Call for Papers and Projects: Invisible Culture

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»Online at: www.rochester.edu/in_visible_culture/
»*Deadline for Papers: May 20, 2007*
In his 1965 book Museum Without Walls, Andre Malraux critiques museum conventions of display that deaden art of the past. In fact, over time the artworks have morphed, affected by their surroundings, and taken on new lives as different kinds of aesthetic objects. Three years later, Roland Barthes would identify the death of the author and the emergence of the reader in the making of meaning. These writers' prescient articulations of the fusions - and confusions - of art object, context, artist, and viewer foresaw today's hyper-interaction of art media and the overlapping of roles in the museum and beyond.

What these texts leave out is the seemingly unmarked presence of an intermediary between the artwork and the viewer - the curator - and the world she has traditionally inhabited - the museum. "The gallery space is no longer 'neutral,'" wrote Brian O'Doherty in 1976, at a time when artistic practice turned the ideology of the gallery space upon its head. While underlining the pertinence of the museum's physical and contextual impact on the reception of art, he too neglects the curator. Douglas Crimp's seminal text On the Museum's Ruins laid bare the changing state of the museum by examining shifts in art practice and the rising significance of photography as challenges to the institution. To continue rethinking the museum as a site for art display and the interlinked roles of the artist, artwork, curator, and viewer follows in the steps of these theorists and their peers, to say the least of the decades of artists who have interrupted conventional modes of display in museums through strategic creative applications. As globalization gives way to new cosmopolitanisms, and new media art transforms the site of the museum into the virtual realm, what has become of the curator? By some accounts the role of the curator may be in decline as alternative art spaces, tactical art interventions, and virtual museums refute her role and the institutional power it implies. The other side might see instead a curatorial practice that takes on a multiplicity of roles - as artist, as architect, as nation - and has increased significance in the frenzied world of the international art fair.
Invisible Culture invites papers and projects concerned with contemporary (post-1960s) curatorial and museum practice. Submissions in the form of 2,500-6,000 word papers from all disciplines, as well as digital projects (virtual museums, online art exhibitions, and internet-based endeavors, for example) are welcome. Entries may include but are not limited to investigations of the following topics:
* the relevance and changing role of the curator * artist as curator * curator as translator * criticism and interpretation of exhibitions * models of curating and display * new media projects, the virtual museum * ethics of display * histories of curating * visual anthropology * sense studies, anthropologies of the senses * changes in culture and science museums, museums of natural history * curator as mediator of cultural exchange * architecture and context * global visual culture *

problems of cultural translation * alternative exhibition sites * challenges to exhibition display: performance, video and installation art * the interactive exhibit * hybrid art forms and multimedia displays * museum studies * communication/audience studies * cultivation of art audiences * curating and the expansion of global art markets * collections, collectors and curators * curating the biennial/international art fair * cosmopolitanism, diasporas of artists and curators at home and abroad * display and the politics of identity * authorship * emerging area and regional curatorial networks * developments in institutional critique * the location of the frame

Submissions and inquiries should be directed to Mara Gladstone, Graduate Program in Visual and Cultural Studies at the University of Rochester at mgladstone@gmail.com. Deadline for submission is May 20, 2007.

Invisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture is a peer-reviewed journal dedicated to explorations of the material and political dimensions of cultural practices: the means by which cultural objects and communities are produced, the historical contexts in which they emerge, and the regimes of knowledge or modes of social interaction to which they contribute.
http://www.rochester.edu/in_visible_culture/