THE DISSENSUS OF THE MEDIATED EXHIBITION:

Approaching Audiences in Post-Technological Times

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Abstract

Topic:

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Approaching Audiences in Post-Technological Times

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Content:
The usage of various forms of media has altered the way we communicate and interact with our surroundings and with other people. That computing has become ubiquitous is affecting everyday life in more ways than we might be aware of. This essay looks at how mediation has affected the relationship between the museum and its audiences. I hypothesize that mediation of the personal lives of visitors as well as the museum exhibition have helped to make art more approachable to new audiences and that it has helped in lowering the thresholds to the art world. By using the combined theories of Jacques Rancière and Howard Becker I define what I perceive as the art world and how it is being held together by shared conventions. These conventions potentially could be challenged by new conventions from other areas. Looking at the audiences I also identify identity as a factor in whether or not one feels represented in the museum context and I look at how that identity can be expressed and altered with the use of social media. I also look at the development of the museum form, both conceptual and from a practical standpoint and identify the concepts and needs that have come from the use of various media in the museum. I apply the theories on three case studies and interpret using Rancières theories to find what the state of the art world is today and how the relationship between audeinces and museums have been altered.

Keywords: Exhibition, post-media, post-digital, mediation, museum, interpretation, audience, art world, identity, social media

Supervisor: Associate Professor Morten Søndergaard

Declaration of Authorship

I, Madeleine Hammar
born the 27th of March 1988, in Stockholm, Sweden hereby declare,

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Stockholm, November 5th, 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Who art is for and how audiences should be addressed is a recurring question institutions ask themselves, and various trends in art and curating have made efforts trying to solve the problem of attracting both the layman and the art connoisseur. With the increased use of technology in many people's daily life, communication between various groups of people as well as between institutions and visitors have gone through a shift. New media art also introduced the museum to new forms of media and interactive possibilities that have led to the concept of the digital world being applied to otherwise analog spaces, such as exhibitions. The emergence of ubiquitous computing has created a cultural and social shift where there is almost no separation of the real world and the world seen through media. People's use of various web services and social platforms have also created a new way to engage with information, images, and other people. This must also affect their relations to, and expectations of, museum and art exhibitions.

On an individual level, people have more access to museum content through websites and youtube accounts hosted by the museums. Communication over social media is fast and accessible, and everyone carries a camera to take photos and selfies of or with the art. On an institutional level, museums have taken advantage of new technological possibilities, as well as adapted to the increased demand for interaction, taken on ideas and concepts from the computer world, and integrated them into the work process and ways to exhibit to audiences.

Definition of the problem

My ambition and aim with this study is to investigate if mediation is affecting the relationship between the audience and the museum exhibition. And if I find that it does, in what concrete ways. New media can bring both very concrete aids in the form of tools, digital access points, and means of communication, as well as having contributed with new philosophical ideas coming from the field of media technology. I hypothesize that the use of media technology in the museum, but also in the everyday life of the visitor, has

lowered the threshold for new audiences to the museum. Whether or not this is the case is the focus of my essay.

To do this I first enter into a discussion on the idea of the art world to understand what historically has been described as a social segregation between knowledgeable and unknowledgeable crowds. I look at the role of the audience member as well as the museum exhibition and investigate how to perceive their respective mediations. Lastly, I look at three different case studies to identify their differences in regard to mediation.

Background

The main reason for doing this study comes primarily from personal experiences interacting with museums and seeing non-academic family members being very uncomfortable in these environments. The interest of how to include non-knowledgeable audiences in a non-threatening way has therefore for a long time been something I have been curious about. Seeing a shift in contemporary art where objects with very little or no connection to a more classic art history is being exhibited made me question whether the idea I had about the need for prior knowledge really was necessary, or if that could be acquired differently. Looking at mediated and often technologically complex artworks, as well as new biological mediums or other art closer to various scientific fields also made me realise that others with very different backgrounds than mine could understand the artwork much better. The way I had to educate myself was by reading online and engaging hands-on when the opportunity was given.

When the corona pandemic hit and all art institutions closed, I like many others went online to look at art instead. With the increased volume of material being made available from the museums on websites, social media accounts and on various streaming platforms to attract audiences, there was also a new world opening up in the form of access to a faraway institution and their programs. I doubt that most of the museums that adapted to a digital audience will go back to the way they were before without keeping some or all the features created during the pandemic. I rather believe that this is a development that will continue to expand, hence I find this study relevant to make. If

institutions are interested in attracting diverse audiences and are interested in meeting people through or with mediation, considering the possible outcomes of that should be relevant.

Theory and methodology

The way I approach this topic is by a hermeneutic method where I try to define the current museum and the audience relationships and how they have changed in regard to technology. I see that both the audience member and the museum have gone through a process of mediation and I compare their relationship before and after this mediation happened. Due to the width of the topic, I use several theories of several disciplines that combined can set a frame for the scope I am looking at. To define the frame and foundation of my analysis I use the theories of Howard Becker for a definition of the *art world* and combine this with the theories of Jacques Rancière. Rancières theories on *police*, *politics* and *dissensus* are also central in interpreting the general state I am trying to define as both the old relationship between audiences and the museum as well as for the mediated audience and museum relationship. Using Becker and Rancière adds a culture-sociologist interpretation.

In looking at what I define as the mediation of the visitor and the exhibition, I use and combine the theories of the *new media*, *post-media*, and *post-digital museum*. There are many versions and takes on these theories, something I also account for in the text and I use them collectively. However, Lev Manovich mainly represents the perspective of post-media, Christiane Paul the perspective of new media, and Ross Parry the perspective of post-digital.

Previous research

I have not been able to find any prior research focusing specifically on the effects of mediation on the relationship between audiences and museums. In the area of museum studies however, there are people who have focused more on technological aspects of museum exhibiting and digitalisation. Ross Parry that I have used in my study has made more extensive research than I have been able to account for in this essay, such as

Museums in a Digital Age (2010) and *Recoding the Museum: Digital Heritage and the Technologies of Change* (2007), both of which touches upon the same topics as I do but are focusing more on the museum's use and adaptation of technology than on the visitors. Loïc Tallon's & Kevin Walker's *Digital Technologies and the Museum Experience: Handheld Guides and Other Media* (2008) explore the digital possibilities of technology but mainly on the perspective of information gathering and educative possibilities for the audience. Nina Simone's *The Participatory Museum* (2010) instead holds some shared point in looking at the audiences and how they can be made to participate and contribute to the museum but has less focus on the technological aspects. The same goes for Eilean Hooper-Greenhill's *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture* (2000) that have a focus on the educative aspects of active visitors but not primarily through technology. One problem that occurred to me in trying to find relevant prior research is that the area of social media is moving at such a fast pace that studies conducted only a few years ago appear already too outdated to be useful. This makes the field particularly difficult to research and I realise that this essay might as well soon be outdated. However, I do believe that this essay could work as a foundation to further research on the topic.

Disposition and literary review

The first two chapters are theoretical chapters, defining the concepts and positions I use in looking at museum exhibitions, audiences and their relationship. Chapter three consists of three case studies, thereafter follows an analysis on the whole of the essay. In chapter one I account for the theories of Jacques Rancière, primarily from *Dissensus - On Politics and Aesthetics* (2010). I describe how I perceive his concepts of *police, politics, dissensus* and *politics of aesthetics*. Dissensus as a form of disorder in a structure is what I later apply to the art world. For understanding the concept of the art world, I use the theories of Howard Becker from *Art Worlds* (2008). Combining the theories of Rancière and Becker, I assign the role of the art world a more direct political role. Further, I explain what I see as the perspective of museum visitors and why inclusion and understanding are important. I use John. H. Falk's investigations from *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience* (2009), Falk is one of very few that have made numerous deep interviews over the years with museum audiences in trying to understand their needs and wants with

the experience. I also describe and use Christopher Whitehead's ideas on interpretation from *Interpreting Art in Museums and Galleries* (2012), why interpretation is a political act and how his criticism of the museums are connected to the relationship with the audience. The last part of chapter one enters the field of technology and how audiences use it to build identity and interact in museum environments.

In chapter two I write about the changes in the form of exhibition. First I give an overview on changes not connected to technology, for that I use James Putnam's *Art and Artifact: The Museum as Medium* (2001). Claiming that changes in exhibition form is solely due to technological changes is simply not true and can give an incorrect impression. Looking at what happened conceptually before the introduction of technology hence felt relevant. I also bring up some criticism these changes have faced from Claire Bishop's *Radical Museology: Or What's Contemporary in Museums of Contemporary Art?* (2014) and James Voorhies *Beyond Objecthood: The Exhibition as Critical Form Since 1968* (2017). After this, I enter a discussion on the concept of post-media, combining the perspectives proposed by Andreas Broekmann in *Postmedia Discourses: A Working Paper* from 2013, as well as the definition by Lev Manovich in *Post-Media Aesthetics* (2001). Lastly, I look at the ideas concerning new media artworks and the possibilities they can bring to exhibiting. I use the theories of Christiane Paul in *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond: Curatorial Models for Digital Art* (2008*).* I combine them with the concept of post-media as proposed by Ross Parry in a lecture at Bard Graduate Center in 2015 and let them together represent the concrete way media is affecting the museum exhibition and its audiences, as opposed to the post-media's more philosophical and conceptual form.

Chapter three consists of three case studies. The first one is of the solo exhibition *Behaviour* by Carsten Höller at Kunsten in Aalborg in 2019-2020, the second one of the solo exhibition Verklighetsmaskiner/Reality Machines by Olafur Eliasson at Moderna Museet in Stockholm 2015-2016 and the last one looks at two artworks of Hito Steyerl in the exhibition Hello world! at Kaisma in Helsinki that was part of their ARS-program. All three case studies take on a slightly different approach to technology and the visitors,

both from the artist and from the museum. Combined, they give a comprehensive image of the state of mediated relationships in museum exhibitions.

For the analysis I combine the perspectives I present throughout the essay and add the case studies, I interpret this through the perspective of Rancière. I identify what I perceive as the dissensus in the state of the exhibition and assign the associated roles according to Rancières theories. This, in an attempt to try to understand the state of the art world in today's context and whether or not mediation has contributed to more openness and access to new audiences.

CHAPTER 1. POLITICS AND IDENTITY OF THE ART WORLD

The first section of this chapter accounts for the theories of Jacques Ranciére that are the very foundation for my analysis. I explain his major concepts and combine them with the writings of Howard Becker. Becker's understanding and definition of what the art world is and how it functions is the definition I use throughout the essay. Combining the theories of Becker and Ranicère I give Becker's definition a political perspective, on society at large but more specifically on the access and inclusion of museum audiences. I account for what both Becker and Rancière sees as a conflict between the art world and an "other", something that will reoccur later in the essay.

After using Rancière and Becker to create a theoretical base of the concept of the art world, I try to define the museum audience and their characteristics and needs. This is clearly a hard-defined task, given that the group of potential museum visitors are extremely diverse. Here, I use two perspectives of audience work, Johan H. Falk and Christopher Whitehead. Falk's research looks at the audience experience from the audience's perspectives, Whitehead on the other hand looks at the audience from the point of view of the museum. Combining what I argue is the order of the art world I look at how that manifests itself in the research of Falk and Whitehead respectively, what they criticize and what they suggest that can be done differently.

Lasty, this chapter enters the field of mediation and specifically the mediation of the visitor. It looks at how mediation can be a tool in information gathering as well as identity creation and how this can help a person to approach the museum and the art world in new ways.

1.1 Rancière and the Order of the Art World

Jacques Rancière's maybe most known concept is "partage du sensible", often translated as "distribution of the sensible". Although this translation is correct, it does not fully retain the subtext of the original, making the concept harder to grasp. "Partage" is to be understood as to split and share something, but also as to split up, divide, and separate (Ranciere, 2010, p. 36). The "sensible" here can also lead to some confusion. It should not be read as "reasonable" or "of sense" although Rancière sometimes mentions "common sense" in the same contexts. "The sensible" here are the things that can be sensed through vision and representation and are something that shapes a view and order of the world (Ranciere, 2010, p. 36).

Another concept closely connected to the "distribution of the sensible" is "dissensus". Dissensus is according to Rancière what occurs when an ideology is being challenged. The ideology, the social body that holds and controls the rules and tools of a certain order and who distributes the roles within this order, is what is creating this "distribution of the sensible". The dissensus is when that order is being challenged or shaken up. Dissensus is when classifications of space, time, and status no longer align in ways that fit the usual perception, but where you can perceive something as normal but still not fully grasp it (Ranciere, 2010, p. 38).

One example of this is when there was a shift in traditional oil painting, where working-class people started being depicted in their profession. This combination or meeting of two worlds was something that had not been experienced before (Toni Ross, 2010, p. 157). Another example is from protests in the United States '60s where black people went to sit in lunch restaurants for white people, making the staff uncertain how to react (Todd May, 2008, p. 52-53). What the sensibles are and what creates dissensus is hence depending on the context and on the ideology present in that context. I use Rancière's way of thinking on what I define as the established art world.

Another of Ranicère's concepts closely connected to ideology and dissensus are those of "police" and "politics". What Rancière means when using the concept of the police is

the ruling part of social order. Not in a concrete, practical way as an actual police force or similar organization but those who set the social rules and norms to decide what would be a police matter or just inappropriate to begin with, as well as benefiting from this order (Ranciére, 2010, p. 37). Ranciere (1999) uses the example of where a strike breaks out at a factory and police get called. In Rancière's use of the police, it is not the law enforcement officers that actively removes the strikers from rioting that is referred to, but the whole social order that prevents the strikers from having the legitimacy to be listened to in the first place. When the police order gets disturbed by something, where dissensus occurs, Rancière uses the terminology that the police process gets disturbed by the equality process. Where the order gets disturbed, the distribution of identities also gets disturbed. When the police order gets questioned or appears as artificial and without any true substance, politics appear. According to Rancière, politics is the arrival of a new group in the police order, and the essence of politics is this dissensus that needs to occur (Ranciére, 1999, p. 51-53). Yet, dissensus should not be seen as a general state of conflict, but the specific conflict between two types of sense. One in the meaning of sensory information, what the senses tell you about your surroundings, how your senses are distributed. Also, how you make sense of that information (Rancière, 2010, p.139). Important to point out is also that in the police order, there is no room for void. All functions, bodies, places, and ways of existing have their set places when dissensus is not happening (Rancière, 2010, p. 36).

Narrowing the world of Rancère to an art world level, Howard Becker (2008) has written extensively about his sociological view in which the art world creates and maintains itself within a certain order. Becker does not want to separate the art world from the outer world but for the sake of seeing it as one, he argues that it is built on shared conventions that simplify the creation of art (Becker, 2008, p. 29-30). To this view, Becker considers the art world to consist of all the personnel connected to producing art. While the artist has an elevated position, stemming from the old romantic idea of geniality or extraordinary skill, Becker argues that to produce an artwork there is an involvement of a lot of people. He takes the parable of a Hollywood movie, meaning that the credit list of artwork should look something similar to the long list at a movie's end minutes (Becker, 2008, p. 7).

Becker argues that apart from the artist, the people in the material production of an artwork, all types of support personnel, the people creating the attraction of the artwork as well as the people who see it and react to it are all part of the creation of an artwork (Becker, 2008, p. 2-4). What ties all these people together and simplifies their work are the conventions they follow. These are changeable over time and exist in various forms depending on art form, place, etc., hence Becker does not commit to talking about an art world as a singular. Still, the idea of these shared conventions is what forms a foundation for an art world (Becker, 2008, p. 34). Further, Becker also claims that these shared conventions come from a shared prior knowledge, and distribution of that knowledge. Knowledge about said conventions, therefore, marks an outer edge of this art world, where someone who possesses it is more likely to feel invited but also to understand what is being shared (Becker, 2008, p. 46).

The way Becker describes the art world follows the tradition of many other theoreticians; Hume's ideas of taste and opinion and that some have better options than others or Bourdieu's ideas of cultural capital. Often, contemporary statistics confirm that that same vision of a separation between the art world and the "other" still holds true. Every year the statistics from various museums show the same results, the people who visit art exhibitions and all sorts of museums are to the greatest extent people with high education (European Group on Museum Studies [EGMUS], 2007). Other studies, focusing more on the personal experience of *why* people go to museums and what they get out of it, have shown that it most often comes down to the question of identification and self-image (Falk, 2009, p. 72), something that will be explored in the following chapter.

What Becker also points out is that the conventions of the art world do not start anew very often, but that they rely on what is already customary and what are conventional methods (Becker, 2008, p. 29). Rancières calls this framing of conventions as being a part of the *politics of art*, or the *politics of aesthetics* where a specific distribution of space and time creates certain types of sense among things that in themselves are aesthetics, such as theater or art. This is done in both visible and invisible ways with the intention of creating a *we*, a shared subject (Rancière, 2010, p. 141-142). Still, Rancière in the same way as

Becker does not want to separate an art world from the world "outside". Instead, he sees it as folds of the space, where inside and outside take shifting forms and are crisscrossed. That the real world is a matter of construction, as much as the art world is (Rancière, 2010, p. 148). With this comes a strange duality in the separation of the two.

Rancière mentions the idea that art needs to leave the art world to have an effect on the real world, something that in itself becomes contradictory (Rancière, 2010, p. 137). Rancière sees this as something being connected to old avant-garde movements where there was a will to create a new world where art would no longer exist separated from reality, but at the same time it was important to fight for arts autonomy and to keep it away from external pressure of power or commodification (Rancière, 2010, p. 198-199). This, according to Rancière, has led to that art, and especially the politics of aesthetics, have become schizophrenic (Rancière, 2010, p. 135). The duality of the avant-garde that at the same time wants to open art up to people as well as it wants to keep it safe and hidden is ongoing still today, something that becomes apparent throughout this essay. For Becker, this seems to come down to a very foundational definition of art. To be able to see what art is, one also needs to be able to distinguish what art is not. This according to Becker is also why writers on aesthetics often strike a moralistic tone. They are not interested in inclusion but to sort things out, he argues (Becker, 2008, pp. 136-137). This goes back to a state of consensus in aesthetic value, a consensus by the people in the art world creates a higher aesthetic value, the way Becker sees it (Becker, 2008, p.134). An undisturbed distribution of the sensibles, a state of consensus, is when what is considered good art becomes the most valuable.

