

Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art
Langley Foyer Exhibition Proposal

Framing the Frame

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Laura Ferrante
Hannah Soh

April 20, 2011

What is

Framing the Frame?

An opportunity for visitors to visually engage with various frames and framing techniques as well as provide the foundation and tools to critically think about the broader context of frames in an art museum

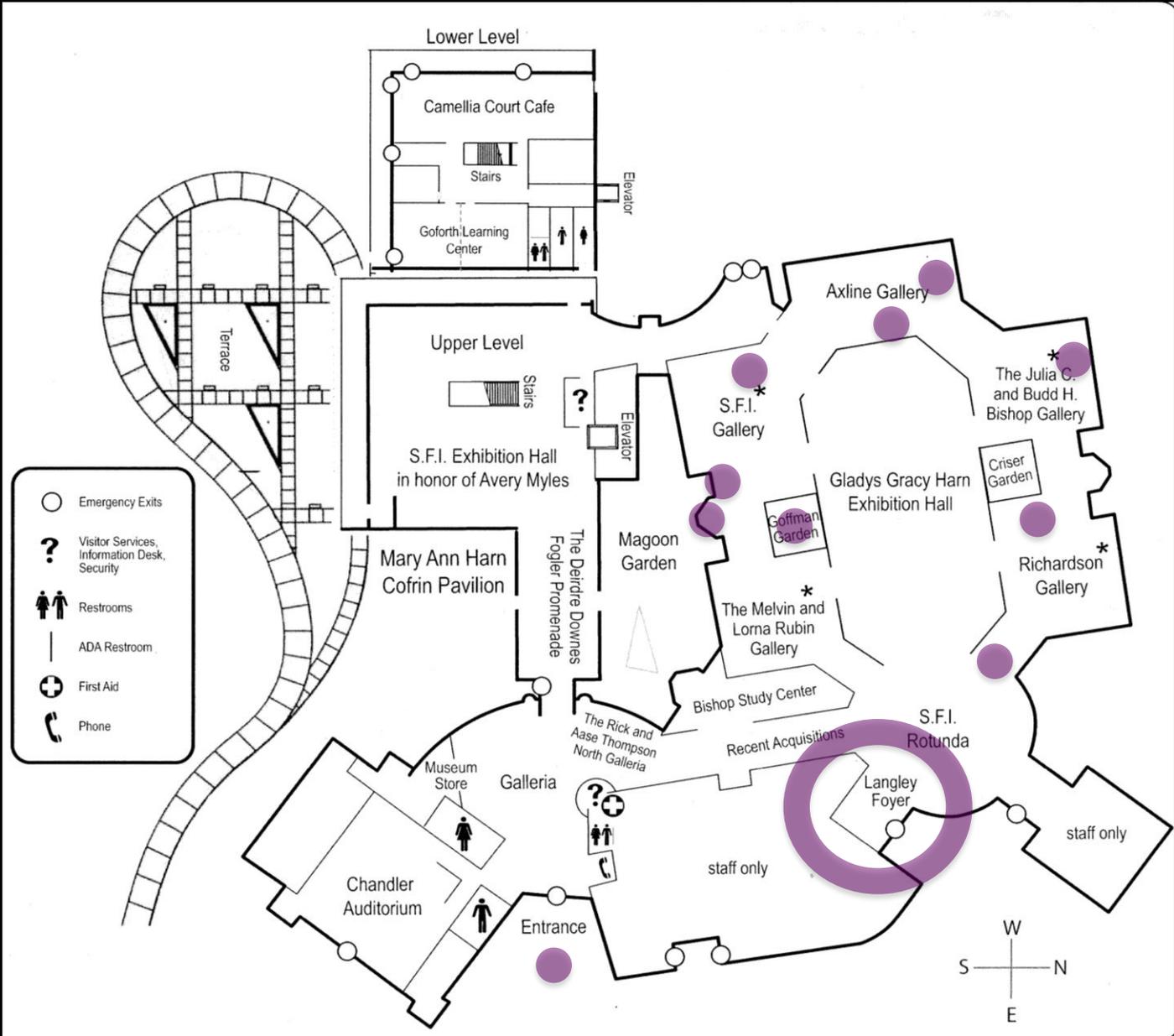
Big Idea:

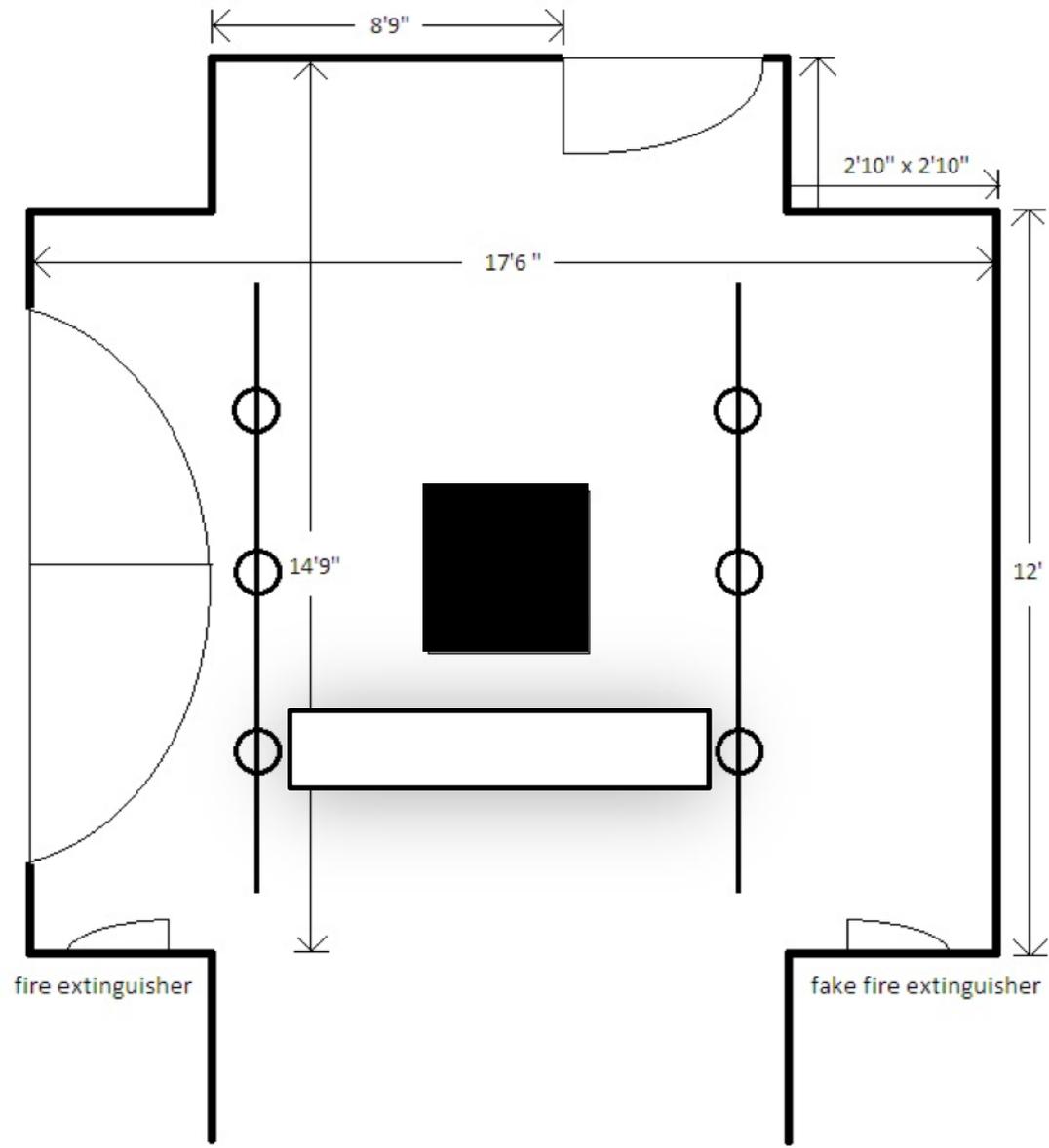
Museum practice structures our understanding of objects through framing techniques.

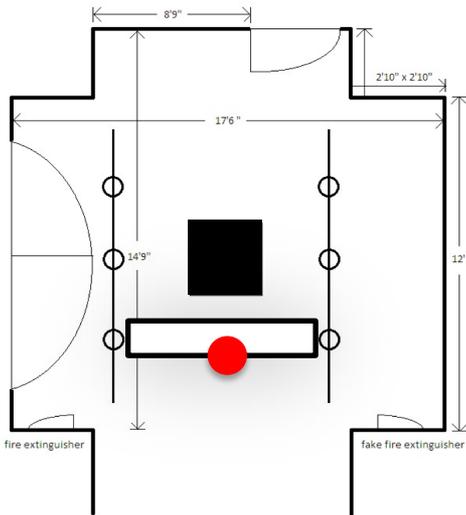
Exhibition Proposal

Proposal Package

- Abstract
- Introductory wall panel
- Object checklist and images
- Object labels
- Layout and design
- Education and outreach
 - Aiming and Framing
 - Frame Quest
 - Frame the Art Museum
 - Educational Guide
- Press release
- Digital copy







