

Visitors to the  
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden:  
Who Visits,  
Why, and  
What Do They Get Out of Their Visits?

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Smithsonian Institution  
Office of Policy & Analysis

## CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	ii
Introduction and Purpose.....	1
Conclusions .....	2
Key Points to Emerge from the Study .....	2
HMSG Visitors: Who They Were .....	4
Increasing the Hirshhorn’s Visitorship .....	6
Unanswered Questions.....	8
Findings.....	10
Defining HMSG Visitors Based on Reasons for Visiting.....	10
Demographic Characteristics of HMSG Visitors .....	12
Defining HMSG Visitors Based on Residence .....	14
Defining HMSG Visitors Based on Frequency of Visit and Previous Contemporary/Modern Art Museum Experience.....	15
Reasons for Visiting HMSG .....	17
Rating the HMSG Visit.....	19
Visit Experiences.....	21
Visit Satisfaction Metric (VSM) .....	23
Engagement .....	25
Is HMSG a Must Visit Museum?.....	25
Improving Satisfaction for HMSG Visitors .....	27
HMSG Geographic Markets .....	28
Appendix A: Methodology.....	32
Appendix B: Questionnaire .....	34
Appendix C: Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden Visitor Survey Results: Winter 2005.....	36

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## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

What do visitors think of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden? Does it have a positive image? Does it offer satisfying experiences in terms of both the art works it displays and visitor amenities? What would make the Hirshhorn more appealing to repeat visitors and a destination for new visitors?

The Hirshhorn, with support from its advisory board, is seeking answers to these and other questions as it undertakes a multifaceted effort to increase the museum's visibility, hone its image, and expand its audience. As part of this effort, the Hirshhorn contracted with the Smithsonian Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) to conduct a survey of visitors to the museum in December 2005. Over three days at the end of December, the OP&A study team intercepted 720 visitors, of whom 484 completed the questionnaire, for a cooperation rate of 67 percent. Those completing the questionnaire constitute a representative sample.

This report presents the study team's findings and analysis. In conducting the analysis of the survey results, the focus was on determining what most influenced visitors' experiences positively or negatively and what opportunities for increasing visitor satisfaction and growing the audience are suggested by the survey results.

This report has two major goals:

- To describe visitors to the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden during December 2005
- To examine ways to increase visitation at HMSG—especially visits by residents of the Washington metropolitan region

The questions in the study fall into four categories:

- Demographic and other background information about visitors
- Reasons for visiting the Hirshhorn
- Experiences with the museum overall and with specific aspects of the museum
- Ways to enhance visitor satisfaction

Appendix A of this report describes the methodology used. Appendix B includes the survey questionnaire. Appendix C presents frequency distributions for the questions together with the comparative frequencies from the Hirshhorn sample of the summer 2004 Smithsonian-wide Visitor Survey.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Results of the 2004 Smithsonian-wide Survey of Museum Visitors*. Office of Policy and Analysis. Smithsonian Institution. Washington DC, October 2004. [http://www.si.edu/opanda/Reports/Reports/SI2004\\_Survey\\_Booklet.pdf](http://www.si.edu/opanda/Reports/Reports/SI2004_Survey_Booklet.pdf)

## CONCLUSIONS

A key question this study sought to answer is how HMSG can accomplish its goals of audience retention and growth. What should it do to get more people into the Museum and then to provide sufficiently satisfying experiences that they will want to return and, equally important, will recommend HMSG to others? Which market segments should it target—repeat visitors, non-traditional museum visitors, Boomers or Generation Y, local audiences or tourists?

Before proceeding to the conclusions and observations, it is important to be aware of some limitations of this study of visitors. All such studies have inherent limitations because time and resource constraints preclude asking all desirable questions every day of the year. In the case of this study, the study was conducted right before and after Christmas. In addition, HMSG was showing only its permanent collection at the time of the survey; no temporary exhibitions were on display. There were differences in the demographics of visitors compared with the Smithsonian-wide Museum Survey in summer 2004, for example, with respect to percentages of male and Generation Y visitors. In addition, the rate at which visitors declined to complete the survey questionnaire was higher than usual.<sup>1</sup> The study addressed only people who were exiting the museum; that is, it excluded non-visitors. Finally, it asked people about contemporary/modern art without distinguishing between the two genres. That said, the limitations do not negate the value of the information gained, and follow-up studies can fill in critical gaps and unanswered questions.

This section begins with a summary of the key points to emerge. It then looks at the implications for retention and increased visitation by repeat visitors to the Hirshhorn, and at what might be said about attracting new visitors.

### KEY POINTS TO EMERGE FROM THE STUDY

At the most general level, the following key points emerged:

- Two reasons for visiting the Hirshhorn were particularly important—“Interest in contemporary/modern art” (61%) and “Spending time with friends/family” (45%).
- The experiences that visitors marked most frequently as satisfying were “Seeing great works of art” (69%), followed by “Stimulating my own creativity” and “Having fun” (46% for both).

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1 The December cooperation rate was 67 percent compared with 71 percent in summer 2004. By way of comparison, a survey of visitor responses to an exhibition at another art museum conducted at roughly the same time had a cooperation rate of 83 percent. Sample biases due to differences in demographic characteristics between respondents and non-respondents were reduced statistically, but there is no way to control for psychographic differences. If the higher non-cooperation rate was the result of disappointed visitors refusing to participate at a higher rate than more satisfied visitors, this exit survey may not reflect a typical distribution of those audience segments at HMSG.