Comparing or combining Becker and Rancière like this, they share the same standpoint of the art world being foundationally open but being ruled by certain structures. Where Rancière has a heavier focus on power relations and structures of order, Becker focuses on habit and conventions. That the people who routinely participate in the art are keeping the art world existing just by doing that (Becker, 2008, p. 161-162). Further, he claims that the people that more often are exposed to art will get more out of the experience and, over time, create a more steady base for the experience (Becker, 2008, p.48). This

becomes a loop that keeps itself going and the structure of the art world remains.

These conventions, however, that according to Becker are a foundation for the art world are being questioned occasionally. Often concerning the question of who art is for. Conventions concerning a specific art form most often stretches out to include neighbouring conventions. He takes the example of wanting to hire a dancer to do something unconventional and very far from ballet, but it is very likely that the person to be hired will know some ballet anyway, because at the same time as one steps away from the convention, the same language of the conventions is still in use to guarantee that at least a minimum of basic knowledge is shared. Equipment is another of Becker's examples of this, how someone who knows the fundamentals of using a camera can use that knowledge to understand a large variety of other cameras and similar processes (Becker, 2008, p. 57). This notion of equipment as a form of universal knowledge of shared conventions becomes interesting when entering the field of media art and mediated museum experiences.

The way I use Rancière is by claiming that the established art world acts as the police in their separate field, and the changes that arrive when a group tries to impose something new upon the art world creates a certain dissensus. This dissensus is what we are seeing today in a lot of arese of the art world and it is an approach of an equality process. When someone redistributes the sensibles, making changes in the art world for equality reasons, politics occur. I want to clarify that this is not about political art, but about processes of change that seen through the lens of Rancière have a political purpose and effect. Creating dissensus is then maybe the first step in trying to change something inside the art world. But to understand how this works, it is necessary to look at who and how people look at art, or why they do not.

1.2 Visitor Identities and Interpretation

Leaving the theoretical bigger picture, this subchapter focuses on the audience identities and why they are important in the context. Working from a standpoint similar to Ranciére and Becker but with a focus that is closer to audience experiences are Christopher

Whitehead's (2012) studies of art interpretation as well as the research of Johan H. Falk (2009) on visitor identities and experiences. Falk's research has in a concrete and practical way identified visitors in the museum space and their primary wants and needs from the museum experience. He has a perspective that, according to himself, is not interested in neither the audience nor the exhibition but in the relationship between (Falk, 2009, p.35). This relationship or border between the audience member and the museum is the one I examine. Whitehead, on the other hand, has the perspective of the curator, and where Falk looks at the museum from an outside perspective, Whitehead looks from within the museum towards the audience.

Whitehead, coming from the area of curating, is outspokenly critical to whether or not museums show art to audiences in a way that is understandable to them. He argues that the whole definition of art and especially the interpretation of art is a highly political question. Whitehead's view is that the museum is responsible for a social construction of not only the value of art but also the definition of the concept of art. In doing this Whitehead sees a responsibility for everyone to be able to understand it (Whitehead, 2012, p. 11-12). This understanding comes, according to Whitehead, down to the question of interpretation, and about how aesthetics, experience, and fruition shapes the production of interpretation in the art museum. Whitehead argues that the core of an aesthetic experience is to partake in the discourse around taste, for an audience to be able to express identity or learned behaviors, and to participate in group or ritual (Whitehead 2012, p.16). From a Rancièran perspective, this group or ritual is the same convention that Becker sees as the joining forces in the art world and the ones that need to be challenged for politics to occur.

Whitehead writes about the exhibition using the metaphor of the exhibition as a map. The visitor either knows how to read the map or he/she does not. Whitehead's claim is that the tools the visitors are given to read this map within the museum are the wrong ones. This is not a conscious decision according to Whitehead, but he claims that the ones making this map have much more prior understanding, a knowledge of these conventions, that are affecting their choices more than they are aware of. What Whitehead argues is

that the ways the art world tries to approach audiences within the exhibition are insufficient for the understanding of the uninitiated visitor. His purpose is to provide means for broader audiences to understand the codes inscribed in the exhibition, or as he calls it, to know how to "read the map" (Whitehead 2012, preface, xviii).

Whitehead's claim is that museums often shy away from their responsibility and their role in creating a form of social politics and that this is something irresponsible. He regards the role of the museum to be to identify and contextualize art in a way that creates understanding and meetings. The museum is thought to be a neutral place for people to meet and to come together but needs to realise, in Whitehead's opinion, that it is not that. It can provide identification, a place in society or history or community but someone has already chosen what view of the world or of history is the correct one. What is art, and what is not, as well as who the intended visitor is and who he/she is not (Whitehead, 2012, p. 12-13). This again comes back to Rancière's distribution of the sensibles, what can or can not be experienced and recognized. When the viewer does not feel recognized or connected to the museum there is an absence of identification and the result is either that the viewer feels incompetent or feels that the art is bad (Whitehead, 2012, p. 21). Either way, one can assume that neither of these feelings will make the viewer come back to the museum very often.

This idea of identification is also very central in the research conducted by Johan. H. Falk (2009) about the reasons people go to the museum. Falk's research focuses more on the "why" people visit a museum than who they are in social demography. Falk identifies five possible reasons out of hundreds of answers; 1) A personal curiosity and need for intellectual challenge, 2) an opportunity to have a social experience in an educative environment, 3) a wanting to be exposed to new things of what is considered the best and most culturally relevant for the community, 4) a specific intellectual need for a specific subject matter or 5) a wish to immerse in a spiritually refreshing environment (Falk, 2009, 245). All of these reasons can of course overlap but Falk identifies and formulates five hypothetical visitor types. In all of these five groups, the visitor's prior knowledge,

experience, and interest are the major factors for going to the museum in the first place (Falk, 2009, p.216-217).

Falk's research spans a larger area than just the art museum, also including historical museums, aquariums, and zoos but for visitors of all of them it comes back an expressed identification and a reinforcement of that identification that happens in the visits; "I am an art lover, therefore I go to the art museum" (Falk, 2009, p. 81,86) or "I was taken to the museums a child, therefore I take my child to the museum" (Falk, 2009, p. 51). This very practical research confirms the view of Becker, that this is a group that already shares some common conventions and foundations of identification. It also confirms the ideas of Whitehead, that these are people who most likely already know how to read the map. In doing this, there is a steady distribution of the sensibles, the order that is safely maintained in a Ranciéran sense.

Important to point out is what Falk sees as a difference in what he calls identities with a lowercase "i" or with a capital "I". The capital Identities are the ones that are often referred to in statistics; gender, nationality, ethnicity, and religiously based identities. While the lower case identities are those that respond more directly to the needs and realities of a given situation. The second is more focused on our identity in a group or context and Falk's claim is that these lowercase identities have a larger impact on day-to-day activities and choices people make than the capital ones. Mainly because these identities are situated in our physical and socio-cultural environment (Falk, 2009, p.72-73). Falk also points out that the reason why some people don't go to the museum has less to do with the capital Identities than it has to do with them not perceiving the museum to satisfy their identity-related needs. There is a lack of perceived value. To come to terms with this, Falk argues that the institution needs to change the way they work entirely, not just trying to attract new audiences to the same type of exhibitions. More of the "same old" will not make any difference (Falk, 2009, p. 211-212). The prior knowledge of the visitors is also something that Falk identifies as something highly relevant, and mainly the importance of this prior knowledge comes from the need of feeling competent and good. Self-efficacy is according to Falk that which is mediating between previous experiences and future

decision-making for if the visitor will think it worth engaging in a museum context again (Falk, 2009, p. 215). Making the visitor feel more competent is however something that can be acquired without changing too much of the form of the exhibition.

Further, Falks stipulates in his studies that a museum visit is strongly shaped by the identity of the audience member. The visitor's identity-related needs, the expectations shaped by the identity prior to the visit, and expectations coming from his/her socio-cultural context (Falk, 2009, p. 10). Where Falk focuses on *why* people go to the museum and how to make them go, Whitehead focuses on how visitors are experiencing the visit while they are already there. These two are of course closely connected. Falk's research also shows the primary thing people stated to what would influence them going to the museum - the word of mouth from friends or family. Falk points out that this reasoning becomes circular, that the museum needs to attract people to attract more people. And while this is true, he argues that less money could be spent on marketing and instead be put on making more groups having their identity-related needs met (Falk, 2009, p. 186-188). Falk's statistics show that more than half, 55% of the visitors had clearly identity-related reasons for going to the museum, another 7% had a duo-dominant reason, leaving a total of 62% with a strong identity-related reason for going to the museum (Falk, 2009, p.84). Worth noting is that this is data from 2005, much has happened over the last 15 years to affect this.

Whitehead is on the same track as Falk in claiming that the museum can provide an identification of belonging to a community, but here Whitehead also expresses a critique on what he sees as the main reason for this not happening. Drawing reference to Bourdieu, Whitehead argues that art is a category that is upheld by social distinction. The need of the visitor and the appeal of reinforcing oneself in a shared context is exclusive and needs to be exclusive. It is to include some but not all, and that is the very foundation of the premise (Whitehead, 2009, p. 29). This also aligns with the ideas of both Becker and Ranciere, you're either part of the shared conventions or not, and you have your place in the police order.

Whitehead argues that this social distinction is partly built into the walls. Here, he also expresses a critique of the white cube, as opposed to the older type of a museum. Whitehead questions the function of the white cube type of setting for isolating art from normal life and from any recognizable continuum of time and space. This, according to Whitehead, is a way for a certain prior knowledge to be built into the form of the exhibition space (Whitehead, 2009, p. 29). He claims that art exhibited within the discourse of the white cube is denied to participate in the building of reality that art normally does and continues instead to produce the myth of the high status of art (Whitehead, 2012, p. 33). In the case studies further on, it becomes apparent that the modern type of museum is more of a white cube than the traditional museum, for various reasons.

Whitehead is highly skeptical of the divide between historical and contemporary art and argues that it is a fake division produced by the museum. While he admits that historical art and contemporary art are part of two different discourses, he also points out the fact that "all art was contemporary once" and that as soon as an artwork exists it is, in some way, part of history already (Whitehead, 2012, p. 41-43). This division, according to Whitehead, separates the forms of art in how they are to be discussed. Contemporary art appears removed from the regular time-and-place narrative that locates art in a context. This makes the two types of art hard to compare and makes the concept of contemporary difficult to comprehend. This disconnection of the concept is also something that holds a power factor, in Whitehead's view. The museum understands that historical art needs to come with some information to build an understanding of the time the art was made. In doing this though, they assume that all "contemporary people" have the same experiences to understand contemporary art. All and all, Whitehead argues that contemporary art is "the hardest terrain of the museal map" (Whitehead, 2012, p. 47).

Whitehead's critique and ideas about how to communicate with audiences are mainly directed towards the traditional museum, still, the "cartography of the museum" as he calls it, applies to all types of exhibiting institutions and affects all audiences. Connected to this, Whitehead argues that there is a double form of interpretation happening in the museum. While the visitor is invited to interpret the art, the institution, or art world, has

already made some interpretations on its visitors. Who they are and what their prior knowledge consists of. This unintended interpretation is also what is contributing to museums having an un-intentionally excluding message filtered through their interpretative channels (Whitehead, 2012, p. 47). What Whitehead is criticizing here is in line with Ranciére and Becker. The shared knowledge and conventions are being kept by those who already know them and they are so built into the system that they are hard to find. At the same time, there is a police order keeping the peace, avoiding dissensus, and making sure the sensibles stay distributed in an orderly way.

Returning to the metaphor of the exhibition as a map, that map and the tools to read it is also changing. Whitehead leaves out the technical possibilities that have occurred and that have increasingly taken an important role in how people communicate with and about institutions and also with each other. With the possibilities of digital exhibitions and fast communication between institutions and audiences in social media or other forums, the same time-and-place narrative no longer applies. With this, there is a shift happening in how the relationship between the museum and the audience manifests itself. The museum's role has more and more turned to become in conversation with the audience, rather than one-way communication (Gianni & Bowen, 2019, p.473). This change, however, is not coming out of nowhere, it is also a natural continuation of changes that have occurred in the art world over a long period of time. Conceptual changes, changes in inclusion, and in increased participation of the audience, as well as changes in the role of the artist and institution.

Although the identity of the audience is also central in Falk's research, his approach differs from Whitehead in a few central ways. Where Whitehead is heavily focused on the "hidden" structures that exist in the museums, exhibitions, and among the people in the art world, Falk focuses on the clear rational choices people make. These rational choices act on a quite shallow level where a person either likes to go to an exhibition, or they do not. What connects Whitehead and Falk, however, is that the idea of the "one fits all" type of exhibition space is not optimal for a large group of people. And especially not the specific "one" that is the prevailing form at the moment.

1.3 The Mediated Visitor

Having identified that identity is of importance to the audiences, both as a reason to why someone goes to a museum and what the museum believes the identity of the visitor to be, I now turn to mediation. If it is important to have one's identity-related needs met in relation to the museum, I want to take a look at the possible ways that can be done and how identities can be built in relation to the museum with the help of mediation. If a person's identity can make them be part of, or be excluded from, the art world, can mediation help shape or change that identity in an inclusive way? When talking about the visitor identity here, I mean it in the double sense combining the perspectives of Whitehead and Falk. Identity as both a rational, out-spoken idea someone has about themselves as well as the harder to grasp type identity that is connected to social order and that is imposed on a person from the outside. I argue that the mediation of the visitor can be beneficial to both of these types of identities.

Seeing that a higher frequency of visiting the museum will make the audience members get more out of a visit as described in Becker (2008, p.48) and that getting more out of a visit in a self-confirming way, is a key reason for having someone choose to come back (Falk, 2009,p. 215), ideally having more people see more of the exhibitions would be beneficial for all. Now when museums have become more digitalised, that means that it is not always necessary to actively visit the museum to be able to access their collection or program. Apart from having websites that often are more than just informative, museums also exist on their already established platforms where people come for other reasons. It has become common for museums to have profiles on various social media platforms; Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Flikr, etc. where they distribute pictures and information from and about their collections and activities (Proctor, 2010, p. 35). Here, the museum's presence has become distributed and available to interaction from everywhere, geographically as well as socially. In this distributed form, the museum no longer has full control over who the audience is, nor what types of comments or discussions can emerge (Proctor, 2010, pp. 35-36), this creates a freer environment, relatively liberated from some, but probably not all conventions.

Museum content can also be shared by the viewer on social media. Seeing people taking pictures and selfies in exhibitions is very much standard for any one regularly visiting museum exhibitions. This spread of information, completely out of control from the museum staff, has the ability to travel to groups it would not otherwise reach. Falk's research showing that the opinions of family or friends as one of the primary reasons that would make people go to an exhibition (Falk, 2009, p. 186-188) should be of high interest here.

Sharing pictures where the location is either recognizable, understood via GPS, or tagged in the picture also creates a connection between the audience member and the museum. This link is also being publicly exposed to a wide community (Gündüz, 2017, p. 85). This way a visitor can show a liking of and a partaking of a cultural context and have that exposed directly. Where Becker describes being a part of the art world as knowing the conventions, taking part in events, and even knowing the gossip (Becker, 2008, p. 48), one could argue that social media have simplified all that. That social media has opened maybe not a door but a window in. Social media here, as I see it, works in a two-way type of communication model where information content both going in and coming out can enhance the closeness to the art world, given that that is of interest to the user. The user can both create him or herself as a person participating in activities of the art world, as a performative act to be shown to the outer world. As well as receiving information from the various institutions he/she follows.

The research on social media networking (SNS) sites and their connection to user identity is vast and extensive. Schwartz and Halegoua (2015) summarize a collection of scholars and ideas of performativity and find that users of social media services present curated images of themselves through images, video, visible communication, profiles, and expressed interests. These curated images make them enact an identity and helps to manage impressions of themselves, both individually and for a collective (Schwartz & Halegoua, 2015, p. 1645). Since Schwartz and Halegoua mainly focus on location-based social media, they consider this virtual self as a *spatial self* but they mean that dealing

with this spatial self has become a normal part of daily life for many people. Managing this spatial self has become part of what they regard as a socio-cultural practice of self-presentation. A presentation that is curated and often presents an idealized image and performance of the person behind the presentation (Schwartz and Halegoua, 2015, p.1647).

These acts of socio-cultural practices and of self-presentation are also present in the art world. The way Schwartz and Halegoua argue, users who demonstrate their physical habits by sharing their presence in certain places attach themself to the narrative of that place with its connotations and meanings. They see that this becomes part of one's social identity and hence can help to negotiate one's social situation (Schwartz and Halegoua, 2015, p.1648-1649). Astrid Rasch writes in the NTNU's (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) blog also about social media as a form of creation of an experienced true self;

> "On social media, we express our identities through text, visual material, likes, shares, and links to other sites. We use these platforms to tell small stories of ourselves, sometimes with specific audiences in mind, sometimes without a conscious target. Thus we engage in a process humans have been carrying out for millennia: storytelling. When we tell stories of who we are and how we have become who we are, we situate ourselves in the world. We draw on existing storylines that inform how we may make sense of our own experience, and how we might translate the multiple expressions of daily life into recognizable stories to be shared with our peers." (Astrid Rasch, 2020)

Rasch also mentions the ability to have multiple identities that can complement each other or be contradictory and that we have the ability to draw on these identities depending on the audience and the context we are in. When stories are told in an offline context, they are often imposed upon by shared cultural narratives that the person can either adapt to or distance him/herself from in a digital context, and in that way have more control of their identity, as well as how to communicate it (Rasch, 2020). This created self can have a psychological dimension, a feeling of being connected to a social body and allow actual

socialization between people in a virtual world where one can temporarily let go of the role otherwise assigned to you (Gündüz, 2017, p. 91).