Framing the Frame

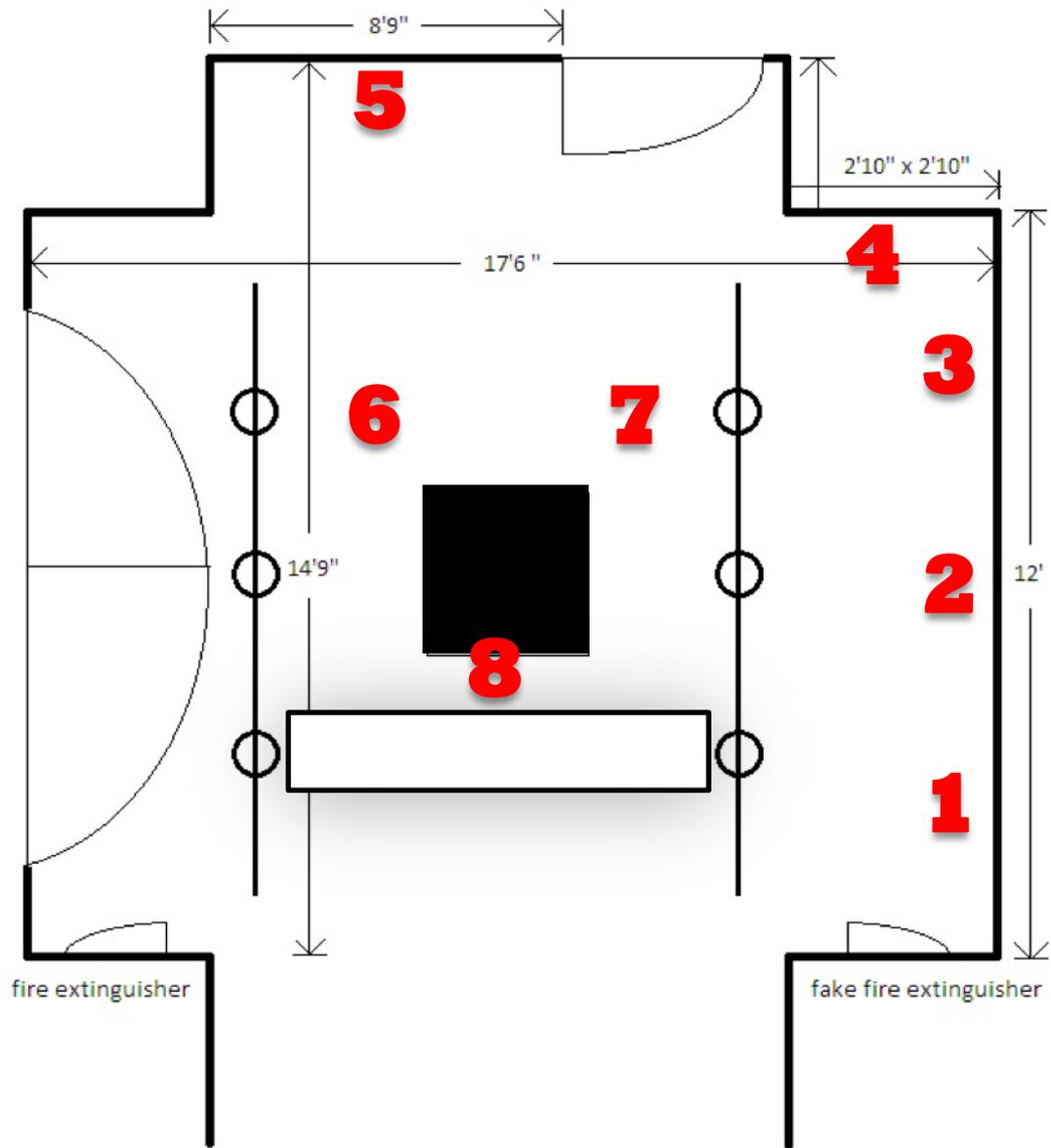
The task of any discussion of frames and framing in the arts is first and foremost to counter the tendency of the frame to invisibility with respect to the artwork. We see the artwork, but we do not see the frame.

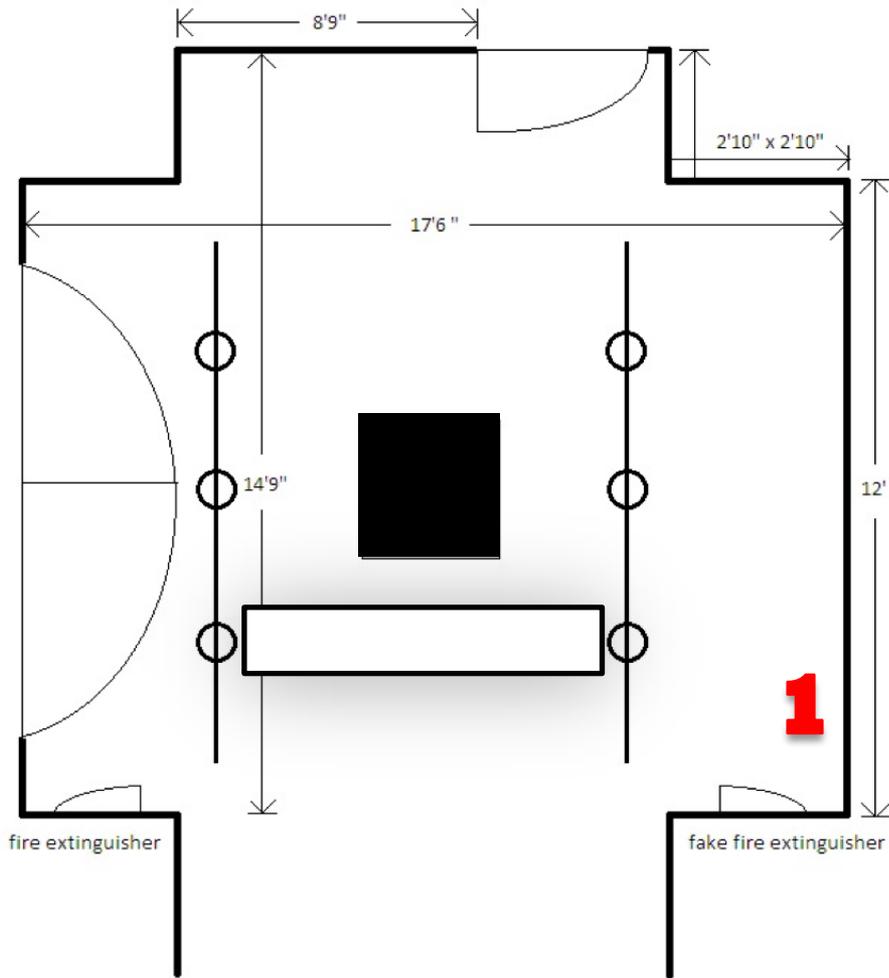
-Paul Duro, *The Rhetoric of the Frame*

Why do frames matter? The picture frame is a tool that has existed for centuries. Established as a fine art tradition, frames are commonly accepted as devices that make works of art appear more attractive. Yet, frames serve more than a decorative function.

Framing the Frame invites viewers to engage critically with various framing methods within an art museum. From different styles of picture frames to design techniques used for displays, this exhibition outlines the functions of frames as a means of influencing one's understanding of art. Why do we use frames? How do frames shape the ways we see art? What are examples of non-traditional frames?

The frame serves an important purpose; it becomes a window, through which viewers see art. *Framing the Frame* will highlight the ways in which frames perform this duty, both within the exhibition and throughout other galleries in the Harn. By drawing attention to the image within, the border of the frame mediates as a boundary between the outside world and art. Museum visitors ignore frames, focusing instead on the works of art they contain. It is time to see the frame.





Unknown

Copy after Titian's The Penitent Magdalene

19th Century

Oil on canvas

40 x 30 in. (101.6 x 76.2 cm)

framed: 55 1/2 x 45 1/2 in. (141 x 115.6 cm)

