

H&ToD submission

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The Power of Music: From Emotion Regulation to Memory Recall

Assesment I: Observing the everyday January 26, 2024

Music is a powerful tool for individuals seeking to regulate and intensify their emotions. Daily engagement with music allows people to express and enhance their emotional experiences. It acts as a medium through which individuals navigate and amplify feelings of joy, solace, or excitement.

An intriguing aspect of music is its ability to fill the void of silence, particularly in settings where quietude may lead to discomfort. A background sound-making company, "BetterSleep," mentioned, "Some people also find ambient background noise comforting and soothing, especially in environments where they may feel anxious or overwhelmed. This can be particularly helpful for individuals with auditory processing disorder or autism spectrum disorder." Whether working in solitude or navigating awkward social situations, music acts as a background sound that alleviates tension and fosters a sense of psychological comfort. It serves as a shared experience that bridges gaps and fosters social connections.

As depicted in the movie "Begin Again," the notion that "music makes ordinary moments special" holds. Even amid mundane routines, introducing a captivating musical piece can transform an ordinary situation into an unforgettable experience. The ability of music to evoke specific emotions and enhance atmospheres is a testament to its profound impact on our perception of everyday life.

Music plays a significant role in human memory. Its ability to create distinct and memorable experiences is exemplified in the story of Tony Bennett, a singer who, despite severe dementia, could recall memories and even his songs when prompted by music. This phenomenon highlights how music triggers recollection, making it a valuable tool for preserving and accessing cherished memories.

In conclusion, music emerges as a dynamic force that shapes, enhances, and preserves the human experience. In this manner, individuals can design their day by singing, searching for, and playing music that aligns with their preferences and the current situation. From emotional regulation to transforming mundane moments and aiding memory recall, the impact of music on our daily lives is profound. As individuals navigate the complexities of their emotions and memories, music's therapeutic and transformative power remains an ever-present and invaluable companion.



illumination of the V&A museum

Assesment II: Questioning the Collection

February 16, 2024



the skillful utilization of lighting plays a weighty role, and the Victoria & Albert Museum excels in this aspect. As I roamed through the museum, observing exhibits and strolling through its halls, I never experienced a moment of discomfort due to excessive brightness.

This fact strongly attests to the museum's success in creating a space where visitors can focus on the displays without being overwhelmed by glaring light. Even when looking up at the ceiling and shifting my gaze towards light sources, I was not blinded.



Light is one of the most critical elements for humanity. Since the discovery of fire, the diverse and creative utilization of light by humans has been crucial in determining how comfortably individuals can engage in activities in spaces illuminated by it. During my exploration of the Victoria & Albert Museum, I delved into how designers strategically employed lighting to enhance the comfort of visitors during exhibition viewings. The effective use of lighting in museums is crucial, as it allows viewers to concentrate on the exhibits without being overly aware of the lighting itself. In the realm of museum architecture,



Throughout my in-depth exploration of the installed lighting within the museum, I discovered various features that contribute to its success.

In this piece, I will delve into these characteristics. To concentrate on the museum's installed lighting, I specifi-

cally chose to visit on a Friday evening after sunset, as Friday is the only day when the Victoria & Albert Museum operates until 10 PM.

reflected lights

The first impression upon entering this museum was the sensation of “visual comfort.” While this may seem like a commonplace experience, I believe what makes this feeling significant is the intentional design that ensures optimal comfort for the human eye. The overall lighting within the museum is adjusted to the most comfortable intensity for human eyes, creating an atmosphere that immediately conveys this sense of ease. The means by which the museum achieved this became apparent upon observing the ceiling, revealing the first distinctive feature.

In spaces designated for resting or walking within the museum, there was no direct, harsh lighting directed at the area. All light sources were strategically positioned to create indirect, reflective illumination. This approach eliminates situations where looking up or directly facing a light source could cause discomfort or fatigue. Human eye fatigue often results from varying light intensities within a single space. When different light levels occur in one area, the irises in the eyes adjust rapidly to the changing illumination with each shift in gaze. The frequent movement of the irises can accumulate eye fatigue over time. The lighting in the resting areas and corridors of the Victoria & Albert Museum is installed facing upwards. The light emitted reflects off the textured ceiling and diffuses gently into the space where people are present. By avoiding direct downward illumination,



distance, enhancing the overall comfort and appearance of the illuminated space.



the design not only eliminates glaring light that can be harsh on the eyes but also widens the spread of light, ensuring a uniform illumination in the space. This method not only diminishes the perception of direct glare but also contributes to maintaining consistent lighting levels throughout the area. As a result, the reduced movement of the iris in response to varying light intensities helps alleviate eye fatigue. Additionally, the museum boasts an impressively high ceiling. All light fixtures are installed at this considerable height, creating a substantial distance between individuals and the light sources. This deliberate spacing allows light to diffuse softly and smoothly from a

