



# The Vision-led Audience-focused Museum

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▶ hargreaves  
▶ mcintyre

# Introduction

# Where we work



# Immersed in the cultural sector

## Rolling research for London consortium



The British  
Museum

National  
Portrait  
Gallery

V&A

THE  
NATIONAL  
GALLERY

the  
DESIGN  
MUSEUM



# Immersed in the cultural sector

**...to international 'big hitters'**

GUGGENHEIM



Smithsonian  
Institution

ngv  
National  
Gallery of  
Victoria

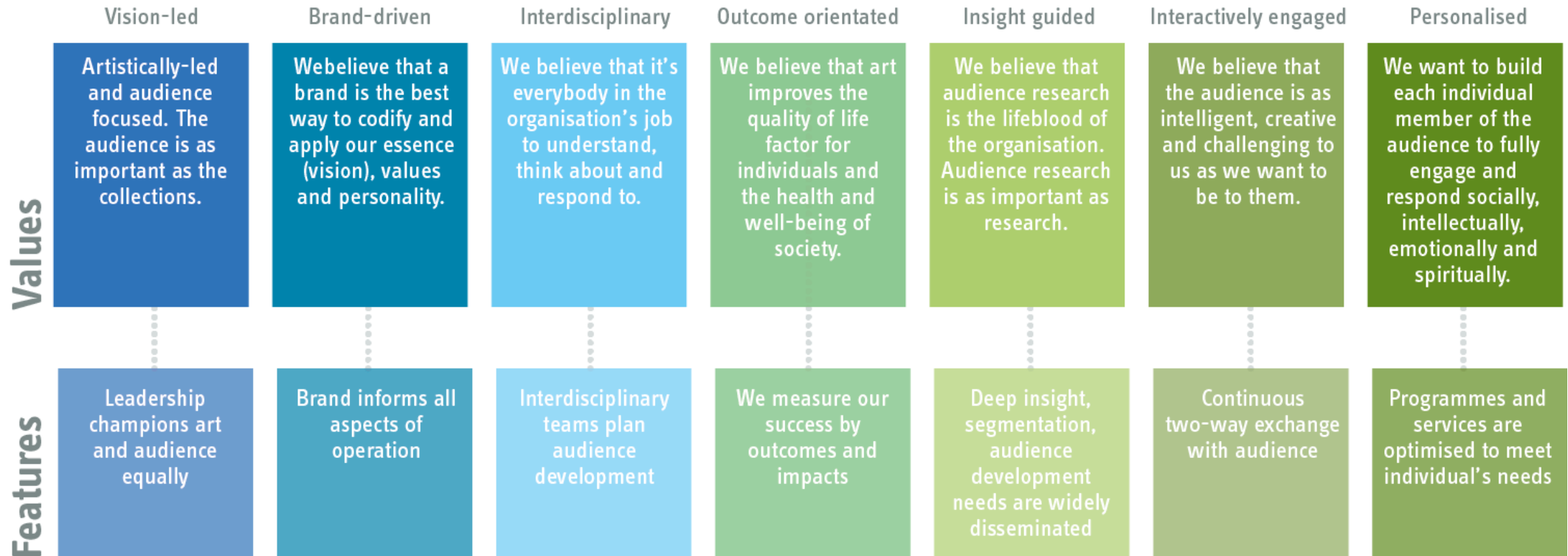
SF MO  
MA  
San Francisco  
Museum of  
Modern Art



**Vision-led  
Audience-focused**

		External focus	
		Narrow	Wide
Internal focus	Artistic	<b>Vision-led, peer-focused</b>  Innovative organisations wanting to push boundaries of art form  Focus: extending critical debate and artistic practice  Introverted	<b>Vision-led, audience-focused</b>  Ambitious, aspirational vision that aims to engage with the widest possible audience  Focus: on captivation  Accessible
	Audience	<b>Audience-led, socially-focused</b>  Community-based developmental organisation where artistic vision, activities and programme is reflection of the needs of the target audience  Focus: to increase life opportunities, quality of life and skills of target audience  Positive action	<b>Audience-led, audience-focused</b>  Mainstream commercial organisation aimed at making profit  Focus: on commercial success by meeting mainstream market needs  Mainstream

# Seven Pillars of Audience Focus



**WHY do people visit museums?**



social interaction	<b>Social</b>
entertainment	
to see, to do	
inclusion, welcome	
access, comfort, security, warmth, welcome	



academic or professional interest	<b>Intellectual</b>
hobby interest	
self-improvement	
stimulate children	



aesthetic pleasure	<b>Emotional</b>
awe and wonder	
moving	
personal relevance	
experience the past	
nostalgia	
sense of cultural identity	



