

Information Architecture Proposal
For
Art Gallery
Redesign

Kathryn McMahon – BCIT New Media Design and Web Development

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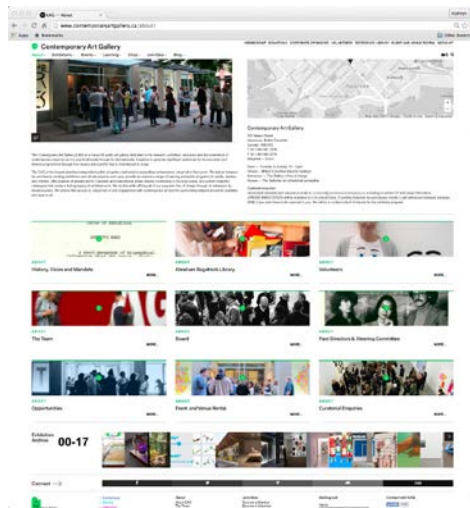
1. Project Background

1.1 Site Purpose

The proposed website is a non-profit public art gallery site that aims to promote their exhibitions of contemporary visual art with a focus on the documentation and research that accompanies it, as well as providing learning resources for people of all ages, with lesson plans on their exhibits starting for those as young as kindergarten students. As well, they provide a shop of artistic goods, and because they are a not for profit organization there is a large emphasis on promoting memberships and donations and other money-making endeavors. The site aims to be a hub to the artistic community in Vancouver, not only to those who enjoy going to their exhibitions, but also those who enjoy the archived information and research on the local and international artist they present.

1.2 Critique

The site aims to position itself as an information rich resource of contemporary art, and I think this lends itself to my initial observation and overarching critique: The site is too convoluted. On almost every page the user is presented with an overabundance of options of subpages to click on and too many photos that are distracting and unclear of their purpose. As well they have an arbitrary navigation system, which I suppose are subpages or areas of the site they want to emphasize, and make readily available. But with all the extraneous information already on the page, this repetitive navigation bar seems to add to the maybe too many options the user has to click on. I will now go into more detail of the specific aspects of the site that I found inhibiting and bothersome as a user.



Organization and Accessibility

On first use, because their site is unorganized it gave me the overall impression that then they, as an organization, will be unorganized, which then made me feel like the archived research material they provide and the artists they exhibit could also be uncohesive. As someone looking for a credible resource, I don't want to feel like the exhibitions I may see at the CAG could be as arbitrary as some of the content on their website. As I first looked around on the pages, as I said before, the first thing that struck me was the overwhelming content. In the about section, not only is the user given the subpage options in the global navigation, but then immediately preceding the intended information for the subject of the page, there is all the categories listed again modularly with accompanying photos. It may make the information more accessible, but it adds to the confusion user. I was left thinking, if these modular links are presented to me here, am I missing something in the global navigation? And vice versa. Upon further inspection I realized they were just reiterations of the subpages listed in the about section, but then I wondered why were they there so prominently if there categories are also in the navigation bar. On many of the other pages this same thing happened, links to other parts of their site, perhaps vaguely related to the content of the subpage, sometimes not, were presented which left me as a user feeling overwhelmed with options to click on.

Labeling

The general labeling is fairly clear, although some subpages could be gotten rid of and fit in nicely with other pages. The "History and Mandate page" page could be linked under the general "About CAG" page. The "Volunteer" section is listed only on the main "About CAG" page, and is not in any of the global navigation. As well, included in every module on the site is a repeated label of what the content is: There is an "info" sign on the "About CAG" page, every "Exhibition" link starts off with the word "Exhibition" etc. If we are in the exhibition section then we are to assume that each of the links are to a previous or current exhibition and the repetition of the word every time is not needed. As well, the word "more..." is repeated at the bottom of every module. Everything in that link is clickable to take you to the specific exhibition page. The word more is not needed.