- There is considerable room for improving how visitors feel about their trip to HMSG. The OP&A study team reached this conclusion based on how visitors rated various aspects of the museum and on their levels of satisfaction.
  - Visitors were asked to rate eleven aspects of their visit using a five point scale of superior, excellent, good, fair, and poor. Of all visitors, 15 percent rated their overall visit experience as superior and 49 percent marked it as excellent. Few visitors (4%) marked fair and none marked poor. A significant group (32%) gave the museum a “good” rating, a percentage that the OP&A study team believes is too high. Further, the highest rating (“superior” and “excellent”) that any aspect of the museum received was “Cleanliness of the building,” marked by 77% of all visitors. In the case of over half the aspects, the ratings of superior and excellent were 52 percent or below. At the bottom was “Learning opportunities” with 36 percent.
  - The OP&A study team developed a metric for measuring satisfaction with contemporary/modern art museum visits that is based on a combination of three aspects of a visit that in this study most highly predict satisfaction—that is, the more pleased a visitor is with the three aspects, the more he or she is likely to be satisfied with his or her visit, and vice versa. The three aspects are “My overall visit experience,” “Personal enjoyment,” and “Relevance of exhibits for me personally.” The metric is called “Visitor Satisfaction Metric” or VSM. Visitors who came to the Hirshhorn five or more times in the last year and who had visited another contemporary/modern art museum were the most satisfied, with a mean VSM of +0.48 (the metric is expressed as the mean satisfaction of all members of a particular audience category). The least satisfied were visitors who last came to HMSG more than a year ago and had never visited another contemporary/modern art museum (mean of -0.55). Satisfaction increased with the number of times visitors came to HMSG in the last year, reaching +0.58 with visitors who had been to HMSG seven or more times in the past year. First-time visitors, many of whom came with friends/family, were the most critical of their visits, even though almost half expressed an interest in contemporary/modern art. A key reason satisfaction might be low is disappointment with the social experience.
- A large percentage of visitors said HMSG is a “Must Visit” museum that they would recommend to friends—79% marked the top two points on a five-point scale. Interestingly, more than half of less satisfied visitors gave that response, an apparent contradiction the study team cannot explain. Is it that they thought the museum would be a good place for people interested in contemporary/modern art to visit?
- The survey asked visitors to mark possible improvements to museum programs and visitor amenities that would enhance their visit. Across all visitors, the most frequently selected were more information on the art work (47%) and on the artist (41%).

## HMSG VISITORS: WHO THEY WERE

OP&A segmented the HMSG audience in three main ways—based on reasons for visiting, geographic market (local versus tourist), and first-time versus repeat visitation—as these categorizations seemed the most relevant to the goal of retaining and increasing visitors. The key characteristics of these categories are as follows:

- *Reasons for visiting.* The largest segment of the HMSG audience (41%) consisted of people who indicated an interest in contemporary/modern art (called Cognoscenti in this report), followed by a second large group (31%) with the same interest but also an additional desire to “Spend time with friends/family” (Social cognoscenti). The third largest segment (13%) was Socials—visitors who said they came for a social experience and who did not mention an art-related reason. Exhibit 1 shows some of the characteristics of these segments.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Characteristics of Major HMSG Audience Segments**

Visitor Characteristic	Cognoscenti	Social cognoscenti	Socials	Explorers Accidentals*
All visitors (%)	40	31	13	11
<b>Age</b>				
WWII/Postwar (%)	17	10	5	7
Leading Edge Boomers (%)	13	12	6	5
Trailing Edge Boomers (%)	25	23	23	27
Generation X (%)	26	19	21	33
Generation Y (%)	19	36	45	27
Mean age (years)	43	38	33	37
<b>Residence</b>				
Locals (%)	28	40	44	22
Tourists (%)	72	60	56	78
<b>Previous HMSG Visits</b>				
First-time (%)	31	28	66	78
Returning (%)	37	43	24	16
Repeating (%)	32	29	10	5
Visit satisfaction (mean)	0.15	0.11	-0.45	-0.22

\* Explorers and Accidentals are combined in this table. Shoppers were omitted from this table because they constitute a very small part of the HMSG audience.

- *Residence.* Of all visitors, 35 percent lived within 40 miles of the National Mall (locals). Collectively, tourists—those who lived outside of the 40 mile radius—accounted for 64% of visitors (55 percent were from elsewhere in the United States and nine percent came from other countries.) Among locals, 72 percent came to spend time with friends/family, and 20 percent came to shop. Twenty-eight percent of Cognoscenti and forty percent of Social cognoscenti were locals.
- *HMSG visit history.* Of all visitors, 61 percent had visited HMSG before, and 39 percent were first-timers. Those who had been to HMSG before fell clearly into two groups: those who had come in the last year and had visited several times (repeaters); and those who had last been to HMSG over a year ago (returners). Older visitors tended to have made multiple visits in the last year. Well over half of local visitors had visited HMSG before. Exhibit 2 shows some of the characteristics of these segments.