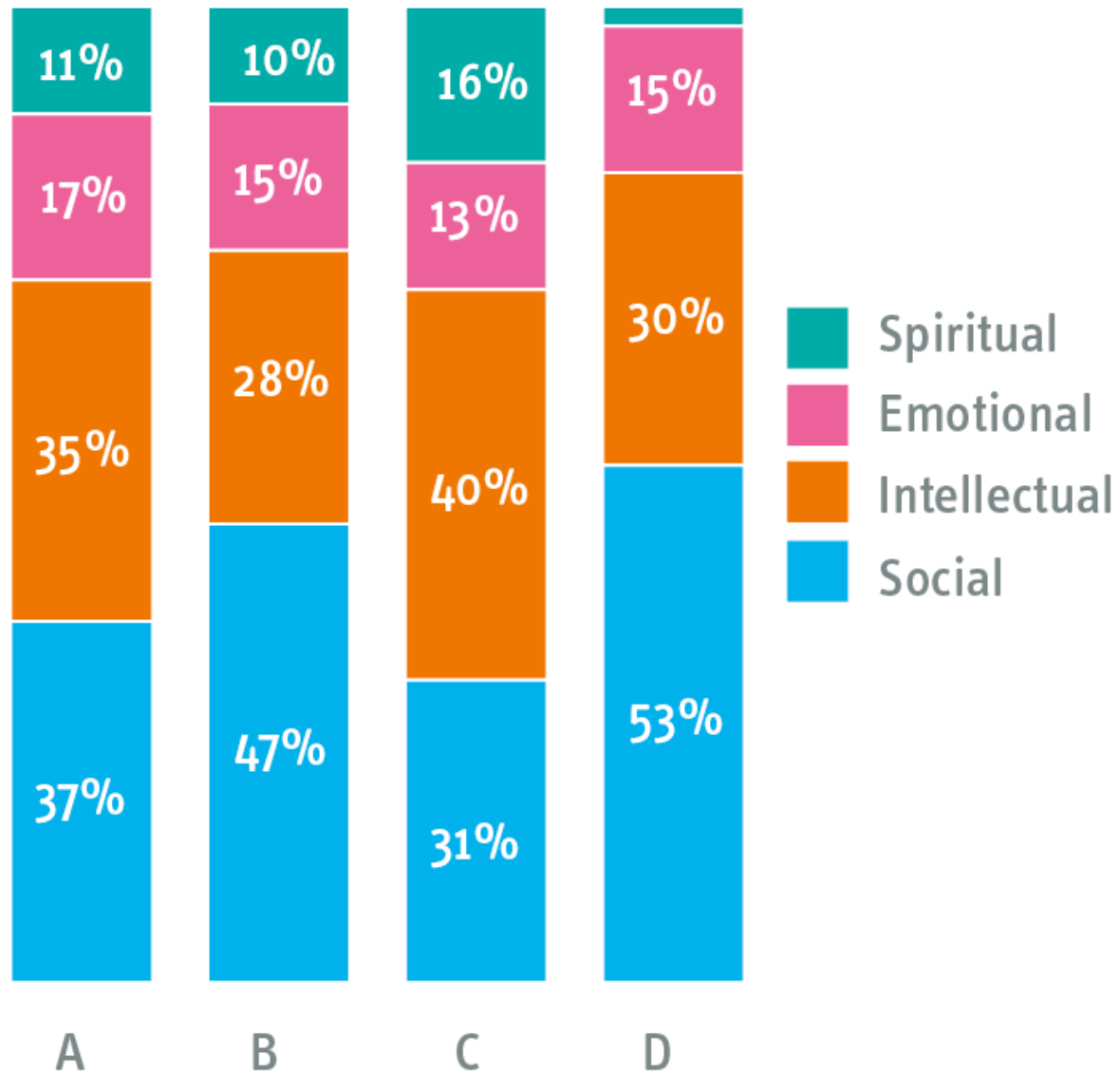
escapism	<b>Spiritual</b>
contemplation	
stimulate creativity	

## MHM's hierarchy of visitor motivations and outcomes

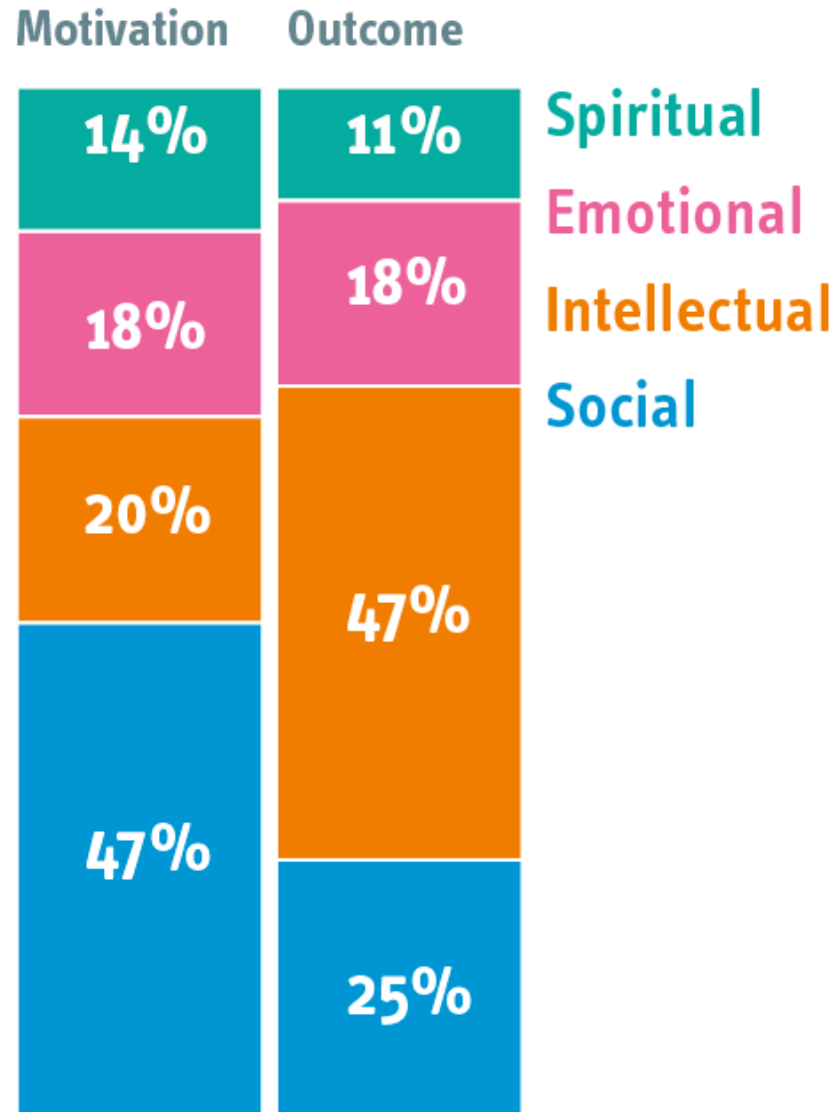
Visitors see venue as: Have this driver:		And they seek this from a visit:
CHURCH	SPIRITUAL	Creative stimulation and quiet contemplation, they see the museum as an opportunity to escape and recharge their batteries, food for the soul
SPA	EMOTIONAL	May have a personal connection to the subject matter, want to see fascinating things in an inspiring setting, seek ambience, deep sensory and intellectual experience
ARCHIVE	INTELLECTUAL	Keen to encourage their children's or their own interest and knowledge, may have professional interest in the subject, seek a journey of discovery, to find out new things
ATTRACTION	SOCIAL	See museums as an enjoyable place to spend time with friends and family, seek ease of access and orientation, good facilities and services, welcoming staff



