statues. 	
0:39	The staff member asks D to show him her neck.	
0:46	He approaches D and she shows him her neck.	

### Example 57 (2011-04-01 13:57 pm)

In the second example exploring the iconic gesture of ‘wearing rings around their necks’, a male adult (M) and two female adults (W1 and W2) approach the statues. M and W1 arrive with W2 following them after two seconds. After looking at the statues for a few seconds, W1 gives out a performance animating an aspect of the exhibit they all encounter. She specifically places her hand on her neck, animating the rings carved around the statues’ necks. In addition, W1 elaborates her performance by naming the aspect that attracted her attention (“*bands around their necks*”) which elaborates her previously given iconic gesture further. W2 turns to her right and looks at the power figures which she immediately renders public to W1 and M with a deictic gesture. W1 followed by M attend W2’s performance and move towards the indicated exhibit.

0:07.5	M and W1 walk towards the statues. W2 follows them. 
0:08.7 0:10	M and W1 stop in front of the statues. W1 is on M's left side. W2 stops and stands next to W1. 
0:12.4	W1: <b>bands around their necks</b> (shifts her left hand and places it on her neck, imitating the rings the statues wear around their necks). 
0:14.5 0:15.3	W2 turns to her right, and looks away towards the <i>Power Figures</i> . W2 points at the <i>Power figures</i> and starts walking towards them. 
0:16	W1 turns her face towards D's indication and starts approaching W2.
0:17	M attends W1 & W2 and walks towards the <i>Power figures</i> 

Example 58 (2011-04-03 14:17 pm)

#### 8.4.3.2. Animating the statue's posture

The first example involves S imitating the male statue's posture to attract W as an audience while the second one involves S1 and S2 imitating the male statue's posture to attract another member of their group. In the first incident, the attempt is successful whereas in the second comes to no avail.

Specifically, in the first incident we join a couple consisting of a female adult (W) with a young boy (S) that enter the *African Worlds* gallery from Door 2. As they walk ahead S notices the statues and turns towards them. Once he looks at the male statue for a few seconds, he turns and calls W over by using person reference ("mum") while turning towards her. His first attempt meets no success, as W does not respond to his call, prompting him to repeat his summon after two seconds. Again, his second attempt comes to no avail prompting him to repair his given performance.

S elaborates his third performance with a shift in posture; he starts walking towards W. Only when W turns and attends him, he starts walking closer to the statues again. As he walks back, he shifts his gaze and turns his body from the statues to W until he reaches the statues. He positions himself in front of the male statue and imitates the statue's posture by putting his hand at the height of his torso and pretending to be holding something. When W approaches him, he shifts his head and with his gaze makes a vector towards the male statue, guiding her to look at it. Once she looks at the male statue and thus, displays the anchoring of joint attention, S performs anew to elaborate his previous performance. Specifically, S moves away, leaving W to explore the *African wooden statues* on her own. W stays in her place to examine the statues, shifting her gaze from the female to the male statue while offering an evaluative comment ("very strange"). Her performance is futile, as there is no-one around to attend to it.

From this incident, we can see how S initially performs to attract an audience -W- inviting W over to see the statues in the light of his performance. Even though W is attracted to the statues by S's performance, she develops an interest in the statues and stays there in order to explore them on her own. W discovered the exhibit through social interaction and in the light of her companion's performance. The ephemeral duration of S' performance and his quick departure may pose questions on the value of social

interaction for him, exploring the reasons why S chose to perform only to attract W over and showing her something he did and then immediately moving on to explore the gallery on his own.

	W and S are walking by the statues, entering from Door 2. 
0:01 0:03	S turns to his left and looks at the statues. W walks ahead facing the <i>Egyptian case</i> . S walks towards the statues. 
0:06.9	S turns and faces the male statue.
0:08	S turns his head backwards, looking at W's direction. S: mum? (0.2) mum? (facing W) (0.2) mum? (starts walking towards W)  
0:14.8 0:15.9	S starts walking backwards towards the statues. S turns and faces the statues. 
0:16.9	S turns and faces W, while stepping backwards closer to male statue.
0:17.8	S positions himself in front of the male statue and imitates his posture.

		
0:20	W is approaching S when S lifts his head, 'pointing at' the statue with his gaze.	
0:21	S: I am (-)	
0:21.9	W passes by him and looks at statues. S turns to his left where W is, and moves to the right side of gallery	
0:23.7	W looks at statues while standing in front of the female statue.	
0:24.8	W steps closer to the statues.	
0:25	W: very strange	
0:26.4	W lifts her head and looks at the statues, flicking her gaze from the male to the female statue	
0:36	S rejoins with W for a second and then, wanders around the gallery space.	

		
0:45	S walks towards the <i>Ijede mask</i> . W is still looking at the statues.	
0:52	W steps to her left and looks once again at the male statue. She reaches and looks at them while standing at the left corner of the Plexiglas.	
0:56.6	W moves on to the back side of the statues and examines them.	
1:09	W shifts her head and looks straight ahead at the <i>Ijede mask video installation</i> , which S has set on.	

### Example 59 (2011-03-26 15:57 pm)

In the second example, S1 and S2 attempt to attract W as an audience. The recording starts when they are exploring the *Life after Death glass case*. S1 turns and spots the *African statues*. He then starts walking towards them while identifying his attention hook (“statues”). Additionally, S1 positions himself in front of the male statue and imitates its posture by putting his hand together in front of this face as in prayer. His animating performance attracts W’s attention who acknowledges her attention by elaborating his performance (“statues, a man and a woman”).

M and W start approaching the boys and the exhibit slowly when S2 reaches S1. Then, he repeats S1’s performance; S2 positions his hands in the same way, animating the male statue. This time neither W nor M reconfirm their attendance, as their gaze towards the right side of the gallery indicates. Their failure to attract W as an audience prompts S1 to further elaborate his performance by giving out an evaluation (“well, like this”). His repaired performance attracts W’s gaze momentarily encouraging S1 and S2 to repeat their aforesaid animating. This time their performance comes to no avail, as W and M are looking at the right side of the gallery.

This example reveals how these two visitors are driven to look at the *two African wooden statues* by S; he manages to **attract** both of them as **an audience** by performing at the face of the exhibit. Through their shifts in posture and their gaze along with naming

and animating, the exhibit comes under the group's joint attention for a moment, when W elaborates S1's previous identification.

0:05.3	S1: <b>that statues.</b>
0:07	S1: <b>statues</b> (approaching statues).
0:08.5	S1 positions himself in front of the male statue with his hands imitating prayer. 
0:10	W: <b>statues, a man and a woman.</b>
0:11	S2 approaches S1, positions himself in front of S1 facing the male statue, imitating S1's gesture. 
0:13	W walks slowly behind them while looking at her right side towards the <i>Power Figures</i> .
0:14.6	S1 turns towards W. S1: <b>well, like this</b> (sticking his two palms together). 
0:15.6	W turns and looks at S2.
0:16.6	S1 turns towards the statues, performing again the same gesture with his hands imitating prayer.
0:18.4	S2 repeats the same performance with S1. W is looking towards the <i>stools</i> <i>glass case</i> while M is walking along with W. 

Example 60 (2011-02-19 14:04pm)

## 8.5. Conclusions

Although the same categories of performances were also identified and derived from the data collected for the case of the Horniman Museum and Gardens, there was a slight difference unveiled through the analysis in contrast to the Courtauld Gallery and the Wellcome Collection. Telling and tagging performances occurred more often than in the other two case studies. A possible explanation may be the fact that visitors at the Horniman Museum and Gardens are in their majority adult-child groups. Past research has explored the central role adults have in the *guided participation* (Rogoff 1995) of their children that they lead through gestures and storytelling (Crowley and Jacobs 2002).

Apart from the sociocultural role the adults play in their children's learning, the institutional context is also considered a factor prompting adults' intense use of telling and tagging. Especially for the *Life after Death* glass case, the length and complexity of information provided through the interpretive text seemed to occasion visitors' performances in very specific ways, pointing to the text and the respective exhibit to link the information to the exhibit and vice versa. As in the case of the Wellcome Collection where there was a "designated reader" in almost each group of casual visitors, at the face of the *Life after Death* glass case visitors assigned themselves the role of the "designated reader" (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60) rendering public the information they read. Mainly visitors addressed the identification of the exhibits displayed in this specific case through their reading aloud of the interpretive text.

In the case of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting, text-echo informed visitors' performances but not as often as in the case of the *Life after Death* glass case. Due to the lack of interpretive text in the case of the *two African wooden statues*, drawing comparisons across the formal telling embedded in visitors' performances was impossible. In addition, regarding the *two African wooden statues*, the analysis unveiled a specific exhibit-related performance, that of touching the exhibits. Even if this was the case only when young visitors encountered the exhibit, a seemingly important factor prompting this type of behaviour is the institutional choices about this specific exhibit, namely the lack of interpretive text and the shape of the protective glass.

Visitors used the same means and practices for carrying out their social sharing and prompt their meaning-making as they did with the other two case studies, the Courtauld Gallery and the Wellcome Collection. Pointing gestures, deictic pronouns and adverbs, perceptual talk in Allen's words (2002), all "danced" on the museum floor through visitors' performances. Shifts in posture and gaze actually seemed to shape the perceptual range of the experience; visitors performed upon a specific exhibit, or an aspect of it, through carefully designed leans towards the exhibits, blocking or allowing visual access to the surrounding context.

## 9 | DISCUSSION

*“Perhaps only silence and love do justice to a great work of art”*  
Dominique de Menil <sup>27</sup>

*“We are not huge fans of pointing [as it] can lead to jabbing which runs the risk of unintentional contact with artwork”*  
Eric Hogan <sup>28</sup>

This chapter brings together the findings across the three case studies, reflecting the research questions posed in the introductory chapter. These were as follows:

- How do visitors' performances initiate, prompt, and lead to shared meaning-making?
- How do visitors render their personal interests public both to each other and possibly to non-members of their group?
- How does context affect performance and hence meaning-making? Specifically, how do the three dimensions of context (physical, personal, and sociocultural), along with the institutional, shape the emerging performances and vice versa?
- Which communicative functions are mainly addressed by visitors' performances? How do visitors' performances unfold to address these functions? Which practices do group members use in order to share their performances with the other members of the group and other people that share the same space? How do members of the same group use reference and how does the use of reference affect the museum experience and the performance that arises?

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<sup>27</sup> <http://www.menil.org/about/history.php>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/ct-play-0512-copy-museum-manners-20110512,0,7129635.full.story>

The first section recapitulates the major findings of my research, introducing the second section that discusses the **categories of performances** identified across the three cases based on typical examples from the face of the seven exhibits. Specifically, each category is presented, detailed and summarized individually, allowing for similarities and contrasting differences to emerge across the sociocultural means visitors used in each case study and for each one of the exhibits.

The **Contextual Framework of Museum Learning**, introduced in Chapter 2, and the possible influences of each one of these three contexts along with the **institutional** are discussed in detail, underlining the interwoven interaction of all of these contexts in the shaping of visitors' performances and subsequently, their shared meaning-making. The third section presents each context individually through examples elaborating their unique dynamics that constantly (re)shape the performances emerging at the face of the exhibit.

## 9.1. Key findings

One of the intentions of my research was to highlight the fact that the encounters in a museum -both with other visitors and the exhibits- are complex, situated and interactive events during which visitors' performances trigger and prompt the processes of shared meaning-making further.

Three main categories of performances were identified. These were: attracting audiences; telling and tagging; and animating through “displaying doing”. These three categories reflect back to the **performativity** entailed in meaning making in museums. Specifically through the analysis of what happens at the exhibit-face, it became realised that the museum experience bears many similarities to a theatrical performance. The museum galleries set the stage for visitors who interchange their roles from that of the performer to that of an audience through their ongoing interaction with each other. Furthermore, the analysis also directed attention to the existence of a set of ‘rules’ and specific context-related behaviours, referred to throughout this thesis as “dancing behaviours” (Burke 1957, 9). These performances aim at regulating the ongoing interaction and “social communication” (Whyte 1979, 77) between the visitors as these

are performative ways to both acknowledge co-presence as well the rules entailed in visiting these public spaces. Every small step and every given performance seems likely to trigger a range of other performances that constantly reshape the ‘context’ in which each encounter is situated.

Additionally, this performativity highlighted the importance of **identification**, especially when conducted through deixis, specifically pointing gestures, for sharing content and context, directing and anchoring attention to an exhibit and starting a conversation in ways that language alone cannot do. In the vast majority of the examples, visitors publicly identified their attention hooks, initiating in this way the social sharing among them and their co-visitors. Specifically, through the analysis of the presented incidents from the three case studies, it became apparent that the visitors’ primary communicational function was the identification of their forthcoming as well as ongoing attention hooks. It also became obvious that when the interpretive text provided information in the form of location description, visitors used heavily in their identification both aspects of the text as well as pointing gestures to link the information to the exhibit, and vice versa. This visual link has been considered as a means facilitating them in the identification process and its confirmation based on the formal voice of the museum.

The public identification of visitors’ attention hooks managed, most of the time, to attract others, prompting a sequence of further performances. Identification seems to be the first stage for visitors’ shared meaning-making as it facilitates the anchoring of their joint attention. Visitors performed this identification through shifts in posture and gaze, pointing gestures, deictic terms, and naming, either by using their personal context and common ground, or the formal voice of the museum through text-echo. Therefore, identification bridges the personal context to the institutional and physical, which then links to the social context of each encounter, all refined and appropriate according to the raised “place expectations” (Babon 2006, 156) that each visitor holds.

If identification is the first stage for visitors’ shared meaning-making then, as seen in the incidents analysed in the previous chapters, every performance carried out by the visitor at the face of the exhibit entails a type of identification, as performances are

always relevant to an exhibit or one of its aspects. This argument is explained further in section 9.2. that discusses the patterns of the performances identified through representative examples.

## 9.2. Categories of performances

In addition to the acknowledgement of the entailed performativity in visitors' shared meaning-making, the analysis of the data collected from the three case studies identified three major categories of visitors' performances: (1) **attracting an audience**, (b) **telling and tagging**, and (c) **animating through "displaying doing"** (Figure 43). Apart from these three main categories, the analysis also revealed two subtle dimensions of performing in the museum; that of **arriving second** and **seeing through another person's eyes**.

