

# Design for Exhibition · Cultural Facilities

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## I. Discourse on Cultural Facility

The category of cultural facility is of very wide range, in general, including public library, museum, art gallery, exhibition, cultural center, art & literature center, etc. These facilities can be conceived as means for natural joint of diversity and continuity and as items to spread or control the social and cultural changes. In particular, as a universal phenomenon, building more art galleries and museums is going on worldwide as they represent social culture and history.

Viewed from a cultural environmental point, exhibition is a creative behavior establishing a space to give deep emotion, understanding and discovery to the public by rebuilding cultural and historical value of exhibition materials (historic properties, remains, artistic works), differentiated from the concept of display. The purpose and function of exhibition is knowledge delivery and artistic appreciation, for which various space devices and media are used. To follow the current diversity of culture & art sector, exhibition · cultural facilities should get out of stereotyped forms and take their role as the containers to hold cultural activities.

To be comprehensive ones embracing the whole spectrum of society and culture beyond simple display of ancient history and culture, there are required government policies, through which they can be spaces to increase understanding about the whole culture · art industry, to create local culture and educate the public as a social education center. Cultural facility should be understood as a conveyer embracing the general modern society, culture, and art besides doing its original function.

## II. Design Methodology for Exhibition & Cultural Facility

### 1. Requirement for Exhibition Space Planning

Exhibition shows an assortment of things from the past and the present through a medium of exhibition space, which is different from simple display in that it allows visitors to have meaningful mental experience. Therefore, exhibition space should provide optimum conditions according to the characteristic and value of each work so that visitors freely and voluntarily appreciate and pay attention to it, catching the real message and meaning of the work.

The space itself takes various forms and possibilities according to its contents and display type. Above all, as exhibition materials have the most direct influence on the space, the research on the relationship between exhibits and visitors should proceed to exhibit valuable works in perfect condition. From this point of view, design of exhibition facility needs special space planning satisfying a contrasting requirement of the maximum information delivery and the minimum visual interruption, based on the analysis on the collections and how to effectively display them at their most advantage.

As the primary purpose of exhibition space is effective exhibition and perfect preservation of materials, interior design aims to harmonize formative beauty with quality of materials and arrangement. A comprehensive consideration is required on the followings: visual environment such as color and light, thermo-condition of and around materials, reflection on behaviors if the movement of materials and visitors is smooth or not.

In general, exhibition can be classified into 4 types- comprehensive, by division, planned, special exhibition. The first two usually take the form of standing exhibition and it's desirable to rotate the materials and works at regular intervals. In case the contents are fixed without diversity, the space is prone to fall to an unproductive facility for visitors to look around and pass away.

The last two is by choosing theme or for exhibiting special materials (valuable ones). In these cases, all process including taking in and out materials or works, decoration and dismantling should be done within short time because of limited exhibition period, so special regards should be given to secure enough space corresponding to the peak time and one-time increase of visitors. And block-out devices, movable partitions, showcases and wall-attached showcases should be equipped because it's inevitable to make lots of changes in architectural space according to the composition and contents of exhibition, on the other hand, spacious area and enough ceiling height is also necessary to preserve materials in good condition. In general, ceiling must be about 4 to 6 meter high, with 3 meters at minimum in case of small area. In planning ceiling height, at least 1-meter spare space above high exhibit must be secured, and particularly in case of museum and gallery, pre-examination about visitors' circulation, various exhibition methodology as well as exhibits is needed.

However, the most important thing is to get a data on the average, highest and lowest value of scale and quality of target exhibits and then, based on the data, to analyze the exact space scale for exhibition and preservation.

The essence of architecture and equipment planning for exhibition space is to answer the original purpose and basic concept of the space. Also, the original exhibition method and the stableness of materials should be respected as they were at the opening days. Materials and works, followed by comments, must have visual clarity, which allows visitors to get the easier understanding.

Every comment or explanation should be easy to understand and appeal to the ears and eyes of visitors. There are several methods to exhibit materials according to the contents and planning, for example, 'exposed exhibition', 'showcase exhibition', 'original

exhibition', and 'imitation exhibition'. The light is diverse from 'natural light' to 'artificial light' and 'both of them'.