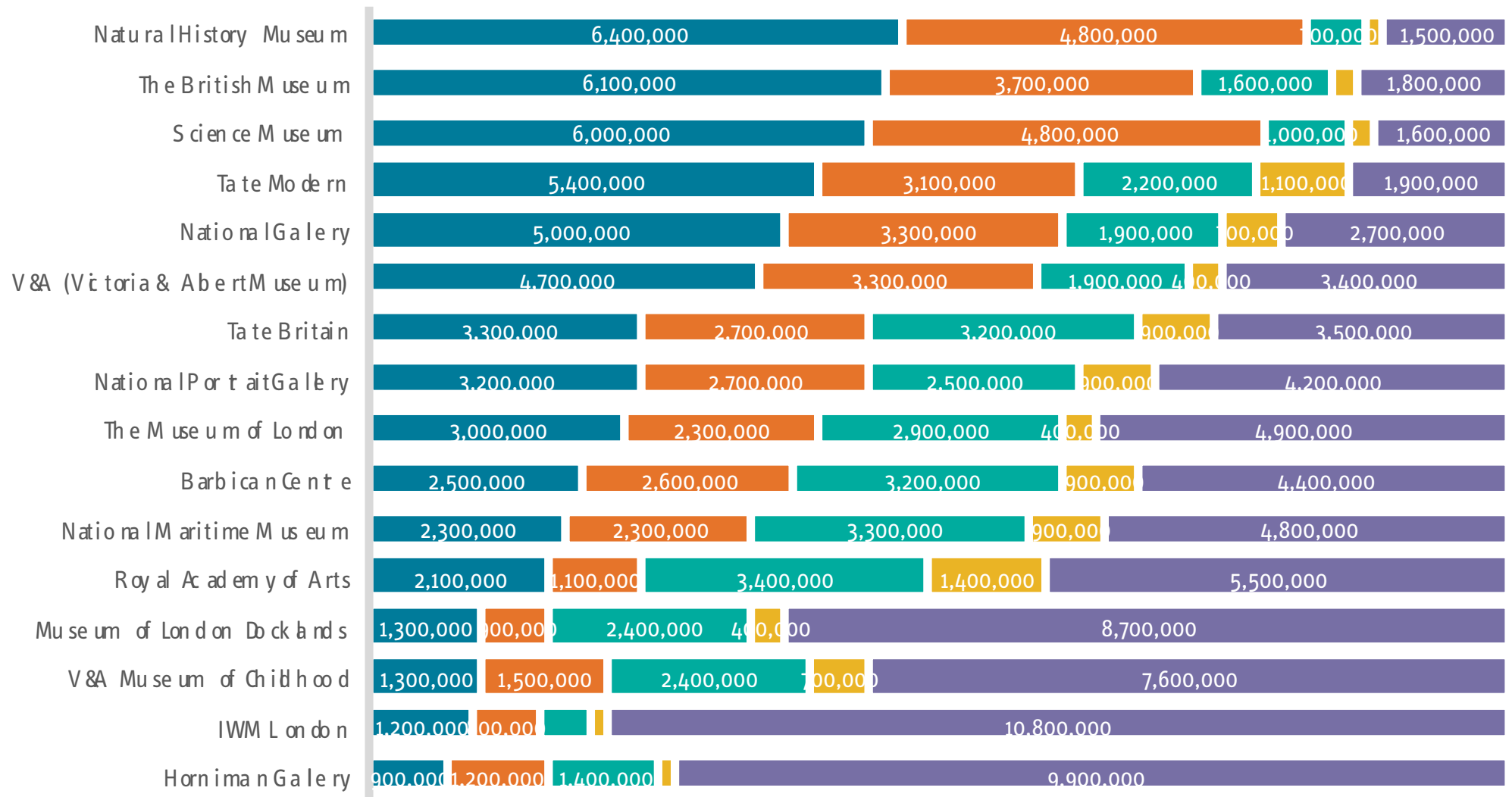
## Example from national museums data



Example outcome shift from a British Museum exhibition



## Market size in 2018 (London, East and South East)



■ Visited in past 3 years 
 ■ Visited more than 3 years ago 
 ■ Never, interested 
 ■ Never, not interested 
 ■ Unaware



# Changing expectations

- Involvement
- Immersion
- Co-creation
- Co-curation
- Empowerment
- Multiple voices
- Blurred boundaries – multi-sensory
- Participatory



# Planning for changing public expectations of museums

# Deliver

## WE BELIEVE

Museum knowledge and research underpin our civilisation

## PERSONALITY

Trusted expert

## THE MUSEUM IS A

Storehouse of knowledge

## WE OFFER

Authoritative reference

## YOU'LL EXPERIENCE

Knowledge

## OUR PROMISE

Our expert knowledge is credible, authoritative and accurate

## OUR BRAND ESSENCE

Keepers of the flame

## CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE

Institutional

## OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

Single, authoritative voice

## QUALITIES THAT SHOULD BE RETAINED

**Authority.** This gives us permission to tackle subject matters others can't.

**Expertise.** This is empowering for our people.

**Credibility.** Trust is critical to building deeper connections.

## ATTITUDES THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED

**Don't touch.** The idea that collections are too good for visitors is a huge demotivator.

**We know best.** Our audiences are all experts of their own areas and their views have value.

**One way flow of information.** Our job is not just to deliver, we need to accept and learn from dialogue.

## IMPACT FOR BRAND

We need to use these qualities as a platform for an egalitarian conversation.

# Inform

## WE BELIEVE

Education sets you free  
and improves your life

## PERSONALITY

Benevolent educator

## THE MUSEUM IS A

Centre for learning

## WE OFFER

Interpretation

## YOU'LL EXPERIENCE

Understanding

## OUR PROMISE

We will open your mind and  
expand your horizons

## OUR BRAND ESSENCE

Explain the world

## CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE

Individual

## OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

One group telling another

## QUALITIES THAT SHOULD BE RETAINED

**Learning.** Learning is an essential part of empathy and shifting perception.

**Altruism.** A desire to benefit WA people and culture is very important.

**Connections.** The ambition to create connections is very important.

## ATTITUDES THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED

**Transmission of knowledge.** The information is still travelling in a one-way direction.

**We know what's best for you.** The notion that we have a more enlightened perspective.

**Your life needs improving.** It is not our place to judge.

## IMPACT FOR BRAND

An egalitarian conversation from which we and our audiences gain benefit.