direct and natural lights

Paying meticulous attention to the light that illuminates the exhibits is another noteworthy aspect. The second feature lies in the lighting installations designed to showcase the exhibits without using reflected light. Instead, direct illumination is employed, yet the viewer's eyes are not dazzled. This is attributed to the strategic placement of these lights, which, like other lighting fixtures, are positioned high up and at a distance. The softening of the light occurs as it reaches the exhibits, mitigating any harsh glare. Additionally, even when looking directly at these light sources, fine barriers are in place to prevent direct exposure to the eyes and to ensure that light is confined to the exhibits. These subtle details contribute to the overall comfort experienced by visitors as they view the exhibits. Another distinctive feature is the varying position of light sources for each exhibit. This is due to the differing angles at which the light is reflected for each display. The natural occurrence of eye fatigue from the reflected light on exhibits is acknowledged, and the museum addresses this issue by adjusting the positioning of the lights to minimize direct reflection into the viewer's eyes. This method not only reduces the likelihood of

discomfort caused by reflected light but also enhances the concentration on the exhibits. Furthermore, standing in the center of the museum exhibition space provides a noticeable contrast – the areas with exhibits appear brighter than those without. This deliberate design allows for a clear and focused view of the exhibits when standing in corridors, facilitating a more immersive experience.

The lighting in large spaces, such as the Cast Courts, differs in its approach, utilizing natural light. This area houses numerous large exhibits and notably lacks columns. Given the vast expanse of this space, relying solely on artificial lighting would present various challenges. Illuminating such a wide area using reflective light could be impractical, and the absence of columns limits the

installation of lighting fixtures. The Victoria & Albert Museum addressed these challenges by employing a combination of different lighting techniques and natural light in this space. Examining the lighting, this area deviates from the use of reflective light and instead incorporates fluorescent lamps strategically placed at a considerable distance. The fixtures are installed at such a distance that the light gently diffuses downward, providing a comfortable illumination similar to reflective lighting experienced in other spaces. During the day, this space benefits from natural light to illuminate the exhibits. Upon observing the ceiling, it becomes apparent that the entire area is fitted with windows. These windows allow natural sunlight to stream into the space, providing a naturally bright ambiance to showcase the exhibits.

By integrating both artificial and natural lighting in the Cast Courts, the museum effectively resolves the challenges posed by the size and characteristics of the space. The use of fluorescent lamps at a distance and the incorporation of ample natural light through windows contribute to a well-lit and comfortable environment for viewing the exhibits.

In conclusion, the Victoria & Albert Museum meticulously attends to various nuanced details in its lighting design, sparing no expense in utilizing an abundance of lights. This approach not only creates a comfortable atmosphere within the space but also establishes an environment conducive to focusing on the exhibits.



Personal and Institutional Design: Shaping Human Civilization

Assesment III:
Personal and Institutional Design

April 22, 2024



Personal design has commonly been used to address how individuals can live more comfortably, while institutional design appears to play a role in shaping the development of human civilization. Tools represent one of the key domains of personal design. As we advance into modern civilization, the scope of personal design has significantly expanded. Therefore, I will focus solely on tools, as they exemplify this domain.

Designing and utilizing tools can be viewed as a form of personal design. Over generations, the shape and appearance of objects naturally become more familiar and user-friendly. However, the design principles between modern and ancient civilizations often differ. Even within the realm of tools, the design mindset can vary. In ancient societies, many objects were crafted out of sheer necessity, as survival itself was a challenge. Conversely, in modern society, where survival is less precarious, design has shifted from mere necessity to consumerism. This shift involves incorporating various additional factors into fundamental design, reflecting individuality and sometimes even social class differences. By offering objects with the same functionality but different aesthetics, individuals can express diverse personalities.

In contrast, institutional design has made significant contributions to human civilization. Homo sapiens, our current species, is characterized by bipedalism and advanced cognitive abilities. Before Homo sapiens, Neanderthals, who also walked upright, possessed large brains and robust physiques. However, they likely became extinct due to their inability to adapt to changing environmental conditions. The difference may lie in the frontal lobe, responsible for higher cognitive functions such as judgment and planning. Neanderthals lacked the cohesive social structures that enabled Homo sapiens to thrive through cooperation and collective intelligence.

This inherent ability to collaborate and innovate has been leveraged in institutional design. Ancient civilizations, for instance, revered gods as essential to their survival. This belief inspired the construction of grand

temples, showcasing the utilization of institutional design. Over time, the belief in gods and the institutional structures surrounding them evolved, contributing to the development of modern civilization. Many temples and public facilities created through institutional design have catalyzed societal progress.

In conclusion, personal design and institutional design have both played significant roles in shaping human civilization, albeit in different ways.

Personal design, particularly in the domain of tools, has evolved over time to address individual comfort and needs. From ancient civilizations to modern society, the design of tools has transitioned from necessity-driven to consumer-oriented, reflecting societal changes and individual preferences. This evolution has allowed for the expression of diverse personalities through objects with varied aesthetics but similar functionality.

On the other hand, institutional design has contributed to societal organization and progress. Through the utilization of collective intelligence and cooperation, ancient civilizations leveraged institutional design to construct grand temples and public facilities, reflecting their beliefs and societal structures. Over time, these institutional structures evolved alongside human civilization, contributing to its development and progress.

In essence, personal and institutional design are complementary forces, each influencing and contributing to the advancement of human civilization. While personal design addresses individual needs and expressions, institutional design facilitates societal organization and progress, ultimately shaping the course of human history.

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