

A Contemporary Spin: The Guinness Collection Reimagined
Exhibition Proposal
ARMS 7002 Producing an Exhibition 2022
MA in Museum Professions Program
Seton Hall University

The Big Idea

A Contemporary Spin: The Guinness Collection Reimagined is an exhibition developed by graduate students in the MA in Museum Professions program at Seton Hall University. The big idea for this exhibit is a contemporary interpretation of the museum's Murrough D. Guinness Collection, guided by the essential question: *What stories can the Guinness Collection tell for a modern audience?* This exhibition is an extension of the panel exhibition *A Contemporary Spin: Museum Graduate Students Take on the Guinness Collection* produced by students in the fall semester 2021 for the museum's North Gallery. The current exhibition consists of four subthemes:

- *Stereotypes and Identity* focuses on stereotypes and identity in the Guinness Collection as revealed through a modern lens.
- *Music in Public Spaces* focuses on music in public spaces and how music and music technology have grown to reach wider audiences.
- *Technology and Innovation* focuses on how the objects in the collection were precursors for technological advancements.
- *Migration and Memory* focuses on how objects in the collection illustrate the idea of migration and memory through music.

Audience

The primary audience is families with children and older adults who make up the majority of the museum's visitors. The secondary audience is the general population, including students and visitors of all ages.

Learning Outcomes

New visitors may not know much about the Murrough D. Guinness Collection, while returning visitors may be familiar with the Guinness Collection gallery that showcases only a fraction of the collection. Through this exhibition the audience will be able to explore the collection, challenging them to consider contemporary issues, not only in the historic collection and other objects and images on display, but in their own lives as well.

Means of Expressions

The artifacts featured in the exhibition are part of the Morris Museum's Guinness Collection, consisting of approximately 750 mechanical musical instruments, automata, and programmed media from the 16th century to the 20th century. Incorporating the actual objects of the Guinness Collection, especially those from storage facility, allows visitors to view the collection with a new, contemporary focus and learn about objects that they may not have viewed before. This exhibition features large text on interpretive panels and labels, vivid images, information placed at a median height for better accessibility, easy-to-read text, and various activities, including multi-media QR codes and soundscape.

Visitor Experience

The atmosphere of the exhibition is intended to be one of welcome, contemplation, discovery, and openness to new interpretations. The thematic areas of the exhibition encourage movement throughout the gallery. By highlighting real objects from the Guinness Collection and different types of media, the space offers an immersive experience. Integrated into the space is programming for visitors, including a detectives activity, family and teacher map, stereotype discussion guide, migration map activity, QR codes, and audio tour.

Exhibition Team

Student Project Managers: Christopher Bohm and Julie Golt

Student Curators: Christopher Bohm, Andrew Cates, Taylor Cavanaugh, Jacquelyn Deppe, Shannon Hahn, Julie Golt, Sarah Konyak, Sutherlyn Nichols, Emily Rainbolt, and Ilona Supel

Students were guided by Greg Stevens, Director, MA in Museum Professions, SHU

Morris Museum advisors: Ron Labaco, Former Director of Exhibitions and Collections/Chief Curator; Sara O'Connor, Preparator; Jere Ryder, Guinness Collection Conservator; and Anne Ricculi, Guinness Collection Curator. With thanks to Andrew Sandall, President and CEO of the Morris Museum for his support of the collaboration between the Museum and Seton Hall.

Seton Hall University Master of Arts in Museum Professions Program

The MA in Museum Professions program prepares students for careers in museums through challenging coursework and concrete experience, helping them speak as change agents about why museums are essential in a diverse society.