### QUALITIES THAT SHOULD BE RETAINED

**Passion.** These people will be our advocates.

**Inspire curiosity.** Realisations come from inquisitive exploration.

**Learning journeys.** Interactivity as a more effective transmission of ideas.

**Relevance.** Make sure it's for our audiences, not for us.

### ATTITUDES THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED

**Collections are everything.** It is the ideas that collections inspire which should be our goal.

**Individual.** While each person's journey is important, we must also think about the broader collective picture.

### IMPACT FOR BRAND

An egalitarian conversation from which our audiences' curiosity inspires shared discoveries.

## Involve

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### WE BELIEVE

Museums inspire curiosity and fire the imagination

### PERSONALITY

Inspirational storyteller

### THE MUSEUM IS A

Portal to an amazing world

### WE OFFER

Immersive experiences

### YOU'LL EXPERIENCE

Active engagement

### OUR PROMISE

We make learning and discovery fun and magical

### OUR BRAND ESSENCE

Hands on, minds on

### CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE

Social

### OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

Telling relevant stories

### QUALITIES THAT SHOULD BE RETAINED

**Partnership.** An equal two-way exchange.

**Ideas are king.** Collections and stories are vehicles for ideas.

**Shared relevance.** The basis for community.

### ATTITUDES THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED

**People's collections.** Other people's things in jars is not quite lofty enough, we need a big idea to ensure we are not trivialising.

### IMPACT FOR BRAND

An egalitarian exchange which creates an ideas-based community.

## Co-create

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### WE BELIEVE

Sharing experiences and identities builds community

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### PERSONALITY

Generous partner

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### THE MUSEUM IS A

Community builder

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### WE OFFER

Emotional connections

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### YOU'LL EXPERIENCE

A sense of community

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### OUR PROMISE

Share your story and ours to find personal relevance

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### OUR BRAND ESSENCE

Self-discovery + Shared identity  
= Community

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### CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE

Communal

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### OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

Two-way exchange

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### QUALITIES THAT SHOULD BE RETAINED

**Facilitator of debate.** The Museum has the role of facilitator and the community becomes the advocate for justice.

**Self-directed thinking.** A paradigm shift from institutional-directed thinking to self-directed discovery.

**Questions not answers.** Breaking down prejudices through unbiased presentation of viewpoints.

### ATTITUDES THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED

**Militance.** Relevance demands this to be an opt-in experience, not one that is forced upon you.

### IMPACT FOR BRAND

An egalitarian exchange which creates an unprejudiced ideas-based community.

## Empower

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### WE BELIEVE

Sharing ideas builds an empathetic and participatory society

### PERSONALITY

Egalitarian facilitator

### THE MUSEUM IS A

Platform for ideas

### WE OFFER

Debate and discussion

### YOU'LL EXPERIENCE

New perspectives

### OUR PROMISE

You will not be judged and can make up your own mind

### OUR BRAND ESSENCE

Safe place for challenging ideas

### CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE

Societal

### OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

Multiple viewpoints with as many questions as answers

# Spectrum of Audience Engagement

Deliver	Inform	Involve	Co-create	Empower
WE BELIEVE Museum knowledge and research underpin our civilisation	WE BELIEVE Education sets you free and improves your life	WE BELIEVE Museums inspire curiosity and fire the imagination	WE BELIEVE Sharing experiences and identities builds community	WE BELIEVE Sharing ideas builds an empathetic and participatory society
PERSONALITY Trusted expert	PERSONALITY Benevolent educator	PERSONALITY Inspirational storyteller	PERSONALITY Generous partner	PERSONALITY Egalitarian facilitator
THE MUSEUM IS A Storehouse of knowledge	THE MUSEUM IS A Centre for learning	THE MUSEUM IS A Portal to an amazing world	THE MUSEUM IS A Community builder	THE MUSEUM IS A Platform for ideas
WE OFFER Authoritative reference	WE OFFER Interpretation	WE OFFER Immersive experiences	WE OFFER Emotional connections	WE OFFER Debate and discussion
YOU'LL EXPERIENCE Knowledge	YOU'LL EXPERIENCE Understanding	YOU'LL EXPERIENCE Active engagement	YOU'LL EXPERIENCE A sense of community	YOU'LL EXPERIENCE New perspectives
OUR PROMISE Our expert knowledge is credible, authoritative and accurate	OUR PROMISE We will open your mind and expand your horizons	OUR PROMISE We make learning and discovery fun and magical	OUR PROMISE Share your story and ours to find personal relevance	OUR PROMISE You will not be judged and can make up your own mind
OUR BRAND ESSENCE Keepers of the flame	OUR BRAND ESSENCE Explain the world	OUR BRAND ESSENCE Hands on, minds on	OUR BRAND ESSENCE Self-discovery + Shared identity = Community	OUR BRAND ESSENCE Safe place for challenging ideas
CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE Institutional	CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE Individual	CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE Social	CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE Communal	CONTEXT OF EXCHANGE Societal
OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE Single, authoritative voice	OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE One group telling another	OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE Telling relevant stories	OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE Two-way exchange	OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE Multiple viewpoints with as many questions as answers

**1 In the 21st century, Mankind is facing unprecedented possibilities and unparalleled challenges.**

We will create a museum fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a museum that has something to say; a museum that unleashes creativity and co-creates insight; a museum which is collections based, curatorially informed and audience focused; a museum with a human face providing a third space anchoring community life.



**2 Conventional museums and disciplines represent thinking from a bygone age.**

We will examine, challenge, and disrespect assumptions, conventions, and disciplinary borders. We will scrutinize and contest what a museum is and how it is run by creating an interdisciplinary, free-thinking hybrid museum.



**3 Museums of the future must enable personal and collective insights, not just present knowledge and aesthetics.**

We will re-think the physical museum spaces and buildings to create compelling, immersive experiences which speak to the mind, the body and the soul, engaging the senses, triggering the imagination and stimulating creativity, delivering social, intellectual, emotional and spiritual audience outcomes.



