

The Big Book of Exhibits: Fascinating Exhibitions and Collections from Around the World

AUTHORS

MARITA BULLOCK AND JOAN-MAREE HARGREAVES

ILLUSTRATOR

LIZ ROWLAND

SCIS: 5421838

ISBN: 9780734419996

RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid to Upper Primary



SYNOPSIS

This gorgeously illustrated full-colour hardback is a cabinet of curiosities in its own right, showcasing a range of significant museums, collections and exhibits from Australia and around the world. From some of the oldest objects in the world, to an underwater museum in Mexico and a collection of the world's smallest books in Russia, this book includes over fifty exhibitions from past to present.

It covers controversial exhibits, world-famous artefacts, surprising and unusual objects, playful and pretend museums made by artists, as well as some of the more weird and wonderful exhibits from private collectors. Covering a wide range of topics, from art, technology, the natural sciences, medicine and the cultures of everyday life, this book is for readers with an interest in the weird and wonderful world around them.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Marita Bullock has worked as an academic and secondary school teacher across the fields of Cultural Studies, Film, Art and Literature, most recently at the University of Sydney. She has published numerous articles on art and the visualisation of 'difference', and her academic book—*Memory Fragments: Visualising Difference in Australian History*—investigates the relationship between object fragments and cultural memory in Australian art, museums and culture (Intellect Ltd.)

Joan-Maree Hargreaves is inspired by the bravery and optimism of children. She is driven by a desire to tell stories about 'real' life in a visually captivating and unexpected way. She has a special interest in social justice and representations of diversity. Joan-Maree has worked in publishing and magazines for more than a decade and has edited a number of Australian and international children's titles including *National Geographic Kids* (Australia and New Zealand), *K-Zone* (Australia) and *Kraze Club* (United Kingdom and Germany). She has also written hundreds of articles for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, including specialised educational supplements for children.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Liz Rowland is a British Illustrator with a particular interest in people and cultures. Since graduating from Falmouth University in 2011, Liz has worked with clients including *Vogue*, *Gourmet Traveller* and *Visit Britain*. Liz's work is hand rendered, using a combination of gouache and watercolour. She is inspired by colour and pattern. Through her work Liz explores our interactions both with each other and with our environment.

STUDY NOTES**HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

- Research any exhibit described in this book further.
- What exhibits have you visited either in your home town or in other places while travelling? Encourage students to seek out interesting exhibitions and to report back to the class about them.
- Discover and research online other fascinating exhibits overseas.
- What exhibition would each student like to curate? Do they have a particular interest or collection that they would like to develop? Research the art of curation. See for example, 'The Art of Curation' UNSW Media 12 August 2021 <<https://newsroom.unsw.edu.au/news/art-architecture-design/art-curation>> If possible, visit a local museum or exhibit and have a curator discuss the process.
- Explore the similarities and differences between different exhibits, for example, visit local history museums to discover the different ways in which such collections are sometimes arranged.
- Discuss museum terminology and their meaning with students. See 'Glossary of Museum Terms' Museum Planner <<https://www.museumplanner.org/glossary/>>
- Why do people collect objects? Discuss with students why public collections exist. Then discuss why individuals choose to begin collections and what their aim is in collecting.
 - Invite students to share with the class the things they collect. It might be trading cards, marbles, toys, shells or buttons. Why do they collect them? What do they like about these objects?
- Communities are bonded by their cultures. Exhibits sometimes celebrate a culture. For example, the Museum of Brisbane <<https://www.museumofbrisbane.com.au/>> celebrates the culture and history of residents there. The Immigration Museum in Melbourne celebrates immigrant cultures. <<https://museums.victoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/>> Discover other exhibits that celebrate a culture.
- Food can be the subject of collections which also document culture. See, for example the Momofuku Ando Instant Ramen Museum in this book (p 39). What other museums dedicated to food have you discovered in your research? For example, there is a United States Pizza Museum <<https://uspizzamuseum.com/>> and a Kuo Yuan Ye Museum of Cake and Pastry <<https://www.kuos.com/museum/>>
- Discuss the key values celebrated by exhibition curators and visitors to exhibitions, and by individuals who collect objects.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

- Invite students to write an acrostic poem using the letters in EXHIBIT.
- Write a fictional story about visiting an exhibition OR write a description of an exhibition you have visited and what you discovered there.