PA-83-4

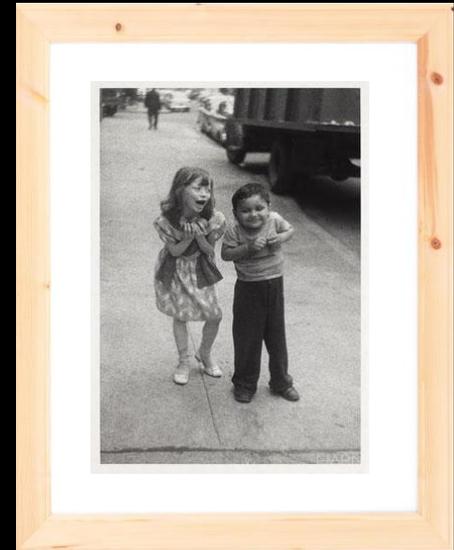
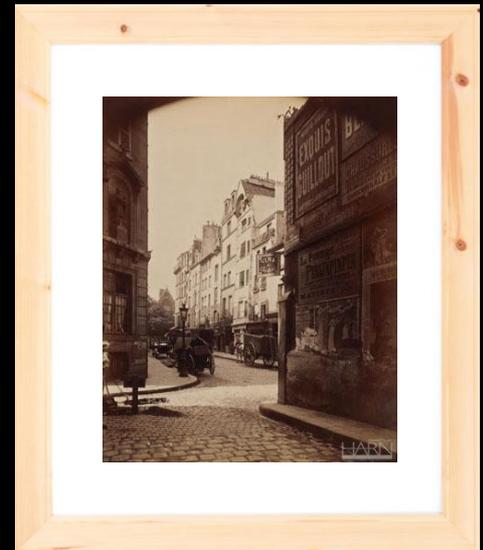
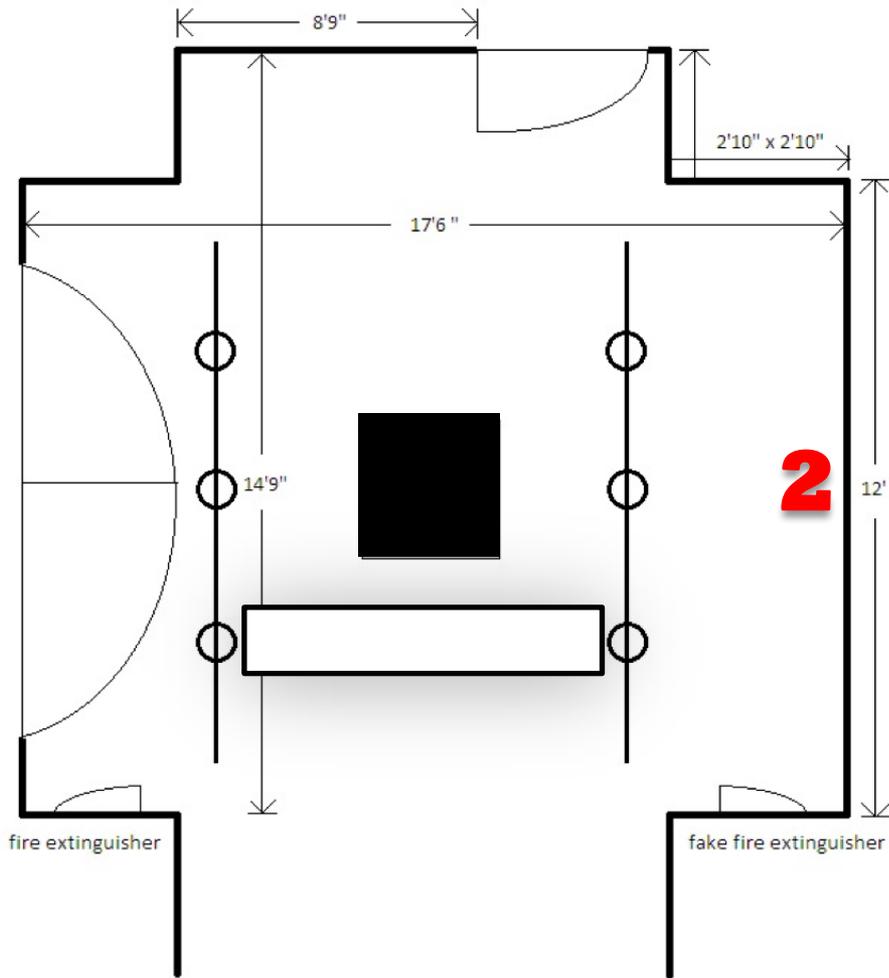
Gift of Jeannean Green

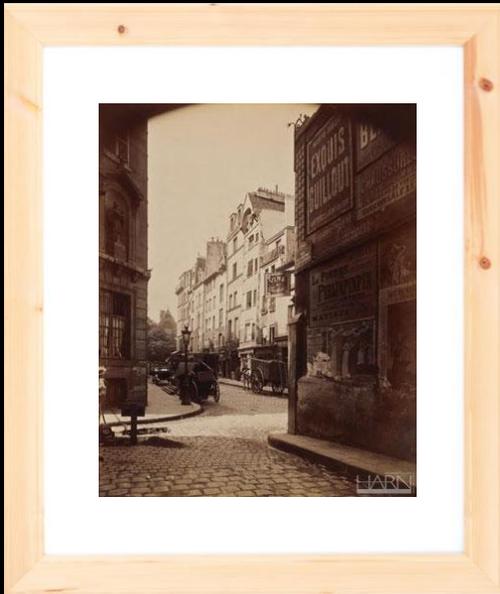


The use of frames in Europe began with small panel paintings in the 12th and 13th century. Initially, the frames and the paintings were made from the same piece of wood. Over time, the more efficient method of the engaged frame emerged. This process attaches wooden custom fit molding to flat wooden panels for the artwork.

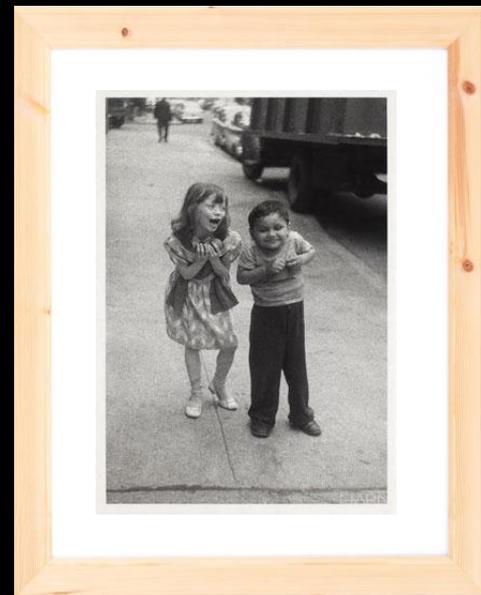
Prior to the Renaissance, many frames in Europe were customized architectural elements. During the 14th century, a rise in arts patronage necessitated frames with more portability. The portable, removable frame became an essential component in the display of painting on canvas. Most present-day frames are still based upon this model—a three-dimensional border that accents the artwork it borders.

Framing method: gilded frame, hang at eye level





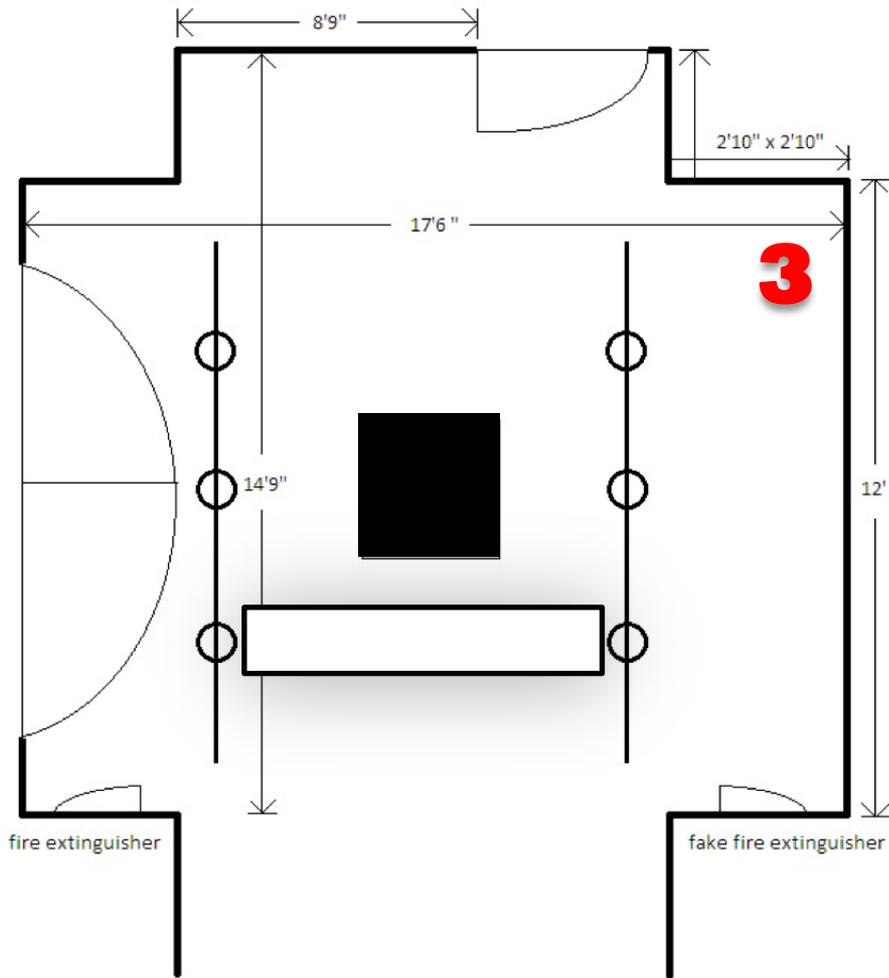
Eugene Atget
France, 1857 – 1927
Rue Boutebrie, Paris
ca. 1900
Albumen silver print
8 1/2 x 6 7/8 in. (21.6 x 17.5 cm)
2004.40
Gift of Melvin and Lorna Rubin



Diane Arbus
American, 1923 – 1971
Child Teasing Another
1960
Gelatin silver print by Neil Selkirk, 1990s
Mat: 20 x 16 in. (50.8 x 40.6 cm)
Image: 8 7/8 x 6 in. (22.5 x 15.2 cm)
2005.42
Museum purchase with funds provided by the Melvin and Lorna
Rubin Endowment

The advent of photography in the late 19th century introduced a new medium for fine art. Museums frame photographs in simple frames regardless of the time period in which the photograph was taken. This presents a contrast to the various frames used for paintings of similar date. How does the style of frame influence the way you see the photograph? If the photographs were placed in carved, gilded frames would it change the way you think about the image?

Framing method: matted, same frame, hang vertically





Andy Warhol

American, 1928 – 1987

Soup Can, Vegetarian Vegetable

1964

Silkscreen

Print mark: 32 x 18 3/4 in.