- 1. A fundamental feature of a democratic society is each and everyone's awareness of their ability to influence the development of society.**
- 2. 2. We will bring new perspectives, make a difference and enrich peoples lives.**



**Case Study:**

**Art Institute Chicago**

**Delivery – vision-led, audience-focused**

## Issues identified:

- Alternative entrance developed with a new Modern Wing which housed the Modern Collection
- First timers use the Modern Wing entrance because it is spacious
- More relaxed and balanced in use.
- But low proportions of visitors exit to the modern and contemporary galleries.



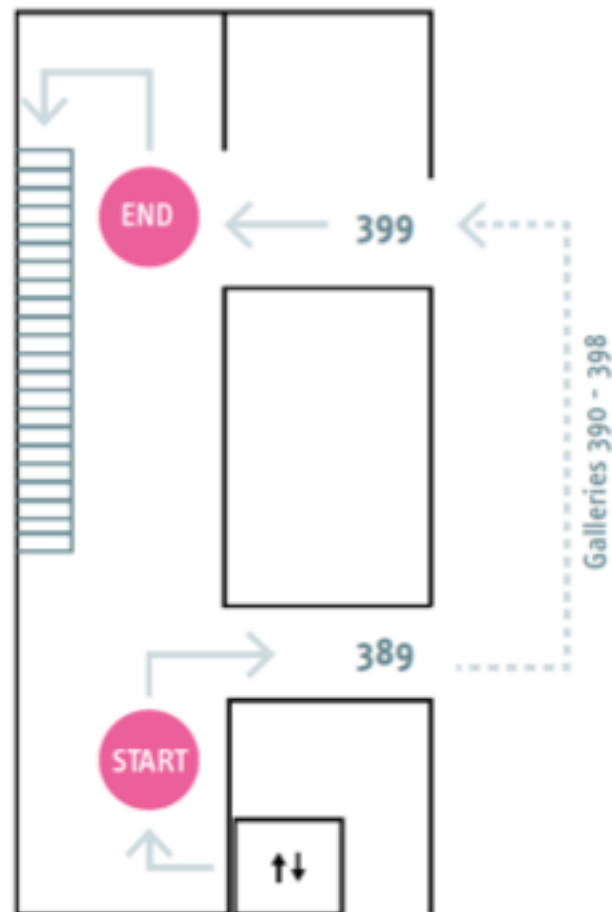
## Intended and actual behaviour

### Observations at the Art Institute of Chicago

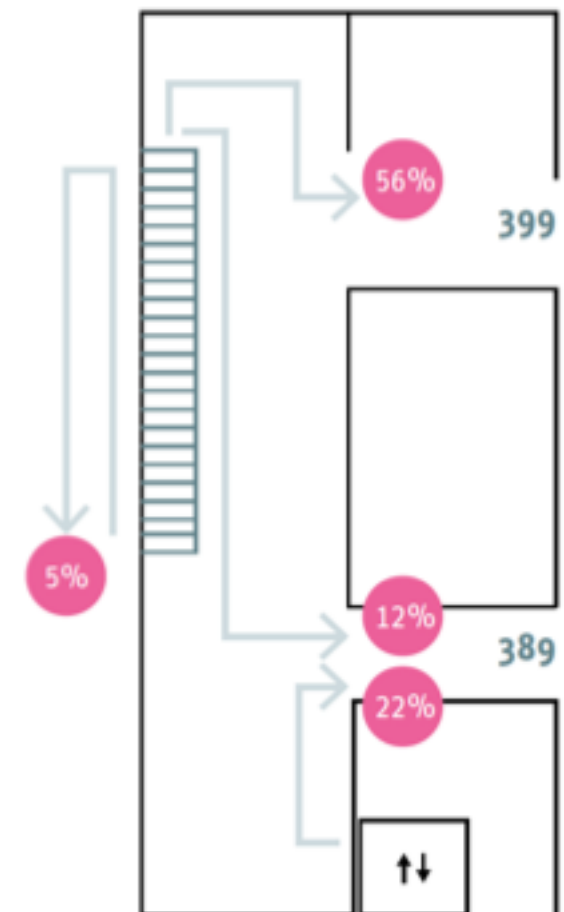
Our observational research with the Arts Institute of Chicago provoked a fundamental rethink to their visitor journey; including the approach to interpretation and messaging.

We conducted multiple layers of visitor observations in arrival spaces and within the galleries. Our findings have resulted in a full rehang of the Modern Wing of the museum, along with the development of a new interpretation scheme.

Intended behaviour



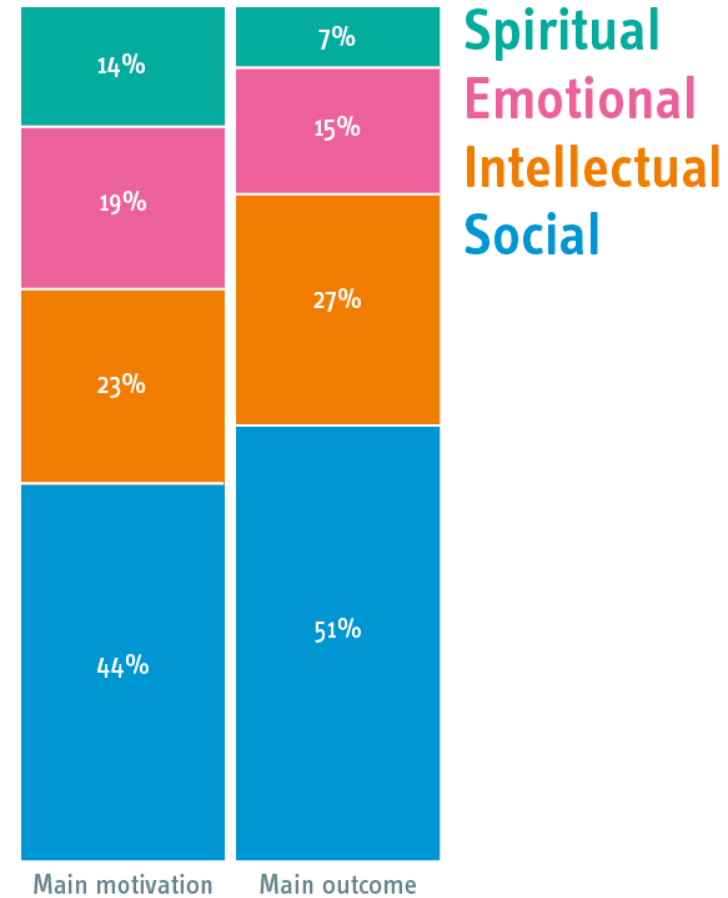
Actual behaviour



A very simple but effective navigation tracking method (above) used at an art gallery found that due to counterintuitive signage and design, the majority of visitors were experiencing an important collection in the 'wrong direction'.