Navigation

On this site, to add to the overwhelming nature, there were repeated and arbitrary navigation systems. There was the extraneous navigation system in the top right corner I mentioned before pointing to what are I suppose areas of the page that they wanted to

highlight. As well at the bottom is a secondary system leading to their social media links, which is also repeated in the top right corner. As well running along the bottom is an alternate navigation system leading to their exhibition archive. As I feel this is one of the main purposes of their site, I think this repeated navigation works well. Where the navigation did not work for me was in the “Exhibition” section. A constant feature on the dropdown menu is the ability to search the content via keyword, artist, or date. Although when trying this search feature in some of the other categories it was included in, such as “Shop”, it did not work and was redundant. But where it is most helpful was in the “Exhibition” section where it is most likely you will want to be able to search by date and artist. I think this is a very useful feature. Where it falls short is that once you have done a search, as I did for 2006, and retrieved all your results, as soon as you go further and click on one of those results and go to the specific exhibition, there is no way to go back to that search result of all the exhibitions in 2006. You would have to redo your initial search again, resulting in many unneeded clicks.

2. Audience Analysis

2.1 Intended Audience

The gallery focuses on contemporary art and is aimed at a younger generation. It's website attests to that. It is going to be used by those who are versed somewhat in visual art and will want a good visual aesthetic. As well, it is going to be used by those trying to gain information on the exhibitions and artists for their own interest or scholarly research. A good user experience and a visually organized website is paramount.

2.2 Audience Scenarios

Audience Scenario 1



Name: Jane Macgregor

Age: 25

Occupation: Student, Barista

Jane is an art student in Vancouver. She has always loved the arts and has always wanted to attend art school and surround herself in the artistic community. She is new to Vancouver and looking for events to attend and exhibition openings to network at. As well she is also looking to do research and gain inspiration for her schoolwork and art practice. As she is a visual artist she has a honed eye for detail and cares a lot about aesthetics and design functionality of what she uses. When something has a good design and usability she will be drawn to it and trust its integrity.

Audience Scenario 2



Name: Robert Smith

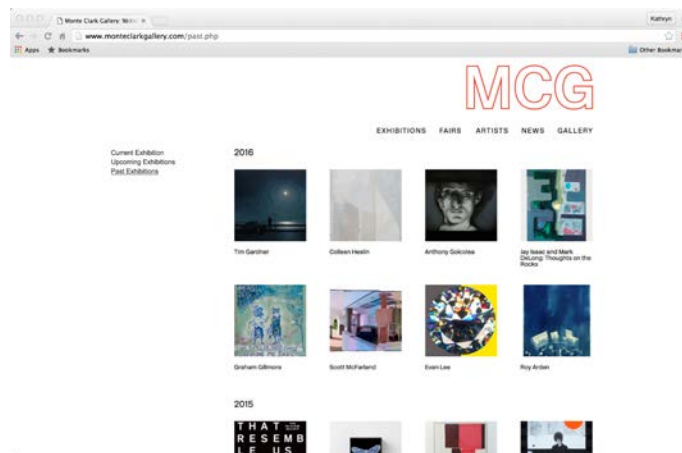
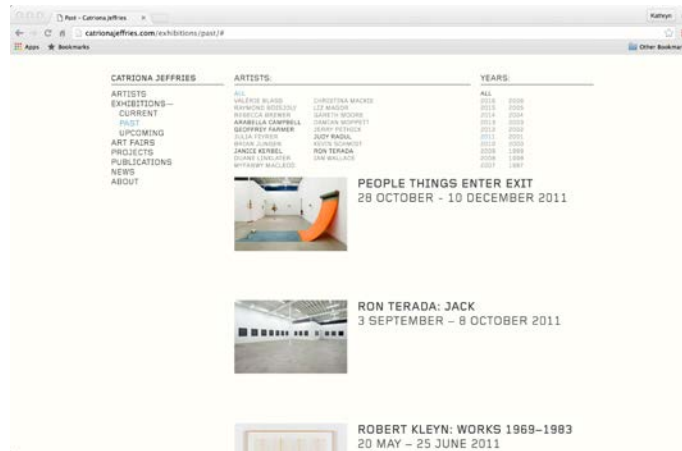
Age: 37

Occupation: Elementary School Teacher

Robert grew up with a mother who was involved in the artistic community and took him to events as a child. He always valued this exposure to the arts at a young age. Although he himself never had an interest to go into that field he thinks it is a good thing to incorporate it into educational system. As a young teacher he is somewhat frustrated with the outdated learning system he is forced to use and is looking for new ways to spark his students imagination and critical thinking skills. He likes the CAG because it offers easy to find lesson plans he can utilize for his field trips to the gallery.