Comprehension

1. When did 'Cabinets of Curiosities' first begin in history?
2. When did grouping objects together in exhibits and classifying them by their similarities rather than grouping different things together, become the style in which collections were displayed?
3. The world's only specimen of the rare colossal squid caught in 2007 is housed at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. What is unusual about its brain?
4. Who crafted the works contained in the incredible Museum of Microminiatures in Kyiv, Ukraine?
5. Which art movement or school of theory was Marcel Duchamp's 'Fountain' (1917) (an upturned urinal) considered a very early example of?
6. Belgian artist Wim Delvoye's controversial 'Poo Machine' is held at the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Hobart, Tasmania. How does the artist describe this work?
7. Why does the Disgusting Food Museum in Malmö, Sweden, encourage visitors to taste disgusting foods?
8. In the Museum of Questionable Medical Devices, housed in the Science Museum of Minnesota, one of the inventions was created by John Henry Kellogg who invented cornflakes. What was the name of the invention?
9. The Louvre in Paris is one of the world's most famous art museums. When did it become a public museum?
10. What movement lies behind the Toppled Statues found in Richmond, Virginia, and elsewhere in the US?

11. Who is responsible for the five underwater sculpture museums and what is their purpose?
12. What are fragments of the Nakhla Meteorite held in the British Museum and the Smithsonian Museum from?
13. What was unique about the 2020 'Portrait of Humanity' international portraiture competition, run by the creators of The British Journal of Photography and Magnum Photos?
14. The Gweagal Shield is one of the Stolen Treasures held by the British Museum. What is its significance?
15. What unique specimen is held by the National Museum of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, and being closely examined by a team of paleoanthropologists?
16. What momentous discovery did mathematician and poet Ada Lovelace make in the nineteenth century?
17. Museums of Everyday Life exist in several countries and offer an insight into underrecognised parts of our history. The Dog Collar Museum in Leeds, UK, for example holds collars dating back how long?
18. What makes the collection of Ennigaldi-Nanna, a princess in Uris, held in the Iraq Museum so special?
19. What is the oldest exhibit at the Kennedy Space Center's Rocket Garden in Florida, US?
20. What is unique about the design of the Berlin's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe?
21. The National Arboretum, Canberra, holds living examples of how many trees?
22. What was the Palais Idéal, in Hauterives, France, built by postman Ferdinand Cheval made from?
23. Chinese artist Ai Weiwei's monumental installations often focus on what global social issue?
24. What was the Crystal Palace in London?
25. What was the rather ghoulish origin of Madame Tussaud's famous exhibitions?
26. What and where are the Ancient Terracotta Soldiers?
27. A flame burns under the arch of the Cenotaph for Atomic Bomb Victims at the Peace Memorial Museum, Hiroshima, Japan. Lit on 1 August 1964, it has been burning ever since. When will it be extinguished?
28. What does the Stasi Museum in Berlin, Germany commemorate or protest against?
29. What form of art is Banksy famous for?
30. The AIDS Memorial Quilt was initiated by Cleve Jones in what year?
31. What does Rosa Parks' Dress held by the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, in Washington DC, USA, symbolise?
32. Two Toilet Museums are detailed in this book. Where are they located?
33. Who is responsible for the miniature venues for mice in Malmö, Sweden, and throughout Europe?
34. One of the least attractive exhibits in this book is the Meguro Parasitological Museum in Tokyo, Japan. What is one of its major exhibits?
35. The Momofuku Ando Instant Ramen Museum is a monument to Momofuku Ando's invention of instant ramen noodles. How many noodle flavours are on offer here?
36. What is 'the oldest thing you will ever see in a museum!' held in the Natural History Museum, London?
37. What is the unique material from which Jeff Koons' giant Puppy sculpture displayed outside The Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain made from?
38. The 1893 Women's Suffrage Petition, *Te Petihana Whakamana P ti Wahine*, which led to New Zealand becoming the world's first nation to give women the right to vote, contained how many signatures?
39. What was the writing script used on clay tablets by the ancient Sumerian civilisation called?
40. What word is 'Megalosaurus' exhibited in the Oxford University Museum, derived from?
41. What did famous pop artist Andy Warhol store in his 'time capsules'?
42. The great astronomer Galileo demonstrated in his scientific findings that the planets revolved around the sun, not the earth. How did the Catholic Church, which was in power at the time, respond to his findings?
43. What sacred relics are held in the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul?
44. How did the intriguing museum dedicated to broken relationships in Zagreb come to be established?
45. What does the title 'Extinction Studies' refer to?
46. Robert Hooke's microscopes are on display in the Museum of Health and Medicine, Maryland, US. What did he discover?
47. What was one of the most precious discoveries made by Howard Carter in the boy-king Tutankhamen's tomb in Egypt's Valley of the Kings in 1922?

