

**“TALKS ON THE DOT: BRIDGING THE GAP FOR
THE TOUR AVERSE”**

TIP SHEET

WHAT MAKES A GOOD DOT TALK?

1. Location, location, location.

Choose a spot that gets traffic – but has room for a crowd to gather around. Or place the dot in a better spot to collect visitors, who you then take to the site of the talk.

2. Advertise!

Ensure that the front of the house knows where the dots will be that day and can direct visitors accordingly. Make sure the dot pad is laid down well in advance of the talk. Tactfully mention the upcoming talk to people in the gallery who might be interested, and encourage them to come.

3. Hook them!

Grab their attention within the first few minutes -- or they may drift away. Try to ask a challenging open-ended question of the audience very soon in your talk after you have briefly introduced yourself and the piece. Or make a provocative statement about the work. We have found that people often love to be asked to look closer and offer their thoughts. And they enjoy being privy to an important, provocative bit of information about a piece they might not otherwise learn about.

4. Get personal!

You’ve picked the art work for the dot: you might tell the visitors why. Tell them your personal connection to the work, why it appeals to you.

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- 5. Repeat comments** from the floor in case others don't hear them. Remember the gallery behind them may be noisy.
- 6. Look around at everyone and make eye contact.** They are important (or you wouldn't be there).
- 7. Have a few open-ended questions prepared in advance** to ask the visitors to encourage them to look closer.
- 8. Have a few themes or important points about the art to which you would like to lead the audience** (e.g. alternate a question with some information you have that expands on the answers to that question.)
- 9. Segue into your ending at about the 9 minute mark** by suggesting what the visitors might wish to look for when they are looking at the exhibits independently. Mention any tours happening later. Thank them, and offer to stay and answer questions.

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