2.3 Competitive Analysis

When looking at other contemporary art gallery sites, it is clear to see the simplicity and organization is a commonality. Because they are displaying and promoting visual art, it is important not to overwhelm the site with extraneous visual information. Like in an art gallery, the art is best viewed against a blank white wall. Such as in a gallery website, the information they provide on the artist is most effective when there is less visual stimuli surrounding it. As well, they focus on well organized labeling and easy to find information for their discerning user.



3. Proposed Content

3.1 Content Strategy


In my redesign I aimed to simplify the use of repetitive navigation systems, modular links and extraneous information. I removed the navigation system in the top right corner that pointed to pages already in the primary global navigation. Instead of a drop down menu that appeared and disappeared from the global navigation I replaced it with a side local navigation menu, one which lets you back track to your previous page without having to start a new search. At the bottom of the page I left the reoccurring exhibition archive, but cleaned up the footer navigation: The only repeat of the top navigation are their sponsorship links, which I believe they want to make prominent to the user. As well, in the footer is the newsletter signup and their social media links, one last measure of connectivity before the user leaves the page.

3.2 Wireframes of Proposed Changes

About CAG

The wireframe shows the layout for the 'About CAG' page. At the top left is the CAG logo with gallery hours: Tuesday to Sunday 12 - 6pm, Free Admission. At the top right are social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram) and a search icon, with a navigation menu: Exhibitions Events Learning Shop About CAG Get Involved Contact. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a vertical list of links: About CAG, History/Vision/Mandate, The Team (Current, Board of Directors, Past Leaders, Volunteers), Event + Venue Rental, and Blog. The right column features a large placeholder box with an 'X' and a paragraph of text: 'The Contemporary Art Gallery (CAG) is a non-profit public art gallery dedicated to the research, exhibition, education and documentation of contemporary visual art as it is practiced locally through to internationally. It aspires to generate significant audiences for its innovative and diverse programmes through free access and a profile that is international in scope. The CAG is the longest standing independent public art gallery dedicated to presenting contemporary visual art in Vancouver. We deliver between ten and twenty exciting exhibitions and off-site projects each year, provide an extensive range of learning and public programs for adults, families and children, offer a series of residencies for Canadian and international artists directly contributing to the local scene, and publish insightful catalogues that create a lasting legacy of exhibited work. We do this while offering all of our programs free of charge through an admission by donation policy. We believe that access to, enjoyment of and engagement with contemporary art and the surrounding debates should be available and open to all.' Below this is a 'Visit CAG' section with a placeholder box and contact information: 555 Nelson St., Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6B 1R6; T 00 1 604 681 2700, F 00 1 604 683 2710, and contact@contemporaryartgallery.com. To the right is a 'Become a Member' section with a paragraph: 'The CAG is a not-for-profit reliant on member support. As a Member of the CAG, you are supporting contemporary art now and playing a role in its future.' Below this is a 'Make a Donation' section with a paragraph: 'Help support the only free public art gallery in Vancouver.' and a 'DONATE NOW' button. A horizontal line separates this section from the 'Exhibition Archive' section below. The 'Exhibition Archive' section has a placeholder box and the text 'Exhibition Archive' and '2000-2017'. Another horizontal line follows. At the bottom, there are four columns: 'Get Involved' with links: Become a Member, Become a Volunteer, Become a Supporter, Become a Sponsor, Make a Donation; 'Mailing List' with fields for Name and e-mail; 'Connect with CAG' with social media links (Facebook 866, Twitter 6,054 followers) and a 'LOG IN' button; and the CAG logo with address: 555 Nelson Street, Vancouver, Canada, and gallery hours: Tues to Sun, 12 - 6pm.