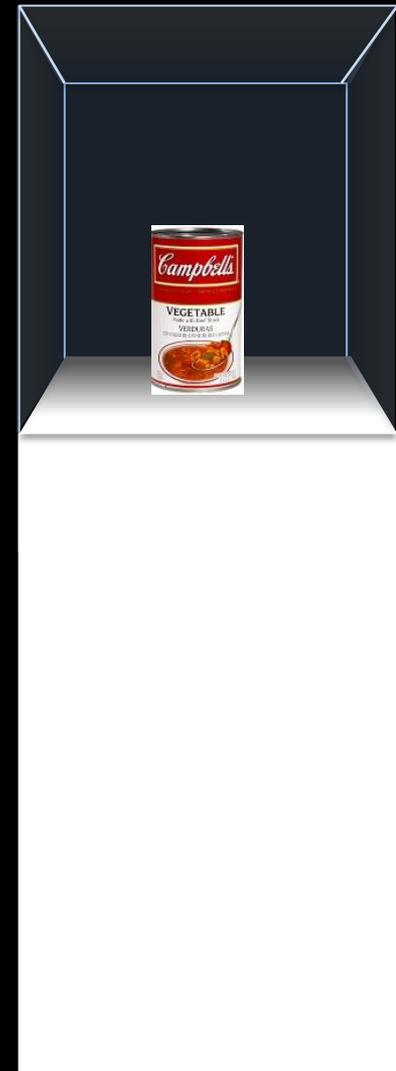
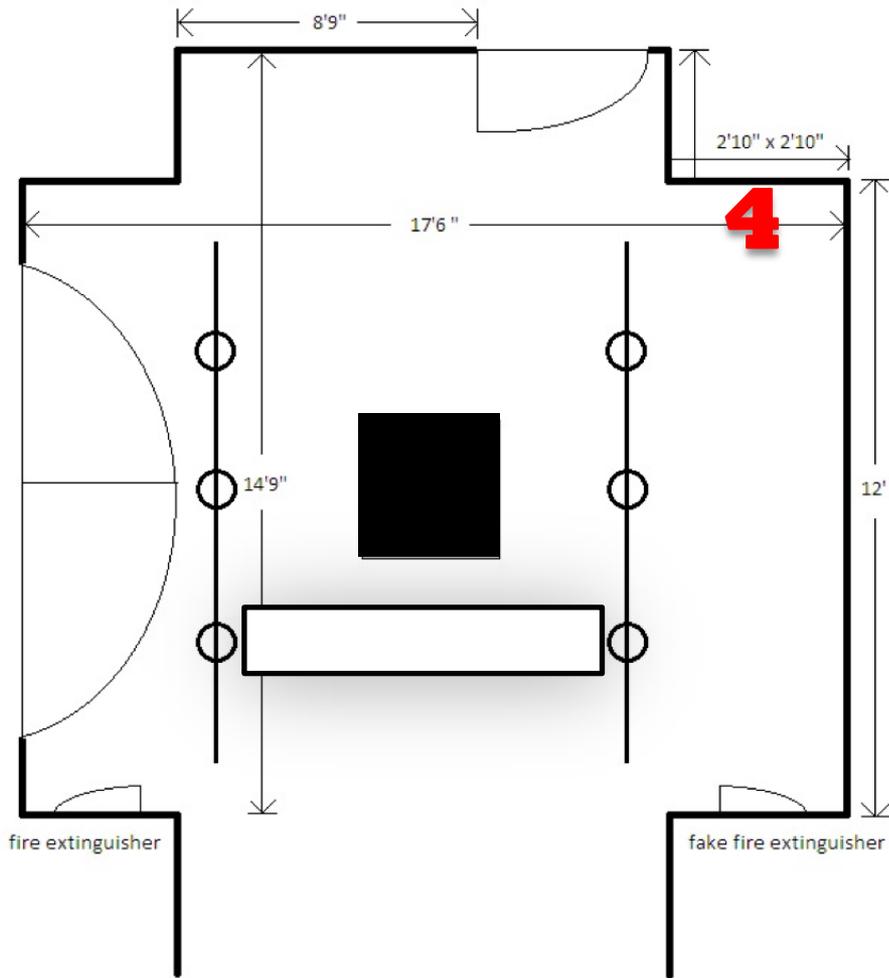
Frame: 41 5/8 x 29 1/4 in. (105.7 x 74.3 cm)

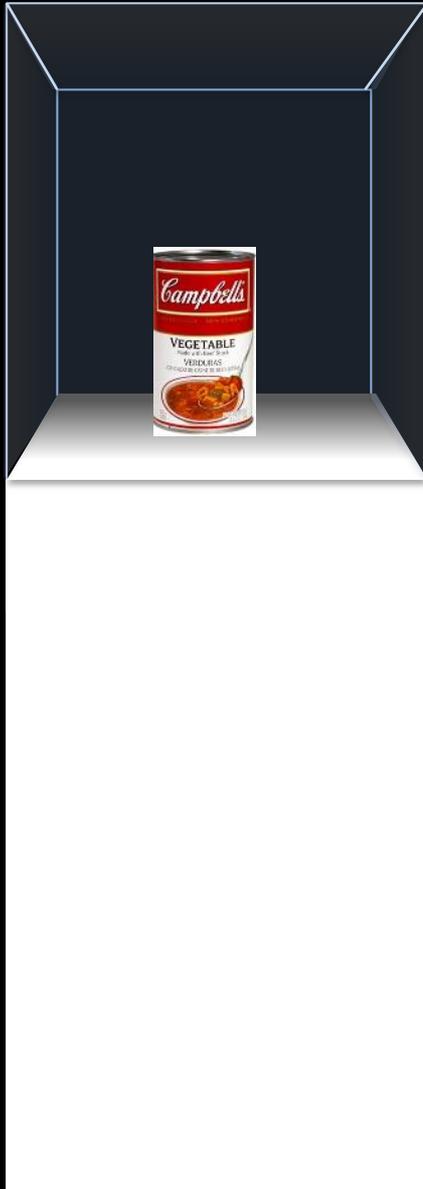
1989.12.1

Gift of Richard Anuszkiewicz

Contemporary art challenges the need for frames. Some works benefit from a frame's appearance while others bypass the use of frames entirely. Pop art collapses the space between everyday life and art. It often uses commercial imagery as social commentary. Andy Warhol is known for his "factory" that produced hundreds of silkscreened controversial works. Warhol's *Soup Can, Vegetarian Vegetable* is both matted and framed. Does the frame intensify or weaken the commercialism of the image? Does it make the image a work of art?

Framing method: matted, framed, hang elevated above eye level

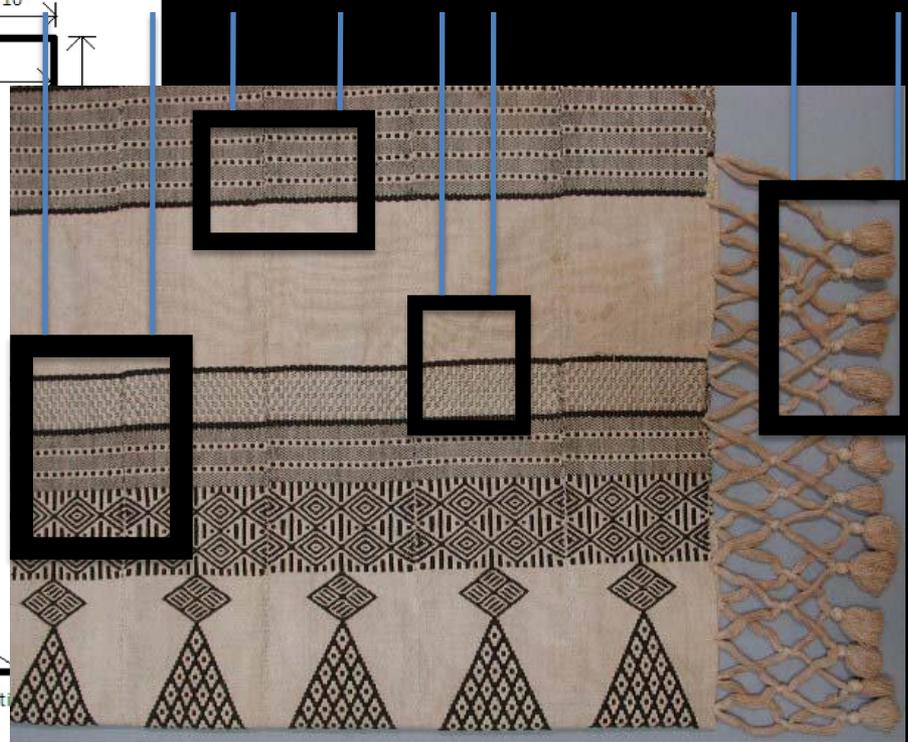
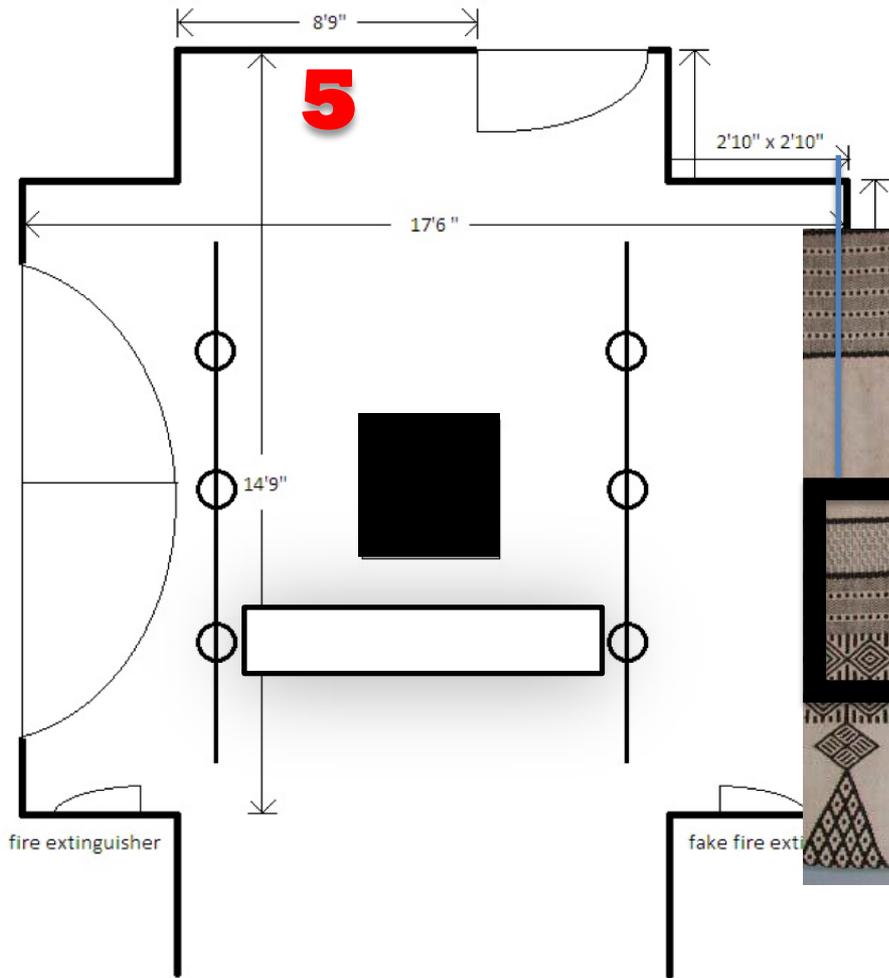