## Exhibit 2 Characteristics of Visitors by Residence and Previous HMSG Visits

Visitor Characteristic	Locals			Tourists		
	First-timers	Returners	Repeaters	First-timers	Returners	Repeaters
All visitors (%)	7	9	18	32	25	8
<b>Age</b>						
WWII/Postwar (%)	0	9	15	9	15	24
Leading Edge Boomers (%)	9	15	11	8	13	20
Trailing Edge Boomers (%)	21	26	29	21	28	20
Generation X (%)	29	15	23	27	26	10
Generation Y (%)	41	35	22	35	18	27
Mean age (years)	32	38	42	36	43	44
<b>Major Audience Segments</b>						
Cognoscenti (%)	14	17	46	36	55	50
Social cognoscenti (%)	37	48	29	19	37	43
Socials (%)	37	22	4	18	4	5
Explorers/Accidentals (%)*	9	13	3	26	3	0
<b>Composition of Visit Group</b>						
Alone (%)	14	9	42	22	25	32
Adult(s) without child(ren) (%)	57	53	43	54	53	46
Adult(s) with child(ren) (%)	23	34	15	23	19	22
Other (%)	6	4	0	1	3	0
Visit satisfaction (mean)	-0.40	-0.30	0.39	-0.17	0.16	0.08

\*Explorers and Accidentals are combined in this table. Shoppers were omitted from this table because they constitute a very small part of the HMSG audience.



- About 25 percent of visitors were from Generation Y (born 1978-1993), and another 25 percent were from the older generations—WWII/Postwar (1946 and before) and the first wave of Boomers, known as Leading Edge (1947-1955). Members of these older generations appeared more frequently in the Cognoscenti and Shopper (people who came only for the museum store) groups, while Gen Y-ers were more prominent in the Social cognoscenti and Socials. Spending time with family and friends was very important to Gen Y-ers and Socials.
- A high number of all visitors (81%) had been to other contemporary/modern art museums, and they appeared to compare the Hirshhorn favorably.
- As has been the case in other studies at HMSG and the Smithsonian generally, small percentages of visitors were African American and Latino (4% for each group).

## INCREASING THE HIRSHHORN'S VISITORSHIP

There are two broad categories of people to consider in terms of increasing visitorship: repeat visitors to the Hirshhorn, and those who have never visited. The literature states that about 26 percent of the American public go to art museums and 16 percent claim to “know a lot about contemporary art.” Given that the Hirshhorn is already at the high end of visitorship to contemporary/modern art museums, it appears that it can anticipate only incremental increases in the traditional audience of contemporary/modern art museums. And non-traditional audiences have universally proven hard to attract on a consistent basis.

### Increasing Repeat Visitation

- It is important for the Hirshhorn to retain its solid core of Cognoscenti/Social cognoscenti. The key to doing so is maintaining and increasing the already high level of satisfaction of these groups, as defined by VSM, which was correlated with the quality of the art they saw and the social experience. The subgroups with the most potential for more frequent visits are Cognoscenti and Social cognoscenti who did not visit in the last year. They have low levels of visit satisfaction, and reversing that might increase their visitorship. Unfortunately, this study cannot answer why they were disappointed with their visits. Both groups of Cognoscenti indicated that their visits would be enhanced by more information on the artists and works of art.
- A goal of museums is to convert first-time visitors into repeat visitors, particularly local audiences. To do so, the Hirshhorn needs to boost the level of satisfaction of this group. Exactly why they were disappointed cannot be ascertained from this survey. First-time visitors indicated an interest in more information on the artists and works of art, and some also wanted information on how to view (and comprehend) the art they were seeing and some type of orientation to the museum.

*Visitors to the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden*

February 2006

- The Socials contained a large share of Generation Y, a prime audience because of its size and the fact that it is still moving into early adulthood. Although close to half of this group had experience with other contemporary/modern art museums, their level of satisfaction with their Hirshhorn visit was low. This is likely a reflection of the museum not having met their need for a good social experience. It is unclear why this was so.
- In terms of the important local audience, 35% of all visitors lived within 40 miles of the Mall. Local first-timers and local returners constituted about 20 percent of all visitors, with each accounting for half of this group. Both groups had low levels of satisfaction. A possible reason may have been an unsatisfying social experience. An improved social experience might lead a portion of this audience to make one or more additional visits, since HMSG is readily accessible. Both groups indicated that they wanted more information on the artists and works of art. Local repeaters were also the one group with a substantial interest in after work (5 to 8 pm) programs.
- In terms of age, two important categories of visitors are Boomers and Gen Y-ers. The former tended to be Cognoscenti, who were discussed above. Generation Y would seem to be a logical target audience, given its size and interest in edgy activities. However, the social experience is very important to this group, and the Hirshhorn did not appear to provide Gen Y-ers with a satisfactory social experience.

#### Attracting New Visitors

- The evidence is clear that the Hirshhorn has been drawing heavily from a small slice of the US population: the traditional contemporary/modern art museum goer. Attracting large numbers of new visitors from this population is likely to be difficult. However, because this group of enthusiastic Hirshhorn visitors not only spread the “buzz,” but visit with other people, they are the most likely source of new visitors. For example, 96 percent of the most satisfied visitors indicated that they would recommend the museum to others. The Hirshhorn has a strong core of Cognoscenti who can create that “buzz,” particularly if the satisfaction levels of Cognoscenti who visited less recently were raised. Studying the disappointment of this group should yield insights into how to do it.
- Along the same lines, improving the satisfaction of first-time visitors such that they become repeat visitors might result in a larger core of repeat visitors who in turn would attract new visitors. Here again, ensuring a positive social experience may be the key.
- Another source of new visitors is visitors to other Smithsonian museums. The current survey did not contain sufficient numbers of these audiences to draw robust conclusions on what would attract them. But based on the evidence from the “Lure the Visitor” sur-

vey of 2002,<sup>2</sup> HMSG attracted about one-fifth of the visitors on the Mall who were visiting the National Air and Space Museum, National Museum of American History, and National Museum of Natural History. About one-third (37%) of visitors to other art museums also said that they were going to HMSG. Fewer than one in twenty claimed to be visiting only HMSG. Attracting new visitors from this source, and getting them to visit again, may require innovations that appeal to visitors not normally drawn to art museums, especially contemporary/modern art ones. These include people who are not comfortable with art museums, as well as members of minority communities who are passing by HMSG.

## UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

Studies always raise new questions. The study team notes several here that it considers particularly important as the Hirshhorn makes decisions about how to increase visitorship.

- If the survey had asked visitors to respond first with respect to modern and then to contemporary art, would their responses have differed? For example, were the visitors who said they came to the Hirshhorn for art-related reasons, including the Hirshhorn collection, referring to modern or contemporary art, or both?
- The study showed that social experiences matter to a large proportion of Hirshhorn visitors. Too little is known about what contributes to and detracts from a good social experience for different groups of visitors; this suggests a need for in-depth research into this experience.
- Visitors indicated a desire for various changes at the Hirshhorn, particularly more information on the art works and artists. Without further testing, it is impossible to tell if those changes would in fact raise the level of visitor satisfaction and translate into increased visitation and “buzz.” Is the 10-15 percent of US visitors across all groups who want orientation to the museum significant enough to merit a response? What about the 20-29% who want more information on ways to look at contemporary/modern art?
- The study team discussed whether a membership program could be a tool for attracting visitors and increasing visitorship. The study team believes that HMSG might be able to create a successful contemporary arts interest based membership program with member-only activities and publications similar to those at NASM and NMAI. The reasons for considering this are:

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2 *Lure the Visitor: A Report for the National Museum of American History*. Office of Policy and Analysis. Smithsonian Institution. Washington DC, July 2002. <http://www.si.edu/opanda/Reports/LuretheVisitor.pdf>.

- The HMSG audience has a high interest in contemporary/modern art;
  - Much of it lives within a 40-mile radius from the Museum;
  - Local visitors expressed interest in more information, including learning more about contemporary/modern art and artists;
  - Many visitors make frequent visits to the Museum, and others might in the future; and
  - Visitors have a high interest in social experiences.
- The Washington metropolitan area contains a large number of minority residents who are well-educated and well-to-do. HMSG’s local audience in the summer 2004 survey had a smaller percentage of African-Americans (9%) than the percentage of college educated African Americans in the metropolitan area (14%). In contrast, the percent of Asians (13%) and Latinos (6%) both exceeded the percentages of college graduates (8% and 3% respectively). The OP&A study team believes that ethnic minorities can be an incremental source of new visitors with appropriate programming, for example, exhibitions with special attraction to ethnic minorities, such as *¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz* recently shown at the National Museum of American History.
  - The survey did not address outreach as a means of recruiting new visitors. However, conclusions from a study by the Urban Institute, under commission by the Wallace-Reader’s Digest Funds, suggest that outreach may be a productive strategy.<sup>3</sup> The study, which used a broader definition of the arts than has been the norm for similar studies, found that “Three of the top four places where people attend arts and cultural events are community venues rather than conventional arts venues.” While many people go to both types of venues, “a substantial group of arts and cultural participation only attend community venues.” Moreover, “certain community venues—churches, for example—appeal more strongly to African Americans and Hispanics.” The study concluded that arts organizations seeking to build both new and existing visitorship might do well to explore community venues as sites for some programs and to engage in partnerships with community organizations.

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<sup>3</sup> The study began in 1998, and a series of reports were issued in 2002. The one to which this report refers is Chris Walker with Kay Sherwood. *Participation in Arts and Culture: The Importance of Community Venues*. Building Arts Participation, New Findings from the Field. The Urban Institute, Washington, DC, and Wallace-Reader’s Digest Funds. New York, n.d.

## FINDINGS

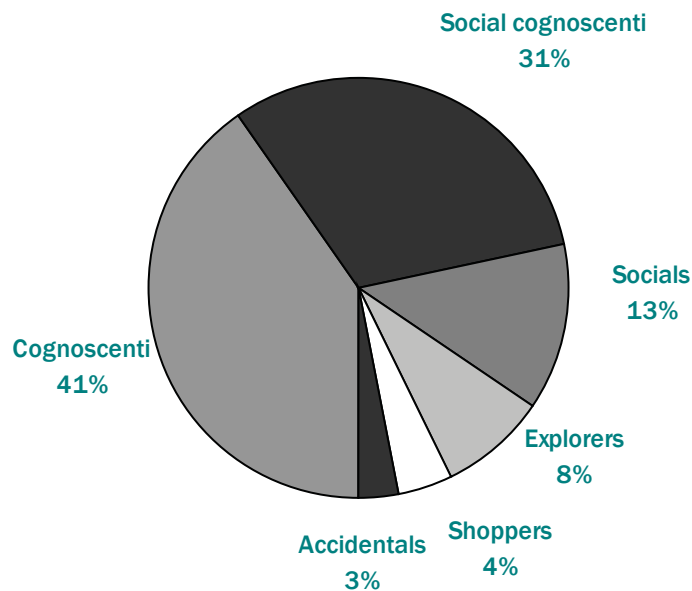
### DEFINING HMSG VISITORS BASED ON REASONS FOR VISITING

On any given day, visitors enter the Hirshhorn Museum for different reasons. Most enter to see contemporary and modern art work. Some come to shop or spend time with friends or family. Yet others wander in from the Mall with no well-defined purpose other than to visit a new museum that they have never visited or have not visited recently.