Current Exhibition



Gallery Hours
Tuesday to Sunday 12 - 6pm
Free Admission

[Exhibitions](#) [Events](#) [Learning](#) [Shop](#) [About CAG](#) [Get Involved](#) [Contact](#)

Exhibitions

Current

White, Steel, Slice, Mask -
Sameer Farooq & Mirjam Linschooten

Gallery Currently closed for - Three Exhibitions open on January 12

Past

Upcoming

10 September 2016 - 19 March 2017

White, Steel, Slice, Mask
Sameer Farooq & Mirjam Linschooten

01 January, 2017 - 12 January, 2017

Gallery Currently closed for - Three Exhibitions open on January 12

Exhibition Archive

2000-2017

155 Nelson Street
Vancouver, Canada
Gallery Hours
Tues to Sun, 12 - 6pm

Get Involved

Become a Member
Become a Volunteer
Become a Supporter
Become a Sponsor
Make a Donation

Mailing List

Name _____
e-mail _____

Connect with CAG

Like 1,936
 Follow 4,054 followers

Exhibitions

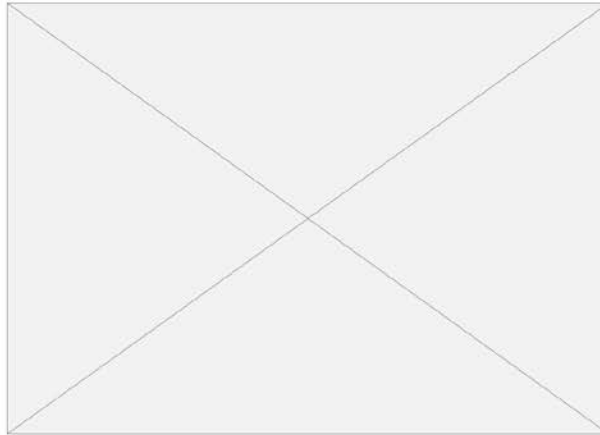
Current

White, Steel, Slice, Mask - Sameer Farooq & Mirjam Linschooten

Gallery Currently Closed for - Three Exhibitions open on January 12

Past

Upcoming



White, Steel, Slice, Mask
Window spaces
September 10, 2016 - January 1, 2017

Raw Chew Salad Hands
Off-site: Yaletown-Roundhouse Station, Canada Line
September 10, 2016 - March 10, 2017

The Contemporary Art Gallery presents an ambitious nine multi-venue commission by collaboration Dutch artist Mirjam Linschooten and Canadian artist Sameer Farooq, interrogating the ways in which cultural diversity is narrated and represented. Working together for over a decade, the duo's interdisciplinary practice creates community-based models of participation in order to reimagine a material record of the present. Utilizing installation, photography, design and writing, they investigate the tactics and methods of anthropology to examine various forms of collecting, interpretation and display. The result is work that reveals how institutions speak about our lives, making an archeology of the present often existing beyond the framework of the gallery. Their expansive projects develop intricate, speculative archives re-purposing found objects and language to expose ruptures within cultural representation, questioning the invisibility of the archival and interrogating the inherent value bias in collecting.

Over the past year, Farooq and Linschooten have undertaken a series of cumulative research visits via the Burned Marina Field House Studio Residency Program toward the development of installations at CAG, the Yaletown-Roundhouse Station and the Museum of Anthropology (MOA). Close to the various commissions are participatory workshops led by the artists with the Native Youth Program (NYP) at MOA, a program for Indigenous youth from Greater Vancouver where students engage in various aspects of working within a museum context, leading public tours, completing research projects and participating in presentations. Farooq and Linschooten invited NYP participants to consider their personal narratives in relation to the anthropological museum's displays, identifying key elements for examination in the Multiversity Galleries. Throughout the histories of colonialism and capitalism innumerable cultural objects have entered museum collections around the world detached from the communities and physical bodies they belong to. Ripped from context and trapped behind glass, rearranged and decontextualized, the culture's authenticity, specificity and vitality of these objects are dismantled into fragments of artifacts. Within the window spaces at CAG, Farooq and Linschooten consider such acts of ethnographic curation. Reflecting lessons between local communities and their representation in museums, Farooq and Linschooten focus on ongoing cultural forms that persist in contemporary culture. Replicating, yet also subverting, the supposed objective aesthetic of museum vitrines, Farooq and Linschooten have installed a collection of mass-produced cultural objects purchased from shops across the lower mainland, notably representative of Vancouver's largest immigrant communities. Display mechanisms such as shelves, hooks and bins are used to disrupt and unsettle the objects, disturbing the meticulous arrangement and suggestive of the uneasy relations between the conserved and custodian, artifact and everyday object, revealing the unintended violence of display.