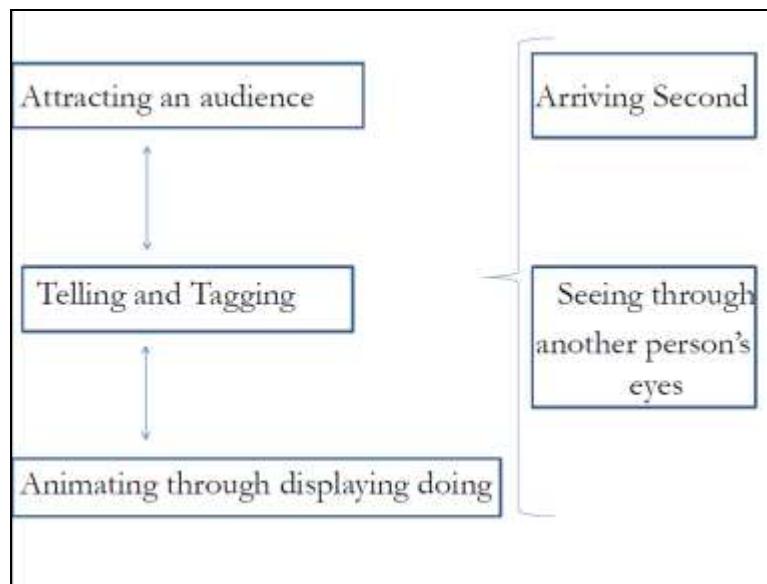


Figure 43. Patterns of visitors' performances across the three case studies

Visitors' performances shift moment by moment, enabling visitors to also shift between the sociocultural practices used for their performances. The aforementioned categories may all apply to the same strip of interaction as visitors progressively prompt

their ongoing interaction. Typically, the “attracting an audience” performance precedes all the others as it has been undertaken to open the perceptual range of a personal encounter to the other co-visitors, facilitating the anchoring of joint attention. As seen in Figure 43, these categories are interconnected, with the links between the categories pointing in both directions to highlight the two-way interaction.

Visitors’ performances evoked different combinations of phases and means. Not unlike using language, performances unfolded moment by moment based upon what preceded and what succeeded them. Furthermore, the emerging performances did not always occur in a specific or repeated order but, instead, through a slight variation of practices and phases carrying out different communicative functions. Each incident was examined in repeated scrutiny, taking into consideration the location of actions and their sequential relation to each other. Actions fell under certain codes and as the analysis progressed, collections of instances showing the same phenomenon clustered, identifying themes and issues of visitors’ social sharing at the exhibit-face.

In the following sections, each of the patterns identified in this research is presented through clear examples from across the three case studies, allowing possible comparisons among these and the seven exhibits to emerge while also exploring and summarising the sociocultural means visitors used to carry out each one of these broadly defined performances.

### **9.2.1. Attracting an audience**

The “attracting an audience” category included those performances used to attract someone’s attention, broadening a personal encounter by inviting others over. It addressed one of the major motives for visiting the museum: that of socializing and sharing with others (e.g. Blud 1990a; McManus 1989a), while it was also proved through the analysis to facilitate the pivotal function of identification (Ash 2004; Borun *et al.* 1996; Crowley and Siegler 1999; Feinberg and Leinhardt 2002).

The analysis in Chapters 6 to 8 highlighted the fact that visitors seem actively engaged in gathering bits of information about the exhibits in order to make meaning of what they experience in the galleries. These bits of information were most of the time

communicated to their co-visitors, functioning as an active invitation to broaden and share their personal encounters with each other. By inviting others to join them, apart from achieving a joint attention hook about which they may collaboratively make meaning, visitors also triggered each other's motivation and challenged each other to participate more actively in their joint encounters.

“Attracting an audience” was among the most frequently recurring performances across the three case studies independently of the type of exhibit. To attract an audience, visitors performed either intentionally or unintentionally. Specifically, visitors deliberately performed to attract someone through **beckoning gestures, snapping fingers** (example 13) **and whistling** (example 25), **deictic terms** including verbs, adjectives and adverbs (e.g. 2;6;8;10; 30 and 31), **deictic gestures, person reference** [like ‘*mum*’ (e.g. 2 and 33); ‘*dad*’; ‘*Maria*’ (e.g. 24)], **perceptual talk** and **shifts in posture** and **gaze**. (Figure 44). This performed invitation can be seen as the result of socially expressed intention on behalf of the performer to share something with others.

Beckoning gestures
Snapping fingers
Physically Pulling someone
Whistling
Deictic gestures
Deictic terms
Person reference
Perceptual talk (evaluative comments, identification, text-echo)
Shifts in posture and gaze

*Figure 44. Sociocultural means of “attracting an audience”*

Apart from performing to attract someone, visitors elongated their performances to give time to the addressee to accept the invitation. This is part of the acceptance phase of a performance (3.2.1) when the addressee acknowledges attendance. As seen in

examples 2, 12 and 57, the performers' pointing gestures towards the exhibit lasted a few seconds, as they were waiting for a response from their co-visitors, which was performed either verbally or non-verbally through shifts in posture and gaze.

**Beckoning gestures** were considered as the most performative means of carrying out an "attracting an audience" performance. Through beckoning, visitors publicly demonstrated their desire to call someone over; asking someone to join them. These gestures have a clear aim and meaning; that of inviting others over. Apart from this, beckoning gestures impose the minimum burden on others sharing the same space with them due to their non-verbal nature, as well as to their ephemeral duration. Allen (2002) also noticed that members of the families in her study beckoned each other over to see what was of interest in the gallery rather than talk about it later.

Visitors beckoned others to join them at the face of all the exhibits either in the traditional way or by physically regulating it: that is, by snapping fingers, whistling, and pulling someone over instead. Snapping fingers and whistling were performed once at the face of two exhibits at the Courtauld Gallery (examples 13 and 25). The former took place at the face of the Seurat painting while the latter at the face of the two Degas sculptures. These choices may be seen as part of the wider category of "dancing attitudes" (Burke 1957, 9) occurring specifically at the Courtauld Gallery.

Additionally, when visitors failed to anchor joint attention through their performances, they sometimes physically **pulled** the others **over**. In example 45, the performer physically pulls her audience towards the *Life after Death* glass case, demanding in a sense her attendance through her physical co-presence. In the same gallery, there was an incident involving a young visitor (S) pulling the adult away from the exhibit to prevent her from continuing her dancing performance (example 35) at the face of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting. Additionally, from the Wellcome Collection examples 6 and 7 involve adults pulling the younger members of their group physically away from *painting number 3* as a means of shifting their attention. This performance only emerged in groups involving children, used as a means of distracting the children from their ongoing performance. This finding concurs with those by Beaumont (2004) who

carried out research in families visiting art museums and Diamond (1986) and Griffin (1999).

A clear example of the dynamics of “attracting an audience” comes from the Courtauld Gallery involving two adults and two children at the face of the Seurat’s painting *Woman Powdering Herself* (example 10). One of the children performs at the face of the painting in order to attract the others. Specifically, he uses person reference (“*daddy*”) twice to address one of the members of his community of practice, while beckoning three times, making public his intense desire for the male adult to attend his forthcoming performances. Here we have a combination of means used to attract the others over to the painting: that is, person reference, beckoning gestures, and shifts in posture and gazing.

Using **person reference** has also been a recurring practice among visitors across the three case studies. As seen in example 2 from the face of the Wellcome Collection’s *painting number 3*, once the visitor has positioned herself in front of the painting, she turns to her left side, where the other two members of her community of practice are, and uses person reference (“*mommy*”). Immediately afterwards, she uses two **deictic verbs** in sequence (“*come*” and “*look*”), elaborating her previous use of person reference, and hence, clarifying what the person who identified through her reference should do (“*come*” and “*look*”). Specifically, person reference was one of the most efficient means visitors used while in the galleries, as it is a very personal way to tag someone as a ratified member of the ongoing encounter. Therefore, person reference may be used to shape the perceptual range of their encounter, including some of the visitors while excluding others.

Apart from beckoning others and using person reference to demarcate who is a member of one’s encounter and who is not, visitors also attracted others to the exhibits by using perceptual talk. In the case of the painting by Seurat, visitors approached and **pointed at** the exhibit while naming either the artist [“*Seurat*” see examples 11, 12] or its technique (“*pointillism*”; “*this is all small dots*” see examples 13, 15, 18).

In example 16, W broadened the perceptual range of her encounter with the Seurat painting by posing **a question** to her co-visitor (“*what do you think of that?*”) while turning and facing her. In this case, the performer visually linked her question to the painting via **a pointing gesture** elaborating the **deictic term** ‘*that*’. For the Wellcome Collection, as seen in example 9, W2, who arrived second at the face of the exhibit, broadened her encounter to W1 by posing a question (“*hey, have you [got] an information on this painting?*”) inviting her to participate in her quest.

**Evaluative comments** and **text-echo** were also a means for visitors to widen their perceptual range and invite others to come closer and subsequently share their experiences. In the first example from the Wellcome Collection, the joint interaction begun by W1 giving out an evaluative comment on *painting number 3* (“*Oh my God!*”) which she combined with a deictic verb (“*look*”) inviting W2 over (“*Look at this man!*”). Her invitation though came to no avail as W2 did not approach either W1 or the painting. W1 performed again and succeeded in catching her addressee’s attention by using **text-echo** (“*He claimed only to drink water and eat in moderation*”).

Another way an exhibit became salient was through visitors’ subtle shifts in **posture and gaze**, indicating an interest expressed through the direction of the visitor’s eye gaze and body (see examples 30, 31, 32, 37). Particularly, in example 37 from the Horniman Museum and Gardens, we can see the dynamics of positioning oneself at the exhibit-face on the joint encounter. Here, we joined a family, with M and W exploring the painting first. As M positions himself at the face of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting and explores its interpretive text, S1 and S2 approach M, broadening his perceptual range by posing a question to him, concerning the identification of the exhibit (“*Dad, what’s that?*”). More discussion on the operation of the shifts in posture and gaze while encountering the exhibits is provided throughout the following sections, especially in the section that explores the influence of institutional context on the emergence of specific performances (9.3.1.).

Visitors, through their public display of shifts in attention (either verbally or non-verbally), encouraged each other to view particular exhibits or aspects of these. Once their companions accepted their invitations to share attention, further performances

were given in slightly more than half of the incidents. The additional performance usually came in the form of “telling and tagging” and animating through “displaying doing”. The performances under these animating categories prompted further what these visitors were experiencing and their shared meaning-making while also sustaining the audience’s engagement.

### **9.2.2. Telling and Tagging**

“Telling and tagging” refers to visitors’ sociocultural means of narrating and pointing out something while being at the face of the exhibits. These fundamental sociocultural means have most of the time been detailed by either the authoritative voice of the museum, or the voice of the visitor allowing a sense of his/her personal context and their shared common ground to be reflected upon. The analysis showed that telling and tagging have been means of initiating and prompting visitors’ collaborative exploration, accomplished through visitors’ ongoing interaction while, concomitantly, leading visitors to seeing the exhibits most of the time in the light of the authoritative voice of the museum.

Specifically, telling can take the form of text-echo when visitors quote passages directly from the provided interpretive text (McManus 1989a) while takes the form of storytelling when visitors detail their telling with personal information, something that Allen (2002) names life-knowledge. Apart from directly quoting aspects of the interpretive text as it is, visitors also rephrased the information, allowing themselves to filter it according to their personal context as well as the social context of their joint encounter with the members of their community of practice. Rephrasing aspects of the interpretative text was noted also in previous research (Allen 2002; Crowley and Jacobs 2002) arguing that visitors specifically rephrase those aspects in an attempt to tailor their answers to their audience. This may be the case in example 41 from the Life after Death glass case in the Horniman Museum and Gardens, where the adult rephrased the interpretive text, which reads 713-332 BC (“that’s before Christ”) and in example 49, when the adult rephrases the “wadjet (eye of Horus)” by using “the triangle with the eye” instead.

In example 1 from the Wellcome Collection, W1 managed to attract W2 by directly quoting the interpretive text (“*He claimed only to drink water and eat in moderation*”), followed by rephrasing (“*he exhibited himself around England trying to get a shilling for people to see him*”), while in example 19 from the Courtauld Gallery, the “designated reader” rephrased a line of the interpretive text on the *Woman Powdering Herself* painting (“*he painted far, creating more like a frame*” instead of “*which frames the composition*”) even though she directly quoted the rest of the text. Borun *et al.* (1996) argued that families in their research did not read the interpretive text in its entirety if the “designated reader” considered it to obstruct individuals’ ability to enjoy and maintain their social relationships. This may explicate the tailoring of “text-echo” to suit each audience accordingly.

Telling, as analysis suggested, allows visitors to develop complex and more personal relationships between them and the exhibits as well as with other members of the same community of practice, often incorporating information that may span across different contexts. Telling allows visitors to build upon their own personal relationships and bonds, reconfirming their identities and expanding their personal context through the dynamics of the social, physical and institutional context (Borun *et al.* 1996; Falk and Dierking 2000; Leinhardt and Crowley 2002). This finding reflects the Museum Learning Collaborative’s suggestion to treat learning as “conversational elaboration”, bringing together the nature of visitors’ identity, the structure of the learning environment, and the degree of explanatory engagement.

On the other hand, the analysis revealed that the use of tagging could also be detailed by the formal voice framing the exhibit while being further driven by each visitor’s personal context. As seen in example 2 from the Wellcome Collection, *painting number 3* sparked a memory which was shared with those in the same perceptual range (“*it used to be a picture of him in my Guinness book of Records*”). Awakening memories and personal reminisce also occurred at the face of the *Life after Death glass case* at the Horniman Museum and Gardens. Specifically, in example 39, the person who arrived second repairs her co-visitor’s identification of the exhibition as “*beetle kind of thing*” into “*scarab, that’s how they called it*” while elaborating her answer with a personal memory (“*I used to have a little ceramic scarab of that colour*”). Additionally, in example 47 from the face of the same exhibit, one of the displayed exhibits sparked a personal memory of the

performer (“*we have one of these little figures in our cabinet. Someone gave it to grandpa*”), while in example 49 also from the same exhibit, the performer combined aspects of their personal lives with the ‘formal voice’ of the museum (“*yeah, amulets were charms worn in life as well as death. The wadjet protected against the evil eye. Remember when I said about the triangle with the eye? That’s the evil eye, yeah?*”). These findings reflect upon past research concerning family learning in informal settings (Ash 2004; Crowley and Jacobs 2002; Ellenbogen 2002) arguing that family members build their knowledge through “their collective and distributed talking, doing, and remembering” (Ash 2004, 879).