Campbell's Vegetable Vegetarian soup can
2011
Aluminum, paper, soup

Does displaying an object in an art museum automatically make it a work of art? Warhol changed the relationship between popular culture and art. Here the exhibition questions the connections between an infamous painting and the original object it depicts. By framing this common object behind glass in a museum, how are your perceptions of the can confronted? Does this juxtaposition influence you to think differently about the Warhol painting?

Framing method: pedestal, vitrine, against wall



Hammock

Mende people, Southern Sierra Leone

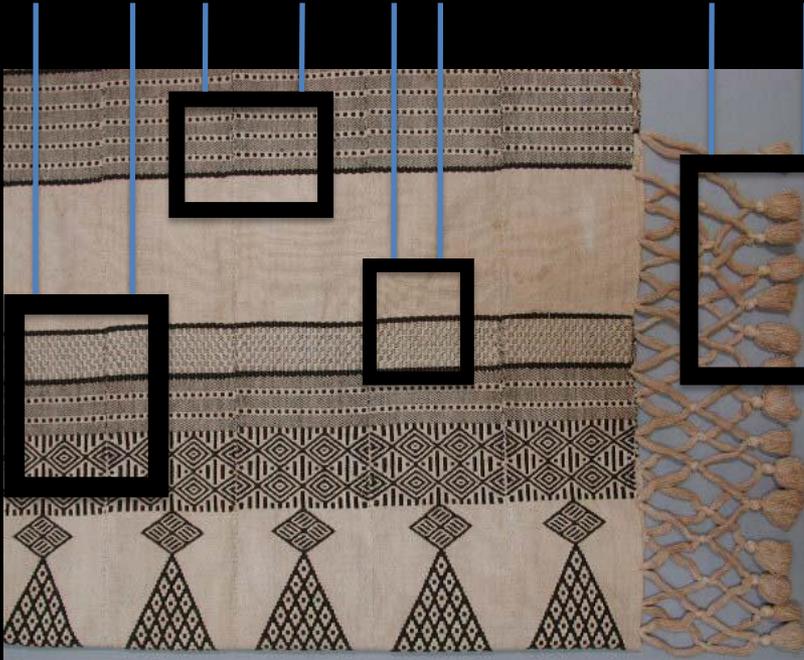
c. 1950

Cotton

26 in. x 7 ft. 3 in. (66 x 221 cm)

2002.31.8

Gift of Lewis Berner and family

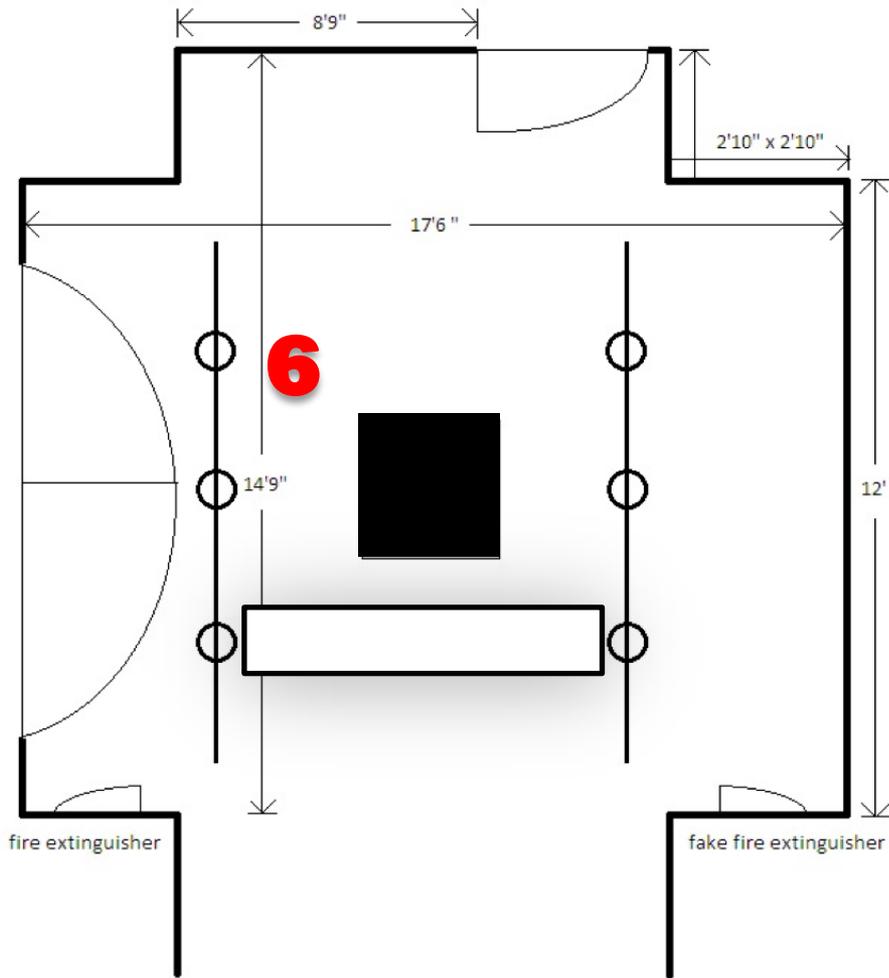


What happens when decorated materials like canvas, wood, or paper are unframed? It simply becomes an object with a decorated surface. A picture frame hides the edges of such materials and disguises the fact that the image is applied to an object. Why then are the edges of this textile exposed? What kinds of objects are unframed?

These frames draw attention to specific parts of the textile. Frames create visual borders. The borders cut off the lines, colors, patterns, and textures of the painting, as well as help focus attention on the enclosed spaces.

Framing method: object mounted on wall, empty picture frames hanging from ceiling at various heights

Alternative framing method: object mounted on wall, Plexiglas in front of textile, frame decals on Plexiglas





Yoshiyuki

Japanese, active late 19th - early 20th century

Vase with Design of Goose by a Stream

Meiji, Meiji period, 1868-1912

Silver, gold, and copper

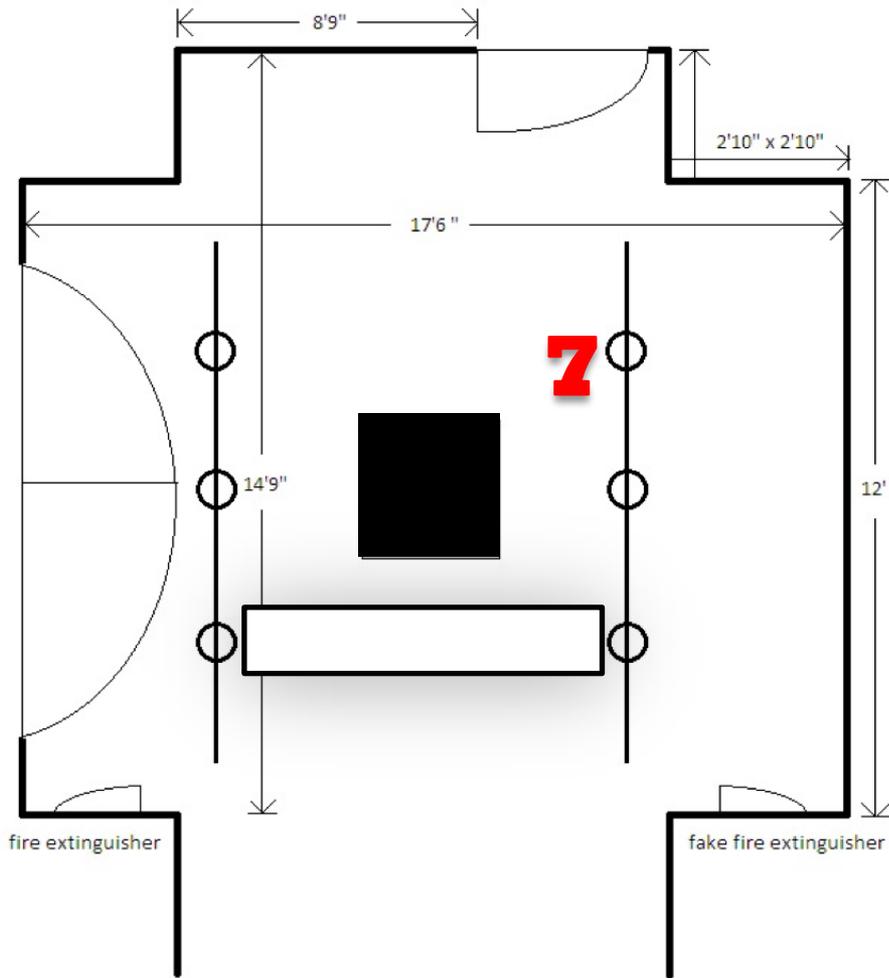
8 3/8 in. (21.2 cm)

2003.44.1

Museum purchase, gift of Dr. and Mrs. David A. Cofrin
with additional funds provided by the David A. Cofrin Art
Acquisition Endowment

Museums generally show objects at eye level. This case's altered proportions subvert viewer expectations by creating a new visual experience. Is it worse? Is it better?