Based on a statistical clustering of reasons for visiting the Museum, the OP&A study team identified six mutually exclusive segments of HMSG visitors (see Exhibit 3 and “Reasons for Visiting HMSG,” page 17). Two of the segments include nearly three-quarters (72%) of the visitors, while the others are much smaller. The six visitor segments are:

*Cognoscenti* (41% of the HMSG audience) include visitors who indicated that they visited for one or more of three art-related reasons: (a) an interest in contemporary/modern art; (b) to see the Hirshhorn collection; or (c) to see what is new on exhibit.

Exhibit 3  
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden Audience Segments



*Social cognoscenti* (31%) are Cognoscenti who also indicated that they came to spend time with friends or family.

*Socials* (13%) indicated that they wanted to spend time with friends or family, and did not indicate an interest in art or shopping as a reason.

*Explorers* (8%) indicated that they wandered by HMSG and it caught their interest.

*Shoppers* (4%) indicated that they visited in order to shop in the Museum store.

Finally, *Accidentals* (3%) include the remaining visitors who did not indicate any of these reasons for their visit.

As will be seen in this report, these segments hold significantly different views about their visits. The segments also provide a framework for thinking about marketing strategies to retain and expand the HMSG audience. The reader should remember, however, that three of these segments—Explorers (8% of visits), Shoppers (4% of visits), and Accidentals (3% of visits)—accounted for a very small share of HMSG visitors.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Using reasons for visiting is one way to construct visitor segments. Residence and first-time versus repeat visits are alternative bases for segmentation that are used later in this report. Other characteristics could also be used. The time of year of the survey may have affected the relative size of the segments. According to official Smithsonian visit counts, HMSG had 37,040 visitors in December compared with 77,125 and 89,926 in June and July respectively. The study team suspects that more Explorers and Accidentals, and fewer Shoppers, enter the Museum during the summer tourist season.

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF HMSG VISITORS

The demographic characteristics of HMSG visitors in December 2005 are shown in the tables in Appendix C. The tables also present the characteristics of summer HMSG visitors for comparable questions in the 2004 Smithsonian-wide visitor survey.

Gender. The gender composition of December visitors was significantly different from the distribution in summer 2004. More than half of December visitors were male (54%), compared with fewer than half in summer 2004 (44%). There were no statistically significant differences in the percentages of male and female visitors in the six segments.

Age. The three youngest generations of visitors, Generation Y (1978-1993), Generation X (1967-1977), and Trailing Edge Boomers (1956-1966), accounted for three-quarters of December visitors, with roughly equal representation for each of these three generations. Older visitors—the Leading Edge Boomers (1947-1955) and WWII/Postwar generation<sup>2</sup> (1946 and before)—accounted for the remaining quarter of the December visitors. While the overall distributions were similar between December and summer 2004, the percentage of Generation Y visitors was higher and the percentage of Generation X visitors was lower in summer 2004 than in December.

The generational compositions of the six HMSG audience segments were significantly different. Older visitors were more heavily represented among Cognoscenti (and Shoppers), while Generation Y visitors were disproportionately represented among Socials, Social cognoscenti, and Explorers (see Exhibit 4).

Visit Groups. Half of December HMSG visitors came to the Museum with one or more other adults, but no children (51%). The remaining visitors divided across those who came unaccompanied (26%) and those who came with children (22%). This distribution was comparable to the distribution of visit groups in summer 2004.<sup>3</sup>

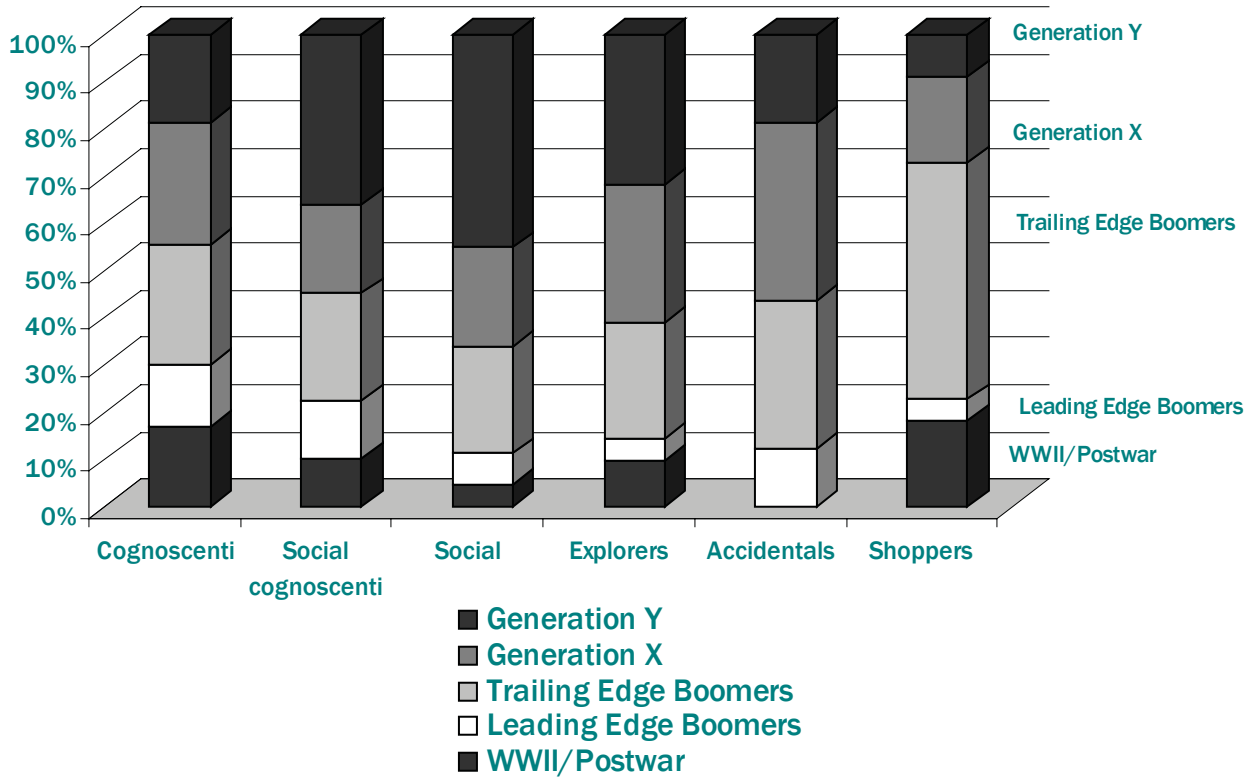
Race. United States visitors who identified themselves as white accounted for four out of five (82%) HMSG visitors in December as well as in summer 2004. Asian visitors were the next