Visitors, apart from sharing their personal stories and memories, shared the exhibits or aspects of these as they identified them as forthcoming attention hooks for their co-visitors. In a few examples, visitors identified “islands of expertise” (Crowley and Jacobs 2002), either their own or their co-visitors, upon encountering the exhibits. In example 44 for instance, the female adult attempted to engage the younger co-visitor with the *Life after Death glass case* as she recognised the exhibits displayed within this glass case as her co-visitors “islands of expertise”. Upon recognising these as such, she performed to **attract her as an audience** while triggering her interest further through “telling and tagging”. The exhibits, as well as the scaffolding resources provided by the museum, function as “mental handles” (Silverman 1990, 97) for visitors and become “social objects [...] around which conversation happens” (Simon 2010, 127). This recognition of their co-visitors’ forthcoming attention hooks and the means which visitors use in order to help others to discover is a pivotal aspect of the social sharing taking place in the museum galleries.

Visitors across the three case studies used the provided information to detail their telling. As in the two out of three case studies further information on the exhibits were provided through the museum labelling, visitors performances were characterized by the encompassing of aspects of this labelling within their occurrence. The museum labelling was used in a sense as an “online filter” (Crowley and Jacobs 2002, 344) through which visitors managed to link their own personal “entrance narratives” (Doering and Pekarik 1996) to the formal voice of the museum. The same case study featured a few examples involving visitors sharing their experiences and expanding their personal encounters by telling the others something they considered important, interesting, intriguing or

(ir)relevant. Through telling, visitors brought into their conversations and meaning-making aspects and reflections of their own personal contexts as well as their joint context, linking the exhibit to their own lives as we see in example 6 where M justified Daniel Lambert's size due to eating “*too many pies*”.

The constant negotiation of visitors' attention at the face of the exhibits became better apprehended through the microanalysis of the tagging performances. In example 45, W used tagging at the face of the *Life after Death glass case* in order to show S the hieroglyphics (“*and you see? This is how they used to [...] you see their writing? There are pictures?*”) and immediately moved on to see the rest of the exhibition. In example 46, M uses tagging and telling as he passed by the *Life After Death glass case* summarizing in a sense the exhibits on display to the other members of his group (W1, W2 and S) (“*Here that's the [...] here is the mummy*”). Apart from using tagging to render something public quickly, visitors also used tagging for linking the information provided in the interpretive text to the actual exhibits, especially in the case of the *Life after Death glass case* at the Horniman Museum and Gardens and the *maiolica glass case* at the Courtauld Gallery.

In more than half of the incidents presented on the *maiolica glass case*, visitors pointed towards the text and the exhibits and vice versa in an attempt to detail their viewing. By using tagging to both text and the exhibits, visitors made visual vectors among themselves, the pointed out object, and the panel text. The same pattern occurred at the face of the *Life after Death glass case* at the Horniman Museum and Gardens. Visitors used their fingers, pointing at the text and then at the glass case, linking the passages of the text to the relevant exhibits by using the *location description* provided through the text (e.g. “*and then the jars, right, top and bottom*” example 41). Especially in two of the examples analysed on the *Life after Death glass case* (examples 41 and 49), visitors collaboratively used the location description provided in the interpretive text to identify the exhibits while locating them in the specific glass case. In example 41, one of the three ratified members of the encounter is the “designated reader” (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60), using text-echo to detail his telling. Specifically, he names the exhibits while also reads aloud the location description (“*top left*”, “*top right*”, “*centre*”) allowing him and the other two to locate the exhibits through tagging.

For those two exhibits, the *maiolica* and the *Life after Death glass case*, the analysis suggested that the framing of the interpretive text (location description) along with the density of exhibits displayed in the same glass case were the two main reasons prompting visitors to heavily use “telling and tagging” performances. Specifically, throughout the examples analysed in the previous chapters, visitors used pointing gestures to facilitate their reading -underlining the long passage of the interpretive text they were reading aloud especially in the case of the *Life after Death glass case*. Additionally, this performance is an observable link to the formal voice of the museum and hence, functioning as a public display of the validity of visitors’ “telling” (McManus 1989a; Stainton 2002).

In the incidents analysed in this thesis, visitors facilitated each other’s viewing by filtering the information ‘situated’ in their personal, social as well as the physical context (i.e. interpretive text and other exhibits). Through telling and tagging visitors shared content or evaluations concerning the exhibits, further shaped by the physical context (framing and juxtaposition of the exhibits) and the visitors’ shifts in posture and positioning at the face of the exhibits.

### 9.2.2.1. Alternative ways for tagging

Analysis also revealed the existence of alternative means of performing ‘tagging’ as visitors tend to use whatever they may be holding in their hands to identify the focus of their attention. A visitor used her **umbrella** at the face of the *Life after Death glass case* to identify her attention hook and attract her co-visitor as an audience (example 38), while another used the **pencil** she was holding to direct her co-visitors towards *painting number 3* at the Wellcome Collection (example 2). Apart from these two means, the **camera** was also used as a means of ‘tagging’ as seen in three of the examples presented in Chapters 6 to 8.

Visitors either made use of a camera to take a picture of the exhibit (examples 18 and 27), or mentioned having a picture of the exhibit in their possession (“*I took a photo of this before*” example 34 from the face of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting at the Horniman Museum and Gardens). Apart from tagging something as interesting by

pointing the camera to it, taking a photograph is more than an indicator of attention; it is a sociocultural means through which attention hooks are revealed. Taking pictures is considered as a pointing device, an alternative way to point and anchor attention to something in the visual locale. It is a choice prompted by the personal context of each visitor as photographs are a sort of personal souvenir and a tool for remembrance and reminiscence, which are subsequently meant to be shared with others (van Dijck 2008).

The camera functions as “place marker” and “a souvenir” (Senie 2003), declaring and proving the fact that someone was ‘there’. It is also a twofold performative means. Firstly, it is an observable and reflective performance, as other people in the gallery space can see someone taking a picture. In addition, apart from being personal and well connected to a person’s identity, taking pictures is also a social performance. According to van Dijck (2008, 62), “pictures become more like spoken language as photographs are turning into the new currency for social interaction”. Hence, taking photographs in the museum, as well as in other sociocultural contexts, is both a memory tool and a communicational device moving “from sharing (memory) objects to sharing experiences” (van Dijck 2008, 60).

### **9.2.3. Animating through “displaying doing”**

“Animating through “displaying doing” refers to these performances visitors use to bring the exhibit, or aspects of it, into life by using their own bodies. This category comes under scrutiny for the **first time concerning non-interactive exhibits**, elaborating the ways in which visitors use their bodies to elaborate and enrich their performances about the exhibits.

Although it initially seemed to be relevant to what Diamond (1986) had coined as “showing”, it soon became evident that the category of animating entailed a more dramatized aspect, aiming at infusing an exhibit or one of its aspects. Instead, Diamond’s category of “showing” mainly addressed the modeling behaviours emerging at the face of interactive exhibits, involving visitors’ demonstrations on how an exhibit works or, should be manipulated. In addition, Meisner (2007), both in her own research and in collaboration with others (2007), discussed the phenomenon of visitors displaying to their co-visitors a range of possible ways to interact with the exhibits while drawing

relations to their personal context. They came up with the category of “doing” and “displaying doing” (Meisner *et al.* 2007, 1537), when referring to visitors relating aspects of the science-related interactive exhibits to their own bodies. Even though their examples include a sense of embodiment and performativity as those in my research, these all referred to performances aiming at demonstrating to others how to manipulate the exhibits, or explaining their function.

Research in art and museum education has underlined the pivotal value of embodied responses to artworks and the essence of emotion (Hubard 2007). Especially embodied responses are means of transforming visitors’ encounters with the artworks into more dynamic and creatively expressed experiences even when it is difficult for visitors to engage in long, detailed conversations. Hubard’s embodied responses refer to visitors’ use of their body to enact parts or emotions about the artworks. In my research, this has been defined as “animating”. The exhibit was seen in the light of the embodied performance, which reflected the exact way the performer experienced the exhibit.

Embodiment was performed across the three case studies through iconic gestures, spatial and temporal arrangements and other embodied performances that aimed at seeing the exhibit in a more vivid as well as a very specific way. This arguably theatrical embodiment allowed visitors to imitate and animate the subject matter of the exhibits, sometimes even the exhibits’ function, and aspects of the technique deployed in the making of the exhibits. Specific, as seen in the examples regarding the *Woman Powdering Herself* painting, visitors’ animating performances included the iconic gesture of “doing dots”, squinting and stepping backwards. At the Horniman Museum and Gardens, visitors animated the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting through iconic gestures imitating the brushstrokes (example 31 with one of the visitors performing the iconic gesture of holding the brush) and the subject matter of the painting by dancing while holding their hands (example 35 with the adult performing a dance while holding hands with her co-visitor). There was only one animating performance at the Wellcome Collection involving a visitor imitating the posture of the painting’s subject matter (example 9).

In addition, visitors in front of the *Life after Death glass case* and the *two African Statues* at the Horniman Museum and Gardens also animated aspects of these two exhibits but not as often as in the case of the Courtauld Gallery. Visitors performed iconic gestures of writing when referring to the hieroglyphics found on the *stela* displayed in the *Life after Death glass case* (“*their writing is*” example 45) and shaping a triangle when referring to the “*evil eye*” and the “*eye of Horus*” (example 49). Even though it was not an iconic gesture, it was a pointing one towards the sky upon uttering the word “*afterworld*” that, arguably animated the specific term (example 49). For the *two African Statues*, a few visitors made iconic gestures of wearing rings around their necks (“[...] *make their necks longer*” example 57) and (“*bands around their necks*” example 58). There were also two examples of visitors imitating the male statue’s posture (see examples 59 and 60).

Performances under these categories underline the power of performance in museums, not only for creating the initial engagement by drawing attention to the exhibits –or their aspects- and subsequently drawing audiences, but also as a public, observable display of experience, allowing visitors to share and create shared meaning-making around the exhibit.

#### **9.2.4. The subtle dynamics of visitors’ performances**

Apart from the three categories of performances already presented, the analysis of the data across the three case studies revealed that performing in the museum entails two subtle dimensions: a) **seeing through another person’s eyes** and b) **arriving at the exhibit second**.

Specifically, being the audience of one’s performance allows one to encounter the exhibit in the light of his/her performance; that is, the exhibit is infused through his/her performance. While arriving at the exhibit second assigns most of the time the role of the audience, visitors change roles through social interaction, often taking the lead themselves and infusing the exhibit with their own performances.

“Arriving” at the exhibits “second” has been discussed briefly in research looking at visitors' behaviours while in the galleries, especially when interacting with interactive exhibits. Vom Lehn (2002; 2006) argues that arriving at an exhibit second leads visitors to experiencing it in the light of the performance carried out by the person who had been there ahead of them in time. Specifically, when interacting with hands-on or interactive exhibits, visitors are expected to leave their input in some format such as building something or typing information, which is available to the person who arrives at the exhibit after them. Towards the same direction, Kendon (1990) underlines that “catching up” with others is one of the means through which people indicate their intention to start “an action exchange system” (Kendon 1990, 245). This intention, once performed through shifts in posture, gestures, utterances and the identification of possible breaks into the rhythm of one's performance, transforms into an “announcement” (Kendon 1990) which is further occasioned by the physical arrangement of the space (Jordan and Henderson 1995).

My research bridged those two points made by analysing what takes place when two visitors rejoin at the face of the exhibits. An argument was made based on a number of examples across the three case studies that visitors tend to give out a performance upon rejoining, rendering their co-presence public. In example 40 from the *Life after Death glass case*, the person who arrived second at the exhibit declared, in a sense, with her performance her desire to be included again in her co-visitors viewing (“*did you see that scarab?*”). Sometimes visitors summarized in a sentence what they encountered while being alone, using this summary as an entry point in their co-visitor's experience. As seen in example 39 from the *Life after Death glass case*, the person arriving second at the exhibit face where her co-visitor is, gave out a summary of her individual experience while approaching him (“*The entire process of mummification took about seventy days*”).

Arriving at the exhibit second does not always imply that the role of the audience will be assigned to this person. There were a few examples where the person who arrived second took the lead and prompted the shared meaning-making through his/her performances. For instance, as seen in examples 39 and 40 from the *Life after Death glass case*, the visitor who arrived at the exhibit second was the one leading the shared meaning, managing to attract her co-visitor to see the exhibit anew.

Findings revealed that when it comes to accepting the invitation to experience an exhibit together -that is after an “attracting an audience” performance- these visitors have to perform anew in order to demonstrate their desire to attend. This was performed through a range of sociocultural means as seen in the examples in Chapters 6 to 8 such as **acknowledgement tokens, evaluative comments, shifts in posture and gaze, and positioning** oneself in closer proximity to the performer. In more than the half of the analysed cases where the performer and the audience were distant, after the given “attracting an audience” performance, the person who arrived second normally shifted his/her posture and approached the other, displaying in this way his/her attendance (e.g. examples 1, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14).

In example 11, which involves visitors to Seurat’s painting at the Courtauld Gallery, two visitors anchored joint attention following the identification by one of them (“*Seurat*”) and the offering of an acknowledgement token (“*Yes*”) by the other. The same pattern emerged in example 15 regarding the same exhibit, when one of the visitors identified the exhibit (“*this is all small dots*”) and animated its technique by a “*doing dots*” gesture, followed by her co-visitor’s acknowledgement token (“*yeah*”) and a shift in posture towards the exhibit. Additionally, visitors confirmed their attendance through evaluative comments. As seen in example 1 from the Wellcome Collection, acceptance to jointly encounter *painting number 3* was performed through shifts in posture and an evaluative comment (“*Oh my God*”), followed by a question (“*what weight was he?*”) elaborating the comment previously made.

The second performance of “**seeing through another person’s eyes**” refers to the subtle dynamics entailed in the main three patterns identified in my data. The social sharing that takes place upon encountering the exhibits actively constitutes and occasions the exhibits as well as the ways in which visitors will experience them (Heath and vom Lehn 2004). In most incidents presented in the previous chapters, the discovery of the exhibit has been driven and shaped by the way the performer rendered it, or one of its aspects, public.