48. What makes the Witch House, the home of a judge—Jonathan Corwin—who ruled over the trials of so-called witches in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692, so important in Salem’s infamous history?

Answers

1. Around 500 years ago during the European Renaissance period. (p 2)
2. In the late eighteenth century. (p 3)
3. They’re ‘shaped like a doughnut...to allow food to pass through it from the mouth to the stomach.’ (p 4)
4. Ukrainian master Mykola Syadrity. (p 5)
5. Conceptual Art. (p 6)
6. As ‘an exercise in pointlessness’. (p 7)
7. ‘The museum hopes to expand people’s understanding of the way “taste” is shaped by culture, and hopefully broaden our palates.’ (p 8)
8. The Kellogg Vibratory Chair. (p 9)
9. 1793. (p 10)
10. ‘Black Lives Matter’ and the anti-colonialist and anti-racist movements. (p 11).
11. ‘British artist, photographer and environmentalist Jason deCaires Taylor, who created his “museums” around the world to help reverse the destruction of underwater ecologies and coral reefs’. (p 12)
12. They are fragments of Mars. (p 13)
13. It was ‘the first-ever exhibition in space’. (p 15)
14. ‘Believed to be one of the few relics from the first contact between Indigenous people and European colonists in Australia, the Gweagal Shield was used by the Gweagal warrior Cooman to resist the gunshots fired by Captain Cook and Sir Joseph Banks in Botany Bay in 1770.’ (p 16)
15. A skeleton, ‘Ardi, short for *Ardipithecus ramidus*, is one of the most important finds of the past century. This 50-kilogram female hominid is not the oldest member of the extended human family—she’s only 4.4 million years old in comparison to the 6-million-year-old ‘Millennium man’ discovered in Kenya in 2000! But her skeleton, held at the National Museum of Ethiopia, is by far the most complete’. (p 18)
16. She discovered the ‘transition from calculating to computing [which] was momentous and formed the basis of modern computers.’ (p 19)
17. 500 years. (p 21)
18. She lived 2500 years ago so archaeologist Sir Charles Leonard Woolley, who discovered the collection in 1925, believed it may be the earliest known examples of a museum. (p 22)
19. ‘Juno II is the oldest rocket on display. It launched America’s first satellite (Explorer I) into orbit in 1958 and led to the establishment of NASA itself.’ (p 23)
20. ‘There are no statues or commemorative lists of people who were murdered. And there is no mention of the Nazi war criminals. From above, the memorial appears to be a grid-like pattern of rows of around 2700 unevenly sized blank concrete slabs spaced over 19,000 square metres. Walking among the concrete columns feels like being trapped in a maze. The effect of this is claustrophobia, darkness and disorientation.’ (p 24)
21. ‘It holds over 44,000 trees from around the world.’ (p 25)
22. Also known as the pebble palace it was made of pebbles collected by Cheval. (p 26)
23. The global refugee crisis. (p 27)
24. It was ‘a colossal glass and cast-iron conservatory built over 7 hectares of London’s Hyde Park, stretching half a kilometre...it was an architectural triumph housing the world’s first global exhibition, now known as one of the most influential of all time: the 1851 Great Exhibition of the Works of All Nations.’ (p 28)
25. During the French Revolution (1789–1799) she was imprisoned but released on the condition that she ‘make wax models of the severed heads of royalty and nobles!’ (p 29)
26. Found in 1974 in Xi’an, China, they are considered ‘one of the greatest archaeological discoveries in the world: around 8000 life-sized terracotta statues of warriors...all dating to around 2200 years old.’ (p 30)
27. ‘It will not be extinguished until all nuclear weapons are abolished worldwide.’ (p 31)
28. ‘If you lived in East Germany between 1950 and 1989, chances are you would have been under close surveillance by the Stasi—government spies.’ (p 32)