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2 Some names for generations such as “Postwar” may appear to overlap, e.g., with Boomers. Boomers were born after World War II (WWII), whereas members of the Postwar generation were teens during the period between WWII and the Korean War. The WWII generation (born between 1922 and 1927) were teens around the time of the war. William Strauss and Neil Howe. *Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069*. New York, Morrow, 1990. William Strauss and Neil Howe. *The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy*. New York, Broadway Books, 1997. Geoffrey E. Meredith and Charles D. Schewe, with Janice Karlovich, *Defining Moments Defining Generations*. New York, Hungry Minds, Inc., 2002.

3 Note that statistically significant differences in visit group composition across audience segments are a result of the way OP&A constructed the segments; that is, unaccompanied visitors cannot appear in the two segments that were seeking to spend time with friends or family.

Exhibit 4  
HMSG Audience Segments by Generation



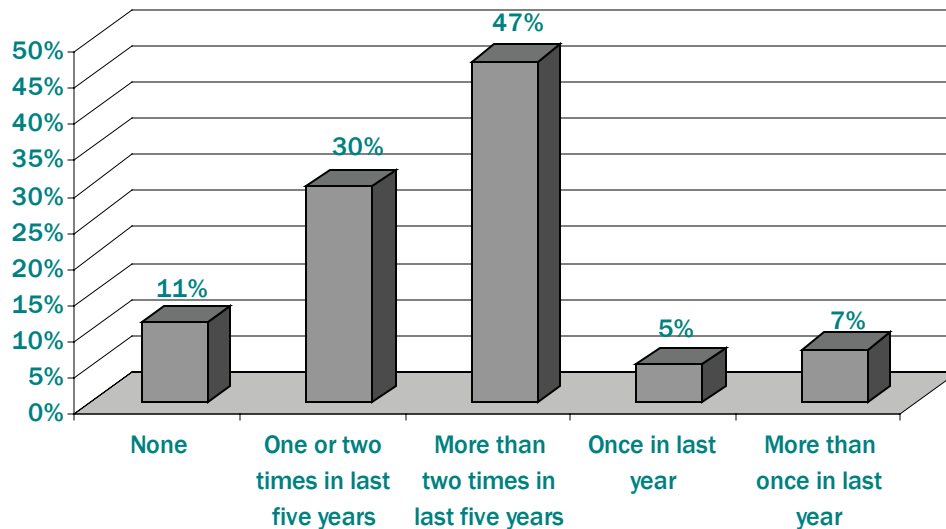
largest racial identification with 12 percent. Both Latinos (4%) and blacks (4%) were substantially less represented in December than in summer 2004, when these groups accounted for seven percent and nine percent of visitors respectively.<sup>4</sup>

Foreign Travel. As a whole, HMSG December visitors were well acquainted with passports. Among United States residents, only one out of ten (11%) (see Exhibit 5) had never traveled outside the United States. Three out of five reported making more than two trips abroad in the past five years or at least one trip in the past year. Interestingly, there were no significant differences between audience segments; all had substantial experience traveling in other countries. Since this question was not asked during the summer 2004 Smithsonian-wide survey, it is not possible to say whether this high level of reported international travel is characteristic of HMSG (and Smithsonian) visitors generally.

<sup>4</sup> Latinos may be of any race; consequently, the percentages may total more than 100 percent.



Exhibit 5  
Travel Outside the United States  
U.S. Residents Only



## DEFINING HMSG VISITORS BASED ON RESIDENCE

Nine out of ten December visitors said that they lived in the United States. One-quarter (26%) lived in Metropolitan Washington, DC, while another quarter lived in the Southeast region (23%), and a fifth (18%) lived in the Mid Atlantic region. Visitors from other regions included Midwest (9%), West (7%), New England (3%), and Mountain Plains (4%). International visitors comprised nine percent of the visitors who responded to the questionnaire.<sup>5</sup>

Using a different measure, visitors were divided into two segments based on the proximity of their residence to the National Mall.

*Locals* include visitors living within 40 miles of the National Mall. More than one-third of December visitors (35%) were locals.

*Tourists* include US visitors living outside of the 40 mile radius and international visitors. Of those, five percent lived between 40 and 100 miles. Eleven percent lived between 100 and 250 miles of the Mall, and the remaining 48 percent lived outside of the 250 mile radius.

<sup>5</sup> Metropolitan Washington, DC, includes the District of Columbia and the immediately adjacent counties in Virginia and Maryland. Otherwise, the regions are identical to those used by the American Association of Museums. Other Virginia counties such as Fairfax and Prince William are included in the Southeast region. Maryland counties other than Montgomery and Prince Georges are included in the Mid Atlantic region.