Especially in two examples regarding the *Seurat painting*, visitors suggested to their co-visitors specific ways to look at the exhibit such as squinting their eyes (example 16) and looking from the painting's left side (example 17). These two examples bring also attention to the role of the means used by the performer while carrying out his/her social sharing. Specifically, the means used by the performers arguably not only facilitate the tagging of the exhibit, or one of its aspects, as context-relevant but also allow the others to experience it in the way the performer just did.

It is especially when this discovery is informed by the authoritative resources provided by the museum and performed using text-echo, or rephrasing, that the intertwined interaction of the institutional, physical, personal and social contexts can be better realised. By bringing aspects of the institution's language into their own discourse, visitors not only discover the exhibit in the light of their co-visitor's performance but also in the light of the institutions' authoritative voice. This can be clearly reflected in example 12 from the *Seurat painting* when the two visitors were drawn to the exhibit through the performances given by their third co-visitor (S) and one of them additionally detailed their viewing by using information provided in the text ("*two years to make it*").

The performer designs his/her performance in specific ways by using specific means which allow the audience to encounter the exhibits in very specific ways which can and may be further challenged through their social interaction. It can be argued that all performances somehow animate the exhibit momentarily, as visitors, through their social sharing seem in a sense to "bring it to life" by personally and socially infusing the exhibit. This social sharing has been described as "pathways" between the two visitors and the exhibit (Morrissey 2002). Of course in these pathways the personal context and their social bonds mediate the interaction and hence, the experience. The social sharing reinforces the social bonds among the members of the same community of practice and, sometimes, even strangers.

### 9.3. The intertwined interaction of contexts

It has been argued throughout my thesis that visitors' performances are always situated in a 'context'. The slippery term of *context* has been approached through the

Contextual Model of Museum Learning, a framework suggested by Falk and Dierking (2000) situating the museum experience within three contexts (personal, sociocultural and physical) under the constant influence of ‘time’.<sup>29</sup> My research considered the physical context of the museum galleries and the museum as part of an additional context, the *institutional* context, which was further explored (see also 4.1.). By adding the fourth context, my research sought to bring forward the fact that visitors’ encounters occur within those four contexts, which they interweave through their actions and interactions. It further managed to bring together research interested in ‘ordinary’ interaction with research interested in ‘institutional’ interaction, underlying in this sense that visitors enact aspects of those four contexts by interacting with each other and the content of the exhibitions.

This section presents these four contexts coupled with examples reflecting fragments of visitors enacting aspects of these contexts while interacting with the others at the exhibit-face. Aspects of these contexts became relevant only when participants themselves demonstrably oriented and enacted those in and through their social interaction. Firstly, the institutional context is presented, mainly through incidents where the curatorial choices on the shaping of visitors’ performances as well as the influence posed by what the institution represents for each visitor became relevant to the emerging interaction. The physical context is presented second, along with a discussion on the influence of the type of the exhibit on the shaping of visitors’ performances across the three case studies and vice versa, followed by the discussion on the sociocultural and personal contexts.

### 9.3.1. The institutional context

The institutional context should not be mixed with the physical, as the latter is part of the former. The institutional context reflects the norms, practices and expectations generated by the type of each museum, which is an institution having specific goals and aims. Museums are highly ordered institutions, following a carefully considered logic in both the presentation and the framing of their collections through which “the authority

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<sup>29</sup> Time in my study has been approached and explored as micro-time by exploring fragments of visitors’ interactions in front of specific exhibits.

of the curator, the sanctity of objects, and even the prestige of the institution itself” (Roberts 1997, 132) become sources of knowledge for the visitors themselves.

My research explored three different institutional contexts whose diversities in subject matter and physical context were further reinforced by those in the institutional choices of display and interpretation. This diversity raises pluralism in terms of visitors' expectations about what they shall experience in each context as well as the ways they should behave (Babon 2006; Smith and Wolf 1996; Sturken and Cartwright 2009). For example, research has underlined the fact that the institutional context seems to occasion whether or not a visitor will arrive alone (Borun 2008) and how they will approach the exhibits (Silverman 1990) while the physical context has been treated as one of the major factors influencing the museum experience (Falk and Dierking 1992; 2000).

For each one of the three case studies a painting was selected in order to explore the ways in which the proposed contextual framework influences and occasions the emerging visitors' performances. Additionally, for each of the cases of the Courtauld Gallery and the Horniman Museum and Gardens two exhibits were also explored to investigate the effect of the institutional context on visitors' performances.

As previously mentioned, the curatorial choices at the Medicine Man gallery (displaying all the paintings on the same wall, addressing them numerically while the interpretive text is provided through printed leaflets) seemed to direct visitors in spatially bound and (physical) context-bound performances. Specifically, visitors shared the provided leaflet, with one visitor reading aloud and replying to the others' comments and questions. The person who approached the leaflet cabinet first and held the leaflet was automatically assigned as the “designated reader” (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60) of his/her community of practice (see example 8).

At the Courtauld Gallery, the institutional choices appear to shape visitors' performances by displaying the paintings thematically in each room, to allow visitors to draw the possible similarities and differences in the painting techniques while also providing for each painting a detailed label with information on the painter and his technique. This framing detailed visitors' performances as seen in examples 12, 14 and 19 where visitors drew links between the two paintings by Seurat (“*the same as that*”; “*I love*

*this one too*"; "*it's another of his*"). On the contrary, the institutional framing of the Horniman Museum and Gardens on the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting informed visitors only about the title of the artwork, the year of its creation and the artist, leading visitors to use only the title of the painting in their performances ("*Yoruba: a celebration of African art*"; "*African paintings*").

The analysis pointed towards the existence of specific context-bound and institution-specific patterns in visitors' performances in the case of the Courtauld Gallery. Visitors at the specific museum carried out the same performances as the visitors at the other two case studies. However, Courtauld Gallery visitors seemed to use more delicate and subtle sociocultural means, such as beckoning gestures, person reference and whispering. This finding reflects a sense of "dancing an attitude" (Burke 1957, 9) and seems likely to be attributed to the "place expectations" (Babon 2006, 156) this institution raised to the specific visitors.

Specifically, co-presence seemed to be a factor calling for more intense monitoring from the visitors at the Courtauld Gallery. Visitors used alternative means for attracting their co-visitors over such as **snapping fingers** and **whistling** (examples 13 and 25). Although these specific means, generally appear rude and intrusive, in the busy, loud context of the museum visit they could be treated as an alternative means to shouting or even talking loudly, likely reflecting upon visitors' concern to keep their conversations to a minimum. These alternatives reveal the fact that visitors acknowledge the co-presence of others around them, while they also unveil aspects of visitors' "place expectations" (Babon 2006, 156): that is, valuing the physical and institutional context as something sacred for both themselves and those sharing the same space.

Additionally, visitors were regulating their co-presence carefully through their shifts in posture. For example, visitors occupied the space around the exhibits once their co-visitors moved on to the next attention hook (see example 14) or carefully positioning themselves where space was not occupied by others (see example 13). However, there was an exception, in which visitors were obstructing other visitors with their performances. As seen in example 21, a male adult was struggling through constant shifts in posture to read the interpretation label of *Seurat's painting* at the Courtauld

Gallery, as two female adults were performing at the face of the label. These performances were considered context-bound for the case of the Courtauld Gallery. Performing in the art gallery entailed a lot of “body gloss” (Goffman 1971, 129), most likely due to visitors’ “place expectations” (Babon 2006, 156) and etiquettes learned from their culture and education.

Furthermore, pertaining to art viewing, two performances were identified in the case of the Courtauld Gallery: that of stepping back to appreciate the composition of the painting and that of using “interpretive art talk” (Knutson and Crowley 2010). The “stepping backwards” performance is one of the most commonly occurring patterns of looking at the specific painting; almost half of the visitors stepped back in order to look at the painting in its whole. Seeing the painting in its whole composition was also among the visitors’ interpretive strategies identified for a study at the Wolverhampton Art gallery (Hooper-Greenhill *et al.* 2001). This performance did not occur with the paintings at the Horniman Museum and Gardens nor at the Wellcome Collection although there is enough space for visitors to move back. Even though a few visitors looked at the paintings in both of the case studies from a short distance, they did not step back while viewing them so as to appreciate their composition. It seems likely that this performance is closely tied to the type and painting technique used in the specific exhibit as well as among these practices visitors use while in the art museum.

For the visitors at the Courtauld Gallery it was not only the placement of the exhibits in a “gilded frame” but also in a “gilded” building, the Somerset House, that seemed to further affect their performances in comparison to those emerging at the other two cases. This was especially reflected within visitors’ discourse, which contained a number of terms related to drawing techniques and even the term *pointillism*, derived from the visitors’ personal context. Visitors’ discourse at the Courtauld Gallery belonged to the category of ‘interpretive art talk’ (Knutson and Crowley 2010). Museum discourse seems to bear many similarities with what has been described as institutional discourse where participants seem to have a context-bound discourse characterised by specific rules and norms (Mayr 2008).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Although there is no specific definition of what constitutes institutional discourse, the general characteristics have been identified as follows: (1) it unfolds in an institution, (2) each one of the

Contrarily to the Courtauld Gallery, visitors at the Wellcome Collection and the Horniman Museum and Gardens were more outspoken and loud when they encountered the exhibits. Although the buzz of their interaction was loud at both of these case studies, visitors at the face of the painting displayed at the Horniman Museum and Gardens elaborated their performances by gesturing and using discourse related to art and drawing. These elaborations derived from their own personal and joint context as the framing of the specific exhibit did not provide further information apart from the title, the year of creation and the name of the artist. Specifically, in two examples (31 and 32) from the face of the *Yoruba: a Celebration of African Art* painting visitors actively performed and discussed aspects of drawing a painting using the terms “*pastels*” and “*brushstrokes*”.

One reason for this lack of ‘interpretive art talk’ (Knutson and Crowley 2010) at the face of the painting at the Wellcome Collection could be the influence of the institutional context and the physical context on the “constitution” of the exhibit. Not a single incident at the face of *painting number 3* involved art talk. Even though the display of artworks in science museums has been a common practice for the last twenty years, the juxtaposition of the painting among other medical objects as well as the information provided through the leaflets are considered pivotal resources for occasioning visitors’ performances. It seems that the physical and institutional contexts can both influence visitors’ performances, especially when it comes to the shaping of meaning-making (Berger 1972; Lynch 2006; Silverman 1990). It can be argued that the physical and institutional context of the Medicine Man gallery in opposition to the Courtauld Gallery raises more performances focused on questioning the subject matter rather than looking at it for aesthetic reasons. Additionally, the thematic juxtaposition of the exhibits at the Wellcome Collection where all paintings with a medical subject were exhibited on the same wall, prompts visitors to talk about the subject matter of medicine rather than discuss the artistic techniques or mediums used for the paintings. The last argument

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participants deploys a specific identity related to the ones expected to be found in institutions like museums and (3) through their performances participants pursue their institutional goals and personal agendas at the same time.

concurs with the findings by Koroscik, Short, Stavropoulos, and Fortin (1992) who argued that thematic juxtaposition prompts visitors to elaborate on the subject matter.

Apart from these differences, the analysis of the data from the three case studies has pinpointed the fact that visitors follow a generic pattern of behaviour across all these contexts. This pattern involves visitors looking, reading the interpretive text and leaflets, avoiding touching the exhibits -in most cases- talking aloud and so on. These behaviours are context-bound as visitors are culturally educated in behaving in such manners while in the museum and refined each time by each institution and its local affordances.

Although the corpus of data in my study is what Ethnomethodology and CA calls “ordinary”, the fact that it takes place in the context of an institution reveals the links to the branch of research focused on “institutional talk” and “institutional interaction” (Drew and Heritage 1992). Institutional talk and interaction refers to the social interaction and the language use emerging in an institutional context with at least one of the participants in interaction representing the institution. In the case of museums, even if there is no-one around representing the organization itself, there are aspects of the organization embedded in the framing of the exhibits, the use of language and so forth, allowing visitors to have asynchronous conversations with the institution. This “institutional interaction” (Drew and Heritage 1992, 3) takes place within the walls of the institution while it may also be elaborated outside of its walls as visitors seem to keep discussing their experiences after visiting the museum. By capturing visitors’ performances at the exhibit-face, aspects of their own identities become realized as well as of the enacted “institutional” identities that they adopt as they visit the galleries. The most evident reflection of an “institutional talk-in-interaction” may be seen through visitors’ use of text-echo and “art interpretive” talk, that is use of art-related terms within the course of their interaction. Additionally, reduction and restrictions in the range of interactional practices and means deployed by the participants in interaction are expected as interaction occurs in an institution, ruled by its own norms and practices. Therefore, according to the outcomes of my analysis, the institutional identities adopted by the visitors while at the exhibit-face were reflected through their performances, which in return reinforced the institutional character of the context.

### 9.3.2. The role of the exhibit type and its physical context

To explore the ways in which the type of the exhibit and its display in the wider physical context of the gallery space occasions visitors' performances, two additional exhibits were included and investigated, in the *African Worlds* gallery at the Horniman Museum and Gardens as well as from the Courtauld Gallery. These four exhibits included two glass cases and two 3D exhibits (statues and sculptures). This section explores how the type of the exhibit influences the emerging performances (three-dimensional objects compared to two-dimensional objects) as well as its framing (the way the museum has formed the provided interpretive text; addressing the exhibits numerically compared to locating them).

According to the findings, the **framing** of the information on the exhibits influences visitors' performances and their meaning-making. As seen in example 12, which involves visitors to the Courtauld Gallery's painting *Woman Powdering Herself*, one of the visitors used the provided dates from the interpretive text ("1888-90") to refer to the time spent by Seurat on creating the specific painting ("yes it must have taken him a year, oh no, two! Two years to make it" example 12).

Furthermore, the ways in which information in the interpretive text related to the objects soon became realised as a factor that shapes visitors' performances. Specifically, as seen in the examples from the Wellcome Collection, visitors performances involved drawing links between the exhibit and the information text by detailing their performances with aspects of the framing provided by the museum -in this case by using the relevant numbers to locate *painting number 3* (e.g. "which number?" "Number 3"). The same pattern emerged when visitors encountered the *maiolica glass case* at the Courtauld Gallery and the *Life after Death glass case* at the Horniman Museum and Gardens.