Despite this, social media often has been regarded as something shallow and the phenomenon of taking selfies seems to be especially frowned upon, but not everyone agrees it is all bad (Lewis, 2017, p. 93). Taking selfies has been studied from a post-phenomenological perspective by Richard Slowin Lewis (2017) who also connects digital identity-creation to the research of Falk. Lewis argues that the usage of cell phones in the museum mediates the visitor and his/her experience in a way that on the surface can look shallow but added to a larger narrative, series of pictures of and from that person, this is part of a creation of self where the museum adds value (Lewis, 2017, p. 93), similar to the view of Schwartz and Halegoua (2015) but here specifically in a museum context. Lewis claims that by mediating the visitor and the art in the same way and in the same frame, the selfie can help reduce the distance to the museum object. This creates a new gaze upon the object but also on the objectified visitor from the people seeing the picture shared on social media. This, in Lewis's view, creates different narratives and interpretations that can stand alone from the museum or the curator's intentions (Lewis, 2017, p. 96-97).

The museum selfie, Lewis claims, can be helpful for a visitor's self-construction since it is focusing attention on the relation between the visitor and the museum object. However, this is also taking some attention from the visitor, which otherwise could have been focused directly on the art. This, again, is a recurring critique, but the way Lewis sees it, this does not have to be an either/or situation, it is possible to do both (Lewis, 2017, p. 97). Lewis refrains from seeing selfies as good or bad but means that it breaks the way people traditionally experience the museum and that this probably is what annoys the more experienced museum visitors. Further, Lewis sees the selfie as a tool for visitors to explore the museum, as well as to share it with their network, and that this is something positive both for that network as well as for the museum (Lewis, 2017, p. 98). Critique has though been raised from parts of the artistic environment saying that this phenomenon has led to an increased interest in coming to take pictures but not actually coming to see

the art or a situation where people do not take the time to look at art for more than a few minutes, take a picture and then move on (Reyburn, 2019).

Social media clearly also has its downsides. Apart from the generally known problems of fake news or people creating multiple accounts of fake profiles (Gündüz, 2017, p. 86) it has also become a problem for museums. This lack of control of the museum visitor that occurs when the visitor no longer is confined to the physical space creates a difficult situation for the museum of where the "real world" and the digital experience should meet (Proctor, 2010, p. 36). Questions such as what responsibilities museums have toward visitors that can never attend exhibitions physically, or how they handle the fact that the majority of the published digital material is material they themselves do not have control over (Proctor, 2010, p. 36). Nancy Proctor (2010) sees this audience interacting and producing of material as a trend that some museums have engaged in more than others, drawing reference to Tate Britain crowdsourcing photographers on Flikr and The Brooklyn Museum letting audiences rank photos to decide what should be chosen for one of their exhibitions. Proctor is sceptical towards the role of the curator as she describes could become merely the "assembler of many voices" (Proctor, 2010, p.39) which is understandable, but that this is even a discussion says something about the power of the mediated visitor and its influence on the museum.

I will return to the discussion of how the mediation affects the museum more concretely in the following chapter, however, it is also relevant to mention the critique on the idea of social media as being neutral. The same way as Whitehead means social distinction is built into the walls (Whitehead, 2009, p. 29), this can also be transferred into social media. The museum professional today cannot assume that online spaces are by default accessible and democratic. The same selection of what to include or not to include online can possibly create the same problems as in the physical museum. This way, the role of the digital museum practitioner has become much more complex, navigating multiple environments at once with more social, political and technological issues than before. (Andersson & Winesmith, 2020, p. 222).

In this first chapter, I have tried to concretize the art world to build a starting point on which my study stands. I have identified identity as one factor of high importance in the audiences within the art world and pointed to what I perceive as the mediation of the audience. I claim that this mediation can help create and change identities both in the ways of accessing information and of changing a narrative about oneself. This way, mediation helps challenge the hierarchy that comes with the art world connected to the state of identity.

CHAPTER 2. THE POST-TECHNOLOGY EXHIBITION

As chapter one focused on the visitor, chapter two will focus on the museum and enter into the discussion of the technological mediation of the exhibition space. The first part acknowledges a duality of the term of mediation where it can be used as both a form or material - *medium* and as well as a specific type of material - *media*. The focus of the first part is on the exhibition as medium and how this is an idea that started before technology entered the picture.

After that, part two looks at museum as medium from the perspective of technology. I account for and use the concept of post-media and how this conceptual and philosophical idea affects the space of the exhibition and its audiences. Lastly, I look at what has been regarded as the standard form of digitalisation of the museum and its audiences today by turning to the concept of the post-digital.

In this discussion on a new normal of the museum, I also feel it relevant to talk about the inclusion of mediated artworks in the exhibition space. New media art being exhibited in museums have also brought new concepts and needs of the exhibition space that today seem to be fundamental. I argue that the post-digital and post-media go hand in hand in the new forms of exhibitions and that they combined is what is changing the exhibition at its core. This combination of all sorts of mediation that has affected the exhibition space is what I collectively call post-technological.

2.1 The Mediated Museum

While the main focus in this chapter and this essay is on the changes and improvements brought on by technology, I also look at some other changes that have occurred in exhibiting and audience relations before fully entering the technological field. Claiming that the changes brought by technology are something separated from other changes simultaneously happening inside the museum is simply not true, it needs to be seen as a current shift in the line of other trends that are building on top of each other. The technological changes that are affecting the exhibition are many and multifaceted but

things have also happened from within the art world that closely links to these changes. In talking about the museum having become mediated, first I want to look at the art world as separated from technology where the exhibition is the medium although filled with media. After that I enter the forms of mediation brought by technology.

The museum as an institution has over time shifted from a collection-based model to becoming a visitor/community based-model, mainly because of the new demands from the audience and the identity of the audience, claims Gianni & Bowen (2019, p.469) in a text about a need for changes in education for museum professionals. The change of the museum in who and how this happened is a step-by-step movement over many years. James Putnam investigates how the museum form shifted from what he calls an encyclopedic form to what is now the white cube of the modern art museum. Putnam argues that the form of the museum exhibition has become almost like an artwork in itself and one that has another purpose than before. Where the old form had vitrines with artifacts that were not all art but objects being found in the context of the main exhibited item, often the exhibition gave rise to more questions than it gave answers. Just like Whitehead, he identifies the historical way of exhibiting as having a narrative form, in contrast to the contemporary. The modern exhibition is, according to Putnam, a very purist place that is highly self-conscious and fully in line with what he sees as the institutionalization of art (Putnam, 2001, p. 8-9).

As Whitehead, Putnam is also very critical of the idea of neutrality in the space of the white cube but mentions that the growth of museum studies has increased investigations of museums' social and cultural forms. In the '90s, artists started becoming invited to experiment and to stage exhibitions as a way of examining the role of the museum and to be interacting more with the permanent collections. The museums then became forced to review their conventions and methods around how to exhibit objects and interpretations (Putnam, 2001, p. 30-31). This change started attracting new audiences and when the artists and institutions became more interwoven, the structure of the museum was more often questioned and started to loosen up. However, this change was not something that came very smoothly and without conflict (Putnam, 2001, p. 32-33).

The core of Putnam's argument is that the museum exhibition became a new medium. Partly because artists became inspired by collecting and classification systems and mixed media artworks started becoming a trend, but also because of the changed role of the curator and the blending of the roles of curator and artist. The museum as a form was, and is, very sought after by artists since being exhibited in the museum comes with legitimacy. A verification that an object is an artwork and that is worthy to be saved as an object of its time. Placed behind glass, separated from the viewer with a physical but also official distance, the object becomes "museumized" and then holds a certain institutional authority (Putnam, 2001, p. 36, 66). A critique against this museumization arose within the art world where artists started to challenge the form of the museum as well as the educational practices and the role of the audience as passive spectators (Putnam, 2001, p. 93, 98). The picture Putnam paints is an overview of the museum moving from the encyclopedic shape to the white cube and beginning to open up to the audience. This is part of the general post-modern trend that started in the 1960s' and that may have peaked in the 1990s' (Voorhies, 2017, p.4). The museum as a medium, or the exhibition as a form is a phenomenon that has worked itself into the museum in various ways at once and has been given both praise and critique. Through the discussions that became known as "institutional critique", started with Daniel Buren among others (Voorhies, 2017, p. 22), to what became known as "new institutionalism". The Early 1990s' turns in curatorial and institutional reforms had the approach to reshape art, culture, and politics and to expand the exhibition. The new institutionalism was a process very much in line with what Ranciere would have called an equality process, it represented a redefinition of the institution and involved its spectators in the making of the art. The social, economical, and physical structure of the institution was to be shaken up and questioned. However, this was a shift that happened from within the institution and not from the people (Voorhies, 2017, p.72).

As part of this process, there was a will to redefine the institution and reduce the emphasis on objects and how they were presented and to instead increase the engagement of the spectator, the art, and the institution. Many, according to Voorhies, saw that the new

institutionalism would succeed in implementing what the conceptual art had started in the 1960s'. To inhabit the museum with more democratic relationships between actors and audiences, changes the idea of art as a commodity to be bought and sold, as well as creating more types of artistic identities other than the idea of the creative genius (Voorhies, 2017, p.73). What Voorhies is critical about is that he didn't see this happening. Instead, he argues that the curator was now given a more prestigious role as part of being a creative content-producer for the institution, in contrast to being more of a caregiver and organizer of objects in a collection. He argues that this new model has made it hard to distinguish whether the work of art is a product of the institution, curator, or artist, or even what the artwork really is (Voorhies, 2017, p.73-74). Further, Voorhies criticizes a number of artists where he argues that they are "neither object makers nor installation artists. The medium is the exhibition." (Voorhies, 2017, p. 103).

In doing this, Voorhies also gives some critique to what he sees as a misinterpretation or misuse of the concept of relational aesthetics (Voorhies, 2017, p. 100). Relational aesthetics was an idea by Nicolas Bourriaud as a type of art that involved the spectator and challenged the rules of the art institution and what you are allowed to do within the wall of the exhibition space. The purpose of relational art was to challenge the norms and conventions of modernism and favor human relationships. This engagement of the audience led to new ways of thinking about the exhibition as more of an arena of change (Voorhies, 2017, p. 102). What Voorhies is critical about here is, in his words, the way relational aesthetics falls into the category of "social practice" that to him is too inseparable from everyday life and hence, takes away art's potential to change the appearance or perspectives of the audiences (Voorhies, 2017, p. 103). Having new institutionalism as the roof under which Voorhies places relational aesthetics, he expresses what he sees as the fundamental qualities of the new institutionalism as being very similar to what Putnam describes; as a way to combine artistic and curatorial strategies in creating process-based works in which to involve the audience. Further, he claims that this discussion about reforming the inclusion of the audience in a qualitative way was not a debate only held inside the museum, but in the entire network connected to it. For Voorhies, the core of this inclusion of audiences was part of a production of

knowledge of art and this he sees as the new institutionalism's primary traits (Voorhies, 2017, pp. 209-210, 213). Further, Voorhies claims that the new institutionalism might be dead as a term but that it has worked its way into the general practice of the museum (Voorhie, 2017, p. 223), how he argues that that has happened I will return to in the case study on Carsten Höller.

Neither Putnam nor Voorhies gets to the entry of technology in the art field but for the current art world that becomes highly relevant. The challenges that are connected to technology still today started even before what Voorhies exemplifies, just not distributed for general audiences. Here, I am thinking primarily about the repeatedly cited *Les Immatériaux* at Centre Pompidou in 1985, curated by Jean-Francois Lyotard that for many marks the start of contemporary exhibitions including art and technology (Cook, 2008, p. 26).

> New media art currently sits somewhere between its emergence and historicization - a period that has been shrinking. Given the speed of changes in new media art, museums repeatedly encounter practical problems exhibiting that are tied to developments in the field of technology. But /.../ it is not only the challenges of the technological media apparatus itself that makes new media artists shy away from the museum, (and the museum from them); there are also political aspects of networked culture that have sustainably changed the role of the curator. Rather than play the role of the exhibition caretaker, collector and conservator, curators increasingly act as filters and commissioners, seeking out opportunities for meaningful exchange between the artist and the community partners. (Cook, 2018, p. 32)

This quote from Sarah Cook describes well how the changes and challenges she identifies as from within the field of new media art and technology go hand in hand with the change and challenges in the art field at large. Cook also means that these changes in how to look at exhibitions also brought about changes in the presentation of emerging artforms. Having what was considered "alternative media" (here meaning time-based, participatory, interdisciplinary, etc) being shown in "alternative ways" such as at festivals, in science museums or in contexts of video and film (Cook, 2008, p. 29-30). Another reason for this is also, according to Cook, the emergence of the web where artist got into

the habit of a more direct way of working both within their own groups but also towards the audience, hosting their own servers, emailing lists, workshops, all in more of a network structure (Cook, 2008, p. 30). Entering the more technical field of the exhibition means also entering the concept confusion of where medium meets media. Clearing out these concepts is something I go deeper into in the next subchapter but I want to state already that I am talking about the exhibition being a medium in the sense Putnam means. The exhibition as a plastic material that can be shaped the same way an artwork can be shaped. This shape can, and most likely will be affected if it contains media.

The concept and usage of the exhibition as a medium has also raised some critique. Claire Bishop (2013) discusses this new museology around contemporary art and seems to agree with Whitehead about this being a hard subject to even collectively talk about (Bishop, 2013, p. 18). She is hesitantly skeptical of this move from the nineteenth-century model of the museum to what she calls the new contemporary, or from "a patrician institution of elite culture to its current incarnation as a populist temple of leisure and entertainment" to quote her directly (Bishop, 2013, p. 1) for the ways in which this has happened. Bishop argues that museums today have taken a more experimental, less hierarchically structured, and more politically engaged approach than before and she identifies contemporary art as something that has become two-folded with a split meaning. The first definition is the art of today, one that is produced in the current and has an air of the zeitgeist she calls "presentism". The other definition she calls a "dialectical contemporaneity" is where the contemporary is more of a method and a politicized project or an approach to art more than an aesthetic. The consequence of this dialectical contemporaneity is according to Bishop that the form of the museum is reconsidered, as well as the categories of art and the forms of audiences (Bishop, 2013, p. 9).

Here, we see again what Whitehead argues, that treading the contemporary art map is much more difficult than previous periods. These rethinkings of forms of the museums, exhibitions, and audiences are also very much the same as the changes of the museums starting from Putnam and continuing with the changes brought by technology. What

Bishop brings up as the negative aspect of this is that she finds that there has been an increased focus on the house of the museum in which she feels the art is getting more lost (Bishop, 2013, p.11). Further, Bishop goes on to argue that museums with historical collections have become the places to test this new contemporaneity out with the aim of trying to represent a global contemporary, something Bishop deems impossible. What Bishop finds problematic is the lack of historical anchoring, cutting ties both with history as with the future (Bishop, 2013, p. 24). She mentions thematic hangs and asks, If everything can fit in the present, how can we then understand differences in place and period? At the same time, Bishop does not refrain herself from this, on the contrary, but she proposes this as two types of museal value. The museum's importance of keeping a more static role as a place for historical and cultural reflection, as opposed to, in a worst case scenario, what she calls "philanthropic narcissism" (Bishop, 2013, p. 61). But this second type of approach to contemporaneity does not need to get lost in a lack of structure. Bishop gives examples of museums she feels has managed to navigate this new museum contemporaneity but talks about it as something that remains nameless. I think that what Bichip is talking about is the mediated museum.

Again, mediation here needs to be seen from two perspectives. One where the exhibition form is the medium and one where the exhibition is mediated in various ways. This mediation described here is mainly due to conceptual changes in the art world and does not yet enter into the field of technology, in the next chapter, however, that will be explored.

2.2 Post-media
From the mediated museum, I now turn to post-media. The concept of post-media is complex and has been used differently by different theoreticians, sometimes with an overlap of multiple meanings all at once. Andreas Broekmann (2013) has written a paper where he tries to separate the three different meanings of post-media he sees as conflicting; the post-mass media, the post-medium condition, and the digital as post-media. The post-mass media is defined as opposed to mass media where instead smaller distributed networks communicate in multiple channels and with a range of agendas and

ways of expression. These networks are considered very different from the perceived "bad" mass media that push one message to a homogenized audience (Broekmann, 2013, p. 2). One example of post-mass media today, connected to museums and their audiences, is to be found on the web where facebook groups, instagram accounts, web publications and blogs easily and for free can offer reviews, articles or virtual group-meetings offering different perspectives on art and exhibitions than what the main communicated narrative is.

The "post-medium condition" is connected to the "post-mass media" but focuses on the move away from medium specificity. Installation art would be one example of a post-medium art in this sense, where a mix of various media come together to form a new medium. This very much connects to what Putnam describes as an evolution of the museum exhibition. I will be returning to this comparison later in the case study of Carsten Höller where he mixes his own works with artworks from the Kunsten collection.

Further, "the digital as post-media" has led to a new way of looking at all sorts of media. Defining the characteristics of new media made it easier to see the characteristics of old media that before was taken for granted. Seeing all sorts of media in a new light with various technological and social aspects decreased the gap between fine art and other types of mediated objects. By defining new media, we can also define old media as a media with other qualities and by other concepts and since media is affecting everything around us, there can not exist any new art that is not post-media (Broekmann, 2013, p. 6). These different yet similar views on post-media all together create the foundation of what I perceive to be the changes that have reshaped the exhibition.