The audience segments differed significantly with respect to geographical distance from the Mall. A substantial majority of Shoppers lived within 40 miles (81%), while two-fifths each of Social cognoscenti (40%) and Socials (44%) also lived within 40 miles. Conversely, only 18 percent of Explorers, 28 percent of Cognoscenti, and 33 percent of Accidentals lived that close to the Museum.

## DEFINING HMSG VISITORS BASED ON FREQUENCY OF VISIT AND PREVIOUS CONTEMPORARY/MODERN ART MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

Previous HMSG Visitation. Visitors were divided into three segments based on whether they were making a first visit to the Museum, had visited more than one year ago, or had visited within the past year.

First-timers. Three out of eight visitors (39%) were making their first visit to the Museum.

Returners. Another third (34%) had visited before, but not within the past year.

Repeaters. One-quarter (27%) had visited within the past year. Of those, one in ten (9%) reported visiting HMSG five or more times in the past year, and two in ten (18%) reported one to four visits in the past year.

Accidentals, Explorers, and Socials were significantly more likely to be first-timers to the Museum than were visitors in the other three segments (see Exhibit 6). Nevertheless, fewer than one-third of visitors in any segment, except Shoppers, were repeaters.

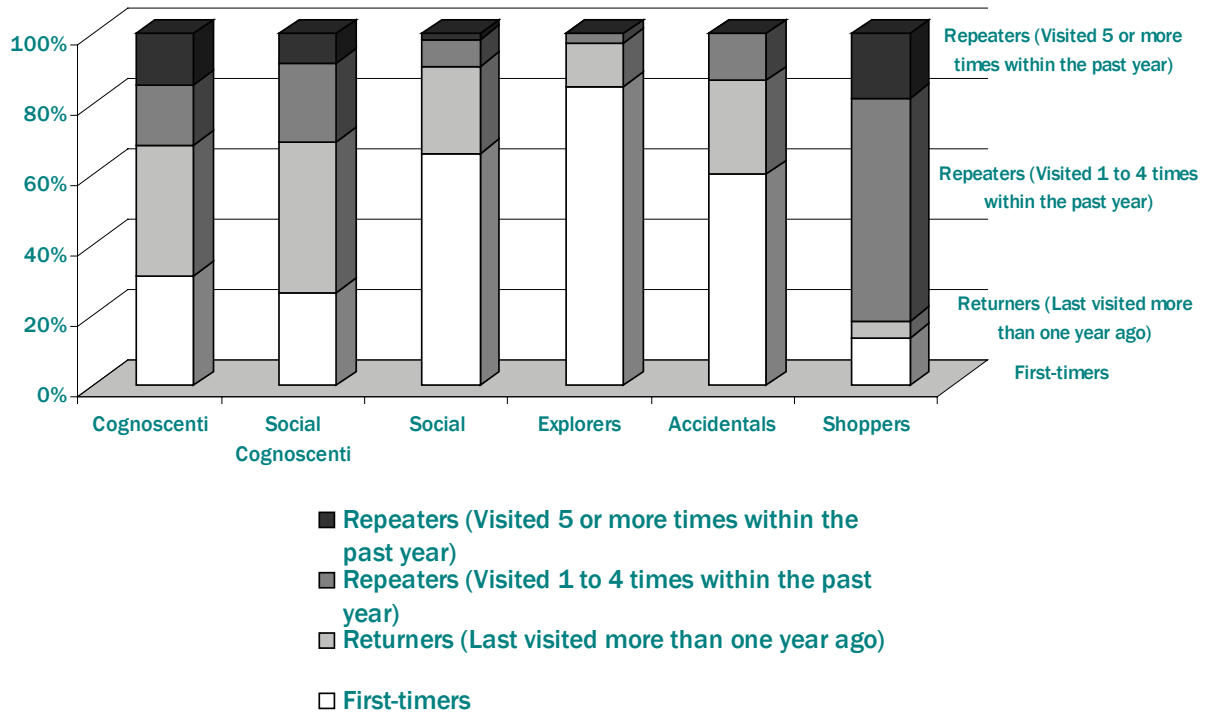
The frequency of prior visitation—returners and repeaters—in the December survey was significantly higher than in the summer 2004 Smithsonian-wide survey (61% in December compared with 47% in summer 2004).

Experience with Other Contemporary/Modern Art Museums. The overall audience at HMSG in December was strikingly familiar with contemporary/modern art museums generally. Four out of five visitors (82%) reported having visited a contemporary/modern art museum other than HMSG. Clearly, the December HMSG audience is not representative of the general United States population.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Since this question was not asked in the 2004 Smithsonian-wide survey, it is not possible to characterize the summer 2004 audience except to note that it included a lower share of repeat HMSG visitors. According to the National Endowment for the Arts' 2002 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, 26 percent of respondents said they visited any kind of art museum in the previous year. Twice as many college graduates (51%) visited an art museum. According to a 1999 study, 16 percent of respondents indicated that they "knew a lot about contemporary art." National Endowment for the Arts. *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts 2002*. Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts, 2003. Data downloaded from Cultural Policy and the Arts National Data Archive (CPANDA). <http://www.cpanda.org/data/a00080/a00080.html>.

Exhibit 6  
Prior Visits to HMSG



The percentages of visitors reporting that they had visited another contemporary/modern art museum differ significantly across HMSG audience segments. However, even in the case of those segments with the least such visitation (Socials and Explorers), more than half of all visitors said that they had been to other contemporary/modern art museums.