Specifically, each of the glass cases displayed a number of exhibits, addressed numerically in the case of the *maiolica* whereas through location description in the case of the *Life after Death glass case*. The analysis of the incidents at both of these case studies revealed that visitors needed and spent more time to carry out the identification of each exhibit individually. Specifically, visitors performed pointing gestures to link the provided information to the relevant exhibit, flicking from the text to the exhibit and vice versa,

along with deictic terms and abstract naming of their attention hooks. In example 20 from the *maiolica glass case* at the Courtauld Gallery, W2 attempts to link the passage from the interpretive text to the relevant exhibit by using her hand to point to the text and the glass case in order to identify her attention hook (“*Oh salt cellar it is right, no that’s a salt cellar*”). The same pattern reoccurred in example 21 concerning the same exhibit, with W and M trying to identify their attention hooks by linking the panel text to the relevant exhibits.

Although initially this shaping of a vector among the visitors, the text and the exhibits seemed identical across the three case studies, it was gradually revealed that visitors at the face of the *Life after Death* and the *maiolica glass case* used pointing gestures heavily in sequence, to facilitate their reading aloud and the identification of the exhibits. Additionally, the specific way of framing the information (through location description) seemed to affect the exhibit’s holding power as the **duration** of the occurring performances at the face of the glass case was **elongated** in contrast to those emerging in interaction with the other two exhibits in the *African Worlds* gallery and the ones at the Courtauld Gallery. This may also attributed to the number of exhibits displayed in the specific glass cases and the subsequent density of information on offer. This argument may link to the findings by McManus (1989b) who found that visitors performed hard at the exhibit-face of *Household Pests* to ensure the focusing of joint attention to the relevant exhibits as the specific display contained twenty-four models, addressed by an equal number of labels.

On the contrary, the location in the gallery and the 3D nature of the *two African wooden statues* occasioned a different performative range as visitors could experience the statues from all the possible angles, approach and look at them from different spatial positions, and sometimes even touch them. As seen in examples 54 and 59, two visitors moved to the back side of the statues to explore them in detail while, in example 52, visitors touched the exhibits by placing their hands between the gap in between the two sides of the protection glass. Apart from the location and nature of the specific exhibit, the lack of interpretive text seemed to shape visitor’ performances further, allowing a

few ambiguous comments concerning the gender of the female statue.<sup>31</sup> Although the statues' physical appearance bears many similarities with art museum statues, they seemed to challenge the visitors' attention. Specifically, as previously mentioned, the gender of the female statue sparked a great degree of curiosity and sometimes discomfort, as visitors could not identify the gender based on the physical characteristics of the statue. This surprising and intriguing encounter was what triggered most of the incidents' occurrence.

Moving around the statues was a performance emerging only in interaction with the *two African wooden statues* and the *two sculptures by Degas* (example 27), and it brings into the foreground the differences generated by the nature of a two-dimensional exhibit in comparison to a three-dimensional one. One further reason may well be that both exhibits were raised on platforms, thus allowing movement around them.

### 9.3.3. The sociocultural context

The sociocultural context of the museum visit refers to the constant social interaction between the visitors, who progressively make meaning of the surrounding world through their ongoing interaction in it (Falk and Dierking 2000). Apart from shaping the meaning-making itself, my research also argued that the sociocultural context affects the choices upon the means visitors use to accomplish their social sharing. As the shape and dynamics of the sociocultural context undergo constant change, museum visits include both instances of visitors independently encountering the collections as well as instances of visitors jointly experiencing the exhibits (Galani 2003; Silverman 1990). Therefore, these joint encounters initiate when visitors jointly arrive, or reunite at the exhibit-face.

The effect of the sociocultural context is considered to be reflected more holistically when visitors reunite with each other at the exhibit-face. Re-joining each other normally occurred after a visitor was pausing for a while at the face of one of the exhibits, making some time for the others to catch up. Once the co-visitor approached,

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<sup>31</sup> It has to be noted that the *two African wooden statues* is the only exhibit in the *African Worlds* gallery that is not accompanied by a label.

an ‘attracting an audience’ performance was normally given. To allow some time for the others to approach, visitors extended the duration of their performances. Specifically, a difference was identified in the moods of the performed pointing gestures when it came to visitors performing for attracting someone as an audience. **Visitors seemed to hold their indications for a while as a sociocultural means of allowing time for the others to approach** (see examples 2, 12 and 57). Additionally, their elongated tagging entailed in a sense both an indicative and imperative mood; showing something to the others to attend which, due to the duration of the indication, gained an imperative mood, demanding the others’ attention.

The sociocultural dynamics of each group and each encounter are negotiated among the members of the same community of practice while being refined because of those sharing the same space, those being other visitors and members of staff. Apart from the social dynamics emerging from the interaction between the visitors, it also becomes evident that social dynamics imposed by the institutions, such as the guided tours at the Horniman Museum and Gardens and the Wellcome Collection, and the Lunch Talk at the Courtauld Gallery, influence visitors’ performances. These scheduled events shaped those visitors’ performances further when they occurred simultaneously with the specific analysed performances. Specifically, as seen in example 13, two adults regulated their encounter of the *Woman Powdering Herself* painting by taking into account the ongoing social dynamics emerging while the Lunch Talk was taking place. These two adults socially negotiated their positioning and flow in the gallery space as well as the means used to carry out their performances at the exhibit-face. The female adult chose to snap her fingers and perform a subtle beckoning gesture to her co-visitor to attract him as an audience and simultaneously avoid interfering with the talk given by the guide in the same room.

As well as with these scheduled events, unscheduled ones involving loud noises also seemed to be shaping visitors’ performances further. An example reflecting the wider social context influences the ongoing performances concerned the *Woman Powdering Herself* painting, involving a visitor pausing his ongoing performance as he got distracted by a loud noise and a flashing light, which took place at the face of a nearby painting (example 16).

An additional reflection of the sociocultural context on each performance is evident when considering the roles assigned to each member of the community of practice. As the complete experience in the galleries was not captured, the analysis of the data cannot shed light on the patterns involving the roles assigned to each member during the entire visit. Instead, the negotiation taking place at the exhibit-face reveals only an aspect of this socially negotiated process. In example 41, even though the female adult arrives at the *Life after Death* glass case first and renders public her attention hook, it is the male adult who becomes the “designated reader” (Hirschi and Screven 1988, 60) although he had already encountered this specific exhibit. He rejoins his group and takes the lead by performing through telling and tagging, linking the interpretive text to the exhibits and vice versa. This example reflects upon past research which has underlined the significance of visitors' sequence of arrival at the exhibits. Vom Lehn argues that arriving at an exhibit second leads visitors to view the exhibit in the light of the previous visitor's experience (vom Lehn 2002; vom Lehn *et al.* 2001). Therefore, as seen in example 41, W and D see the *Life after Death* glass case in the light of M's experience, who designs a second-hand experience for himself and the rest of his group.

Moreover, example 19 from the *Seurat painting* reflects on the possibility of assigning the role of the “designated reader” not to the person who arrives first, but to whomever is considered best suited for this role by the members of his/her group. As seen in this example, upon arriving at the exhibit along with her co-visitor, the younger member takes the lead by using text-echo while visually linking it to the exhibit, and vice versa, by using tagging. Research adopting the sociocultural framework (Falk and Dierking 2000; Silverman 1995) has underlined that social interactions maintain and reinforce the social bonds among the members of the same community of practice.

This assignment of roles can also be reflected in the performances of these groups that consisted of an adult and a child, with the adult being responsible for reading aloud the interpretive text as well as facilitating the child's experience (see examples 41, 49 and 35). This finding concurs with previous research arguing that adults adopt the role of the ‘learning leader’ (Borun 2000, 14), facilitating and assisting the younger members of their community of practice, while also modelling appropriate

types of visiting-a-museum behaviours. The assignment of roles at the exhibit-face seems to be a matter of the sociocultural context of each encounter as well as of the common ground shared by the members of the same community of practice.

#### 9.3.4. The personal context

All encounters with the seven exhibits have been concerned to involve a sense of visitors' personal identity, as visitors choose to explore these exhibits based initially on their personal context. Therefore, the actual choice of the exhibit is a matter of personal identity. Apart from choosing the exhibits, visitors' personal context is enacted through their own discourse at the face of the exhibits. In this section, only examples in which visitors linked aspects of their personal lives to the exhibits are discussed.

The uniqueness of each visitor's personal context has been reflected in the diversity of the personal comments raised upon encountering the exhibits. As personal context triggers different ranges of performances (Rennie and Johnston 2007), this section discusses performed links to personal recollections and reflections of everyday life at the face of the exhibits. Through their performances, visitors were expressing aspects of their own lives, the contemporary lifestyle, their own relationships and social connections as well as their physical appearance.

Recognising the exhibits without reading the interpretive text has been considered a clear example of "recognition", which is based on a personal recollection and hence, reflects aspects of the visitor's personal context (Silverman 1990). Most of the time, visitors at the Courtauld Gallery named the painter ("Seurat") and referred to the specific technique used by the artist without reading the interpretive text ("lots of dots" and "pointillism"). The use of the term *pointillism* is a clear example of the enactment of the personal context as this term is not included within the interpretive text or the leaflets. Instead, it is the term *divisionist* that is used in the interpretive text.

At the Horniman Museum and Gardens, visitors' memories and recollections were clearly manifested upon encountering the scarab and the canopic jars displayed in the *Life after Death glass case*. As seen in example 39, a female visitor verbally expresses her

memory of having a replica of an exhibit displayed in the glass case (“*scarab, that's how they called it. [It] is gorgeous actually. I used to have a little ceramic scarab of that colour*”) as well as in example 47, where once again a visitor rendered public a recollection of having a similar object displayed in their own cabinet to her co-visitor (“*we have one of these little figures in our cabinet. Someone gave it to grandpa*”). Identification of the exhibits also revealed aspects of the personal context just like in the case of Seurat’s painting. Visitors named some of the exhibits displayed in the *Life after Death* glass case as they had encountered them before (“*the beetle kind of thing*” example 39) (“*oh is the jar!*” example 38; “*canopic jar*” examples 49 and 50).

While implementing the institutional language in their own performances, visitors shared more personally driven comments at the face of *painting number 3* in the Wellcome Collection. Specifically, in example 2 the painting brings a memory of seeing “*this picture of him*” in a “*Guinness book of Records*”, while in example 6 the indication of the painting draws parallels to everyday lifestyle and eating habits (“*He was eating too many pies*”) and perhaps a more personal correlation to the performer’s diet. Additionally, as seen in example 9, viewing the painting triggered a very personal comment by one of the two visitors (“*Check him out! It’s your boyfriend?*”) that prompted another very personally-driven comment by his co-visitor in an attempt to understand and elaborate on the subject matter’s condition (“*how does this really happen in these old times? They didn’t have so much food then?*”).

A sense of personal experience was also reflected in example 5, when one of the participants gives her personal touch to a text-echo (“*claiming only to drink water and eat in moderation. Yeah I've done that*”) questioning the quote she just used. A sense of questioning and an elaboration of the text-echo also took place in example 8, in which a turn-taking took the form of a question on the text-echo performed by her co-visitor (“*so was he (.) so was he lying or he actually only drinking water is irrelevant?*”).

At the face of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting at the Horniman Museum and Gardens we joined visitors talking about their ability to draw using the same techniques (“*I could easily paint that*” example 31) or recognising the material used

for the painting (“*that one is made by pastels*” example 32). These performances were all personally driven, and related to the performer’s skills and previous knowledge.

Additionally, a recurring performance at the face of the exhibits across the three case studies was that of taking a picture of the exhibit. Apart from actually using the camera to take a picture during the encounter, this performance has also been mentioned in visitors’ performances (“*I took a photo of this before*” example 34) in front of the *Yoruba: a celebration of African art* painting at the Horniman Museum and Gardens, opening up the perceptual range of the encounter to the others.

Silverman (1990) compared two different contexts, an art and a history museum, in order to explore the differences in the meaning-making of visitors that gender and the museum-type cause. She found that exhibits in the history museum had been sparking visitors’ memories more often as they are more frequently encountered in visitors’ daily lives in comparison to the ones in the art museum. This finding brings into discussion the power of memory and personal relevance in the museum experience and meaning-making and may elaborate the reasons why visitors, especially children, at the face of the *Life after Death* glass case easily identified and related to the exhibits displayed in the specific glass case.<sup>32</sup>

Visitors’ personal context functioned as a prompt for attention and social sharing, developed further into a prompt for shared attention and meaning-making, occasioned by the social circumstances of each specific performance as well as by the personal, physical, and institutional context. Through their on-going performances at the face of the exhibits, visitors prompt each other’s ‘ground’, extending their common ground and making meaning. Furthermore, visitors detail their joint experiences by having asynchronous conversations with the museum curators through the interpretive text, leaflets, juxtaposition, design of the displays and so forth. Through their encounters, the personal context bridges with the physical and institutional and their combination becomes realised through each encounter’s social context.

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<sup>32</sup> Ancient Egypt is part of the Key stage 2 History curriculum (7-11 years old).

The personal context, both of the performer and the audience, becomes apparent through their choices, comments, evaluations, all expressed through their performing at the face of the exhibits. To explore the group's personal context, their joint activities provide a window onto their common ground, as in most cases visitors choose to 'talk' about exhibits that bear personal or shared relevance to them as a group. As visitors in groups are small communities of practice, their members share specific values, background, vocabulary, experiences, and assumptions that are reinforced through their encounters with each other and the exhibits. In a broader sense, visitors' performances reconfirm and expand their own identities as well as their membership to the specific communities of practice (Falk 2009; Fienberg and Leinhardt 2002; Paris 2002).

As seen in example 44 from the *Life after Death* glass case, this sense of membership was reflected clearly in one of the visitors, who recognised an "island of expertise" (Crowley and Jacobs 2002) among those objects displayed in the specific case and performed to attract the others as an audience so as to explore the exhibit together. During their interaction through time, these islands of expertise are negotiated, expanded, and cultivated in different contexts, allowing continuity to take place in the development of interest, knowledge and their shared practices. The museum is one of these contexts in which visitors' identity is negotiated, confirmed, reshaped or rejected as their joint encounters with the exhibits allow them to activate their existent "islands of expertise" (Crowley and Jacobs 2002) and discover new ones.