Lev Manovich's definition of post-media covers most of the three uses of the concept above. He argues in his text *Post-Media Aesthetics* (2001) about the changes in culture that he sees have been brought about by new artistic forms, mediums, and technology. Manovich accounts for, similarly to Putnam, how changes in museums have turned the museum into something other than it used to be. Where there used to be a clear-cut divide of genres like painting, sculpture, photography, etc. that organizing structure no longer

works very well with how art has become to look today. Manovich mentions the differences in the perceived value different art forms used to have, where the mass mediums of video, tv, or digital artworks used to be frowned upon since they could be easily be spread to large audiences, and how the development of these media being accepted in the exhibition have made artwork break the strong link to the museum (Manovich, 2001, p. 4). This is the connection of the "post-mass media" and the "post-medium condition". Although we absolutely are in a post-mass media state, the mediums and media that stem from mass-media no longer hold the same bad connotations in the field of art in the post-medium condition. When Manovich says the link to the museum can be considered broken, he means that art no longer necessarily holds this elevated position that clearly separates the museum object from everything else. Since Manovich wrote this text in 2001, a lot of changes have happened and one could consider the link between object and museum to have shifted even more. Now, the museums and their audiences are creating their photos, videos and channels to push the museum material out of the physical museum room and into an extended, digital space.

Returning to the physical exhibition, I see an overlap in the ideas of Putnam and Manovich. Where Putnam sees the museum as the new medium, Manovich coming from a more technological perspective sees the museum exhibition as software. These views might seem very different but have similar characteristics. Their common ground, as Manovich points out, is to see post-media as an aesthetic with a certain set of principles. This is primarily what Putnam is describing too, just in different words. Something that separates them though, is the involvement of the audience. Where Putnam describes the museum exhibition as a creative process where the role of the artist is getting more and more split between the artist, curator, and institution he never mentions the role of the audience. When Manovich describes the changes in the museum, he describes how technological forms entered the cultural field and suggests we should adopt its concepts to other areas, those concepts being for example database, stream, or interface (Manovich, 2001, p. 6). Seeing the exhibition as an interface is a good way to imagine the involvement of the audience in concrete ways. An interface is meant to be used and understood and comes with a need for interaction built into the very concept. Manovich

claims that in the culture we are often thinking about the author's intention rather than the user, but if we were to think about cultural works as a software we could instead focus on the interactive possibilities that exist (Manovich, 2001, pp. 7-8).

Furter, Manovich argues that the software defines what the "text" is and therefore shapes how the reader thinks of the text. Text in this context would be the information, concept, or message of the artwork or exhibition. Manovich references information theory in his way of looking at culture and culture communication and the fact the software becomes part of the message. This communication model he mentioned has three main components; the sender, the message, and the receiver but looking closer, there are more components than that. Based on the fact that what is sent is not always what is being received. In an art context, that would mean that the message an artist or institution would like to get across might not be what the audience perceives. Instead, Manovich introduces the new model on sender, the sender's code, the message, the receiver, the received code, the channel this is sent through and the noise that can have occurred in sending (Manovich, 2001, p. 11-12). Manovich's point is that in an open interface, there is always room for disturbances or different readings of the software.

I will return to how this, practically, can be seen in new art and exhibiting in the case studies, especially the one on Hito Steyerl but in many ways, these possible disturbances in the message are also part of the foundation of both Whitehead's and Falk's claims. There is a lot affecting the audience that can come from unintended places, from prior understanding or experience, from other audience members, etc. Even if the interaction with the audience only consists of reading labels, that has to be done in a way where the audience is investigated as part of the process (Whitehead, 2012, p. xiii).

The positive effects Manovich claims it can have on culture to look at different information through this lens of the computer world is that the software might become more apparent as part of the message. The author, here artist, curator and museum, need to be aware that the user might use the software incorrectly or in a different way than intended and therefore receive another message than was sent (Manovich, 2001, pp. 10-12). But that

also comes with possibilities, such as the ability to remix the text and to play with the contents, again very much like Putnam explained happened with the artists taking over museums.

The post-medium condition, the exhibition as a medium or a software also holds the complexity of the artworks also being in a state of post-medium, making all sorts of clear cut definitions dissolve. The mediation of the museum, of its artworks as well as its audiences both determine and influence each other in mixing of the media. One single mediation or medium is no longer the dominant one. Peter Weibel described this as a two-step process in the post-media condition that starts with "the equivalence of the media", and then the "the mixing of the media" (Smite & Smits, 2013, p. 149). Weibel wrote:

> This mixing of the media has led to extraordinarily major innovations in each of the media and in art. Hence painting has come to life not by virtue of itself, but through its referencing of other media. Video lives from film, film lives from literature, and sculpture lives from photography and video. They all live from digital, technical innovations. The secret code behind all these forms of art is the binary code of the computer and the secret aesthetics consist of algorithmic rules and programs. (Smite & Smits, 2013, p. 149)

From this, it is easy to get the idea that a post-media aesthetic or state completely lacks structure and organisation, that is not the case. Connected to the post-media aesthetics, Manovich has also written about the very closely related database aesthetics as one form of organisation. Database aesthetics, more than post-media, is describing exactly what Putnam describes happened with the remixing of the museum. The word database aesthetics in itself is pretty self-explanatory, it is the aesthetic of a structured collection of data. There are various ways a database can be structured but in a computerized database, that the viewer can search, view, and navigate freely in the collection is the central purpose. This makes the database aesthetic the opposite of a narrative structure. The area that relies the most on the database structure is the internet. Websites can be found from anywhere and they never have to be completed, something can always be updated, added, or taken out and that is fundamental for the medium. This changeable nature makes it hard to trace changes and this is also contributing to the lack of narrative

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of the web (Manovich, 1999, p. 2). Manovich's text being from late 90s' takes the example of a virtual museum tour on a CD-ROM where the user can browse material based on its own preferences and therefore create his/hers own narrative, separated from the view of the museum (Manovich, 1999, p. 2). Now, several museums instead offer that type of services directly on their website, such as the Kiasma Online Art in the Hito Steyerl case study we will see further on (Kiasma Online Art, 2021).

This post-media and data-base aesthetics clash heavily with the original idea of museology, where narrative and a linear communication from the museum to the viewer were central (Navarrete & Mackenzie Owen, 2016, p. 112). In these types of aesthetics, the museum, whether it is digital or not, absolutely has the function of a medium but made to be shaped by the viewer more than the artist or curator. Navarrete & Mackenzie Owen (2016) writes about the accessibility of museums online and the possibilities and challenges that come from it. They claim that the creation of new digital objects such as digital collections and websites have fundamentally changed the way audiences first come in contact with the museums and their collections (Navarrete & Mackenzie Owen, 2016, p. 117). They talk about the museum as an information space where its audiences now have moved from being inside the space of the museum to being on the outside, assessing the information through the internet (Navarrete & Mackenzie Owen, 2016, p. 111). They mean that one of the challenges with this is giving audiences access also to more metadata, for them to be able to set a context and guide the adicenes more relevant information from a distance. This, according to them, is of crucial importance for the museum to have a chance to provide its users with the information one would expect to get from a museum (Navarrete & Mackenzie Owen, 2016, pp. 120-121).

The post-media condition or aesthetics of art is a multifaceted one, working on both the level of the specific artworks and of museums exhibiting at large. Before going deeper into how the post-media connects to the digital forms of museums, I want to take a look at the concept of post-digital that some claim also is the new normal state of museums (Bard Graduate Center, 2015) .

2.3 Post-Digital & Post-Technological

The idea of the post-digital museum does not need an as detailed explanation as post-media but before going deeper into the conceptual changes on the museum setting at large, something needs to be said about the technological art that has taken place inside the museum and that absolutely has affected the way to see exhibiting at large. New media art would in some aspects fit under the type of umbrella term that post-media is, however, since new media artworks are something concrete as opposed to the more philosophical form I define post-media to be, I propose that it fits better in the post-digital or perhaps a collective term of the post-technological.

Christiane Paul has written extensively about the changes that what most often is known as New media art has brought to the exhibition space and its audiences. Paul means that the category of new media art, here in the meaning of art with a focus or form dependent on technology, has opened doors for new distributions of the exhibition to what she calls a "digital museum", a "museum without walls" or a "ubiquitous museum" (Paul, 2008, p. 53). There are many characteristics of new media art that change the foundational qualities of the exhibition; that the artworks are not necessarily set in time, or space and can have various interactive or participatory possibilities. All of this can change the outcome of the visitor experience, Paul argues (Paul, 2008, p. 54).

A lot of new media art is not, as the logic in post-media theories says, necessarily set to be seen in a linear way but forces the viewer to take action in assembling, navigating, or contributing to the artwork. This need for interaction can also be a challenge to the audience. Firstly, the rule of "do not touch the art" no longer applies, which makes some audiences uncomfortable and insecure. Further, a familiarity with using technology is occasionally needed. Now, most people know how to navigate a computer but with specific artworks, adapted interfaces, navigation patterns and at times new and rare technologies, people with good technological skills can benefit and get a better experience (Paul, 2008, p. 54). This discussion on specific skills connected to the art field is also something Becker mentions as a way to challenge the conventions that, in his view, holds the art world together. By bringing in other areas of expertise, other forms of

shared knowledge, or practices that are closer to everyday life, these conventions could be shaken up. Becker mentions equipment as one example of things that have a standardised way of usage and belong to a more universal knowledge (Becker, 2008, p. 57).

Paul points out that the exhibition of new media art often requires its environment to be adapted to the artwork. Here she feels that neither the white cube environment, nor the black box associated with film and video, is very well adapted to it. This, according to Paul, is partly because of specific technical conditions but also due to the fact that the white cube har the aura of a "sacred space" whereas new media art often has a performative and networked approach that reaches "out" of that space (Paul, 2008, p. 56). Paul also mentions, the same way that Putnam mentioned, the changed role of the curator as having become less of a caretaker of objects and entered more the role of a producer or a mediator. At the same time, she talks about the need for new media art to become integrated into the traditional museum, something she feels has not happened yet (Paul, 2008, p. 65). Her book being written thirteen years ago may in some aspects be considered outdated but the problematic blending of the old type of museum and the need for new technologies in art still persists. The way Pauls talks about it is that new media needs to get "out of the ghetto" and the way to do that is to broaden its audiences. To do that, Pauls feels more help is needed from institutions and curators (Paul, 2008, p. 66).

The artworks as media objects also blend over into the mediation of the exhibition in Paul's view. She feels that it is the role of the curator to be the one creating the mediation between the artist and institution as well as between the artworks and audiences (Paul, 2008, p. 65-66). In doing this, Paul also sees a broadening of how to look at the group of audiences. She wants to step away from the idea of the audiences being seen as one homogenized group of physical visitors and has a more post-media approach to the concept of the audience. She sees that the audiences that are coming from a more mediated, technological context engage more on virtual presence, through internet activities and in networks of self organizing communities (Paul, 2008, p.66). But

audiences engaging digitally has become very normal, as shown in chapter one, and this is also something that has been the focus of Ross Parry in his museological studies.

Parry claims in a lecture from 2015 (Bard Graduate Center, 2015) that he coined the term *post-digital* as a way to catch the spirit of the time in the museum world in one concept. What he meant is that the digital has left the state of being considered new and reached a level of incorporation in the museum where digital aids were considered to be normal and expected by the audiences. He found that the digital had gone from being seen as a separate part, in need of a separate department to become merged within the program and design of the museum. It had become to be looked at as innate as other types of displays, labels, pedestals of other objects that we might use to define the very quintessence of a museum (Bard Graduate Center, 2015). Here, Parry and the post-digital are focused more on the technological tools than on the philosophical framework or agile structure that the post-media perspective represents. It is also worth mentioning that Parry does not talk about new media artworks but all the other technology that exists inside and online for the audience to use and partake in. So when Paul talks about the audiences coming from a more mediated context, that part of the audience in Parrys view is a large part, or perhaps the majority. But Parry also mentions that more than how we, as an audience, look at museums, the digital has also changed how museums look at themselves and how they present themselves. What before was mainly a house with content now is expected to have an online presence and a variety of content available also from a distance. The physical house is only one part of the bigger museum construct (Bard Graduate Center, 2015), or as Paul called it, a museum without walls (Paul, 2008, p. 53).

The changes brought on by the need for an extended museum are partly what is being criticized by those who feel that museums have taken a bad turn. In this I am including the critique raised by Bishop but also the majority of the critique I account for in the case studies. What is very apparent, however, is that whether you are critical or not about new post-digital museology a shift in audience behaviors has happened. A change of attitude, and also a change of expectation like Parry is arguing, stems from this new digital culture

of participation, communication, and communication that is open to anyone from anywhere (Bard Graduate Center, 2015). The audience will share pictures and comment in social media or blogs and others that maybe never have visited the museum in person will see it and respond to it (Giannini & Bowen, 2019, p. 461). Audiences taking a more active stance in engaging with the museum have also created new needs for the museum staff. Content creating for the digital environment that considers access and usage, narrative creation, and more user-centric strategies (Giannini & Bowen, 2019, p. 469).

Where Parry sees the post-digital as the new normal, Suse Anderson talks about it as the post-normal. Anderson writes about the changes in museums and about how the map that mankind made to make sense of the complexity of the world no longer seems legit (Anderson, 2020, p. 11-12). She finds that there is a questioning of this map, one of which the museums are very dependent on. She argues that the museum's whole task is to distill a time, history, or aesthetic and to display it as one coherent picture. Stepping away from this map is according to Anderson to realize a new normal that has become apparent due to the interconnectedness of the present, of network structures and internet communication. All these changes, Anderson claims, have caused existential angst within the museum since they are trying to run a nineteenth-century model in a twenty-first-century world (Anderson, 2020, p. 12).

However, Anderson feels that this is a meaningful crisis. A crisis that comes from a growing awareness of contradictions in history and possibilities of a fast-changing world. At the same time, she is careful in pointing out that although digitalization, online platforms, and diverse tools for content creations do bring more and new participants, there are still some thresholds into the museum. Anderson argues that museums must become more comfortable in taking discussions and create a space where discussions and clashing experiences can occur. Where modern times and technological communication patterns have created new problems, they should also be part of the solution (Anderson, 2020, p. 20).

These new skill sets of museum employees are also discussed by Giannini and Bowen in looking toward the future of museum studies. They claim that what is important is that museum professionals of today learn to think non-linear and multidimensional (Giannini & Bowen, 2019, p. 458). In doing this, they also question what exactly is to be curated today in what they call a digital ecosystem where the role of the curator has been recast and must include the old skills of art history, knowledge on the collection and of curating content as well as having digital skills, communication skills and new ways of narrative and content creation (Giannini & Bowen, 2019, p. 462).

> The primary reason for these dramatic changes in audience behaviors, attitudes and expectations in general stems from audiences entering the museum being immersed in digital life and culture. Connected and communicating, participating and interacting as part of everyday digital life, they are unbounded by geography and diverse cultures. What they see and hear inside the museum is being tweeted, posted on Instagram, emailed, blogged, and messaged as the world watches and reacts. (Giannini & Bowen, 2019, pp. 461-462).

Giannini & Bowen, like many others, see this as a new identity of the museum that is disconnecting itself from the old idea of a museum and entering the digital ecosystem with its benefits of its global culture and sharing of collections and ideas. This, in their view, is also a step away from the elitist culture that is the foundation and the symbol of the art world (Giannini & Bowen, 2019, p. 476) in the sense Becker is using the term. Moving away from traditional collection building, curating and conservation Giannini and Bowen sees that the museum moves away from the social and cultural hierarchies that used to define the museum, and that the museum now instead is entering a state of complexity (Giannini & Bowen, 2019, p. 476).

Understanding the mediation of the museum is a complex story. The combination of media objects and mediated form that is at times indistinguishable from each other, connected to the blending of roles between audiences, artists and museum professionals easily end up in a situation where nothing can be clearly defined. The various concepts of new media, post-media and post-digital that overlap but at the same time have their

own focus also creates an instability of definitions and a confusion, although addressing very similar topics. What combines all these perspectives and their effect on the museum exhibition is the entrance of technology in the sphere of the museum. I say sphere rather than space since the physicality of the museum also comes into question as it has expanded out into the virtual world. This state that now is considered the new normal, like Parry is saying but in my opinion includes more than that and comes down to a question of post-technology in exhibiting.

CHAPTER 3. CASE STUDIES

In this chapter, I give three concrete examples of the practical and philosophical ways in which I argue that technology has affected the exhibition space and its visitors and why I consider these changes to be positive for attracting new audiences. I account for two solo exhibitions as well as two artworks that together were part of a bigger exhibition. I argue that these clearly show the points I want to make regarding the new ways of exhibiting and the positive and for some less positive outcomes that follow this development. All three case studies start with a description of the exhibition space and the information that has been communicated from the institution about the exhibition. I have personally visited all three exhibitions and some descriptions come more from my personal experience than from what is communicated in the written material.

Regarding the audiences, I have no way of knowing who they are, what their reasons for visiting the museum are, or whether or not they feel that their identity-related needs are met in the exhibitions. What I look at instead is the access to information that has been given prior to the visit about the exhibition and how that has been communicated. I have gone through the museum websites as well as their Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube accounts of the time one month before the exhibition until the closing. Since I claim that social media offers a two-way communication with the audience, with information both coming in and going out, I also look at what has been communicated on these same services by the audiences.

What I have been looking for in the social media platforms are the following; posts that have been hashtagged with either the museum, artist, or exhibition name and fit the timespan. Also, posts that have been GPS-tagged in the right location in the right time span. I also have to assume that there is a large part of the audience who went to the exhibition and did not take pictures for social media nor comment anything anywhere, as well as those who took pictures for social media but without tagging anything. Those I am not able to find, so my material cannot give a complete image.

After describing the exhibitions and looking at their communication patterns I compare them to the theories of mediation I have accounted for in chapters one and two to show how I see them as mediated.

For getting the perspective of the art world, other than the hosting institutions, I also look at some of the reviews that the specific exhibition has received or that in another way is connected to the artist. My intention with the case studies is to show how mediation works in these respective cases before I can apply Rancière's theories.