## Visitors not achieving desired outcomes

Main motivation and outcome - total audience (phase 1 only)



Summary presentation of 'The complete picture'

## **Key changes made**

- Red banners for room signs
- Orientation panels by stairs
- Orientation panels by lift

**Desired impact:**

**To drive more visits to the Modern Art Galleries by lift or stairs**



## **Little change reported**

- **People still not coming up in the lift**
- **Those that reach 3<sup>rd</sup> floor enter galleries in wrong door**



## Phase 2 – more changes made

- Clearer directional signage on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- Entrance and Exit signs on the gallery doors
- A timeline of C20th art along the corridor to provide context

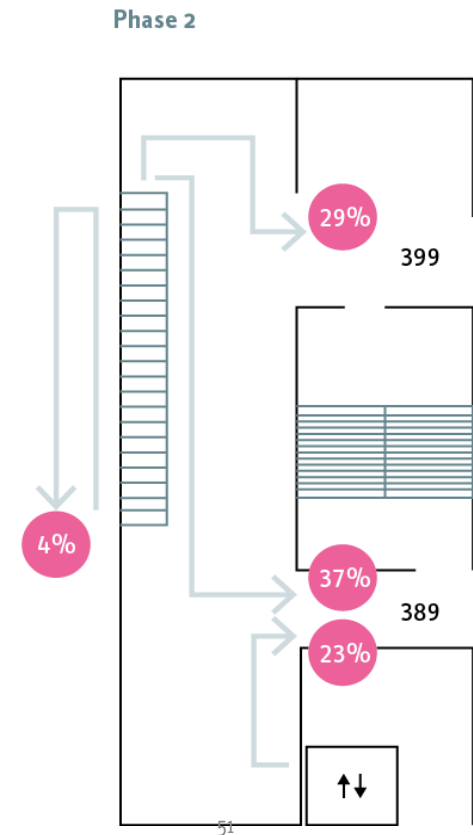
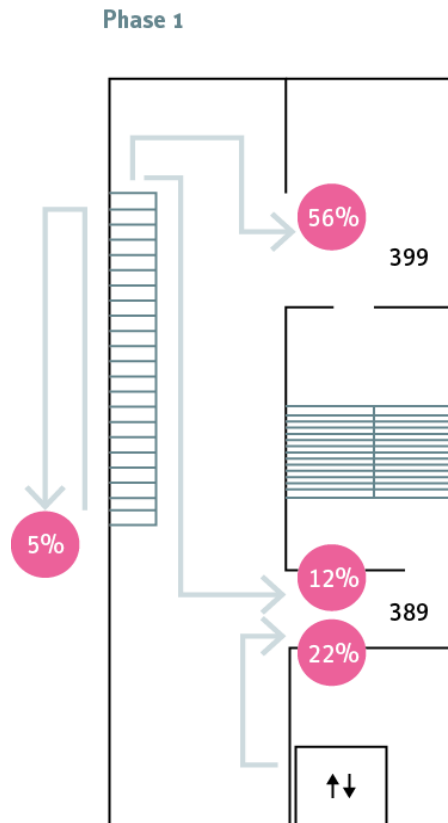


# The impact of changes made to visitor experience

## Signage on third floor Modern Wing

### Impact of changes made:

- 60% entered the galleries through room 389 (the correct chronological order). This compares with 34% from phase one.
- This represents almost twice the proportion of visitors entering the European Modern Art galleries in the direction in which is curatorially designed.



## The impact of changes made to visitor experience

### Interpretation on third floor of the Modern Wing

#### Key changes made:

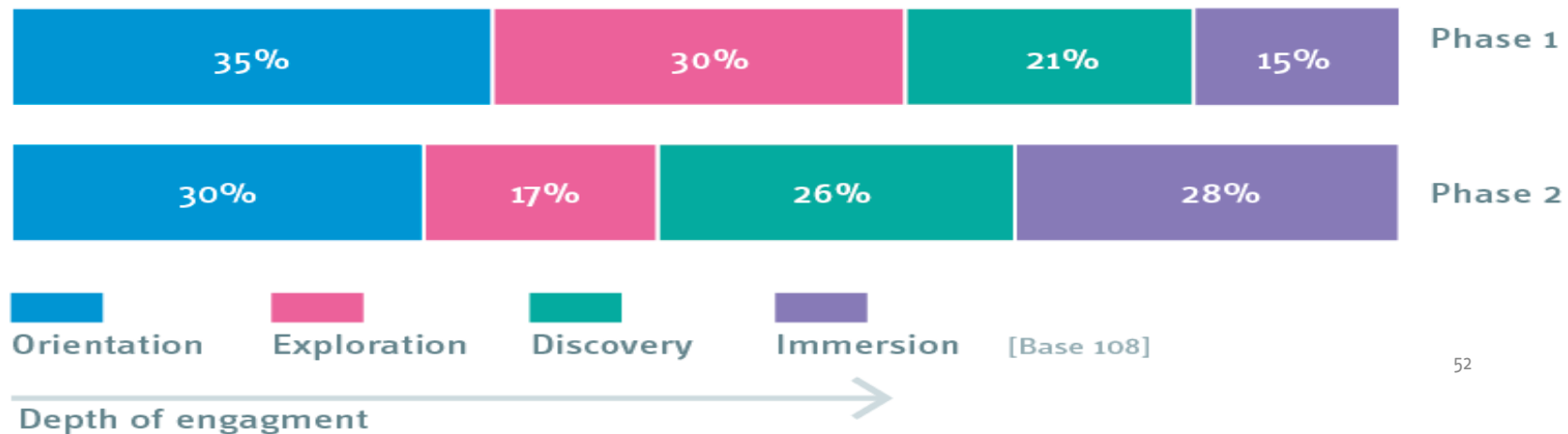
- Timeline outside galleries.
- Introduction panel outside galleries.