My research has also argued that aspects of visitors' identities are not only reflected through their discourse but instead their Discourse (Gee 2005), what they say and do, independently of its duration. Even if visitors' performances seem subtle and ephemeral, there are indeed indicators of their identity (Ellenbogen *et al.* 2004) as their performative practices are driven by the members' personal context and shared across their community of practice. It can be argued that performing in the museum allows a visitor to discover himself/herself through the performances of his/her co-visitors.

## 10 | CONCLUSIONS

*"Whatever the visitor does attend to is filtered through the personal context, mediated by the social context, and embedded within the physical context"*

Falk and Dierking (1992, 4)

This chapter draws together the arguments and main points of analysis discussed in the preceding chapters by summarising my research's objectives, methodology and key findings. It discusses the contributions of my study to the theory concerning meaning-making in museums, its applied methodology and the implications for museum practitioners. It concludes by discussing the limitations of my study while identifying areas for additional research.

### 10.1. Summary of my research

Borrowing the term *performance* from the theatre as well as Goffman's dramaturgical perspective (1959) in order to refer to the emerging social interaction at the museum, my research begins with the premise that shared meaning-making is a performative, social and collaborative action during which visitors have an active role and deploy a range of means and a variety of modes in order to achieve it.

Specifically, the process of meaning-making is considered a performance as it includes both verbal and non-verbal behaviours just like acting on a theatrical stage does. It also addresses an audience, may that be conscious of its role or not, which can be expanded from the person belonging to the same social group with which the visitor came to the museum, to the people just being in the same space. Everything that takes place in the galleries is -most of the time- an observable action which triggers a sequence of other actions as a reaction to the performance that just took place. Thus, a performance accomplished at a specific exhibit may not only be observable to those performing at the exhibit-face but also to those observing the performance (Meisner *et al.* 2007), including those who just happen to share the same perceptual range.

Based on the Contextual Model of Learning (Falk and Dierking 2000), my research explored visitors' encounters with seven exhibits across three museums. Visitors' encounters were video and audio-captured, and then micro-analysed based on Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis in order to allow patterns and possible correlations to emerge between the sociocultural means, the performances and the contexts in which these performance and means were situated.

One of the focuses of my research was the sociocultural means visitors used in order to communicate either the content of the exhibition or personal stories/comments. Reference (verbal and non-verbal) was of great sociocultural use as it encompasses in one performance the body of the visitor, aspects of the exhibit and of the wider context in which the performance is situated, and parts of the discourse. Reference provides the anchors that integrate language, exhibits, and gestures into a complex performance.

The analysis of my data identified three major patterns in visitors' performances as follows: (1) attracting an audience, (2) telling and tagging, and (3) animating the exhibit through "displaying doing". Each performance made sense in relation to the performances of others sharing the same perceptual range (the social context) as well as the personal, physical, and institutional context. These contexts have always been situated and responsive to each other with no aspect or fragment of a performance making sense if explored individually. Instead, everything is chained in order to make meaning (Goodwin and Heritage 1990). Apart from these three categories, analysis also revealed the existence of two subtle dynamics in performing in the museum; these were arriving second and seeing through another person's eyes.

By investigating the same type of exhibits in specific physical contexts, which also represent specific institutional contexts, my research made an attempt to draw comparisons in the performative ways and means visitors use in order to detail their joint experiences with others within the museum space. My research explored the possible dynamics offered by specific displays, physical and institutional contexts along with the social dimensions of each joint encounter. The findings of this research made apparent that the museum experience is a multimodal social event during which joint meaning-making is achieved.

## 10.2. Contributions

My own research was built upon an interest in what unfolds at the exhibit-face, and indeed its findings expand those previously explored by others (Heath and vom Lehn 2004; Meisner 2007; vom Lehn 2002). It micro-analysed what really happens at the exhibit-face by analysing naturally occurring data and not solely depending on what the researcher has taken note of according to a list of pre-fixed behaviours and indicators of engagement with the exhibits. Therefore, my study extends the list of sociocultural behaviours to be observed and tracked while in the museum, which, depending on the nature of the research questions, can either be considered indicators of learning or engagement (Borun *et al.* 1996; Dierking 1987; Griffin 1999; Hilke 1989).

Previous research has drawn attention to the feasibility of comparing data from different types of museums (Silverman 1990; vom Lehn *et al.* 2001; vom Lehn 2002). My research took this direction by combining different institutional contexts, types of exhibits within these institutional contexts, and group consistencies as both intergenerational and multigenerational groups were explored. This variation in the concept of context allowed the inclusion of different degrees of the physical, personal, sociocultural and institutional context in my data analysis, demonstrating that the physical context is only one of the contexts in which each encounter, and hence meaning-making, is situated. In addition to the physical, it is also the institutional context, the personal, and the sociocultural that constantly influence the order and means enacted while making meaning at the exhibit-face. My research argued that each encounter in the museum takes place in seemingly pre-fixed contexts, namely the institutional and the physical, while being further reshaped and actively recreated by the interconnection of the visitors' personal and social contexts.

My research allowed the exploration of visitors' personal contexts through their choices reflected in their performances at the exhibit-face. The three major categories of performances involved visitors sharing information actively with each other about the exhibits and subsequently with each other. Exhibits functioned as attention hooks and entry points based on which visitors expanded, altered, or reconfirmed their personal context and common ground. Once attention was drawn to the exhibits, visitors

normally performed and, through the regulation of their interaction with each other and in an asynchronous dialogue with the curators, gained additional knowledge not only on the exhibit but also themselves and their co-visitors. Visitors learned *about* the exhibits as well as *themselves* and *others* while learning *through* each other.

The analysis further revealed that visitors' spatial arrangements around the exhibits and their shifts in posture infused the shaping of meaning-making, for themselves and all those included in the perceptual range of the encounter. In addition, my research argued that visitors' performances facilitate or even distract the ongoing regulation of visitors' social sharing and joint attention by hindering or facilitating the visual access to the exhibits.

By adopting the term *performance*, my analysis addressed the necessity to study what happens in the museums by analysing the different modes enacted while at the exhibit-face. The analysis of even brief incidents highlighted the fact that most of the visitors' performances unfolded to direct others' attention to aspects of the exhibits. There has been a mixture of "providing information, pointing things out to one another, asking questions, and arguing with and elaborating on each other's ideas" (Resnick *et al.* 1991, 2), transforming the exhibits into social objects, that is "engines of socially networked experiences, the content on which conversation happens" (Simon 2010, 127).

My research showed that performing set the initial ground on which engagement with the exhibit could be built. By attracting other visitors as an audience, visitors invited them to interchange and share as well as shape, prompt and finally reach shared meaning-making. Performances seem to trigger future conversations; they might foreground a meaning-making process that will continue long after the museum visit. My research did not investigate the degrees of the complexity of meaning-making, or the levels of learning, but instead, explored the processes of meaning-making.

In the majority of the incidents presented and analysed in Chapters 6 to 8, visitors primarily performed to tag the exhibits as their current or forthcoming attention hooks. This **identification** of their attention hooks has been highlighted in previous research (Allen 2002; Borun *et al.* 1996; Feinberg and Leinhardt 2002; Ma and Wong 2004) but

my research has developed our understanding of this pivotal process by analysing the ways in which it unfolds, progresses and comes to an end. My research reinforced previous arguments on identification preceding interpretation and meaning-making (Silverman 1990), as analysis revealed that identification is the basis on which visitors elaborate their next performances, leading their shared meaning-making to develop further.

In addition, the analysis highlighted the inextricable connection of the personal and the social context under the constant influence of the physical and institutional context when it comes to the process of identification. Especially as seen in the incidents presented in Chapter 6 to 8, the influence of the framing of the exhibit and its 'user language' was acknowledged on the ways and means visitors used to detail their performances. Visitors informed their shared meaning-making by selecting aspects of the institutional and physical context, specifically through 'text-echo' (McManus 1989a). Additionally, the intrinsic connection of the exhibits' design affordances and the emerging sociality among the visitors was highlighted, especially when performed in terms of reference, specifically pointing gestures.

My research, among others, showed that mutual interest is socioculturally negotiated and manifested through visitors' performances. If, according to Falk and Dierking (2000), narration or storytelling and observation are two of the possible means for sociocultural "information" to be shared in the museum, my research argued that reference (verbal or non-verbal) is also a way for information to be represented and shared in visually complex environments such as museums.

Vom Lehn (2002) argued that pointing gestures do not only facilitate visitors to direct each other's viewing of the exhibits but to also align their viewings. My study extended the multiple uses of pointing gestures at the exhibit-face, elaborating on the sociocultural dynamics entailed in these ubiquitous performances. My analysis highlighted the use of reference, arguing for its uniqueness and frequency, especially in the complexity of an environment such as a museum, by comparing different types of exhibits and their institutional framing and "user language" (Bradburne 2005). Apart from visitors using reference themselves for their social sharing, reference has been

implemented in the interpretive text provided by the museum through **location description** (3.6.2.), prompting visitors to make visual links between the passage read and the relevant exhibit.

Additionally, as the gallery environment produces several competing foci of attention for the audience, my research argued that the use of reference and especially pointing gestures is important for collaborative exploration in the museum, as it facilitates the sharing in ways that language cannot do. Specifically, the analysis revealed that reference and pointing gestures are jargon-free means of referring to objects or concepts that (1) one has not come across before and thus lacks the proper vocabulary to describe them(Moore 2008), and/or (2) are situated within specific physical and social circumstances when behaving in specific non-disturbing ways for others is preferable. The analysis showed that reference seemed to be the first step to initiate social sharing as it facilitated the establishment of a joint focus of attention, which is the primal primary presupposition to commence the process of meaning-making. Through the analysis, subtle sociocultural means came into the foreground of attention such as gazes, gestures, tag questions, and acknowledgment tokens such as “uh-huh” and “okay”.

The **methodological framework** of my research reflected on the vibrant range of windows into visitors’ meaning-making that open once video-based methods coupled with the relevant analytical frameworks are implemented. The need to listen to visitors, identified by previous research, is now supplemented with a need to capture *what* visitors do, especially when they visit in groups. The focus of attention was on the making as a sociocultural process rather than on the outcomes of this process, the possible meanings. This is in accordance with the sociocultural framework of learning as it argues for the necessity to treat learning as a joint process rather as an outcome (Allen 2002).

Video and audio recordings facilitated research to move towards the capture of visitors’ encounters while these unfold, and provided the unique opportunity to researchers to study them while being situated in specific contexts (physical, sociocultural, institutional, and personal). The medium of the camcorder provided a wider perspective compared to the one by an observer into these encounters as it allowed capturing of the interconnection of the visitors, exhibits and wider physical and institutional content. The versatility of the sociocultural means entailed even in the briefest of encounters became

realised through the use of the camcorder, making the community of practitioners and researchers aware of its pivotal use in capturing the range of modes enacted while visitors make meaning in the gallery rooms.

Through the adoption of Ethnomethodology and CA, the ways in which visitors' joint encounters initiate, elicit and come to an end, or may be hindered by the presence of others in their "perceptual range" (Goffman 1981) of each encounter, become explored. Indeed, visitors' meaning-making was shaped not only by those with whom they visited the museum on that day but also others, complete strangers, who just happen to be in the same space at the same time. Ethnomethodology and CA allowed the **situatedness** of the social interaction to become realised.

The contextual configuration of the encounters is fluid and fleeting, as visitors shift from one contextual element to another while interacting with each other and the context itself (Goodwin 2000c). Elements of context became relevant only when participants in interaction made them relevant to their actions. For the analysis of the case studies, contextual elements that became salient within the unfolding interaction were taken into consideration as influences of the physical context. These contextual elements were, among others on the labels, the space around the painting, the juxtaposition of the paintings, the thematic display of the paintings, other visitors happening to be sharing the same space, gallery leaflets and floor maps. In addition to these elements, my research acknowledged the possible effects of the "place expectations" (Babon 2006, 156) on the unfolding performances. That is, the influence of the institutional context on visitors' performances and the etiquette adopted while in the specific place.

By exploring issues already addressed in museum studies in a new way, namely with the systematic application of an ethnomethodological framework, and by focusing on the indexical practices on a discursive and a gestural level, I was able to bring to the foreground seemingly subtle, but nonetheless, ubiquitous performances such as shifts in posture and gaze, pointing gestures, deictic terms (verbs, adverbs and adjectives), restarts and repairs. Through these performances, visitors managed to regulate and negotiate their joint attention, collaboratively leading each other to a shared meaning-making.

My research captured visitors' shared meaning-making while in the museum and expanded previous research by encompassing the multiple modes enacted when visitors make meaning at the exhibit-face (Rahm 2004; vom Lehn 2002; Meisner 2007). In this sense, my study made an important contribution to sociocultural research orientations aiming to investigate and interpret the processes of shared meaning-making in embodied, situated and contextualised ways. Additionally, my study expanded the existing suggestions on the affordances of the exhibits (Allen 2004) by bringing into the spotlight the importance of the social context in the design of the exhibits and their "user language" (Bradburne 2005).

My research, even if it had not primarily intended to make such conclusions, found that both families (adults with children) and couples or groups of adults encountering the exhibits performed McManus's (1994) "hunter-gatherer" mode of visiting, actively "foraging" in front of the exhibits to locate aspects that interested them and come together to share their experiences with each other.

My research addressed the gap identified in research related to art museums and the experiences their visitors have in art galleries (Hooper-Greenhill *et al.* 2001; Hooper-Greenhill and Moussouri 2001). Additionally, my study extended Allen's (2002) simple identification of moments of interaction between co-present visitors who shared no previous history by exploring the sociocultural means used for carrying out the broadening of their personal encounters to the others who happened to be nearby.

As pointed out by Vom Lehn (2002), the order in which visitors arrive at the exhibits somehow creates a context in which the particular visitors will experience the exhibit. For vom Lehn (2002), the visitors who arrive at the exhibits second experience the exhibits in the light of the first-to-arrive visitor, therefore having a second-hand experience. Vom Lehn (2002) picked up on the posing of questions from the person who arrived at the exhibits second and argued that questions were not only means of gaining more information on the exhibit but also a demonstration of the performer's desire to be included in the ongoing encounter with the exhibit. In my study, queries were also made by those who arrived first at the exhibit, in an attempt to recapitulate their experiences and allow the others to elaborate on their summaries by giving out a

number of performances. Even if questions were used more often to broaden the perceptual range of the encounters, there were a few other performances enacted for carrying out either the invitation or the acceptance to be included in the emerging encounter.

