

Monsters under the Bed & Manners
At Table: Memories of Childhood
A Temporary Exhibition at
The Grosvenor Museum, Chester

Vital Statistics:

- Budget of £2, 110
- Exhibition ran from 2 December 2006 - 11 February 2007
- Curated by two permanent members of staff.
- Assisted by two technicians and three volunteers.
- Objects from the museum collections and loaned by individuals.

Our aims:

- To show the two types of childhood that exist; the one that adults think children should have and the one children actually have.
- To do something different with the gallery space.
- To make it an experience - try and genuinely make visitors feel the sense of wonder/curiosity children have of the world:
- To have an informative but informal atmosphere in the gallery which would let adults and children enjoy their visit.
- To give people a greater sense of ownership over the exhibition.
- To give the museum, and therefore the visiting public, access to a wide range of objects and experiences .
- To ensure that parts of the exhibition were well within the realm of living memory, and would therefore ignite a spark of recognition in visitors.

What did we did:

- Split the gallery into four different 'rooms', reflecting four different parts of childhood.
- Asked our technicians to build us 'props', such as the giant chair.
- Involved the community, through loans and reminiscence.
- Incorporated eleven different interactives into the exhibition.
- Organised a programme of related events and activities.
- Asked a Salford University Post Graduate student to carry our visitor research and evaluation for us.

Learning points:

- Be clear in your aims, particularly if working with the community.
- Don't be afraid to try out new things. Sometimes they may be fun but it doesn't necessarily mean they are frivolous!
- Consider health and safety issues right from the start, as they do impact upon the feasibility of the exhibition.
- Make an effort to appeal to different audiences, with a variety of activities and different levels of information.
- Utilise the help of volunteers and work placement students. Their help is invaluable, particularly for parts of the work which you do not have time to carry out yourself.
- If you are proud of your achievement don't be too modest. Other museums may well be interested in and able to learn from your experiences.

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