Engaging the Visitor: Arts-Based Dialogic Approaches and the Docent

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Lifelong Learning/
Reflections on Engagement & Arts-Based Dialogic Approaches

The Banff Centre
inspiring creativity
To Get Us Started

Find an ‘artifact’ from your wallet/purse/smart phone, that reveals a bit about you, and share that artifact/story with your partner.
What if …

We sought to engage with visitors through art, instead of trying to get them to engage with art?

And, what if we focused on the visitor’s relationship with the artifact (e.g., asking what’s the story that connects the visitor and the art/artifact) vs. focusing on the artifact itself?
“I never had a vision for the chocolate company ...”
“My vision was to solve poverty in America, one child at a time.”
Framing My Interest: Arts-Based, Dialogic Approaches to Organization Development

--- Lesson #1 ---

Art Affords an ‘Other’ Way of Engaging
Why Interdisciplinary Studies?

--- Lesson #2 ---

Don’t Be Afraid to Engage Folks in the Intersections
“Bank’s Art Brushes Workers Wrong Way”
Milwaukee Sentinel (11/21/87)

--- Lesson #3 ---
Art Can Create Space for Conversations
Engagement Through Collaborative Artmaking: Making Art/Making Sense

--- Lesson #4 ---
The Arts Offer an ‘Other’ Language to Help Us in Sensemaking and Storytelling
Another example ...

--- Lesson #5 ---
Engagement ...
Beyond the Museum Walls
Engagement and Narrative Competence

“The effective practice of medicine requires ... narrative competence.”
--- Lesson #6 ---

“The effective practice of the docent requires ... narrative competence.”
SCPA’s Mission: 
We Feed Hungry Children

... with Nourishment Through the Arts.

The arts help fill the empty spaces inside of us.
Arts-Based Dialogic Approaches and the Docent

1. Art affords an ‘other’ way of engaging.
2. Don’t be afraid to engage folks in the intersection spaces.
3. Art can create space for conversations.
4. The arts offer an ‘other’ language to help us in sensemaking and storytelling.
5. Think about engaging ‘outside the box’ (e.g., beyond the museum walls) – story making through collaborative artmaking.
6. The effective practice of the learning facilitator (e.g., docent) requires narrative competence.
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