### 10.2.1. Implications for practice

The thick description of each incident through use of the detailed transcripts facilitated the identification of a number of issues related to the existent museum practice. The findings reveal that visitors' performances are means for making meaning not only for those in the same "participation framework" (Goffman 1981, 226), but also for those who share the same space.

Additionally, the institutional framing -curated by the institution- enhanced or even hindered visitors' abilities to make meaning of the exhibits. The interpretive text offers social learning opportunities to visitors as "[those] with social agendas can engage in learning experiences in response to a label's components such as: questions, explanations, descriptions or instructions" (Hall 2009, 28). The interpretive text functions as an entry point to visitors' shared meaning-making, allowing visitors to detail their vocabulary and reconfirm their performances. Apart from informing on the exhibits and their creators/users, the interpretive text also reveals recommended ways to look at the exhibit. The analysis reflected on the use of text-echo (McManus 1989a) at the face of the seven exhibits and suggested that museums should consider the provision of visual links between the exhibit and its framing as these are "mental handles" (Silverman 1990, 97) for visitors' meaning-making. This suggestion concurs with the recent evaluation at the Detroit Institute of Arts suggesting writing labels related to what can be seen in the works of art (Sikora *et al.* 2009). Taking upon this suggestion, analysis may also suggest that using *location description* in the label text to address dense displays of exhibits, such as in the case of the *maiolica* and the *Life after Death glass case*, prompts a heavy use of pointing gestures as visitors perform to link the information to the respective exhibit.

Borun and her colleagues (1998), and Allen and Gutwill (2004), based on their findings respectively, suggested seven and three design rules that facilitate learning with

interactive exhibits. The need to provide clear guidance to the visitors through the interpretive text was underlined in both studies, leading my analysis to suggest that a **lack of framing** and ‘user language’ (Bradburne 2005) may trigger performances less focused on aesthetic appreciation and value towards the exhibits, as seen in the case of the *two African wooden statues* at the Horniman Museum and Gardens. Additionally, the **thematic juxtaposition** in Room 4 at the Courtauld Gallery allowed visitors to discover the exhibits in the light of each other, somewhat elaborating their meaning-making resources by being able to draw links between the exhibits and their creators or techniques (see example 12). Making links with other exhibits in the same gallery was a category of visitors’ learning talk suggested by Allen (2002), which she named *inter-exhibit connection*. Museum practitioners may encompass the thematic juxtaposition of exhibits, which can be further detailed and elaborated by providing visual as well as cognitive links across the actual exhibits.

My study expanded research on the multimodality of meaning-making by elaborating the socio-cultural interconnection of a range of means, such as the gaze, posture, talk and gestures and the communicative functions these means may carry out to shape visitors’ joint meaning-making (Rahm 2004). My study does not argue that the means and performances identified are indicators of visitors’ learning as in the PISEC case (Borun *et al.* 1996). Instead, it intends to underline the multimodality of visitors’ joint encounters at the exhibit-face and question those studies that capture and analyse visitors’ discourse.

Beaumont (2010) recently reported on her “Adult Child Interaction Inventory”, an observation/interview tool aimed to achieve a better understanding of the range of non-verbal and verbal interactions occurring between adults and children during their joint interactions with interactive exhibits at the Boston Children’s Museum. This inventory mainly analysed their joint interactions from the adult’s viewpoint and not from the child’s. The findings of her research project contributed to the development of an exhibit, Peep’s World, at the Boston Children’s Museum, designed to optimize such positive adult-child interactions. In the same direction, my own findings may contribute to the identification of problematic facets of the existent framing of the exhibits, leading to its refinement based on visitors’ performances.

### 10.3. Limitations

Although the methodology of this research was informed by the current progress made in the relevant fields of education and linguistics, a few **limitations** have been identified.

Each of the contexts explored in my research is a multidimensional construct in which a range of factors constantly interplays and subsequently influences each of these contexts. Therefore, the full exploration of this range of factors such as motivations, expectations and so forth was not possible. Instead, by micro-analysing different incidents of visitors' encounters on different days and times, my research explored dimensions of these contexts as these were made relevant by the participants in interaction. One further impediment to understanding the continuous interchange of these contexts on visitors' joint meaning-making was the great heterogeneity of the visitors participating in my research.

Concerning methodology, there was no inter-coder reliability; that is, the analysis was conducted only by the researcher, although a number of the incidents were presented in seminars and conferences. Among my main intentions in the future is to present my research along with audio-visual examples from my data, allowing in this sense the distribution of my methods of analysis and coding scheme.

Another issue may be raised concerning the methodology of my study. For example, Griffin (2004), who observed students visiting museums in Australia, argued that the majority of their conversations occurred as students were moving between the exhibits. Allen (2002) found that it was very rare for conversations to occur between the exhibits that were neither about the exhibit just encountered nor about the forthcoming one. As in my study visitors did not wear microphones on them for reasons explained in Chapter 5, I was not able to capture conversations that did not unfold near the exhibits and the camcorder. Even though my analysis included those performances preceding and succeeding visitors' encounters with the specific seven exhibits, the lack of microphones attached on visitors may have resulted in not capturing every verbal detail. Therefore, my data may have missed important aspects of visitors' joint meaning-making which seems to continue even while moving to the next exhibit.

In the same direction, Stevens and Hall (1997) used Video Traces, an activity system, for allowing visitors to reflect on the video records of their own interactions at the Tornado exhibit at the Exploratorium in San Francisco. Although obtaining visitors' accounts of their own encounters at the face of the exhibits may shed a light on the inaudible words captured via camcorder, this method was not followed in my research, as the focus of analysis in my study has been the sociocultural means and not identifying learning as in the case of Stevens and Hall (1997).

Additionally, the three contexts framing the museum experience, as suggested by Falk and Dierking (2000) and the institutional context were explored through visitors' performances at the exhibit-face. Aspects of those contexts were reflected upon visitors' performances although one could argue that following the same group of visitors throughout their visit in the gallery might reveal more information about visitors' personal and social contexts than a single-element interaction. In the same direction, previous research (Crowley 2000; Ellenbogen 2002; Rennie and Johnston 2007) has underlined the importance of the museum experience for the course of the lives of visitors. This implies a post-collection of data using the same participants at a pre-determined time period after their visit. My research argued that visitors' encounters with the exhibits, initially started in the museum, may lead to conversations and new experiences at a later point in the visitors' lives, an aspect which remains unexplored as my research has not scheduled post-collection of data. The reader is reminded that no visitors' personal information has been obtained by the researcher.

Particular problems were noted with three-dimensional exhibits (sculptures), as visitors approached the exhibits from different angles and moved around, often out of the camera's and the microphone's range (if a microphone was allowed to be attached on the exhibit or its label text). That may have resulted in failure to capture aspects of visitors' performances that took place out of the camcorder's angle, leading me to more widely suggest to museums to welcome audio and video-based projects in their galleries. Museums should be persuaded on the value of conducting video-based research in their galleries and allow researchers to use those means in their full capacity. Attaching microphones on the walls and exhibits allows institutions to learn who their visitors are

and hence museums can in turn be the facilitator and address visitors' needs in more efficient ways than before.

#### 10.4. Future research

My research can support future research aiming to capture the processes of shared meaning-making, while it also facilitates the summative evaluation of museum exhibitions and exhibits. For example, as my research argued, when the interpretive text provides visual links to the actual exhibits, linking the information to visual characteristics of the exhibits through feature and location description, then visitors tend to heavily use this framing to detail their performances. This argument replied to Corbett's question on what museums have to do in order to 'participate' in visitors' naturally emerging conversations (Corbett 1999). Extensive use of tagging and telling may spark social interaction more intensively within gallery spaces. More research is needed to identify possible patterns and differences in visitors' performances when encountering different types of 'user language'.

Additionally, learning may be further investigated through visitors' performances by taking into account possible differences in visitors' performative means. Apart from studying their telling and tagging as a sociocultural practice, further research may explore the differences in the framing of these two practices, referring back to visitors' differences in educational background while exploring the possible ways museums can facilitate their social work.

The groups of visitors performing in front of the seven exhibits of my study included both multigenerational groups (adults with younger adults; adults with child) and groups of same generation (adults with peers). There has been a branch of studies within visitor studies specifically focused on families (adults with children) interacting with interactive exhibits in science centres, exploring the scaffolding processes enacted by the adults (Crowley *et al.* 2001a; Rowe 2002). The processes of scientific explanations from adults to children have been thoroughly explored (Crowley 2000; Crowley *et al.* 2001a; Crowley *et al.* 2001b) and thus my research may facilitate this branch of studies in capturing and micro-analysing the means adults use to elicit children's participation (questions, tagging, tag questions, life-related knowledge). This socially-mediated learning,

even though it is not always orientated towards the content of the exhibition (Dierking 1987), includes a range of sociocultural means, such as the use of reference in the forms of verbal deixis and of non-verbal deixis (pointing gestures). Future research may explore the use and frequency of reference when families encounter specific exhibits at the museum. This type of research also addresses Allen's suggestions (2004, S30) for the field of family informal learning which "needs more studies of nonverbal forms of learning because these may be dominant forms for three-dimensional physical interactions [with exhibits], especially for children."

Apart from discovering the sociocultural ways in which the exhibits become social objects, this type of research can be a remedial evaluation, revealing aspects of the existent 'user language' that may hinder the occurrence of social interaction. My study briefly brought into the foreground the existence of a range of distances within which visitors can unfold the perceptual range of their encounters. Especially in the cases of the *Seurat* painting and the *maiolica glass case* at the Courtauld Gallery, distances between the visitors and the exhibits themselves varied significantly when visitors expressed a desire to look at the exhibits in their whole composition. Further research may shed a light on the diversity of distances created between the exhibits and the visitors and explore the circumstances under which these distances are created, for example is a distance only created when the exhibit face is crowded or does this happen also when no one is around the exhibit? The development of an understanding of the distances created between the visitors and the exhibits and the use of space for the unfolding of their shared meaning-making and perceptual range may facilitate the museum in refining its 'user language' and develop further resources for those who want to look at the exhibits from a distance (e.g. leaflets). This research may also point towards a better understanding of the visitors' flow patterns within the galleries, and hence, elaborate the framing of the exhibits' juxtaposition, for example maybe more space is needed between the two exhibits and so forth.

Falk and Storksdieck (2005) attempted to approach the interconnection of visitors' identities, museum learning and museum motivations by carrying out post-exhibition interviews with visitors who further agreed to be contacted again after about two years' time. They identified five museum-specific identities reflecting visitors' motivations as

these were expressed through visitors' interviews and hence based on the visitors' own discourse. These five identities were the explorer, the facilitator, the professional/hobbyist, the experience seeker, and the spiritual pilgrim, later renamed the recharger (Falk 2009). Falk's identities can be reinforced by examining visitors' performances while at the museum as visitors' performances can be considered as a means of negotiation and exploration of their own identities. My findings may lead future research in a deeper understanding of visitors' motivations, when considered together with other research findings such as the one by Falk (2009) and Falk and Storksdieck (2005).

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1– Information Sheet for Visitors



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### Information Sheet for Visitors

A research project is taking place in the galleries, investigating **visitors'** behaviour within the gallery space. This project is interested in the ways visitors experience and interact with different types of exhibits and in different museum contexts. This project will result in suggesting different ways to improve exhibits and exhibitions.

For the aim of this project, an exhibit in the specific exhibition area is being **video-recorded**. **It is up to you** to decide whether you want to take part in this research or not. If you decide to take part, you are still **free to withdraw at any time and without giving any reason**. Your choice to participate will be based on your decision to **approach** the specific exhibit that is under video recording. If you have any concerns about being video-recorded at any point of your visit, please inform the researcher and any footage of yours will be immediately erased.

All the data analysed in these video recordings will be used for research and teaching purposes only. All arrangements for ensuring **anonymity and confidentiality** have been addressed by the researcher. If you have any further questions, please contact the researcher herself.

Thank you for your collaboration

All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee (Project ID Number: 2158/001)

**Appendix 2 – Filming Signs used for each one of the three case studies**

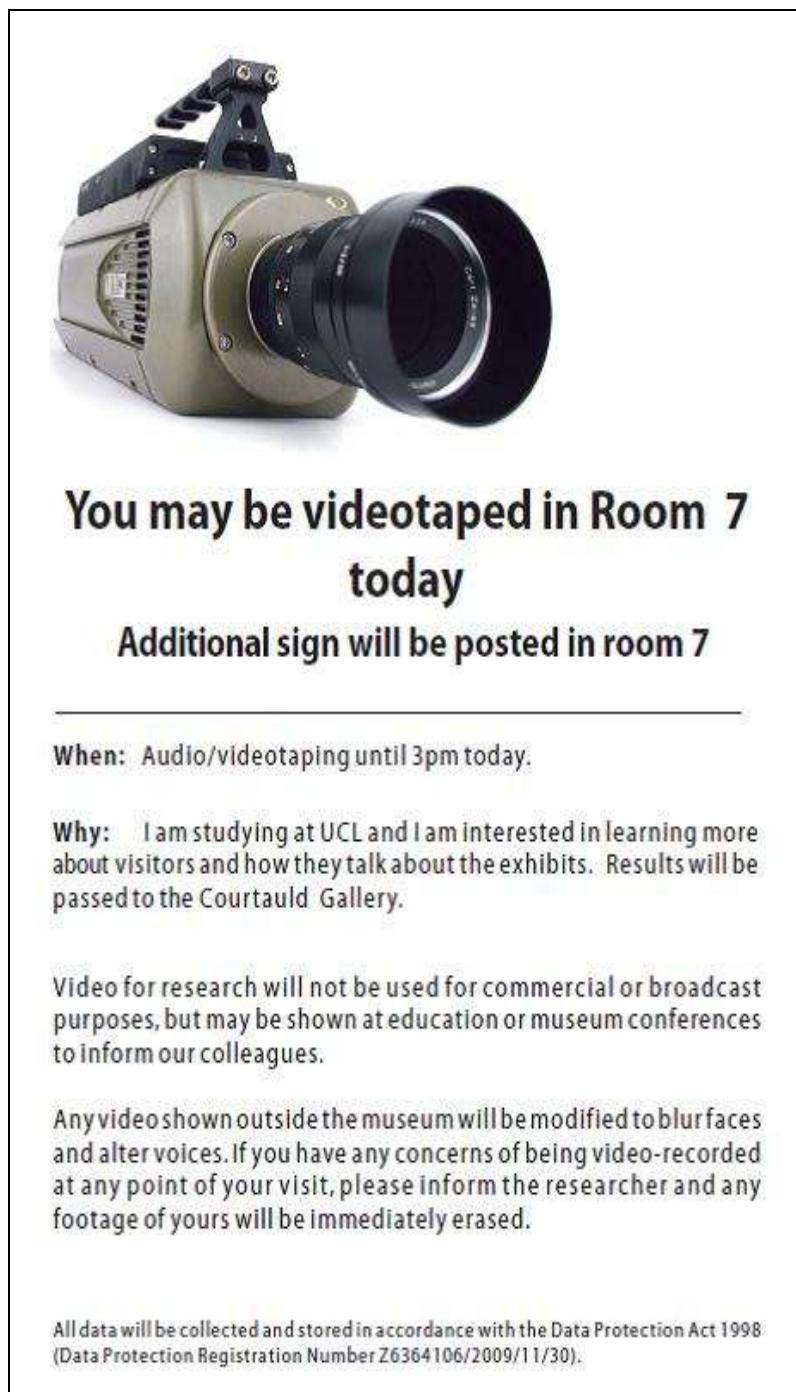
**1) Filming sign used for the Wellcome Collection**

**Filming will be  
taking place in the  
Medicine Man  
gallery today**

A student from UCL is conducting some audio and video research on how visitors talk about the exhibits with their companions. You are welcome to decline the chance to take part in the study.