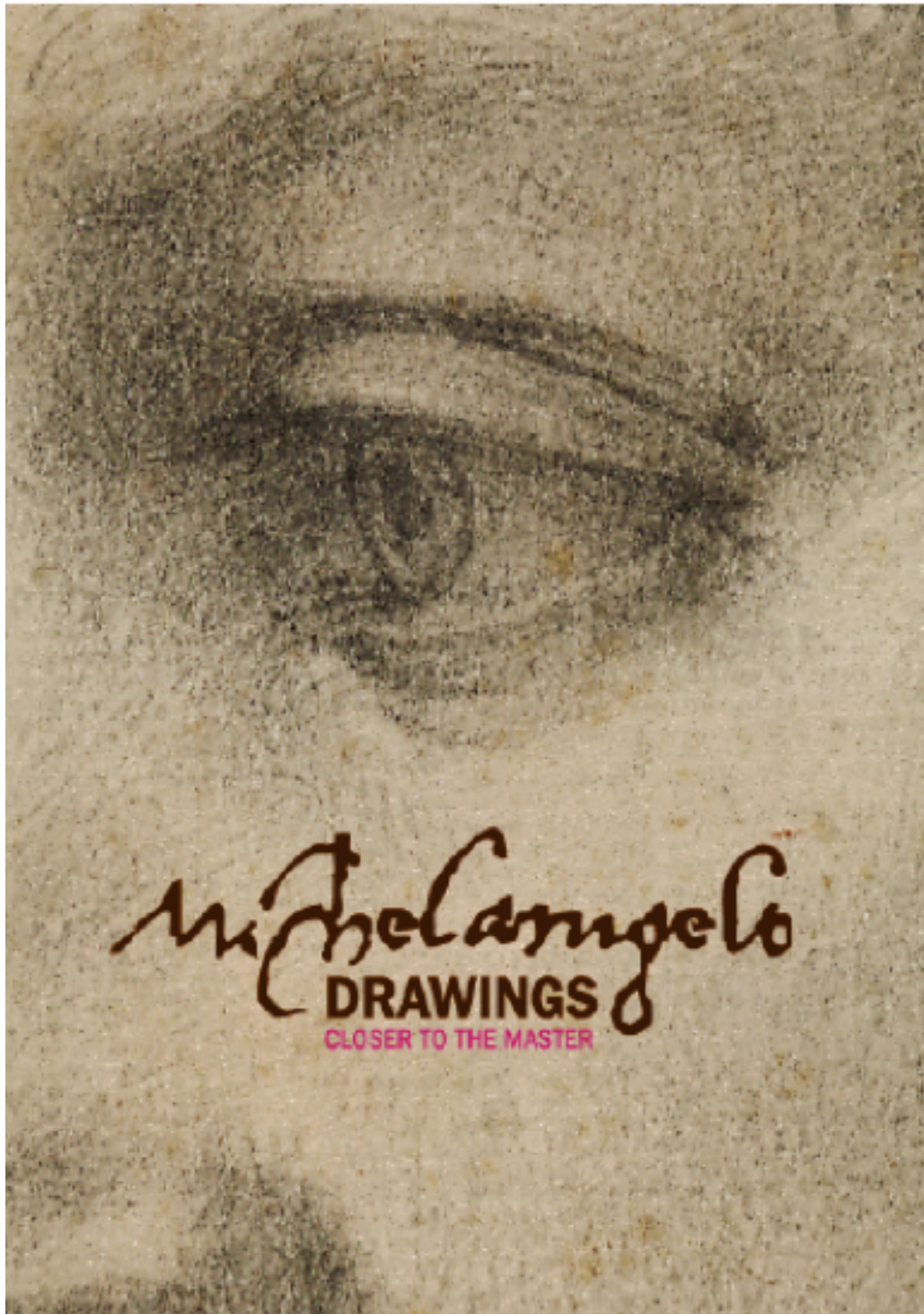
#### Desired impact of these changes

- Deeper engagement within the galleries'