Framing method: low pedestal, tall vitrine





Hu Wenming

Chinese, active late 16th - early 17th century

Incense Tool Vase

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

7 1/4 x 2 1/2 x 1 3/4 in. (18.4 x 6.4 x 4.4 cm)

Bronze with gilding and inlaid silver wire

2005.21.1

Museum purchase, gift of private donors

Katsushika Hokusai

Japanese, 1760 - 1849

Okitsu, from an untitled series of views of the Tōkaidō Road station

c. 1800

4 7/8 x 6 1/2 in. (12.4 x 16.5 cm)

Color woodcut

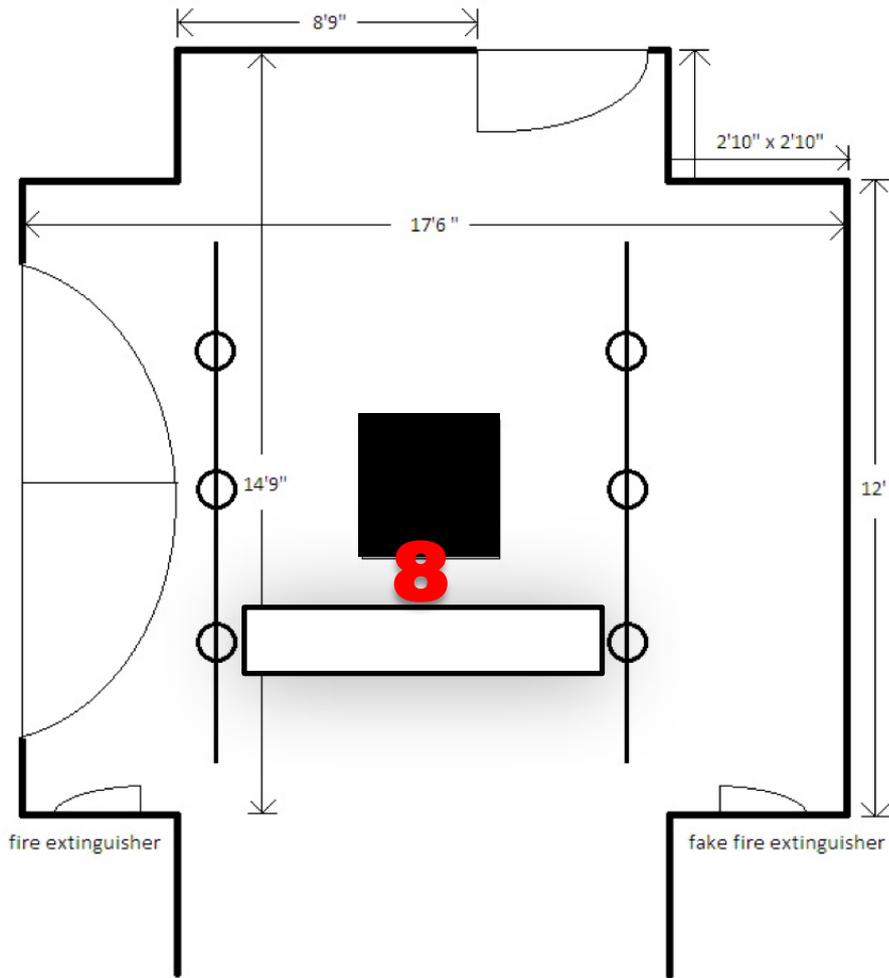
PR-00-23

Gift of Rudolph Weaver



Display cases work the same way as picture frames by creating a discrete space for images. Placing these two objects together creates a single image that imposes a relationship on them. Would such a relationship exist if they were in separate display cases?

Framing method: pedestal, vitrine





Canoe Prow

latmul people, Papua New Guinea, Korogo village
20th century

Wood

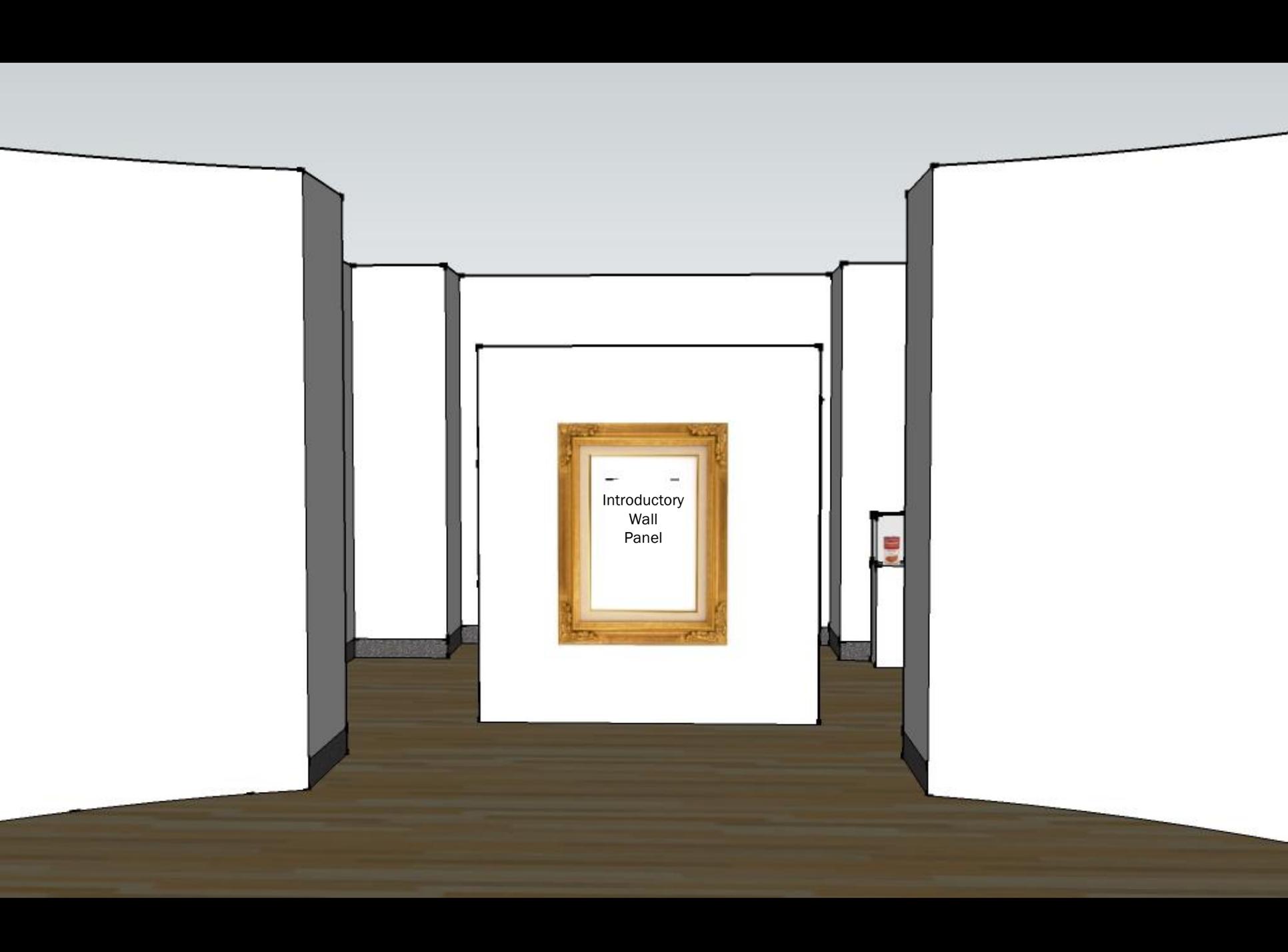
39 1/2 x 15 1/4 x 8 in. (100.3 x 38.7 x 20.3 cm)

S85-SPNG-G204

Gift of Dr. Samuel Spring

The edges of a pedestal restrict the area surrounding an object and create a frame for it. This display creates a visual tension by allowing the object to leave its designated space and intrude upon the viewers' space. How does this display violate the idea that frames form boundaries?