Above all, an exhibit has to preserve its own original quality during exhibition to show its real value as it is. That's a key point. However, if a material is too fragile and sensitive to be exposed to air, or absorb dust, or too small to appreciate it as it is, or easily subjected to robbery and damaged, the material is recommended to be exhibited in the showcase. The higher the value of a material, the wider area is allocated for it.

Exhibition plan starts from making an outline about what kind of materials, how and where to arrange them. With simple and clear circulation, important exhibits are arranged after investigating some questions: to which direction visitors have to step inside from entrance? And then what course they will follow?

In arranging exhibition space, representative and intriguing materials with great exhibition effect are given the best place to naturally attract visitors while their moving direction on foot is unconsciously coincided with viewing direction. Arranging valuable materials or works at totally inappropriate place out of natural moving flow or eye direction will cause confusion and make visitors embarrassed, having bad influence on the safety of visitors and materials and exhibition effect itself.

Exhibition space itself, rather than composed of creative and decorative factors, needs empty space image in simple and balanced proportion. That's because the space should embrace and exhibit numerous valuable cultural, artistic works at their most advantage.

Accordingly, multilateral consideration for space planning is essential and it must be reflected to the basic concept at early planning stage.

## **2. Circulation of Exhibition Space**

Exhibition environment depends on what kind of viewing circulation and route plan it takes. Therefore first of all, circulation type should be determined as single guidance route or selective free style. In general, double & multiple circulation system is recommendable because under the system, group visitors and other individual visitors can enjoy harmonious viewing at the same time in one place. The two circulation types have their own merits and demerits, so after analyzing some representative possible cases, it is chosen between the two, being in rapport with classification and comment system of the exhibition.

In case of taking the regular route type, there happens a gap between it and the real viewing pattern and circulation, which is aroused from the too wide spectrum of visitors' behaviors to be controlled by a specific factor. Visitors move in many directions according to their will based on their own perception and decision. That determines the real viewing direction.

The regular (usual) route type indicates the moving flow from entrance via exhibition space to exit, while acting as extremely important element to decide the function of space. There are lots of visual elements such as ceiling, wall, floor, opening (shape, color, height, situation, direction, finish materials, etc.), showcase, background of exhibition, exhibition method, equipment, design, light, circulation and sign in the whole exhibition space and all of them keep the viewing cycle from coinciding with the intended regular route, creating a gap between the two. They lead visitors to follow the regular route, but sometimes guiding people to another new moving direction out of the regular route.

Visitors' moving pattern (behaviors) that is continuous or retrograde or stationary, can be observed through the various elements such as the regular route of circulation, the density and psychology of visitors, admission time period, physical condition of exhibition space. Regardless of visitors' admission direction, all materials related with history, folks and archeology should be displayed along the left-handed screw, from right to left. Visitors' viewing route also moves to the same direction as the developing direction of materials as ancient documents, folding screens and pictures. It's the same case with every information sign.

In case of post-modern materials with horizontal writing or pattern, or numbers or western characters used for natural science materials, they are arranged on the left of circulation route so that visitors can see them at the same time moving toward the left. Their information sign and marks also take the same horizontal writing. Otherwise, it will cause lots of fatigue from visitors. In conclusion, every material of all times and places, of cultural & natural science should be exhibited or written in viewing direction, irrespective of its regular route direction, without making visitors return to read comments or explanation. It seems trivial but really important to help visitors understand exhibits. Accordingly, each exhibition room or corner is divided by the properties of material that function as indexes in circulation planning.

## **III. Conclusion**

The character of exhibition space, representative cultural facility, is a fundamental element for more vivid exhibition based on its own management philosophy. So discussing about it is required at the early design stage: what character and shape will be given to this space?, what kind of role will this space take as social, cultural and art facility?, And definition on the essence of exhibition space and thorough analysis on social interest and expectation about society, culture and art are needed. If exhibition space is composed of good points adopted by others, without enough examination on the original character and establishment principle of it, it fails to be designed into a creative and appealing exhibition facility.

Deep inquiry on exhibition method for more smooth delivery of message and citizen's regular use is inevitable. Along with appropriate cultural policy, establishing guideline for exhibition layout and space composition is urgent problem to be solved so that it can deliver clear message in spite of one-time visit and viewing within fixed admission time period and that furthermore, various cultural facilities can become permanent facilities contributing to local society and cultural development.