At Yaletown-Roundhouse Station, Farooq and Linschooten re-purpose found language from a local souvenir shop highlighting the active commodification of culture. During their time in Vancouver, the artists discovered Hudson House Trading Company, a typical tourist store in Gastown selling a plethora of Canadian 'knick-knacks' that capitalize on perceptions of Vancouver's identity via a collection of cultural reproductions for sale. Through the simple act of reproducing the language of the store's inventory list and applying the names of a selection of items, directly onto the station windows, the Canada Line facade operates like an advert exaggerating the wholesale co-opting of culture as currency.

The re-appropriation of found images, objects and language developed into public installations both exasperate and subvert the ethnographic strategies of representation and implicate such practices into a larger system of commodification utilized to propagate cultural hierarchy, difference and discrimination.

Projects are generally supported by the BC Arts Council Innovations Program, the Montleau Fund and the Harwood Foundation. Farooq and Linschooten's collaboration with the Native Youth Program is developed in collaboration with the Museum of Anthropology. The project at Yaletown-Roundhouse Station is presented in partnership with the Canada Line Public Art Program - IntransitBC.

The interdisciplinary practice of Sameer Farooq (Canada) and Mirjam Linschooten (Netherlands) can be situated as an expanded documentary practice, preserving counter archives, new additions to museum collections or making buried histories visible. Their work has been exhibited in various countries, including Belgium, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Hong Kong, Morocco, Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland and Turkey. Recent projects include The Figure in the Carpet, Blackwood Gallery, Toronto (2015), Fata, Gable, Trieste, Morocco (2014), The Museum of Found Objects, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2011), The Museum of Found Objects, Sami Linna, Istanbul (2010) and Something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue, Anteflex, Cairo (2014).

Downloads

Exhibitions Bulletin

Categories

EXHIBITIONS FIELD HOUSE STUDIO OFFSITE PROJECTS
WINDOW SPACES YALETOWN-ROUNDHOUSE STATION

Details

ARTISTS/PARTICIPANTS:
Mirjam Linschooten
Sameer Farooq

Exhibition Archive

2000-2017



Get Involved

Become a Member
Become a Volunteer
Become a Sponsor
Become a Sponsor
Make a Donation

Mailing List

Name: _____
e-mail: _____

Connect with CAG

Like 9.9K
 Follow 1,024 followers

Past Exhibitions



Exhibitions Events Learning Shop About CAG Get Involved Contact

Exhibitions

Current

Past

BY DATE:

- 2008
- 2007
- 2006
- 2005
- 2004
- 2003
- 2002
- 2001
- 2000
- 1999
- ALL

BY ARTIST ↓

Dropdown Menu

Upcoming



01 Dec. 2006 to 14 Jan. 2007
Euan Macdonald – You Are My Nebula



01 Dec. 2006 to 14 Jan. 2007
Euan Macdonald – You Are My Nebula



01 Dec. 2006 to 14 Jan. 2007
Euan Macdonald – You Are My Nebula



01 Dec. 2006 to 14 Jan. 2007
Euan Macdonald – You Are My Nebula



01 Dec. 2006 to 14 Jan. 2007
Euan Macdonald – You Are My Nebula



'08 Sep. 2006 to 05 Nov. 2006
Concrete Language



01 Dec. 2006 to 14 Jan. 2007
Euan Macdonald – You Are My Nebula



'01 Dec. 2006 to 14 Jan. 2007
Rhonda Weppler & Trevor Mahovsky



01 Dec. 2006 to 14 Jan. 2007
Euan Macdonald – You Are My Nebula



01 Dec. 2006 to 14 Jan. 2007
Euan Macdonald – You Are My Nebula

Exhibition Archive
2000-2017



Get Involved
Become a Member
Become a Volunteer
Become a Supporter
Become a Sponsor
Make a Donation

Mailing List
Name: _____
e-mail: _____

Connect with CAG

3.3 Sitemap