#### The impact of these changes:

How visitors engaged in gallery 391

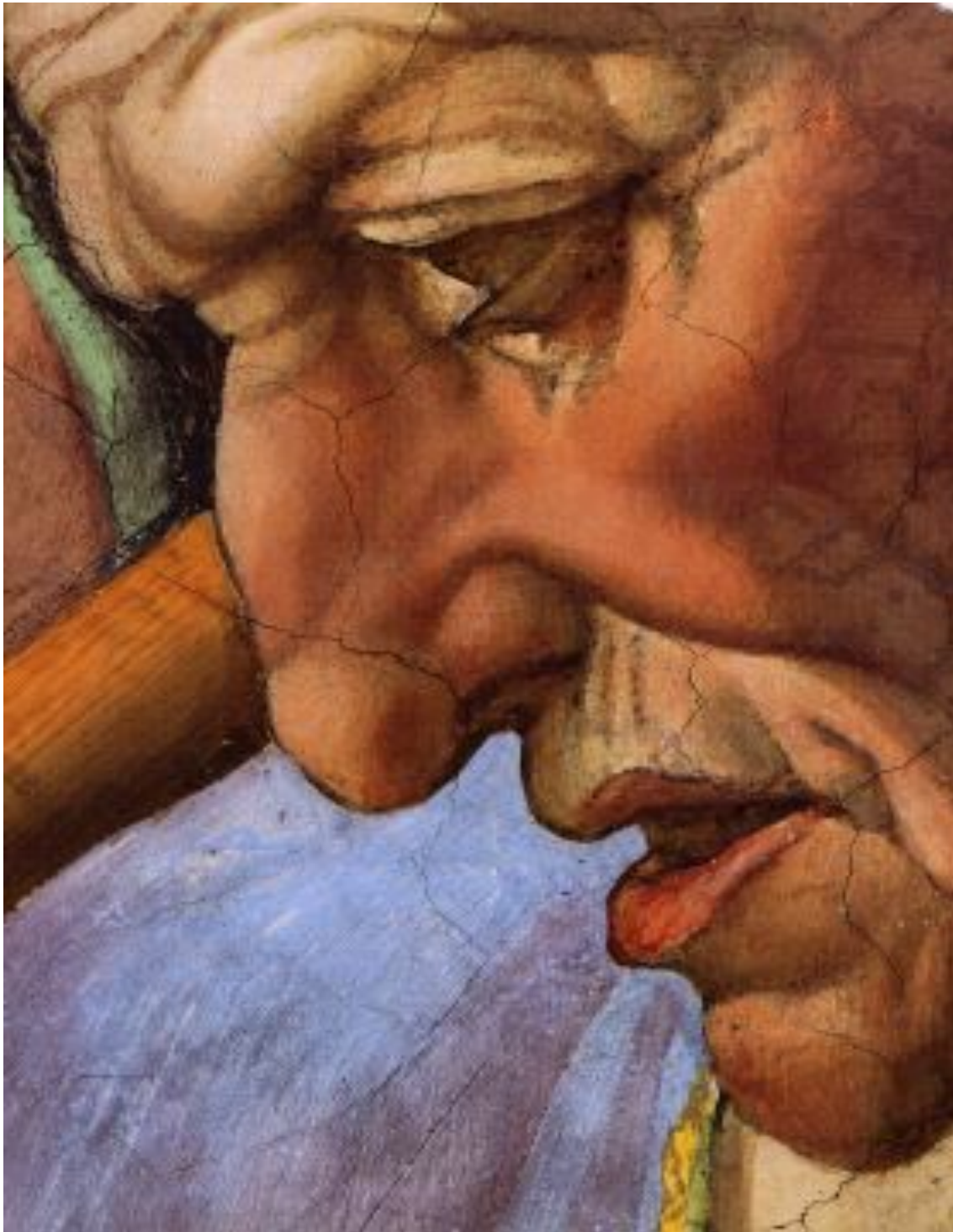




**Michelangelo the  
draftsman – drawings only**

**Michelangelo the artist**

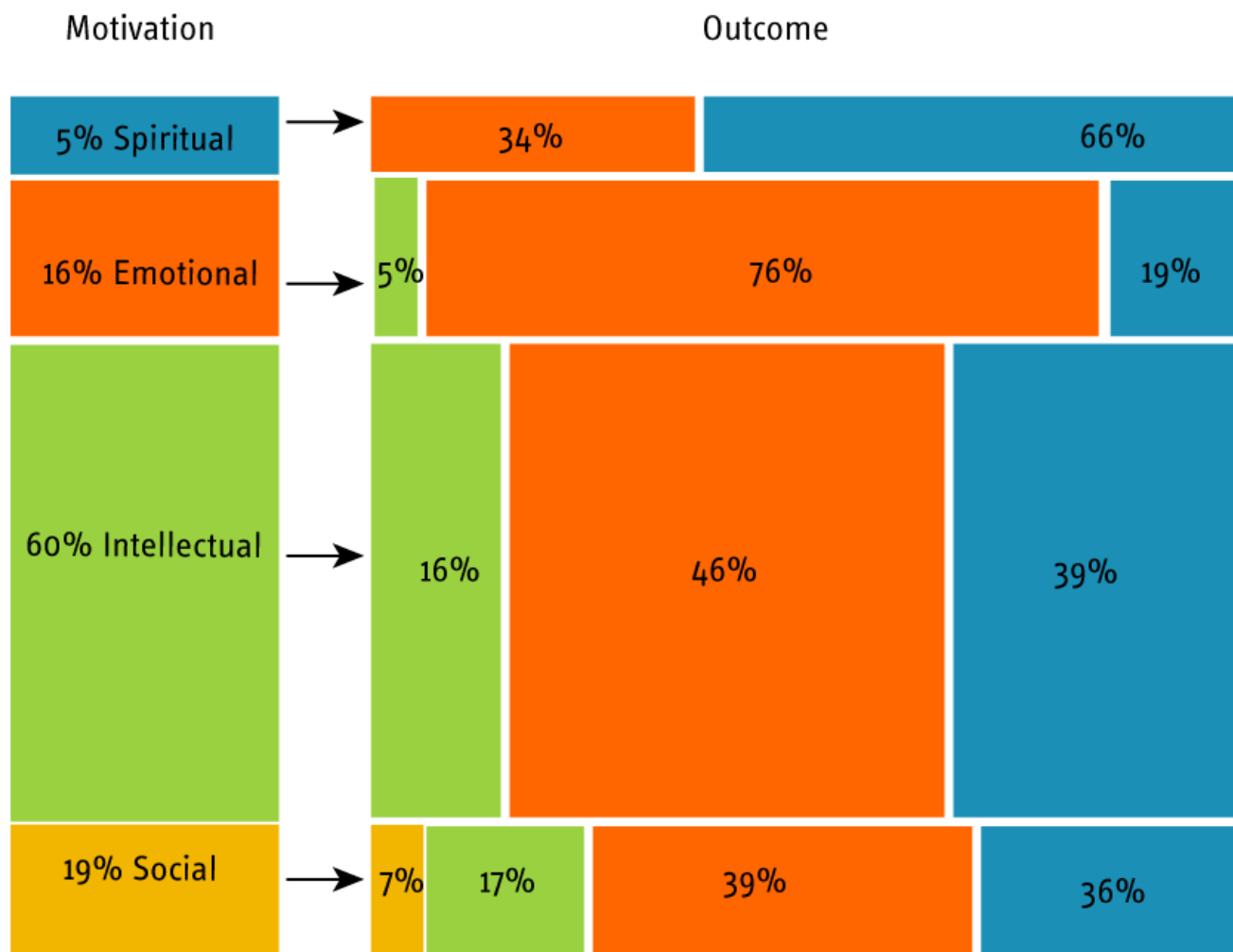
**Michelangelo the man  
and his world**



**An emphasis on facts or  
presentation of the debate**

**Welcomed innovative  
presentation style**

**Desire for time travel  
experience**



**Thank you**