29. Graffiti, in public places, often in social protest. (p 33)
30. 1987. (p 34)
31. On 1 December 1955, when seamstress Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white woman instigating the Montgomery Bus Boycott, she was carrying a floral wrap dress she had made for her mother. (p 34)
32. New Delhi, India and Suwon City, South Korea. (p 35)
33. 'The mouse-themed miniatures are made by a group of anonymous artists from Malmö, Sweden, called AnonyMouse MMX.' (p 36)
34. 'The main attraction is the world's longest tapeworm, measuring 8.8 metres long. It is accompanied by a rope the same length that you can play with to get a feel for its size.' (p 38)
35. 5460 noodle flavour combinations. (p 39)
36. 'These diamonds are relics (objects surviving from an earlier time) of the dust of dying stars that scattered into space billions of years ago.' (p 40)
37. Flowers, because 'Puppies and flowers almost universally symbolise love, happiness and joy'. (p 41)
38. 'Nearly 32,000.' (p 42)
39. Cuneiform. (p 43)
40. The Greek words 'Great lizard'. (p 44)
41. He stored what some would call rubbish: 'around half a million items from his everyday life from the 1950s to his death in 1987.' (p 45)
42. He 'was sentenced to life imprisonment. He served his sentence under house arrest and died at home in 1642.' (p 45)
43. 'The Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, Turkey, is important to some Muslims because it holds many sacred relics of the prophet Muhammad and his associates,' (p 47)
44. 'The Museum of Broken Relationships was founded by two Croatian artists, Olinka Vistica and Drazen Grubisic, after their own four-year relationship ended.' (p 48)
45. 'Tasmanian-based artist Lucienne Rickard hoped to get us to see the scale and horror of animal and plant extinction in new ways through her incredible art performance, Extinction Studies.' (p 52)
46. The cell. (p 53)
47. Tutankhamen's solid gold death mask. (p 54)
48. It 'is the only building left in Salem with direct ties to the witch trials after a huge fire burnt most of the town in 1914.' (p 56)

VISUAL LITERACY

- The cover of the book depicts a range of the objects and specimens contained in collections around the world. Ask students to identify some of them before and after they have read the book. Have students design their own cover for this book.
- The half-title page depicts a woman taking a photo, and the title page has Banksy spraying paint on the title of the book. Have students design another appropriate title page.
- The format of the book allocates a single or double page spread to each exhibit. Have the class create their own book of exhibits by collecting various pieces of research done by each student and arranging them in a similar format.
- Encourage students to use critical literacy skills by looking closely at the images to explain what they see and then what the text says.

CREATIVE ARTS

- Create a poster to advertise an exhibit that you found interesting.
- Invite students to bring a few items from their own personal collections, to label them and to display them as a class 'Cabinet of Curiosities'.
- Encourage students to visit an exhibition and then make a creative response to it. For example, a drawing or painting or sculpture of an object which appealed to them, or an installation of found objects that relate to the exhibition in some way. Each response should be accompanied by an artist's statement explaining the reasons behind their response.