3.1 Carsten Höller at Kunsten, Aalborg, 2019-2020

The Carsten Höller exhibition *Behavior* at Kunsten was part of a two-part project between Kunsten and Copenhagen Contemporary in 2019-2020 but ended earlier than planned due to the corona-pandemic. Unfortunately due to the pandemic situation I was only able to visit the exhibition in Aalborg and therefore the second part *Reproduction* is not included in this case study. However, since some of the criticism, mainly from Voorhies (2017), is focusing on some of Höller's works that were shown in *Reproduction* I will mention some of them as well.
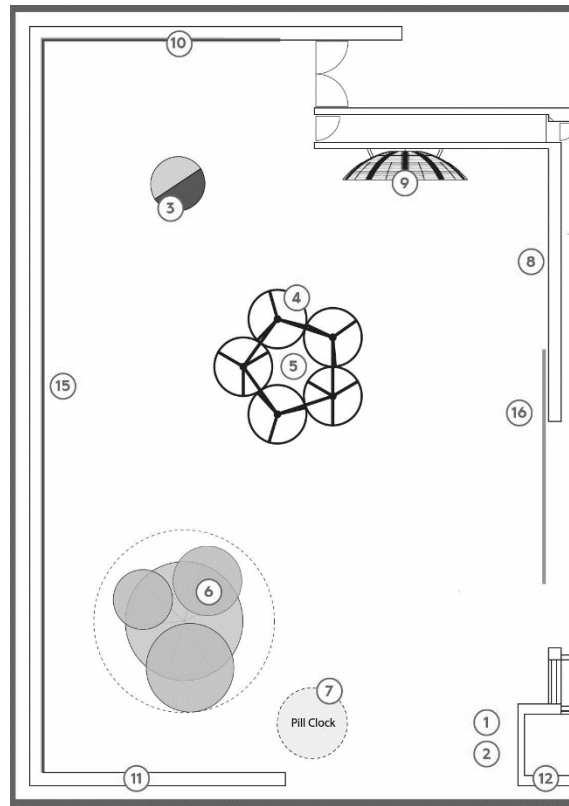
Figure 1: Overview map of the Carsten Höller exhibition at Kunsten

Source: Kunsten (2019) Carsten Höller - Behaviour [Brochure] Kunsten Museum of Modern Art Aalborg. Reprinted with the permission of Kunsten.

Behavior takes place in one big room (figure 1). When entering the room and facing it, the walls of your left and right are filled with oil paintings from the collection, all abstract expressionism coming from the CoBrA movement and chosen and arranged by Höller (Louisiana Channel, 2019). Moving forward you first find Höllers characteristic two-sided mushrooms and behind them *Revolving Doors* (figure 1, nr 4) which are five revolving doors connected to each other. All sides of the doors are mirrors, making it extremely hard to navigate through the center of the doors and out on the other end, especially if someone else is entering from the other side so that more than one door is rotating at once. From the back wall, there is a large clock (figure 1, nr 9), consisting of circles with rows of pink neon lights that blink in a pattern of seconds. The clock measures the time of 10 hours, 100 minutes, and 100 seconds, instead of the usual 24/60/60 (Kunsten, 2019-b).

The clock is also connected to the existing lighting system, the artwork *7,8Hz* (not pictured in the map) in the hall, making the light flicker in a fast frequency for one decimal minute every 10th decimal minute, throwing the visitors off for a moment while their eyes readjust back to normal. Further, there is a three-parted room, called the *Revolving Hotel Room* (figure 1, nr 6). The work consists of three round glass discs on which one has a bed, one has a table with chairs and one has a drawer (Kunsten, 2019-b). The installation is meant to spin with the different floors gliding partly on top of each other, making the person in/on the room be wary of where there will be floor space next and not. Connected to the exhibition there was also an opportunity to stay overnight. The revolving hotel room was rented out through Airbnb (Kunsten, 2019-a).

Behind the bed, there is a large pile of pills and a box sitting in the roof, *Pill Box (red and white pills)* (Figure 1, nr 7), throwing out a new pill on the pile every 3 seconds. Next to the pile of pills, there are also paper cups and water available if someone would like to take a pill, that is absolutely allowed but the contents are not disclosed anywhere. Next is a shelf with two different portable devices that derange your vision, forcing your field of view to places hard to navigate from. *Upside-Down Goggles* and *Expedition Rucksack* (figure 1, nr 1 and 2). The Upside-Down Goggles were also available for a home loan up to eight days, in case the visitor would like to try the same experience as the artist of seeing how long it takes before the brain adapts to the new perception (Kunsten, 2019-b). Other than this, there are three different artworks connected to smell, one minimalistic black-and-white painting of line from Höller and a sound piece with two speakers emitting two different words that are not always real language. The sound piece is also connected to the clock, to play every 20th decimal minute (Kunsten, 2019-b).

Worth mentioning with this exhibition is the fact that Höller was invited to Kunsten to be part of their ongoing exhibition series *pARTicipate* where they invite international, contemporary artists to work on a project specifically for their museum. The idea of the series is that the invited artists will create engagement in the audience via co-creation, user involvement, or performative strategies. Kunsten's aim with the series is to "pay

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tribute to human creativity and creative power and provide space for participation"
(Kunsten, 2019-a).

In a short interview made with Höller before the exhibition, he talks about the usage of
the old CoBrA paintings taken from the collection that is being put in a Petersburg hanging
on the two side walls. He sees this as creating art with other artists' art and to show them
in a way that they will be seen by both knowledgeable and unknowledgeable crowds in
an expanded way, by the means he as an artist produces. Further, Höller talks about him
being uninterested in the standard setting of saying"I am the artist, this is the art I have
created, and I would like to have it exhibited like this". The way Höller sees it, the
experience of observation can, in itself, also be considered art. This experience will be
different depending on the context you are seeing something in. Seeing the CoBrA
paintings in his exhibition is a different form of art than seeing them separated. The new
way of observing is a new artwork, in Höller's view (Louisiana Channel, 2019).

Höller also points out that he sees the idea of the done artwork as something extremely
exaggerated. He suggests that artworks should preferably be left undone and presented
as an object or a tool with a purpose to open up viewpoints, spaces, or experiences. The
way he sees it is that the ability to wonder is always present in art, art should make it
possible to wonder about things you do not understand. This, he considers, is also a hard
thing to verbalise because it is always a private experience, even shared with others
(Louisiana Channel, 2019). The ability to wonder is one of the qualities that art is good at,
Höller says, compared to other cultural products because it is so immediate. It doesn't
require a large effort for you to be able to engage with it. He means that art allows a sense
of doubt, that to him is a fundamental feeling that people more or less always have in
some form, but also a feeling that some cultures are very interested in trying to remove,
something he deems impossible. Höller means that we have learned to control so much
of our surroundings, much has become calculable and predictable that we have lost the
feeling of being exposed to the unpredicted or impossible. To not know what is happening
is a spiritual luxury, and the beauty of doubt is something we can get exposed to again
(Louisiana Channel, 2019).

Looking at this exhibition from a perspective of mediation I would argue that it primarily falls under a post-media category. The putting together of the exhibition has similarities with what Putnam describes as the exhibition becoming a medium, something Höller also confirms in his reference to not wanting to "finish the artwork". This type of mediation is also something that now can be seen in a new light of technological mediation. Using the CoBrA-painting fits both Putnam's description of mediation, as it does Manovich post-media aesthetics with a letting go of genres or medium specificity. Höller's approach to seeing something in a new light depending on the context and his aim to create confusion of the visitors also adds to his approach to not having a clear sender-message-receiver path but invites some interference that can affect the message. A more "open interface" type of reading without a given narrative. When Höller says that the experience of observation in itself can be art, he gives the audience the role of being their own artist. By doing that he is also giving them a legitimacy in having and expressing their views and interpretations, of giving them importance.

Even though Höller's technological works stay relatively simple, they are absolutely enough to at least partly put him in a category of new media art. The technology is never in the center but the experience caused by the technology is. In this sense, technology is being used both as a tool and as a medium. As a medium in the obviously clear technological works, the large clock, the machine throwing pills on the floor and in the rotating hotel room. And as a medium where the experience of seeing is primarily in focus, which it is in almost all of them. The exhibition also needs to be seen as a whole, as a medium in itself that Höller works with. This makes every mediated artwork both a tool and a medium at once. In the exhibition, there is no specific artwork or invitation made to take the visitor "out" of the exhibition through media. In that regard, the experience stays within the walls of the museum. But being visually interesting, combined with Höller's ideas about the experience of observation being the art, people were documenting and mediating their own perception of the exhibition as part of the artwork.

Looking at the mediation of the exhibition from a distance I start with the Kunsten.dk website. What is available to find is the following; a short introduction to the exhibition, a few pictures from the exhibition, grades and quotes from some good press reviews, information about the possibility to rent a night in the spinning bed, short information about the pARTicipate program at Kunsten, the interview as an embedded video, information of the artist as well as some thank you to some financial supporters. Condensed in a short and perspicuous format, there seems to be everything a visitor needs to know, and with links for deeper reading. This display is very well adapted to a modern audience member of today. There is no pompous tone, people seem to be engaged and having fun at the pictures, all-in-all it has a very friendly approach. They do not seem to be afraid to "spoil" anything to their future visitors since almost the entire exhibition space can be seen in the pictures, as well as two people using the different wearable artworks (Kunsten, 2019-a).

I have also taken a look at the social media of Kunsten both on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. On YouTube, there was no material connected specifically to this exhibition at all (Kunsten, n.d.). The communication on social media from the museum was moderate and included information about the opening, multiple sharing of press reviews, images of specific parts of the exhibition, and information about the possibilities of renting the bed and of loaning the Upside-Down Goggles (Appendix A, 1). The posts were, to me, surprisingly few compared to other museums I follow. It should be said that any time-bound information that is only up for 24 hours and that could have been posted during the exhibition, I am unable to find.

The communication between the museum and the audience is very direct, personal, and friendly. Many have, on Kunsten's Facebook page, tagged someone else, asking if they want to go to the exhibition together or just said that they are interested in going, often with a direct and friendly reply from the museum about opening hours. Looking at the collective information from the museum, the general approach towards the audience is very welcoming and inviting. Also in the press release that went out before the opening, audiences are invited as if to be guinea pigs of the art and there is a stress of Höller being a scientist, creating art for the audience to explore. (I Do Art, 2019) Officially, both

museums (Kunsten and Copenhagen Contemporary) seem to at least try to say that there is no prior experience needed.

The audience, as is maybe to be expected, shared a lot more on social media than the museum itself and especially on Instagram. Here, I have taken a look at people who tagged their location to Kunsten during the time of the exhibition as well as people who used the #carstenhöller within the same period showing the Kunsten interior. There are many pictures of people in the Upside-Down Goggles, in the Expedition Backpack, posing with mushrooms, standing in the pile of pills, as well as videos of people walking through mirrors. In the background of many of the pictures, you can see other people taking other pictures of themselves or their friends (Appendix A, point 2). One can assume that this form of mediation is something Höller would approve of, to see this as an art creation in itself where the observation of the audience is taking concrete form and is being put in a totally different environment outside of the museum. What the followers of the audience member would see is a new artwork, in a context that is unique to each of them. No doubt Höller makes Instagram-friendly art, something he has also been criticized for.

Looking at some of the critiques, it seems as if whether the critic enjoys the exhibition or not, he or she seems to feel a need to refrain from some fundamental part of Höller's artistry. In a review on *Kunsten.nu*, critic Ole Bak Jakobsen (2019) is quick to call Höller a superstar of the experience economy (Bak Jacobsen, 2019) as well as saying that one does not have to be very well experienced in the art scenes of the world to realize that this type of audience involving art is selling a lot of tickets at the moment. Bak Jakobsen (2019) mentions however that this is not originally a shift coming from the institution but from the artist, drawing reference to Bourriaud and relational aesthetics. Further, he expresses that this is the type of art that has become loved by the institutions to help implement political or financial goals and mentions in a rather degrading tone the audience success of, for example, Olafur Eliasson at Tate as another example of what he calls an institutions chase of the "experience-economy buzz that puts the selfie-ready exhibitor at the center" (Bak Jacobsen, 2019, my translation). Bak Jacobsen also mentions the main critique often being directed towards this type of art, that it does not

pose any hard questions nor creates any deeper reflection (Bak Jacobsen, 2019). Critic Torben Sangild (2019), reviewing the Copenhagen exhibition *Reproduction* on the same webpage on the other hand calls the exhibition both entertaining, thoughtful, and provocative and claims that Höller is a little better than the type of relational art that, in his opinion, only want to offer an experience and "hide its relation to the experience economy in cliches about democratic art" (Sangild, 2019, my translation). Also, Kjaer Themsen (2019) in *Information* needs to point out that putting a carousel in the museum is taking the experience economy so literally that it almost feels like an ironic gesture, but at the same time, she feels there is more to it than that. She expresses a sort of envy of the "merry lunatics" that throws themselves into the experience with an open mind and means that the exhibition becomes a study of human behavior and what you are allowed to do in an exhibition hall (Kjaer Themsen, 2019).

Here, one has to imagine what Bak Jacobsen means when he says that artists like Höller help to implement political and financial goals of the institution, and why that would be negative, if that is what he actually wants to state. Trying to leave the financial part out of the discussion and not knowing too much about Danish cultural politics I have to assume that the development on the political side is similar to the Swedish one. Meaning, the museum is more reliant on attracting and broadening audiences to receive state aid. Whether or not that is true, the expressed disliking of audiences' successes and people taking selfies, as well as democratic measures as cliches trying to hide something as proposed by Sangild, exposes a separation between the critics and the exhibition in regard to audience engagement.

What you are allowed to do, or more, what you are expected to do and not do inside the exhibition comes down to one of the major points in the critique. Voorhies (2017) that dedicated a whole book to criticizing the exhibition as a medium, and specifically Höller's role in this does so with the foundation of Bourriaud modernism refusal and the idea of the exhibition as an experience as being a fragmented state of relational art where the audience member has become a consumer (Voorhies, 2017, p. 8-9). The aspect of commercialization of the museum is recurring in the critique and although part of that can

be of importance, it is not something that I go deeper into. Voorhies analyses the role of the spectator from the perspective debated by Michal Fried where the spatial experiences and the audience members' solicitation neglected art's true position by giving it a theatricality. Especially, the bodily experience was considered a problem since it deprived the art of the purity of modernism and made audiences lose focus on fully taking the art in (Voorhies, 2017, p.12). Interestingly, Voorhies is also highly critical of some of the very practical measures the museum takes to ensure their visitor well being such as warning signs of flashing lights, or advice not to engage in certain artwork if you have heart problems, back problems, or are pregnant. This, in Voorhies view, is an adaptation of the artist to the museum (Voorhies, 2017, p. 9) as if there were museum visitors that could not possibly have these kinds of problems, or that they should be ignored. I am not entirely sure what Voorhies' problem is here, but the museum adjusting to new and perhaps primarily more visitors is something he seems to dislike (Voorhies, 2017, p. 230). Voorhies also comment on some of Höllers works as they were exhibited at Tate Modern in 2006, he mentions how people in the Upside-Down Goggles were "wandering aimlessly" and meant that Höller's confusion machines, as he often calls his artworks, creates an "overabundance [which] can diminish unexpected perceptual encounters art seeks to create" (Voorhies, 2017, p. 230). Voorhies is here displaying a very definite idea of art, what it is meant to do and how, an idea that seems almost to be the complete contrary to what Höller set out to achieve in the Behavior exhibition.

Voorhies and other critics of Höller seem very stuck in him being an artist stemming from relational aesthetics. And that being true and still very much a large part of Höller's artistry, it is strange to me that they do not seem to believe Höller to keep up with changes in the museum. I find nothing that would indicate that Höller actively or outspokenly is thinking in the concept of post-media, but the idea of taking in art from the collection to have it seen in a new way reshaped in the medium of the exhibition is doing exactly that and in a way that is separated from the traditions of relational aesthetics. What is similar to the two disciplines however is the core of social engagement. Höller's art does not have a narrative, it lets its audiences build their own after purposely throwing them out into a state of confusion (Louisiana Channel, 2019). In this audience experience, it is also

allowed to let go of the focus of art, to maybe take a picture, and create an own narrative between oneself and the museum and in that way possibly decrease the distance between oneself and the art (Lewis, 2017, p. 96-97).

The separation of the old school and the new school of the museums becomes apparent when the same action is found to have two very different effects. What post-media is offering in the form of the exhibition and what the post-digital is offering in the larger picture, of audience communication and participation that stretches out of the museum house does not go well with the more conservative pre-media or old institutionalism of art that I feel here is represented by the critics. Interestingly enough, it is not the museum that represents this older view, Kunsten seems to have adapted very well to the new demands of the audiences.

This is to me what Rancière calls the duality of the avant-garde (Rancière, 2010, 1999) and what he means with the schizophrenia of the politics of the arts (Rancière, 2010, p. 135). A position has been reached where the art world, including the museum, the audience as well as the critics needs to change due to societal changes. Globalization, communication patterns, constant digital access to cameras and other media have created, whether one likes it or not, a new situation to see art from. At the same time, it is understandable that some artists and critics do not embrace this change, they are with good reasons attached to what are the old regimes of art (Rancière, 2010, p. 135). The distribution of the sensibles creates, at the same time something common and shared, and at the same time an exclusivity that for some is necessary to maintain (Rancière, 2004, p.7).

What I am taking from this case study is the way Höller uses the exhibition as his medium, and how he in this medium offers space to the viewer's own creation. Kunsten's use of social media is still basic, in many regards they have not entered into being a "museum without walls", but despite having very little media moderating between the audience and the museum, the communication that is there is very direct and personal. Perhaps because it is so small. Also, the audience seem to have no problem creating this link out

of the museum with their own material, something that indirectly or not could be considered encouraged by the exhibition. More so, the critique directed specifically towards this exhibition or Höller as an artist surprised me. There appears to be a ridge between both the museum and the critics, as well as between the critics and the audiences. These expressions of disapproval of the audience behaviours, expressed as a critique of the museum I find particularly interesting.