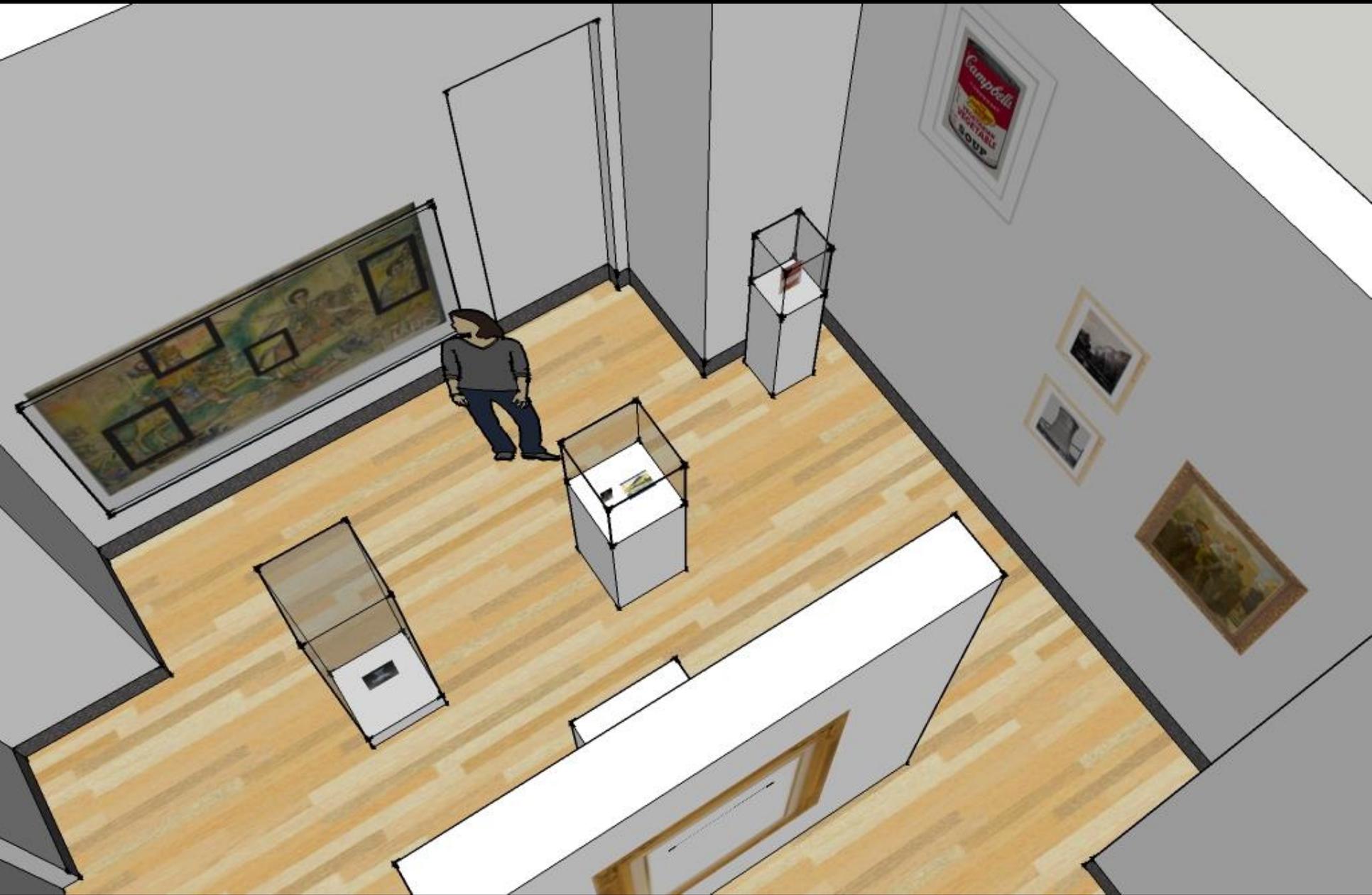
Framing method: pedestal, against wall, object slightly suspended above pedestal



Introductory
Wall
Panel

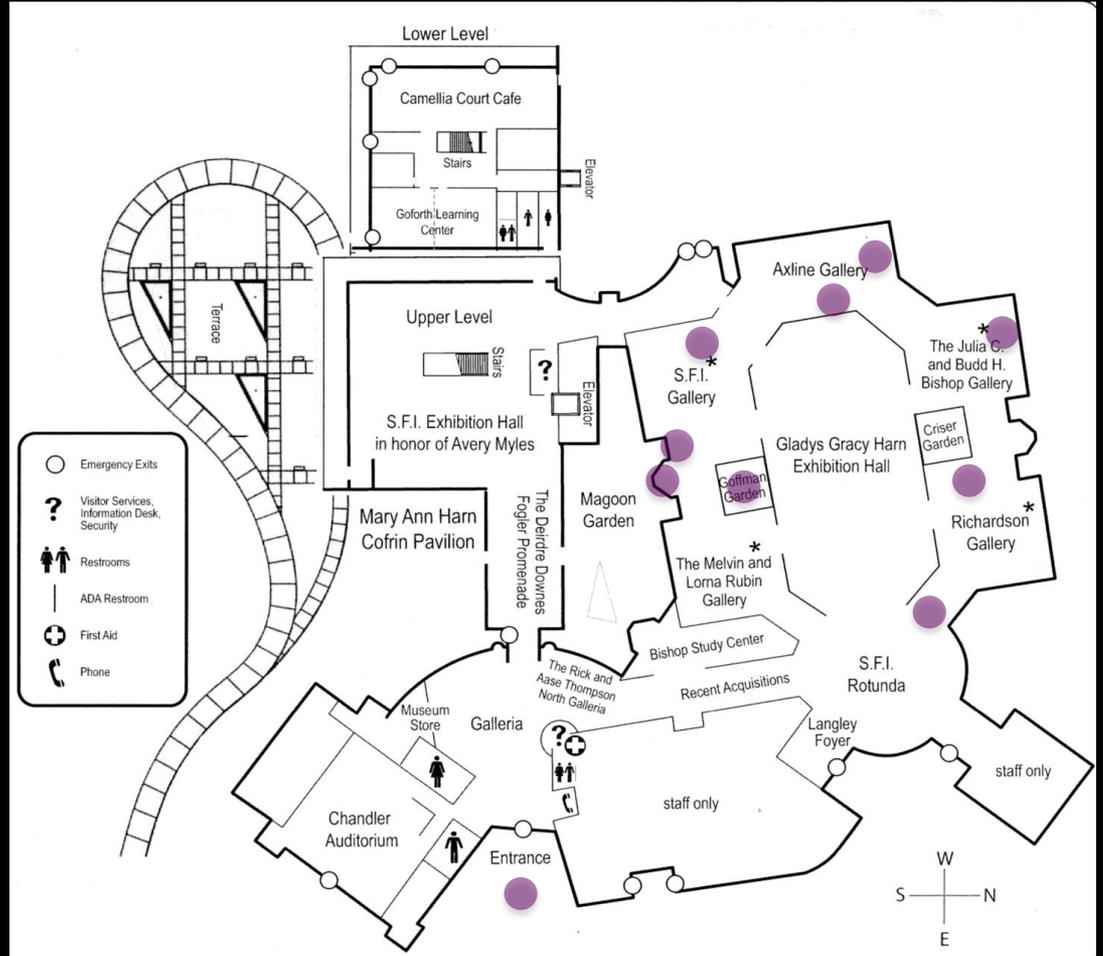






Education and Outreach

Aiming and Framing





AIMING AND FRAMING

Horn Museum of Art
Gainesville, Florida

The task of any discussion of frames and framing in the arts is first and foremost to counter the tendency of the frame to invisibility with respect to the artwork. We see the artwork, but we do not see the frame.

-Paul Duro, *The Rhetoric of the Frame*

Aiming and Framing



UF FLORIDA
The Foundation for The Glass Museum
343 West 27th St.
Gainesville, Florida 32611-2700
www.horn.museum



Month date, year - month date, year
Framing the Frame exhibition currently on display in the Langley foyer. Exhibition and outreach material designed by Museum Studies graduate students Katherine Doyle, Laura Ferrans, and project.
Framing the Frame exhibition currently on display in the Langley foyer. Exhibition and outreach material designed by Museum Studies graduate students Katherine Doyle, Laura Ferrans, and project.



AIMING AND FRAMING



1 While literally resembling a picture frame, this arch also serves as a border into the gallery. The viewer must enter the frame physically and visually to see the art.



2 Though this platform does not serve as a physical support for a three-dimensional object, it sets the two-dimensional object hanging above into its own space. It limits the viewer's access, changing the visual experience.



3 This unique vitrine, which encloses three separate platforms, creates an interesting viewing experience. The baskets are divided by the stands, yet united by the case. What is the resulting effect?



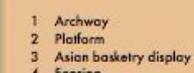
4 This subtle fencing creates a nearly invisible barrier between the viewer and the art, a barrier that is unconsciously obeyed. This method of framing is often used as a security measure, protecting vulnerable objects without using a glass case. Is this understated frame preferable to other frames? Or does it intrude on the viewer's space?



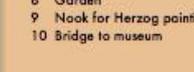
5 Like a display case, the shadow box encloses an art object in three dimensions; however, a shadow box is usually mounted to the wall and has solid side panels—a sort of extended picture frame. This protects the object inside, but also limits the viewer's access to all sides of the object.



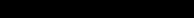
6 When a museum visitor pauses to rest and look around at the gallery, a bench becomes a sort of reverse frame. Instead of situating the art, it situates the viewer. What can be seen, and what cannot, become a new image to be appreciated on its own terms.



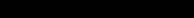
7 This cabinet of drawers also acts as a frame. Here, the objects—often prints and drawings—are presented horizontally. This is very different from most museum displays, and yet in some cases it often more closely approximates the original viewing context of the works. Works on paper are often meant to be seen in books or otherwise held in hand. This cabinet allows visitors to safely view the works, while maintaining that height and orientation.



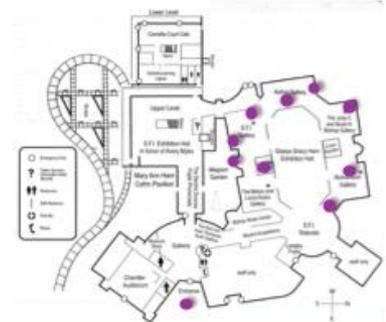
8 A unique feature of the Horn is its enclosed gardens. Seen from multipaned windows, the gardens frame natural and man-made elements.