All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (Data Protection Registration Number Z6364106/2009/11/30)

2a) Filming sign used for the Courtauld Gallery (placed on the reception desk)



**2b) Filming sign used for the Courtauld Gallery (used in the galleries)**



**You may be videotaped now**

---

**When:** Audio/videotaping until 3pm today.

**Why:** I am studying at UCL and I am interested in learning more about visitors and how they talk about the exhibits. Results will be passed to the Courtauld Gallery.

Video for research will not be used for commercial or broadcast purposes, but may be shown at education or museum conferences to inform our colleagues.

Any video shown outside the museum will be modified to blur faces and alter voices. If you have any concerns of being video-recorded at any point of your visit, please inform the researcher and any footage of yours will be immediately erased.

All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.  
(Data Protection Registration Number Z6364106/2009/11/30).

**3) Filming sign used for the Horniman Museum and Gardens**



**You may be videotaped in the African  
Worlds Gallery today**

---

**When:** Audio/videotaping until 5:30pm today.

**Why:** I am studying at UCL and I am interested in learning more about visitors and how they talk about the exhibits. Results will be passed to the Horniman Museum.

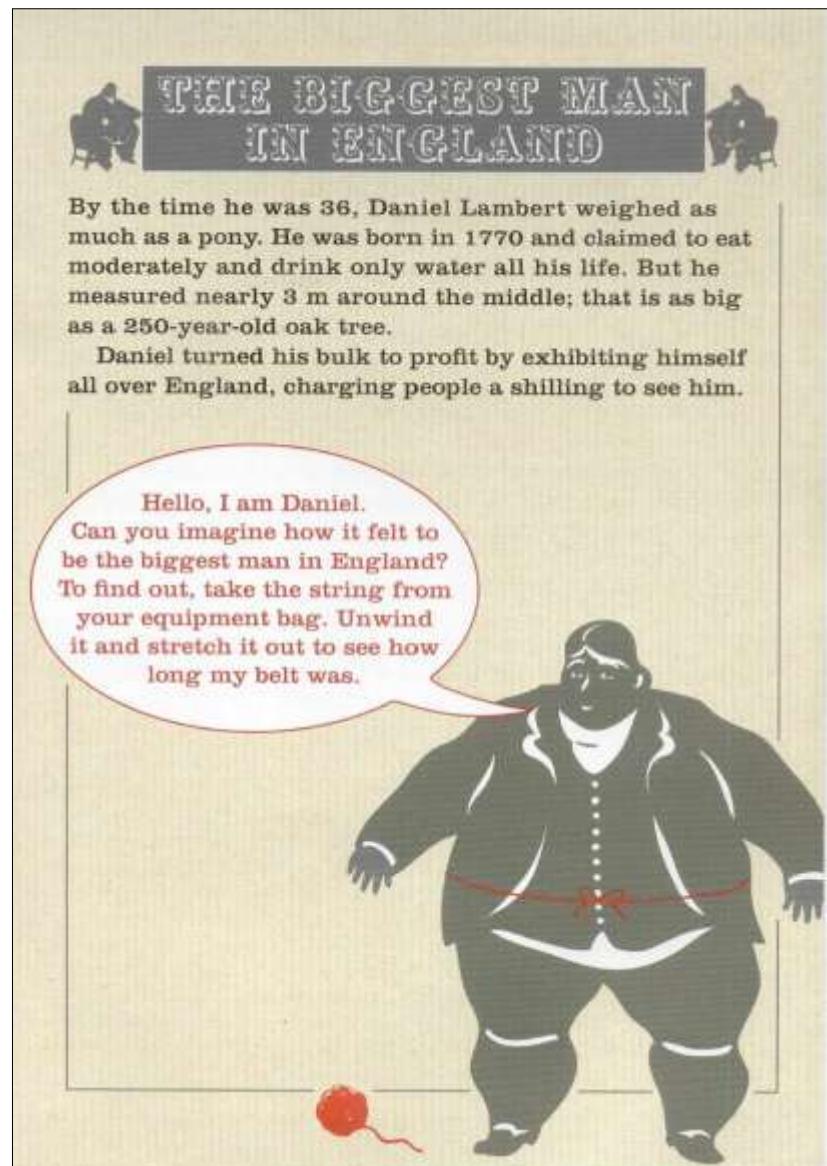
Video for research will not be used for commercial or broadcast purposes, but may be shown at education or museum conferences to inform our colleagues.

Any video shown outside the museum will be modified to blur faces and alter voices. If you have any concerns of being video-recorded at any point of your visit, please inform the researcher and any footage of yours will be immediately erased.

All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (Data Protection Registration Number Z6364106/2009/11/30).

## Appendix 3 – Activity leaflets used across the three case studies

1. The *Young Explorer* leaflet from the Wellcome Collection (screenshot of the activity on *painting number 3*)



2. *Let's celebrate* leaflet used at the Horniman Museum and Gardens (screenshot of the front cover and the activity on the *Yoruba: a celebration of African Art* painting)

**HORNIMANMUSEUM**

# Let's celebrate!

Come on a global adventure around the museum to discover some fabulous festivals!

**Gelede festival of the Yoruba people, West Africa**

Find a display of masks similar to this one.

These are **Gelede** masks. They are used in a festival honouring women. The masks are worn by male dancers who dress, dance and act like women.

Can you find these things on the masks?

two horse heads  a bird eating a snake   
a big tortoise  a red face

All the masks have a woman's face, but the top section varies. Sometimes the mask carvings illustrate famous Yoruba proverbs. Sometimes they tell us things about peoples' relationships with each other or with supernatural beings.

Behind you there is a painting of a Yoruba celebration.

How many different dancers and musicians can you count? **Dancers** **Musicians**

**Islamic festival of Eid**

Find this object nearby.

What is it called?

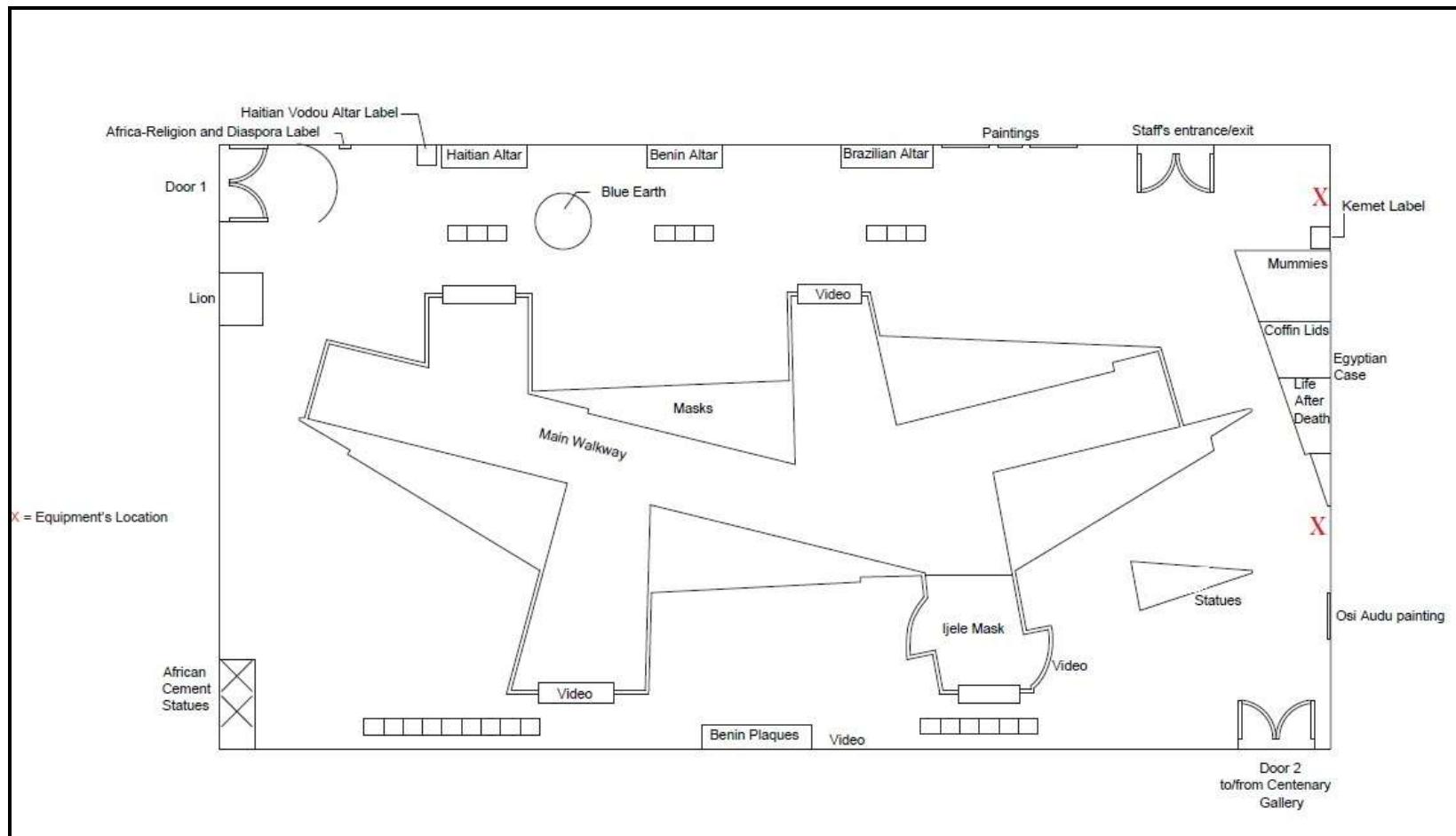
Children used boards like these to learn to read and write Arabic. Verses from the Koran were written on them and memorised. Then the ink was washed off and a new verse written.

**Ramadan** is the month when Muslims fast (don't eat) from sunrise to sunset and pray for those who suffer from starvation and drought. The end of the fast is marked by the joyous celebration of **Eid ul-Fitr** in which prayers of thanks are offered and gifts are exchanged. The festival begins with the first sighting of the new moon after Ramadan.

This Arabic text means "Best wishes at Eid".

Can you copy it?

Appendix 4 – Floor map of the *African Worlds* gallery indicating the two locations of the camcorder



## Appendix 5 – Analytical categories

**Conversation:** a sequence of verbal exchanges, developing on a number of turns-in-talk. Both a process and an outcome of museum learning experience (Leinhardt and Crowley 1998).

**Performance:** refers to the visitors' verbal and non-verbal behaviours unfolding at the face of the exhibits.

**Telling:** a term borrowed from Diamond (1986) and refined for the purposes of my research. It refers to the spoken exchanges between visitors that may take the form of storytelling when it contains information related to the personal context of each visitor, and text-echo, when it is detailed with aspects of the interpretive text.

**Tagging:** a term borrowed from the field of social media. It refers to the performances carried out by the visitors in order to make something visually relevant for the others to attend. Tagging can be performed non-verbally through hands (pointing gestures) and shifts in posture and gaze, and verbally with deictic terms, and perceptual talk.

**Identification** (Feinberg and Leinhardt 2002; Leinhardt and Crowley 2002): Identifying or naming aspects of an exhibit.

**Affective comments** (Allen 2002): visitors commenting on the aesthetic nature of the exhibit. Three types of affective comments have been identified as follows: pleasure; displeasure; and, intrigue. Allen's findings (2002) highlighted the high incidence of affective talk among visitors while at the Exploratorium, in San Francisco.

**Animating through “displaying doing” (embodiment):** refers to these visitors' embodied performances that bring aspects of the exhibits into life, aiming at seeing the exhibit in a more vivid and specific way.

**Perceptual talk:** a broad category of talk including all those kinds of talk that visitors use in order to refer to and share an exhibit or information with others (Allen 2002). There are four

subcategories of perceptual talk as argued by Allen (2002): identifying; naming; feature and quotation. According to Allen (2002) perceptual talk was the most frequent category of learning-talk with the identification of exhibits comprising the most common subcategory. In my research, identifying is considered to be performed non-verbally through pointing gestures and spatial deixis, while the verbal identification of the exhibit may talk the form of naming (verbally stating the name of the exhibit) feature reference, location description, and quotation, referred to as “text-echo” (McManus 1989a).

**Seeing through another person’s eyes:** Being the audience of one’s performance allows one to encounter the exhibit in the light of his/her performance; that is, the exhibit is infused through his/her performance.

**Arriving second:** Arriving at the exhibit second assigns most of the time the role of the audience, who sees the exhibit through the other person’s eyes; therefore, having a second-hand experience.