3.2 Olafur Eliasson at Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 2015-2016

The exhibition *Verklighetsmaskiner/Reality Machines* by Olafur Eliasson took place at Moderna Museet in Stockholm in 2015-2016, covering the majority of the ground floor of the museum and part of the space of their neighbor ArkDes (Sweden's National Center for Architecture and Design, at the time a separate institution from Moderna Museet) in an almost labyrinth-like structure.
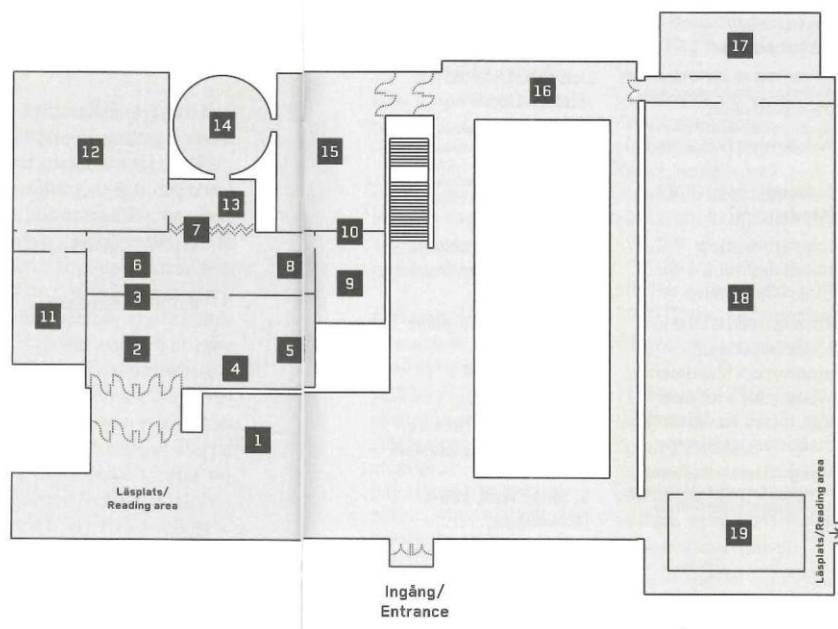

Figure 2: Overview map of the Olafur Eliasson Exhibition at Moderna Museet
Source: Moderna Museet. (2015-2016) Olafur Eliasson - Verklighetsmaskiner / Reality Machines [Brochure] Moderna Museet Stockholm & ArkDes. Reprinted with the permission of ArkDes research service.

The audience enters under a fan hanging in its cord and spinning in its own orbit by the wind it is generating, in the room is also a glass ball placed in the wall, showing you a distorted image of the next room, a wall made of white moss and a meteorite lit in a way that has two shadows, one blue and one yellow. For those who read the brochure, audience members were invited to touch the stone, although the permanent wall labels of "Do not touch the art" said otherwise. Further, there are several artworks playing with mirrors and different glass bulb installations having the visitors see themselves in or others through. Some of the artworks require a more separate space such as *Beauty*, a lit water fog creating a prism, *Big Bang Fountain* (figure 2, nr. 9), a shortly lit splurge of water being seemingly trapped in the air, or *The Sand Storm Park* (figure 2, nr. 14) with an air-blowing hose, swinging around uncontrollably in a round room filled with sand. In *I Only See Things When They Move* (figure 2, nr. 12), the entire room is lit from the center with a striped pattern of colors, moving clockwise around the wall and sometimes overlapping. The audience shadows become clear against the wall and change in color and complexity with the movement of the center light. In *Room of One Color* (figure 2, nr. 15), there is nothing but void and the experience of seeing in grayscale against the yellow walls that are lit with mono-frequency lights. *Seu corpo da obra (Your body of work)* (figure 2, nr. 18) is one of the final artwork before leaving the exhibition and consists of a filter foil wall in cyan, magenta, and yellow, creating a labyrinth-like path, taking up the space of a large room.

The information to be found on Moderna Museet's webpage is rather restrained and they seem to rely heavily on the large and spectacular pictures that take the majority of the space of the page (Moderna Museet, 2015-a). If you choose to fold out more text you can read a short introduction from the curator of the themes Eliasson often works with, as well as some quotes from the artist about the act of "seeing yourself seeing" as the focal point of the exhibition (Moderna Museet, 2015-a). The webpage has several subpages where visitors can get more in-depth information on the biography of the artist, the central themes, his connection with architecture (due to the part exhibited in ArkDes's premises) as well as information on an artist talk to be held and about tours for families and children (Moderna Museet, 2015-a). On the Youtube page of Moderna Museet (Moderna Museet,

n.d.) there are a total of four films available connected to the exhibition. An introduction to the theme, concept and ideas behind the exhibition by Eliasson, as well as two videos where he talks specifically of two of his works. The last one is the recorded artist talk Eliasson had with Timothy Morton at Moderna Museet in connection to the exhibition.

In their social media, Moderna Museet is addressing their audiences more directly than on the website but there is still a short and concise type of communication, almost always accompanied by a picture, video, or a thumbnail image of a link. In their Facebook account, there is also a lot more information than what can be found on the webpage and it seems very well adapted to a diverse audience. For instance, the museum has advertised opening talks with the artist present, "Ask the curator"-sessions and things such as "Family Sunday" or "Free Entrance Friday" (Appendix B, point 1). Advertised also from the museum was a suggested hashtag to be used by visitors. The hashtag #OlafurSthlm was linked, not to the webpage of the museum but to a subpage on the artist's website (Eliasson, 2015), adding all the pictures there automatically. Unfortunately, this page no longer functions properly. The pictures however are still easy to find and a lot of people have wanted to play along and add their pictures to the collection. Only on Instagram, the hashtag has close to three thousand pictures tagged. The vast majority of the pictures include people, mainly people at a distance but also selfies, seen through one of the many light phenomenons available (Appendix B, point 2)- This, I would argue, is a way for the museum to extend itself but also to extend this specific exhibition. The exhibition does not end at the museum walls, it stretches out to the digital lives of the audience's internet presens as well as to Eliassons' and connects all these various points. The visitor who was interested, as in Lewis' view (Lewis, 2017, p. 93), in receiving some of the value of the museum to his/hers narrative of themself gained a bonus in also receiving some of the artist. This is by no means a one-way process, Eliasson who is used to work in a studio with 80-90 others helping him (Moderna Museet, 2019-c) is here getting three thousands co-creators whose work, of his work, he can exhibit on his page. This is a massive extension of the exhibition through mediation.

Interestingly, the text-based audience response in social media was a lot more moderate, and much so compared to the responses found in Kunsten's social media. They had the same type of themes, people asking friends to go together to the exhibition or communicating directed towards the museum that they enjoyed the exhibition. In total, the Facebook page of Moderna Museet has very few comments, rarely more than 1-5 on an average post although some of them have around 2,7 thousand views (Appendix B, point 3). As well as on Instagram, the textual communication level is low. Not even the people posting the pictures have given many comments on what they are doing or seeing, nor getting that many responses on what has been posted. The visuality is here allowed to take over.

In the same way as in Casten Höller's exhibition, technology is never the focus for Eliasson, it is more the tool than the medium. But the experience of the technology is still highly relevant. Having so many analog artworks it could be considered a far stretch calling Eliasson a new media artist, but he is not an "old media" artist either. There is, with the one exception of a video from Eliasson's studio (figure 2, nr, 19), no visible media artworks in the exhibition. That is, unless you want to count, the hanging fan, the running air hose, or the monochromatic lamp. The kinetics of *I Only See Thing When They Move* is the closest you get to a more classical idea of new media art. Although Eliasson presents some fantastic objects in the shape of glass bulbs or mirrors, you are always looking through them or having them reflect back at you more than looking at the object itself. The object is not central but the process of using it is. In an episode focused on Eliason in the documentary series *Abstract*, Eliasson talks about one museum director who wanted him to put a red rose on the floor in *Room of One Color* to point out that it was not red. Eliasson refused and explained that if they did that, the artwork would instead be about a red rose (Zeldes, 2019). This immateriality as a concept being problematic is something Eliasson shares with digital art. As in the art that is hard to grasp and to put on a wall label. When Christiane Paul (2008) defines the new challenges to new media curating, several of them also apply to the works of Eliasson; the non-material, the interactive and participatory, the time-based aspects, and the reconfiguring of the physical space (Paul, 2008, p. 54-56). This genre exceeding position that Eliasson is in is quite

hard to grasp but others than me share my view of fitting Eliasson within this mediated context. One critic defines Eliasson as belonging to "a generation of artists who were keenly interested in anchoring their experiences within media and consumer culture" and sees Eliasson as "articulating contradictory subjects such as a humane technology, a social institution and an active spectator" (Ekeberg, 2015).

Eliassons art is a good example of when what is considered an old medium is being seen through the context of the new medium, and all of a sudden new mediated qualities become visible. His art does leave the interpretation up to the audience, there are no specific rules to be followed, still, every artwork has a relatively clear outcome. Indifferent to how you interact with it, the result will be more or less the same and there is a concise map to follow to be able to experience them right. In this regard, I do not feel that Eliasson could fit a category of post-media art, the post-digital category, though he fits perfectly. Eliasson's artwork, collectively, is a visual feast both to be experienced first-hand but also in a mediated form. This is something he is very well aware of, considering he, himself, wanted to collect audience images on his site instead of leaving it to the museum. This also has a very inclusive atmosphere where, again, the distance to the audience almost ceases to exist.

Looking at the reviews the exhibition received, and the way critics often have come to talk about Eliasson, the separation of two groups becomes apparent with a few exceptions. In *Dagens Nyheter*, critic Bo Madestam (2015) takes a very neutral stance in saying that the world of Eliasson is very pictorial and perfect for glossy magazines or Instagram photos, he also remarks that after just one week of the exhibition being open, social media is heavily full with pictures from the exhibition using the hashtag. However, he does not see this as the exhibition being shallow, instead, he proposes that Eliasson has a wow-factor but also a depth for those willing to dig for it (Madestam, 2015). The way Madestam sees it, Eliasson's exhibition is meant to be "seen with the body" to be able to become aware of one's own position in relation to the art (Madestam, 2015, my translation). Further, Madestam poses comments like Eliasson being like a magician and the exhibition having qualities of a fun-house. It has all the possibilities of becoming an

audience success, he reckons as well as claiming that this right now is the hottest place for Instagrammers right now (Madestam, 2015).

The references to fun-houses (Hammarstörm, 2015; Thurfjell, 2015 & Rabb, 2015) or entertainment parks (Poellinger, 2015) continue in more reviews. This can be a display of the consensus and predictability of Swedish-speaking art critics but more likely I believe that this is connected to the international criticism Eliasson received in 2003 on the Tate Modern Installation *The Weather Project* which is similarly mentioned in the same reviews. Jonas Ekeberg writes for *Kunstkritikk* of how he sees Eliasson's exhibition at Moderna Museet as a "brand-controlled playroom of late capitalism" and points out a separation of two audiences; the one he himself belongs to and the one of those who will enjoy the exhibition, "just like those people who had a picnic under The Weather Project" (Ekeberg, 2015). Linda Fagerström in Helsingborgs Dagblad starts her review by telling about the enthusiastic man in his mid 70's calling out "This is fantastic" when entering, and letting us know that you can clearly tell that he is not a Moderna Museet regular (Fagerström, 2015). At the same time, there are parts of the critics who praise the exhibition for being liberated from narrative and context as well as from the worship of technology (Mattsson, 2015). Or feel that with Eliasson's art, you need to let go of trying to interpret anything to embrace magic (Bons, 2015).

What is striking here is that what is criticised is very similar to Höllers exhibition, a bodily engagement and enjoyment, perhaps due to the changed behaviour the audience take on in the space. In a passage, Voorhies writes about the reactions he saw on audiences using the slides Höller installed at Tate in 2006 as "spectators shed engraved behaviors of an art institution. Missing the objects and the ideas. Missing are the labels, everything that separates them and an understanding of the artwork." (Voorhies, 2017, p. 224). But perhaps this shedding of the engraved behaviors is precisely the point. In one of the videos uploaded on Moderna Museet's Youtube, Eliasson talks about a temporality that in his view, most museums do not manage to make visible but that he feels is relevant. He means that when you stand in front of an artwork and look at it, and then move on to look at the next one, that passage is also of relevance. Eliasson feels that everything that

happens in that passage, visually, bodily as well as in thoughts is affecting your understanding of the art and yourself in relation to it (Moderna Museet, 2015-b). Here, I believe that Eliasson is talking about the invitation of "noise", in Manovich's sense but put in other words. Eliasson seems to see an interactive possibility between the visitor, the artwork and the space. This break or room for noise I believe is what often is being criticised whether this noise consists of having a picnic, taking a photo or just not actively engaging in the art for a while to be able to stop and as Eliasson said, "see yourself seeing".

The audience response to the Eliasson exhibition seems to have been massive and has also exceeded the common use of social media. Several blogs of laymen, from teenage girls to older men, have written short reviews on their personal blogs to be found through easy googling. The layman reviews have comments indicating that this is in fact not the usual crowd of the museum, such as "I was wrong thinking this would be boring", "I usually don't like the art museum but I do like the technical museum" ("Mickeandl", 2016, my translation), or "worth seeing even if you're not that interested in art" (Forsberg, 2015, my translation). All have, of course, beautiful pictures from the exhibition that seem to be the focus. One could perhaps feel that these comments or reviews are absolutely irrelevant but here I disagree. If, as mentioned in chapter one, photographing is a way to approach and get closer to the art, these people without a particular prior interest still decided to do that. In trying to conduct any form of audience research I believe that this group is possibly the hardest one to catch.

Taking a step back from this specific exhibition, this type of audience response has been given heavy criticism on Eliasson's exhibitions before, one example of that other than The Weather Project is his following Tate Modern exhibition "Olafur Eliasson: In Real Life". Here, it becomes unclear if what is being criticized is the artwork, the museum, the audience, or the experience as a whole. In an article in *The Art Newspaper*, one writer focused on the digital world asks whether "Instagrammable" is a word of praise or ultimate insult (Dawson, 2019). Here, Dawson mentions the thousands of Instagram posts tagged with #olafureliasson with comments like "BLEW my mind," or "Cool shit" as well as with

the comments about the place being overcrowded and "tailored for Instagram " (Dawson, 2019). Another critic with a similar name, Sheppard Dawson, has the same objection calling the show a shallow experience with excessive queuing due to the fact that "the work is painfully on-trend". She is also very disturbed by the Instagramming people and by the health-and-safety speech held at the beginning (Sheppard Dawson, 2019). Interestingly, Sheppard Dawson, just like Voorhies in the Carsten Höller exhibition, feels that safety information deprives the immersion (Sheppard Dawson, 2019). In the Art Newspaper, Dawson (2019) also brings up one point where social media might have been beneficial, a debate questioning the lack of accessibility. Further, she hypothesizes that maybe after luring in visitors with striking visuals and they are done taking pictures, they will engage deeper in the art (Dawson, 2019).

What I am taking from this case study is primarily the very simple way to extend the museum in a way that is a generous exchange for all parts. A hashtag has become very commonplace and a lot of businesses are encouraging their customers or visitors to use them, but by the simple way of collecting them they become something else. The general extension of Moderna Museet into an internet presence is at the level of what has become relatively basic in the post-digital time. More than Kunsten, they could offer a few videos for those perhaps wanting to go to the physical introduction or longer talk with Eliasson but who were unable to. On the other hand, they seem to lack the more direct and personal communication in their channels. This is naturally linked to the difference in size and number of regular audience members, giving the two museums a very different starting point, but still it feels relevant to point out.

What I am also taking is the similarity in critique that is directed toward Eliasson as is to Höller. This particular exhibition had a very tame critique, saying very little at all other than putting him in the category of "fun" art. Whether that is meant as something good or bad or both I am not sure, but this recurring reference to having Instagrammable seems to be a bit of a curse for critics. The words such as "audience success" also seem to come with a bit of an undertone that is not entirely positive. Luckily it does not seem to bother Eliasson too much since he embraced his instagrammability wholeheartedly.

3.3 Hito Steyerl at Kiasma, Helsinki, 2017-2018

The artworks *Factory of the Sun* (2015) and *How Not to Be Seen. A Fucking Didactic Educational. MOV File* (2013) by Hito Steyerl was exhibited at Kiasma in Helsinki in 2017. They were a part of Kiasma's recurring exhibition program happening every 4th year called ARS. ARS17 had the theme of Post-Internet Art and compared to the two previous case studies this is not a solo exhibition of Steyerl but I am focusing on two of her artworks. However, to be able to look at the way the museum communicates and how the audience is responding, looking at the museum's general activity is also relevant but I will not be going into any other artists' artworks. After a description of Steyrls artworks, I explain the process in which Steyerl works and why I see her as a good example of post-media art. To after that engage in the mediation of the museum.

The majority of the top floor at Kiasma was assigned to Steyerl's two works. The space has a very typical white cube environment, in it - two black boxes. I will start with going through *How Not to Be Seen* (further I will only refer to the title in this shortened form). The artwork consists of an about 15 minutes long video that in a humoristic way lists various ways of how to become invisible. The video shows an old resolution target from the California desert and Steyerl walking around on top of it. She also interacts with some small, mounted screens, showing other patterns for measuring resolution. The rest of the video has different animations and styles mixed with recordings of people dressed as pixels or in what is supposed to seem like invisibility cloaks (Artforum, 2013).

Outside of the black box of the video, in the exhibition setting, a resolution target is drawn upon the floor in the same way as the one shown in the video from the desert and other props from the video such as the mounded screens are also exhibited. All together it gives the audience the feeling of being in an extension of the video while leaving the box. This way, the clear separation of where the artwork ends or what the artwork even is or encapsulates are dissolved in the space. The exhibition of the artwork includes the painted resolution target on the floor, as well as the screens, giving them sculptural qualities but on the question if this is to be considered as part of the curating, or part of

the artwork, again is debatable. Before digging deeper in this, I turn to look at the other artwork.