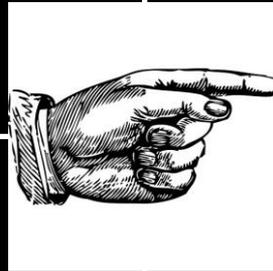
9 Another special architectural feature of the Horn is this nook. The window seat encloses an intimate space, containing a single painting. Again, the visitor is situated in a specific and deliberate way, but so is the painting. Cozy or claustrophobic, this space is separate and discrete from the rest of the museum experience.

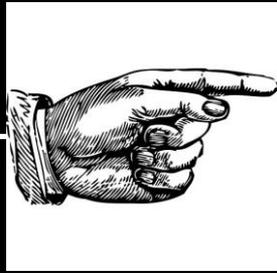


10 The museum itself acts as a frame: enclosing art, separating it from everyday life. Here at the Horn, the entrance, with its bridge and fountain, clearly delineates the museum's space, the place where the mundane ends and art begins.



- 1 Archway
- 2 Platform
- 3 Asian basketry display case
- 4 Fencing
- 5 Shadow box
- 6 Bench
- 7 Drawer
- 8 Garden
- 9 Nook for Herzog painting
- 10 Bridge to museum





Frame Quest



Frame Quest



Frame 1: Gilded Frame

This is an example of a gilded frame. **Gilding** is the process of decorating a material with thin flakes of gold. Often, frames are carved from wood and the gold is stuck on using a glue-like substance called gesso.

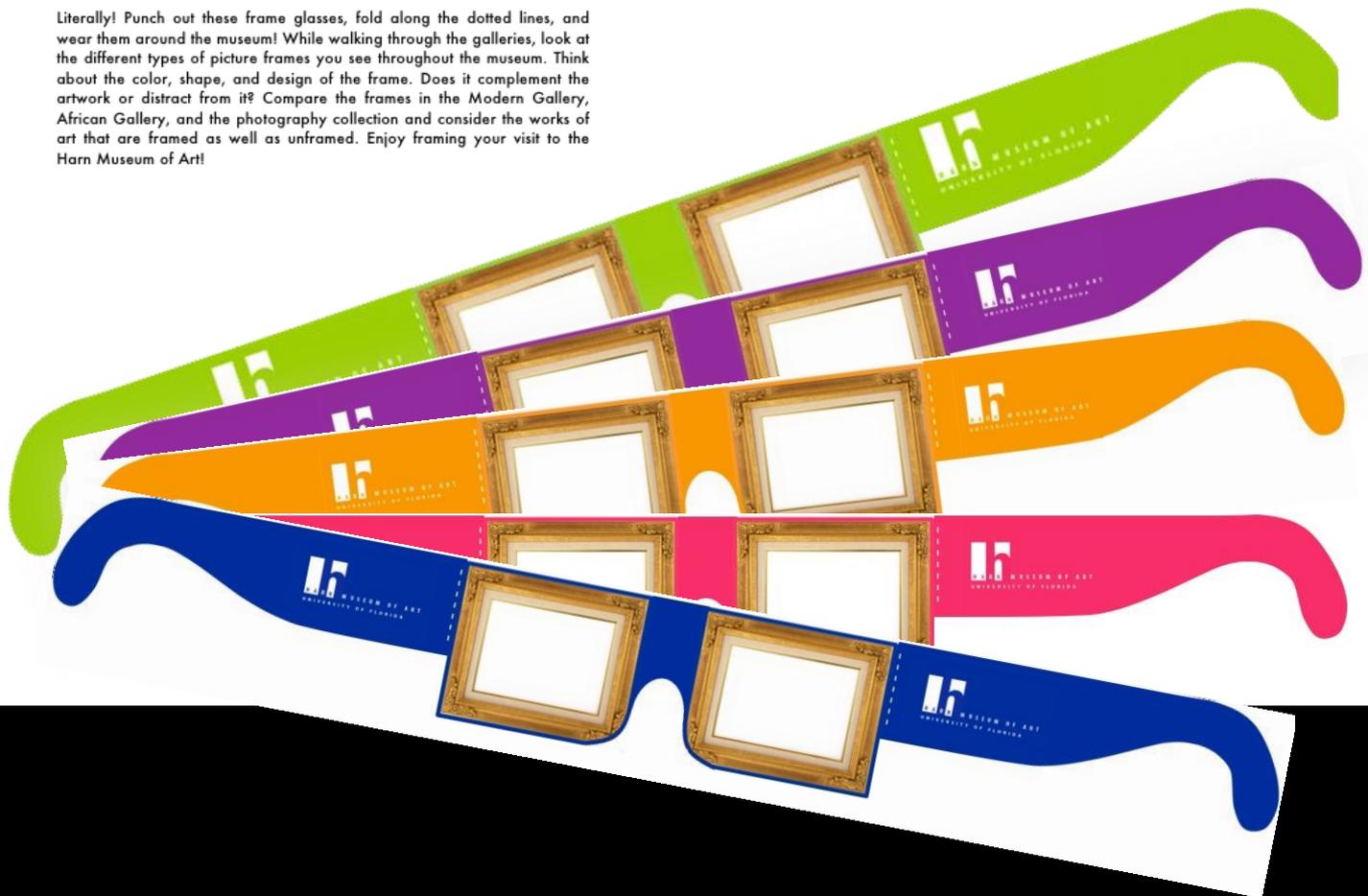
What paintings have you seen that use a gilded frame like this? What paintings do not have gilded frames?

Use this card to put a gilded frame around a vase. How does this make the object look different?

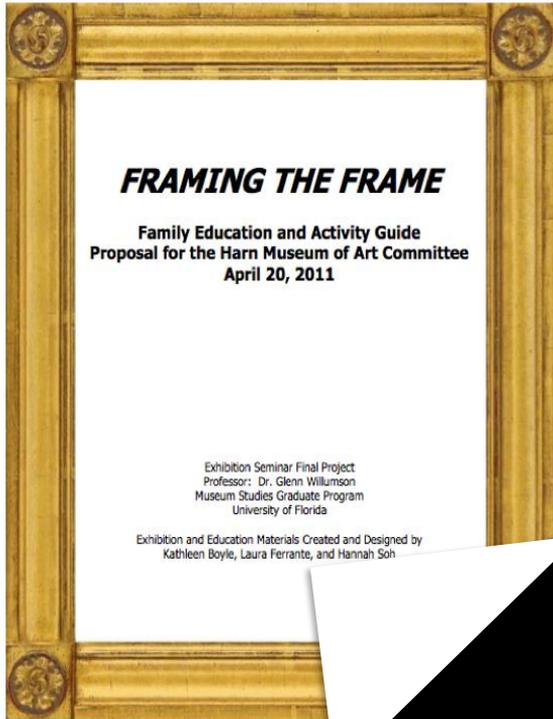
Frame the Art Museum

FRAME THE ART MUSEUM

Literally! Punch out these frame glasses, fold along the dotted lines, and wear them around the museum! While walking through the galleries, look at the different types of picture frames you see throughout the museum. Think about the color, shape, and design of the frame. Does it complement the artwork or distract from it? Compare the frames in the Modern Gallery, African Gallery, and the photography collection and consider the works of art that are framed as well as unframed. Enjoy framing your visit to the Harn Museum of Art!



Educational Guide



2. Glossary

The following is a list of vocabulary words that address aspects of framing. We encourage you to introduce these terms to exhibition and museum.

Arabesque: A scrolling

Back Edge: The outer

Cartouche: A decorative

Gesso: A liquid mixture

prepared for the frame for gilding

Gilding: The process in

which a thin layer of gold

leaf is applied to the

inner surface of the

frame.

Patina: The natural or

artificial surface

Punchwork: A surface

decorative pattern

Rail: The place where

the frame is hung

Replica: When a period

frame is reproduced

Reproduction: When a

frame is made to

look like the original

Rope Twist: An ornamental

decorative pattern

Running Pattern: A decorative

border or ornament

Sight Edge: The inner

edge of the frame

Top Edge: The element

of the frame that is

closest to the artwork

(Definitions taken from

Wilner, San Francisco; C

outside reading suggests

the following definitions

Exhibition Seminar Proposal: /

Early Christian Artwork

The roots of traditional picture frames can be traced to architectural framing devices used in religious places of worship such as cathedrals and temples. Early Christian art is especially



connected to the evolution of traditional

art in Europe (500-1150 CE) established

Christian art and architecture through

further evolved into the Gothic period

identified by massive cathedrals across

Europe. Frames in these settings are

of devotion, such as the Virgin Mary

common people. As a result, the frames

of society. Elaborate frames are

as suggested connections to the

worship include borders around altars

bindings. How are the frames in the

the art museum?



Notre Dame Cathedral Windsor
1180-1225 CE, France

Exhibition Seminar Proposal: Framing the Frame

4. Exhibition Writing Activities

Sometimes it is difficult to even think about how frames affect the ways you see and understand art. The following questions were created to help you appreciate why frames are important. Take a moment to read these questions over, and consider the different ways you could possibly answer them. Feel free to be creative with your answers! Sometimes it is even better to draw a picture for a response!

Most people consider frames to be purely decorative. What kinds of frames would you call decorative in this museum? Where are they? What kinds of artwork do they frame?

What makes a frame decorative? What kinds of frames are not decorative? Why might someone not want to use a decorative frame for their art?



Exhibition Seminar Proposal: Framing the Frame; Kathleen Boyle, Laura Ferrante, Hannah Soh; April 20, 2011

1. Introduction
2. Glossary
3. A Background for Frames
4. Exhibition Writing Activities
5. Outside Activity and Reading Suggestions

