

Question: w2

This week, please reflect on how the information needs of art information users, such as artists, designers, and art historians (whether students or practitioners), may differ from information needs in other disciplines or professions. Please cite and synthesize at least three specific examples from your Week 1 and 2 readings in this post, and feel to incorporate in your own experiences and questions.

Response

Understanding the information needs of art information users: artists, designers, & art historians

Understanding artists & designers information behaviors is vital if visual reference professionals & arts librarians want to provide useful collections & services to this demographic of user. Until recently these users haven't been fully considered, instead visual reference services have focused on art historians needs. This focus is shifting as more research is produced to understand creative users as a demographic.

A key consideration in this endeavor is the profound diversity of needs for these users. When looking through the competencies created to support creative studies students put out by ARLIS/NA one can start to comprehend just how many sub-fields are contained within this user group (2018; 2019). In addition, from one subject to the next, each user group has their own varying needs that will allow them to expand their mastery of visual literacy within their specific domains.

Gendron describes artists & designers information behaviors as "highly individualized & multidisciplinary," comparing their interactions with information to Dervin's sense-making theory (2009). This comparison leans into the diversity of materials & techniques used by artists & designers in their processes. Sense-making also acknowledges the use of both external & internal knowledge, including feelings & emotions during knowledge creation (Dervin, 1998). While this may not be typical for other academic library users, it emphasizes how within artistic practice information isn't just sought but made (and sometimes maybe "un-made"). This eclectic use of information is reaffirmed by Mason & Robinson who were given nearly 300 sources of inspiration from their survey of emerging artist & designers (2010). While many of these sources are could be seen as traditional fair for libraries, such as books, films, magazines, music & art, others are much more expansive, including objects, people, & social movements. They observe that these types of sources are maybe more likely to be "encountered" and thus fall in line with Erdelez theory of information encountering (2010).

Grimm & Meeks see the scope of influence as going far beyond the individual, connected to larger social, political, & power structures (2017). Thus, artistic creation is affected not only through a contextual lens of the creators' individual questions, emotions or encounters, but must ultimately be understood within the larger cultural picture in which they are situated. Visual literacy is innately connected to information literacy, for Grimm & Meeks, and it is vital that students in the arts field are able to fully reflect on how, why & by whom images they interact with are created (2017).

While there are unique points to each of these researchers view of artists & designers information behaviors, they speak to similar ideas of multiplicity within the individual as well as the community at large. At the same time they build on some traditional models of information behavior within the LIS literature.

This week's readings reminded me of a video of Cai Guo-Qiangs work I once saw. He's famous for his gunpowder paintings, that hold significance to the locations where they are created (Guo-Qiang, n.d.). I think the connection I felt was with how others are involved in the creation, which could be a type of information encounter for those people. An example of this can be seen in these photos of his process from 1040M Underground at Izolyatsiz, Donestsk.

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Hi Kameron,

I too felt very engaged with this weeks reading by Grimm and Meeks. With everything going on in our society, this type of work is beyond important. I imagine that if I was asked to guide students through fully contextualizing the images they encounter without this type of example, I'd feel very overwhelmed. One thing that really caught my eye within the reading was how the tempo of research and study today's leaves little time for reflection. I would argue that this increased tempo is similarly seen within the professional industries many of these students maybe headed into, which makes honing those skills even more important.

Question: w3

This week, please reflect on how academic libraries and fine arts (or other branch) libraries on college and university campuses support the need of art information users in those settings. What does this work look like? What are the challenges in this setting? What interested or surprised you? Please give three specific examples of resources, services, or practices discussed from what you read, watched, and reviewed this week (and cite them)--and feel to incorporate in your own experiences and questions as well as cite readings/videos/slides from previous weeks as well.

Response

Supporting Art Information Users Needs in Academic & Fine Art Libraries

From this weeks' readings it seems that academic & fine arts libraries struggle to address the expansive needs of art information users.

Kays explains how arts librarians' duties are expanding past traditional roles of collection development & reference to now emphasis engagement & outreach with particular focus on the use of digital tools. (2017) Crookendale furthers explores these roles by directly surveying arts students at VCU; findings suggest that students use many resources but don't seem to engage their specific liaison librarian (2020). This supports the idea that outreach maybe needed to make those connections occur. Furthermore, while library resources are being used, access is not necessarily smoothly achieved.

The liaison librarian model was also discussed in the ARLIS/NA State of the Academic Art Libraries report, where it was found that 79% of survey respondents indicated that their job included liaison activities. The report furth found that this role increasingly is being asked to take on more engagement activities as well as taking on new areas including "scholarship, scholarly communication, curricular development and instructional design." (2019)

Taking into consideration all of the new directions that are being included into these librarians' jobs it's no wonder that some are finding it difficult to navigate their responsibilities. I wonder if this is just a current state of transition that will eventually calm down or if this is just the "new normal" considering how unstable the current technology climate is. These documents and readings aren't even discussing the newest tech we're facing: AI, VR, and increased interactive software environments.

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Question: w4

This week, I would like you to reflect more closely on the **teaching work** of art librarians in studio art and design contexts, whether as part of **academic art libraries** or art and design school libraries. What kinds of skills, abilities, practices, and critical thinking dispositions are considered or emphasized in library instruction for studio art/design courses? What are the major opportunities and challenges for working with art and design students, and how might they differ from library instruction for art history courses, or in disciplines outside of the visual arts entirely? Which guidance documents or professional frameworks do art librarians consult or interpret to develop their lesson plans and assessments for instruction in studio art/design courses? What kinds of course assignments, teaching activities, or library materials might come

into play? Please include at least three specific examples that help you answer some of the above questions from your readings or recordings so far, at least two of which should come from your Week 4 assigned or recommended readings or recordings.

Response

Teaching Practices & Critical Thinking Emphasizes in Art & Design Librarianship

As previously discussed, art & design students have diverse information needs and can present a significant challenge for librarians. When it comes to library instruction, art & design students continue to show differences from other disciplines.

Appleton argues that metaliteracy is key when creating information instruction for this population (2017). This ability to think about & reflect on ones' own literacy engagement centers art & design students experiential learning tendencies while taking into account that these students will be engaging with subject matter in multiliterate contexts. Archives & special collections can support some of these unique information literacy needs through object-based learning, subject specific knowledge, and can even provide practiced-based research (Crilly, Montero & Mahurter, 2017).

Critical visual literacy, as outlined by Grimm & Meeks, speaks to a similar emphasis on critical thinking skills that Appleton talked about with metaliteracy (2017). Here though, students need to reflect not only on their own basis but on the larger contexts those basis's come from. The activities outlined in the character development workshop are also a type of reflective process.

These reflective practices seem to be a pattern within this weeks readings, as critiques were recommended as another learning activity that could be done in the library by Garic & Peterson (2017). This process is often useful from both sides, in being critiqued & giving critique. It's interesting how these practices are so reminiscent of the iterative process often experienced in studio work. I don't think I've ever experienced "getting it right" the first time in any of my artistic endeavors. I suppose that's the point, in order to learn the students must be able to critically engage over and over again, to evaluate both their work & others.

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