Factory of the Sun (2015) has another black box, an enormous one separated from everything else on the floor. Here, the entire artwork is inside the box but takes up its entire space. The walls and roof are lit in a way that creates a grid in the otherwise black-painted and fairly dark environment. The whole of the room is much similar to the "holodeck" from Star Trek, something made purposely by Steyerl (MOCA, 2016). In one corner of the room, a massive screen is mounted and angled down to face the audience. In front of the screen, there are several sunbathing chairs available for audiences to sit or lay in. The video being displayed on the screen tells the story of factory workers forced to create sunlight and to increase the speed of light by moving in something similar to a motion capture studio. The aesthetics of the video is a collage of computer games, news, talkshow, dance videos, and documentary and is at times a bit hard to follow (MOCA, 2016). The audience is perceived to be in the studio that created this "game" the factory workers work within, at the same time we appear to be inside the game itself. The sunbathing chairs under the angled-down screen also invite further interpretations when the light of the screen reflects down on its audience underneath.
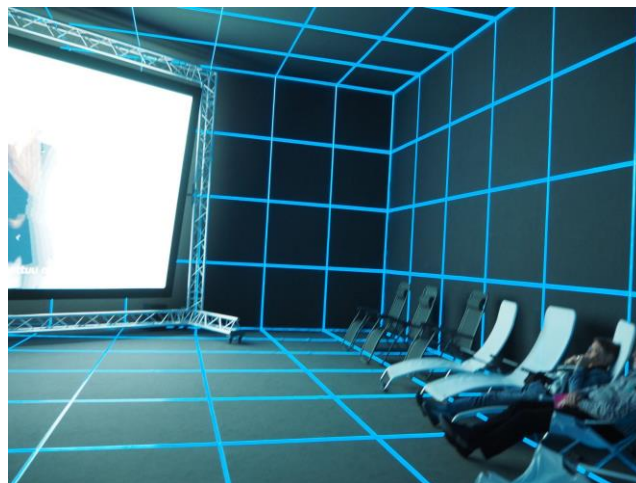

Figure 3: Inside Factory of the Sun (Kiasma, May 2017). Private photo.

There is a lot to unpack in *Factory of the Sun*, as often is the case in Steyerl's work and in how she communicates with the audience. Firstly, we can note that this artwork creates

a world of its own, encapsulating the audience. Here, the description of the museum as a medium becomes complicated. The artwork is clearly separated from the rest of the exhibition, still, the border where the artwork ends or begins is not too clear, at least not in regard to the audience. The idea of the medium of the artwork is also a bit unclear, just as in the previous artwork. The focus is clearly the video but the environment is referencing and extending that video. It is an immersive audience experience with elements of video as well as sculptural qualities, although not in a traditional form. The contents of both of the videos have a large mix of media. Where "How Not To Be Seen" have elements of film, animation and what looks like architecture imagery (Artforum, 2013), "Factory of the Sun" have what would be considered the "bad mass media" of news, reality shows, documentary as well as games. This incorporating of media creates a bridge from the less formal world outside of the museum and in, to reach the audiences in some of the new ways that post-media offers.The types of conventions connected to these types of media, most people have an access and a relation to.

More than the clear lack of an art category, I would also argue that Steyerl works with Manovich's idea of an "open software". In these both artworks, nothing is clearly explained and the interpretations of the audience are open and welcomed. In an interview made by Tate Modern's series *Tate Shot* with Steyerl she displays a very open attitude towards the audience. She says "I try to put myself in the shoes of the audience, to create possibilities for them to just hang out and have a break and also not even sit down but to lay down and sleep or just do whatever they want in the dark space. I try to create a rhetoric that will engage people, even those that do not really want to listen to me" (Tate, 2016). Returning to Manovich's view that the software affects the message and that the post-media idea is open to interference between the sender and the receiver, Steyerls artwork and how it is exhibited is a good example of that. This is a very allowing form of audience interaction that is open to all sorts of audience engagements and interpretations. Here, both in the sense of the media and medium being used, the artwork is no longer in an elevated state clearly separated from the world, although still being in a white cube environment. This being the critique proposed by Whitehead on the white

cube, that the white cube isolates from the outside normal life (Whitehead, 2009, p. 29), here the normal life has been invited in.

I would define Steyerl as an artist working in a process of post-media, meaning that her mix of materials, her unclear border of inside and outside of the artwork, her open invitation to the audience to affect the artwork is the medium she works with. This medium also blends with the surrounding exhibition, dragging it into her process in becoming hard to define. There is no active interaction encouraged by Steyerl other than participating and that participation does not have a certain way or certain rules. In this regard, the audience could be said to be liberated from the type of critique that was imposed on them in the cases of Höller and Eliasson. Someone having a picnic inside "Factory of the Sun" would just be a natural occurrence of noise.

Turning to look at the communication from the museum. Other than Steyerl being part of the exhibition, nothing is specifically focused on her or any other artist, but is informing about the theme of the exhibition.

> The internet and digitization have radically altered our everyday lives/.../ have transformed our work, recreation, culture and economy and changed the way we communicate with one another. The internet has become a platform for constructing identities and expressing emotions. And, inevitably, the digital revolution has also influenced the practice of art (Kiasma, 2018).

Here, the theme of the exhibition is expressing very closely what this essay is looking into. It seems as if Kiasma really has reflected on how digitalisation and mediation has and is affecting their activities and meeting with audiences and how they can use that as part of their core business.

The website also tells us that Kiasma is expanding the viewing experience to the online realm, extending the exhibition to the internet. The way they do this is by launching a new website, Online Art, that will present online art and work as the museum's platform in developing new methods in presenting art not only during the exhibition but also forward

(Kiasma, 2018). Their Online Art website is since the exhibition in 2017 still active and being continuously updated with various forms of interet art to be accessed for free online for anyone. Other than Online Art, there is also a possibility to look at some parts of the collection online since Kiasma's collection is considered a part of the Finnish National Gallery (Kiasma, 2021-a). All in all, Kiasma's website and their communication is very easy and approachable and you can see that they are trying to accomodate people new to the environment, also offering a glossary of contemporary art terms (Kiasma, 2021-b).

The communication from the museum in social media is moderate. Other than talking about specific happenings such as the opening or artist talks they do not post much, especially not on Instagram where they seem to hand that over to the audiences. Many of their pictures are reposts of what the audience has posted (Appendix C, point 1) and based on some posts from Kiasma, they seem to arrange specific "instagram-walks" for visitors prior to the exhibition opening (Appendix C, point 2). On their Youtube, they have many videos about Ars17 with participating artists, one specifically also about Hito Steyerl, unfortunately they are both in finnish and without subtitles (Kiasma, n.d.). It should be said that I do not speak finnish and all the other text based posts have been run through translation software. This is a limitation in this case study and there is a risk that nuances in understanding are missing.

Beyond the website and the social media platforms, Kiasma offered at the time of the exhibition the possibility to digitally look at the exhibition through a web guide. In the guide there was also information available to learn more about each artwork (Appendix C, point 3). The guide also had a possibility where the audience could create their own list and maps of the exhibition and share it with others. For example; their favorite artworks, the worst artworks, the strangest etc. (Perera, 2017). This type of allowance for not very formal information necessarily coming from the museum as well as an acceptance of diverse opinions seem to be part of the strategy of Kiasma. In an interview post on their own website, talking with the public relations manager Sanna Hirvonen about her job, she specifically says that her job is to make contemporary art as rewarding and appealing to as many as possible and that her aim is to lower the threshold for people to learn about

art. Furter, she says that serving the online audiences that cannot come to the museum due to long distances or other reasons is just as important as the work in the museum. She states that contemporary art and the work being done at Kiasma should be able to be a part of the lives of people also through various social media platforms (Kiasma, 2016).

Kiasma also has an outspoken idea of having an easy approach in how they address audiences. Kiasmas head of audience work, Minna Raitmaa, says in an article that good contemporary art has an expectation to be difficult or unapproachable, but she rejects that to be true. Raitmaa points out specifically that there are contemporary art that does not require a certain age or socioeconomic background of the audience to be able to embrace it and that supplying the audience with the right tools to not feel stupid in the exhibition space is exactly what her work is all about. In doing this, she does not only work with the artworks but also to help people know how to move around in the museum and not feel stupid or think that one did something wrong. Further, Raitmaa says that the wall labels are made as easy and explanatory as for a twelve-year old to be able to understand them. Something that always becomes a struggle between the opinions of different museum staff and a not very appreciated feature by the critics. Raitmaa continues by saying that some people seem to think that you need to learn something for coming to the museum, something she does not agree with, it is fine just coming for an experience (Perera, 2017).

I think this approach of Kiasma is interesting in contrast to Whiteheads critique of the museum. Even though I am convinced Whitehead means it in a hypothetical way or as a metaphor talking about "the map" of the museum, Kiasma has very practically challenged their own map by letting audiences build their own. In having this playful approach to navigation in the museum, that part of the rules is something that one can create oneself, as well as making it as a fun interactive exercise I believe that the visit can seem to be more on the terms of the audience and not as imposed from above. Giving this digital map added information about the artworks also gives access to learn more about what interests you but without the experience becoming overwhelming.

Moving to look at some critique, very little is about specific artworks and assesses instead the theme in general. One critic asks whether this positioning of the "new" compared to a "before" state, where technology had not yet seeped through society at large and changed our perception, is even understandable to people young enough to actually belong to the post-internet generation (Hirvi-Ijäs, 2017). Another says that the exhibition exceeds the limits of his reception, something he feels is symptomatic for the digital age where you can be bombarded with data that you try to make sense of. At the same time art has changed to be something that cannot be easily captured and maintained within the museum (Alanen, 2017). Other critics take the same position, Birgitta Rubin in Swedish *Dagens Nyheter* (2017) is also overwhelmed with the kitsch of the digital world's aesthetics but sees the exhibition as a good orientation in post-internet art, that whether you like it or not is here (Rubin, 2017). Many also point out that Steyerl is "the grand old lady" in the selection of artists and the one allowed to take the largest space (Hirvi-Ijäs, 2017).

The more critical reviews are to be found from the finnish critics where Jaakko Ooti (2017) see a clash between the catalogue texts of the digitally and globally free citizen able to travel and network the world, at the same time as he sees few non-western artists, suggesting that digitality maybe does not liberate from all hegemony and that this perhaps would have been something that could have been pointed out (Ooti, 2017). Further, he feels that the exhibition takes on a form of voyeurism to what is described as millenial youth culture and that the museum exposes itself as the middle aged and middle class looking at it from afar. He calls for a reflection on why this internet culture in art has occurred. To him, it has seemed as a reply or a consequence of the language, conventions or gatekeepers of the art world (Ooti, 2017).

This critique I find particularly interesting and relevant. Ooti (2017) has a point in the separation between the possibilities that come with digitalisation, and the actual result of them. Just because the possibilities are there does not mean that someone will necessarily act on them. Where he sees that Kiasma did not use the possibilities of the

digital world in their selection of artists, that is of course a choice from the audience as well whether one wants to engage or not. Connected to Ooti's comment on voyeurism, I think he is right in defining it like that. It is voyeurism, because that is part of the logic of social media. As we saw in chapter 1.3, the use of social media as a self-creation and through that perhaps building and getting access to other narratives and other worlds is in some way exposing oneself to the voyeurism of others. This however is not a critique I feel can be directed towards Kiasma, Kiasma is just exposing that phenomenon seen from an arts perspective. Where Ooti (2017) points out that he sees the internet culture as a reply to the conventions in the art world, I absolutely agree with him. What is interesting now is that those two worlds have begun to merge. Where the museum has gone through this post-media, post-digital, post-technological development partly due to a need to keep up with the contemporary times and also as Parry states (Bard Graduate Center, 2015) that it has become expected by the audiences, the separation of internet art and just art is indistinguishable. Personally I would argue that Kiasma was perhaps at the last minute to have an exhibition like this, while it is still possible to separate the two.

Other critics take a different approach, Kuosmanen and Laulainen (2017) on Edit Media dislike the curation of the exhibition, that apart from the rooms in which one can sit for a long time (probably referring partly to Steyerl here), they see as a distinct white cube setting. They ask, if the internet has changed art, how has it changed the ways to present art? They are also annoyed about the whole theme of the exhibition. They find it highly outdated since everything produced today in one way or another will have been affected by the internet and that the separation between something being "on the internet" as opposed in the "real world" disappeared a long time ago. Now we are all practically always online, they claim. Moreover, they question who the exhibition is for and argue that the museum shows a lack of understanding of the core of the concept (Kuosmanen & Laulainen, 2017).

I do agree with Kuosmanen and Laulainen about the exhibition being a classical white cube setting in many regards, but claiming that Kiasma has not changed anything in how it is presented is just ignorant. The changing of the white cube setting in the age of

mediated technology is, I believe, part of the core of the exhibition. In this review, as opposed to Ooti's, I feel that Kuosmanen and Laulainen are representing more of the old school, or old art world that is very well navigated in the field of art and feels that they are not the target group here. In that, I believe that they are correct. In this bridging of the worlds between what used to be, and still partly is, the "outside" of the artworld creating something else on their own terms, and the more open approaches the "inside" of the art world are starting to engage in.

Looking at this exhibition from the view point of mediation becomes almost like a meta-study. Taking the position from a post-internet, post-digitality perspective, the mediation permeates both the artworks exhibited and the exhibition form. Several of the artworks not mentioned in this text require the audience to engage with them in VR or game-like programs as well as artworks that stretch out of the museum where the audience can receive video recordings of their interaction to email themselves or post online (Rubin, 2017). This mediation is also all-embracing, even the catalogue cover can be read with your mobile to create a simulated VR-image that you can take home with you. The cutting of the border between the museum of the outer world with the help of mediation, both in a philosophical sense and with the help of mediated technology is happening throughout the whole exhibition.

The reason for choosing Steyerl specifically in this large exhibition is partly because, as has been pointed out, she was the biggest name and with the biggest space but also because I see her as very representative of one of the parts of the mediation of the museum. She is not afraid to mix media materials that traditionally have not fit, or been considered the opposite to art. She also does not stick to any materiality and in doing this create a materiality of her own. In her artistry she breaks or plays with many borders and she has an open approach to audiences. She applies this interface type of setting in which the audience has space to intervene, giving their action a legitimacy in the art, much like both Höller and Eliasson.

What I am taking from this case study is that both the artist and the museum together can contribute to an opening of art through technology and I feel that Steyerl at this specific

exhibition at Kiasma was good at representing that. Kiasma has wholeheartedly adapted to the post-digital position of the contemporary museum but I argue that they have gone further than that. Where I positioned Höller as making the exhibition his medium and letting the audience play with that medium in creating their own art by seeing, I argued that he has adapted to a post-media, interface type of structure. Eliassons exhibition was more set in its form as it were within the walls of the museum but made a very smart use of the digital possibilities with the interacting crowd wanting to participate digitally and contribute to the exhibition. This was from the point of view both from the museum and Eliasson himself an excellent usage of this post-digitality of the art museum. Steyerl at Kiasma, I feel fit in both the post-media with her art, as with the post-digital with the media tool provided by Kiasma as part of the exhibition.

ANALYSIS

My ambition with this study has been to investigate whether the use of media has affected the relationship between the museum exhibition and its audiences. And if I found that it had, in what ways. I hypothesized that the usage of media could help make art more approachable to new audiences and I have investigated this from the perspective that both the museum and the audience members have become mediated. Using the theories of Rancière I analyse what I see as the development that has led to the state the art world is in today, as well as the critique it has received connected with this mediation. I argue that this critique, at least partly, is a response to the state of dissensus that exists in the museum today. And that this, in a Rancièrean way, is a political restructuring with the aim of more equality.

I split this analysis into separate sub-questions that need to be answered one by one before any question regarding the bigger picture can be reached. The first question here regards the mediation of the visitor and the museum, and if that is something that can credibly be claimed has happened and if so, how. This question is actually also twofold, concerning first the visitor, then the museum.

For the mediation of the visitor and the role of the visitor in the museum I first tried to identify what aspects of the visitor were the pressing ones in deciding whether to visit the museum or not and what made the visitor somehow "belong" there. This belonging I identified as connected to the theories of the art world that I proposed as a foundation for my analysis, as something to use as a baseline to measure from. To be able to say that there has been a change in how visitors approach and get approached by the museum I needed to establish a state of normalcy. Combining the theories of Whitehead and Falk, as diverging as they may be, I landed in the visitor's self-identification process. I show that in two different ways identification plays a pressing factor in how someone feels at home in the exhibition space. The visitor's personal identity, the visitor's self-recognition in the exhibition space are seen to be of fundamental importance. Where Falk argues from the perspective that a person's habits, interests, prior knowledge, and feelings of

competence are what is affecting a visitor's choice in going to the museum, the picture he paints is very much in line with the existing art world. The people who share the conventions of that world, to use Becker's word, are the ones that appear and that will continue to appear. From the perspective of Falk, it comes down to the rational choices of the audience and if one believes this to be true, those choices could be easily changed.

These choices connected to personal identity have in some ways been given new possibilities by new technology and the attributes of the post-technological museum. Access to information on museum websites, digital collections, Youtube accounts, Facebook, Instagram, and other social media platforms have increased the group of people that can be reached by the museum material. People distanced by geographical location or by a lack of financial or cultural capital have the ability to receive at least some part of the museum experience. This is also a way to help build understanding in advance for the people going physically to the museum, and to create a better understanding might make them appreciate the visit more. These types of digital services have created a way in, not directly to the museum but to the extended museum, to this museum without walls, that through the filtering of post-media and post-digital have created a new type of space.

But more than giving audiences access to taking information in, their ability to put things out has also changed. The mediation of the self through digital tools and social media have created possibilities of recreating oneself in another context. The accessibility to museums through various channels, whether text based, picture based or in the form of virtual tours or open lectures, gives an opportunity to get in conversation with museum professionals and other knowledgeable, or unknowledgeable but interested crowds. That opportunity has no "walls" and the standardized form and look of the social media platforms makes it hard as in Whitehead's view to see that any conventions are built into the walls. These conventions however, are also something that one is given the opportunity to learn more about by accessing them.

Another form of output for the audience that can be made through the new technologies, and the one that was perhaps the most disliked by the critics in the case studies, is the output of pictures or selfies. The way Lewis (2017, p. 93) argues that the value of the

museum reflects back at the person sharing it, puts that audience member in a different position, connecting him or herself with the field of art. When these outputs of mediated material are encouraged by the museum, as in both the cases of Moderna Museet and Kiasma, and possibly reshared by the museum or the artist, one can assume that this creates even more value. Other than that, it creates a belonging to perhaps not the old type of art world but still to an art context that is shared with others.

I also feel a need to address some critiques of the mediated visitor. Where critics say that the museum visitors today "do not have the attention span" or "lacks the depth of connection" (Reyburn, 2019), those properties can absolutely come from the fast-speed, social media era but is absolutely not a problem specific to the art sector. In fact, the possibility of those audiences coming *from* social media, in the sense that they are new audiences having seen something online that looks interesting, is also possible. Actually getting them into the physical house then, was probably one of the goals of the museum to begin with. Many critics here seem to be willing to "throw the baby out with the bath water" in regard to mediated material online. Further, the critique directed against Höller and Eliasson often revolved more around criticising the behaviours of the audience which did not seem to fit the critics idea of acceptable in a museum space. Words such as "Instagrammable" and "audience success" were also used as negatives, making the border between the critic and the regular museum visitor more apparent.

Further, despite what some seem to think, there is not necessarily a separation in being consumed in the art or being consumed in taking or looking at meta content of the art (Reyburn, 2019). At least, the museums in the case studies do not seem to think so. The behavior of using personal electronic devices such as mobile phones in the exhibition space does not exclude engagement in the art, many times it *is* the engagement with the art. The behavior, however, does not seem to fit in an art context within the scope of the old art world, according to some, even if it is allowed or even encouraged by the museum or artist.

Turning to look at the exhibition instead, I first need to mention that the mediation of the

exhibition and the mediation of the visitor is not always easy to separate. What is to be seen as their relationship has become so influenced, intertwined and at times practically dependent on various forms of mediation to even exist in the current form. Audiences bring their mediated selves into the mediated exhibition and what occurs is a situation where the types of mediation go hand-in-hand as well as mergers and enhance each other. I identify that the mediation of the exhibitions comes in the form of both a conceptual mediation of the ideas connected to the shape and intentions of the museum exhibition (post-media), as well as the practical shape that includes both mediated artworks (new media) and the digital tools that now have become standard for museum settings and communication (post-digital). This new technology-inspired shape of exhibitions, networked shapes, database structures, etc. invites the spectator and is dependent on the spectator for the art to even function in the regard that is intended. This inclusion is fundamentally part of an inclusive process and one that has been present in art in various forms for a long time but that has become more palpable and concrete in the context of technology.

Looking more deeply at the case studies, I first want to clarify their shared and separate qualities in regard to mediation. All three of them lack a clear medium or art category although all three have, in various ways, mediated technological tools. In the case of the Höller exhibition, the form of the exhibition is distinctly mediated and fits a post-media aesthetic. His use of old and new, playing with time and nonlinearity and the open space with hands-on artworks ask the audience to play along and shape the experience of the exhibition. The Höller exhibition does not really extend out to the museum without walls, but Kunsten's general practice does. Of all three case studies, Kunsten has the least amount of digital material connected to the exhibition, still they have the most active conversations both between audience members as well as between the museum and the audience.

Eliassons exhibition on the other hand does not operate as much within a post-media aesthetic, although the question of the medium at times is a bit hard to define. The form of the exhibition is more constricted with each artwork having a clear space and with little

room to deviate from the planned route. Eliasson, and Moderna Museet, however, are very aware of the visual qualities of his artworks and use that in their connection with the audience. Having Eliasson collect and repost the audience pictures became as an artwork in itself and absolutely brought the art and the audience together in having them see that their view of the exhibition was as valid as anyone else. This prior understanding and adapting of the mediation the visitors will engage in, and the participation of that engagement from the side of the museum and artist fit well with a definition of post-digitality. In the case of Steyerl, there is more of a separation between the artwork and the exhibition. This of course due to the fact that this was not a solo exhibition but artworks set in a larger exhibition. Here, the artwork in its form and unclear outer edge represent a post-media state, while the exhibition as a whole and the engagement of Kiasma is highly post-digital in their various types of digital audience engagement.

These cases do not seem, as in Whitehead's claim, to shy away from their museal responsibilities of offering a contextualisation that is comprehensible and that allows audiences to have and express interpretation and identity (Whitehead, 2012, p. 12-13, 21). They do try to create a connection to the museum and a feeling of recognition of the viewer. The way Becker sees equipment as something being a possible universal entry point, another shared convention that could be used as an entry point to art (Becker, 2008, p.57), mediation seems to be this equipment in these cases. In the Eliasson exhibition in the form of simple and practical technological artworks speaking directly to a bodily experience of perception and reflection. The same is to be found in the Höller exhibitions, but here also connected to the openness of the exhibition form. In the case of Steyerl, her mixing of everyday TV-content and pop-cultural references creates a connection and identification of the mediated pictures. All three of the exhibitions also share some common points, one of which is the tolerance of almost invitations of "noise" in Manovich's words. They are aware that the communication line of sender-message-receiver can, and most likely will be broken and that this is an okay, expected, and even an anticipated part of art. Whether this idea of Becker actually works should perhaps need a deeper evaluation, but if it can provide a visitor with a stronger sense of competence as Falk (2009, p. 215) stresses is important, that would influence the willingness of

audiences to participate. And the audience do participate, at least from the look of the audience generated material that can be found online. To conclude, all three of the case studies are clearly shaped by mediation, both of the visitor and of the museum context. Despite the artworks working with very different materials and concepts, as are the audiences, seeing and interacting with the exhibitions in various ways.

Having defined both the audience and the museum exhibition as affected by mediation I now return to Rancières and Beckers theories. First, I break down the various roles Ranciére identifies. The police in Rancière's meaning are the maintainers of order, indifferent to what this order is. Here, already this becomes complicated because there seems to exist two types of order. A duality built on the same duality that both Becker and Rancière account for in the separation of the art world and the "other". It appears that this separation still exists, only in a perhaps a different way than before.

In the case studies I identify the museum and the visitors as relatively equal, more so than I would have anticipated. It seems as if the visitors and the museum have entered the state of mediation at about the same pace and are on a somewhat similar level. The museum is fully aware that people will communicate online, want to access information online and also use media tools, such as phones, inside the exhibition space. This, the museum also uses by resharing their audiences work and even encourages audiences to share as in the cases of Moderna Museet and Kiasma. This I think is seen as positive from both ends; the museum gets good and almost free help in marketing, targeting the friends, family and other followers to the audience member who might not be regular museum visitors but trust the opinions of the person. And as Falk's research showed, is a strong reason for someone going to a museum (Falk, 2009, p.186-188). The audience member on the other hand, will build a stronger connection to the museum and have its value reflect back on him/her (Schwartz and Halegoua, 2015, p.1648-1649). Instead, the critical approach on efforts reaching out to the audiences and the looseness of exhibition form are instead more negatively met by the critics. Some concrete aspects of new exhibiting that up until recently were standard in the museum, such as "no touching" and "no photographing" of the art, do not always apply anymore. Standards having moved

from that to Steyerls very open idea of what she feels audiences are allowed to do insider her artwork is a large step. What used to be the distribution of the sensibles in the museum no longer holds true and the critics here seem to have taken on the role of the police, of protecting the old art world and its conventions.

These changes of the rules of the exhibition space, the form of the exhibition and even where the museum ends have all been shaken up. There is no longer a clear separation of inside and outside of the walls and an access to at least a basic prior knowledge can be acquired from anywhere with material made available online. Also, the possibility to question or critique the museum can be made public and one can easily find others who might feel the same thing. This openness and permissive atmosphere creates this void in the distribution of the sensibles that Rancière means should not exist in the police order. A void where the function, bodies and ways of existing does not have set places (Rancière, 2010, p.36). Even the question of what contemporaneity is, is up for debate. Bishop defines the idea of contemporaneity as something that has gone through a shift and becomes used as two separate meanings (Bishop, 2013, p.6). Here, she does not say that this second type of contemporaneity, the dialectal contemporaneity that is disconnected from presentism, is connected to technology but I believe that is the case. The way Bishop describes how this second idea of contemporaneity works as a method or approach more than an aesthetic and as a politicized project, her description is well in line with the ideas and aims of the techno-positivist approach represented by Paul and Manovich and what they define as an aesthetic. The only difference here is where and how this aesthetic has been applied and put to practical use. This is also something that becomes apparent in looking at a lot of the critique. What is being criticised is not primarily the art but the whole conceptual form or approach to the art and how audiences engage with it. The audience engagement happening in this void of the order.

All this uncertainty around the exhibition space and its audiences appear to me as what Rancière means with a state of dissensus. There is not one structure to clearly follow and it makes the people knowledgeable and included in the old structure, or the old art world uncomfortable. This dissensus happening is a political process of new types of inclusion

that results in a state of more equality, as in the definitions of Rancière. It seems to me as if the mediation, again both of the visitor and the museum, has leveled out the field for both parties to meet on a more common ground. This state of dissensus will most likely settle at some point when a new distribution of the sensibles have been established. However, these openings in the structure, the void of the visitor interaction or the "noise" in Manovich terms have in their very essence a non-conformity that in its nature is inviting disturbance. If a new state of distributions of the sensibles do settle, one can begin to wonder what will happen with Rancière's schizophrenia of the art, or the duality of the avant-garde? If this phenomenon has outlived the previous trials of new concepts in art, those who in some regard paved the way for technology, how would mediation be different?

Here, it feels fair to point out some of the justifiable critique that has been raised from the side I here assign as the police. It would be too easy to simplify these diverging opinions on changes brought by technology and claim that one side is simply defending the old separation of the art world and the "other", scared to lose their shared conventions and exclusivity and the privilege that come with it. However, there are justifiable criticisms that are not specifically directed towards the meditation of the museum, nor the audience, but more specifically towards how this mediation has been put to practice at some museums. Several of the critics point to these approaches from the museum towards the audiences as coming from a position of financial need, more than anything else. This is not a perspective that I have raised but it is something that, in my view, has validity behind it and something that potentially could become or already is a problem. This, again, goes back to the question raised by Rancière as the duality of the avant-garde (Ranciere, 2010,p. 199). How is it possible to both open upp art and still keep it protected?

Another critique relevant to raise is the one regarding the almost tech-utopian view shared with Manovich and Paul. Although claiming in these cases I portray that the relationship between the audience and the museum have been positively affected by a state of mediation, I believe meditation needs to be seen as a tool more than a solution if the goal is to lower the thresholds of new audiences. In all three of the case studies I point to the

positive aspects that I see mediation has brought but behind that I believe there is an active engagement working specifically with audience engagement, as becomes most apparent in the case of Kiasma. This engagement in the post-digital discourse has taken a partly mediated form but that is not to say that it comes solely from the use of media.

Whitehead's critique about the unintended exclusion (2012, p. 47) happening "in the walls" or through the message of the museum where ideas about the intended audience are latent could absolutely seep through a digital form. But, as mentioned previously, the ability to contradict those ideas are more present in the mediated forms of open communication. There is also a critique that can be raised against the ideas of Falk and his heavy emphasis on the identity of the audience member. Of course every approach of a museum can be done in a good or a bad way, almost indifferent to what that approach is. I do not believe an adaptation to meet specific identities is a desirable development of the museum, this is a balance the museum needs to manage. As Proctor (2010, p. 41) points out in this mediated landscape, the knowledge of the curator can no longer be met solely by his/her expertise in art but also by the extent and understanding of these networked processes happening around it. This does in no way remove the need for expertise in making good choices and no one, at least not in the cases studied in this essay, have claimed otherwise although it can sometimes seem that way reading some of the critiques.

The post-media, post-digital, post-technological state have several loose ends here that together create a messy and confusing situation. What is to be allowed and expected in a museum space? Where does the museum's responsibility end with an online access, and what are they supposed to provide? And to whom? How much should the exhibition space be allowed to merge with digitalisation? Is this "open software"-structure what is now referred to as contemporary art? These are questions that do not have a uniform answer and that various museums and institutions most likely will handle differently.

The main difficulty in exploring this subject comes down to the fact that almost all parts of what I am looking at are hard to distinguish in a concrete way. They are structures that

appear very clear but still lack established rules, physicality, or something that could easily be identified in more than descriptive yet vague words. Judging just by the number of times I in this analysis mentions words like "two-folded" indicate that this topic is messy to navigate. The field of contemporary art, in whatever form you use that term, as well as the field of media technology, are in constant movement and change, and with a constantly added vocabulary. The problem of terms piling up on each other, as I am also making myself guilty of, is also problematic. Where one aesthetic or structure begins does not mean that another necessarily ends. The blending and intertwining of mediums and media will continue to create new forms and hopefully keep challenging our understanding to mediation.

In this type of hermeneutic analysis, I also find it relevant to take a look at myself and who I am connected to the topic. Just by writing this text, I am making myself guilty of belonging to the same art world that I am partly criticizing. Having spent years in art education I can not in a credible way position myself as a layman member of a general audience, at the same time I do not feel that my opinions match most of the critics. At least not the ones being referred to in this essay. I am in this essay trying to take on an inbetween position, looking at both the audiences and my definition of an artworld from an as neutral position as possible. Still, I do realise that my selection of sources and case studies as well as my approaches to them are reflective of my position and that a different selection could have resulted in other conclusions and other results.

The goal with this type of essay is rarely to come to a state where one can present clear and unambiguously true and measurable results, but rather to present a way of thought or direction of a phenomenon that can be seen in multiple ways and to offer some sort of explanation of what is happening and why. What I have come to identify as a dissensus of the current art world is mainly a shift in the relationship between the audience and the museum. This new type of relationship is due to several types of mediation happening at once and has not fully established itself yet as a new normal state. The roles inside the museum have changed, both in the museum organisation but also including the role of the audience. The walls or "lack of walls" of the museum is seen from a new light as well as the linearity of time in how to define a state of contemporaneity. That all this is making

some uneasy is not strage, especially if one has something to lose in letting go of the old structure. What there is to gain on the other hand, is a more inclusive approach to audiences from the museum.

Where I was hoping to reach with this essay was not to produce any new abstract theories but rather to present a state of the zeitgeist that is highly complex but at the same time understandable if one manages to see it as a structure in reconstruction, both from a new situation for the museum but also with added demands and wishes from the audience. I decided to look at this from the perspective where mediation is the main change in this relationship but I am open to the possibility of there being other complementary reasons that are also interacting but that have not been given attention here.

Topics bordering this study and that could be explored in future research are several but two stand out more than others. The first one being a study of the changes in politically implemented goals and the connected possibilities of funding for the museums. Several of the critics (Voorhies, 2017; Bishop, 2013) raise the problem with museums' increased need for financial successes and seem to closely connect that to the type of art that attracts large audiences. Some of the downgrading tone directed towards "audience successes" I believe stem from problems not connected to neither the specific artists nor the actions of the audiences.

The second one is more closely connected to the technology being used, something also raised by Winesmith & Anderson (2020) as well as Proctor (2010) and this could take several directions. When museums engage virtually through different services that bring them closer to their audiences, there is also a risk in not fully thinking through what effect this can have. These effects being safety issues with losing control over information shared on other companies' websites, surveillance problems connected to trying to map audiences as well as having the different services' algorithms making decisions over the material in ways that were not intended, and hence affecting the audiences in certain ways.

CONCLUSIONS

The goal with this essay was to see if the relationship between the museum and its audiences has been affected by mediation in a way that could be beneficial for new audiences. Through the research I have come to the conclusion that the relationship absolutely has been affected and created a changed position both for the museum and for the visitor. What I had assumed to be a restrictive position from the museum, preferring some crowds to others does not hold true in the cases I have looked at, on the contrary there seems to be an active will and engagement in attracting and engaging a broad audience. The way mediation has affected audiences is a harder question to answer. What I can conclude however is that the possibilities to actively engage, educate oneself and access information has heavily increased. This way, audiences can access, maybe not all, but some of the conventions of the art world and build their own identity as part of that context. In doing that, audiences also have the power to question and shape the museum in some way, the open and public communication provide that possibility. In this regard I think it is fair to conclude that the thresholds of the art world have been lowered with the help of mediation, something that was also my intention to investigate.

Another conclusion to be made is the one about the state of the art world today. Where I was incorrect in thinking that the museum posed a frontier, it appeared instead that the more coservative opinions came from the side of the critics. I identify a disagreement in how to approach the new influences and possibilities coming from the technological world as well as their implementation on the function of the museum. Looking at it from a Rancièrean perspective, what is happening is what I define as a state of dissensus. This again goes back to the question of inclusion, Rancière means that dissensus is a process of equality happening that has a political importance. I agree that this is what is happening in the art world and that technology has implemented this. This is not a new conflict in any way, looking back at the theories of both Rancière and Becker, but a modernised version perhaps of the old one, and I would argue that it is one that poses a bigger threat to the structure than perceived before.

The discussion of who art is for and where to draw the line between adapting to visitors wants and needs and staying thru to a more original core idea of what a museum is, is a discussion that most likely will and should continue to be had. This essay can conclude that that discussion is ongoing and that technology has affected that discussion, as well as opened new doors for new participants to partake in that discussion.

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