When the questions about previous visits to HMSG and visits to other contemporary/modern art museums are combined, it turns out that more than half of the December visitors (57%) were either repeaters or returners and had visited another museum of contemporary/modern art. One-quarter were first-timers but had visited another contemporary/modern art museum. The two audience segments with the least contemporary/modern art exposure were Explorers (44% no exposure at all and 41% other museum only) and Socials (40% no exposure at all and 26% other museum only). Only one in seven visitors (14%) had no previous exposure to any contemporary/modern art museum, including HMSG.

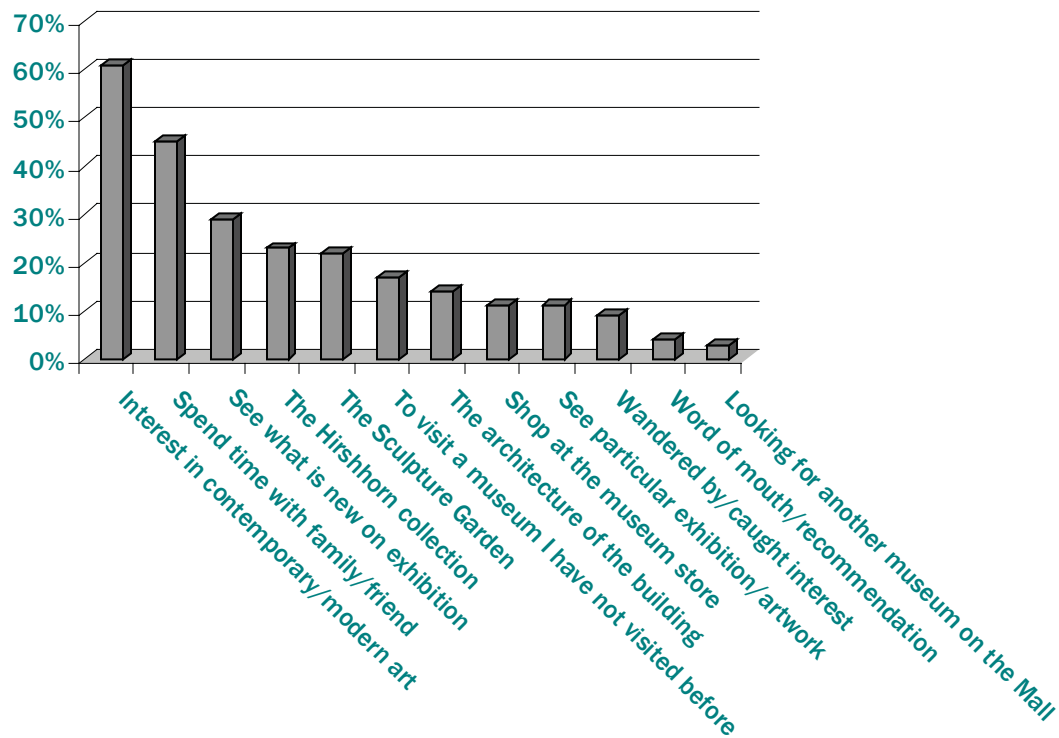
The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA-NY) was the most frequently mentioned museum, with approximately five times as many mentions as the next most frequently cited ones. Five museums tied for second place as most frequently mentioned: Guggenheim, National Gallery of Art, MoMA-San Francisco, Tate, and Museum of Contemporary Art-Chicago.

Initiator of HMSG Visit. Of the 74 percent of December HMSG visitors who were visiting with at least one other person, 43 percent reported that they, themselves, had suggested visiting the Museum.

## REASONS FOR VISITING HMSG

The survey questionnaire listed twelve common reasons for visiting the Museum that are routinely used in visitor surveys or that visitors mentioned in qualitative interviews conducted as part of the questionnaire development. Of the twelve, two were indicated most frequently: “Interest in contemporary/modern art” (61%) and “Spend time with friends/family” (45%) (see Exhibit 7). The next three most frequently mentioned reasons were also art-related.

Exhibit 7  
Reasons for HMSG visit



The youngest (Generation Y) and oldest (WWII/Postwar) visitors were the most different with respect to why they came. Generation Y visitors were most likely to indicate “Spend time with friends/family” (72%), while older visitors were most likely to mention “The Hirshhorn collection” (40%). There were no statistically significant differences in the reasons for coming mentioned by visitors from different generations.

Previous experience with HMSG significantly affected December visitors' reasons for visiting. Although nearly half of first-timers (48%) said that an interest in contemporary/modern art played a role in their visit, significantly more repeaters (66%) and returners (71%) gave this reason. Likewise, the HMSG collection was a more significant factor for repeaters (34%), and returners (27%), than for first-timers (11%). "Seeing what is new on exhibit" revealed a similar progression (50% repeaters, 38% returners, and 5% first-timers).

Conversely, "To see a new museum that I have not visited before" was mentioned by 40 percent of first-timers and "Wandering by/caught interest" was reported by 18 percent of first-timers.

"Shop at the museum store" was cited by a quarter of repeaters (26%), in contrast to seven percent of returners and three percent of first-timers.

Repeaters (18%) and returners (13%) were more likely to be attracted to "See a particular art work" than first-timers (2%).<sup>7</sup>

The only difference in the reasons given by females and males was in the frequency that "See the Sculpture Garden" was cited—27% among females and 18% among males.

Locals (visitors who lived within 40 miles of the Mall) mentioned "Spend time with friends/family" significantly more often (71%) than the average visitor, although half (54%) of the tourists (those who lived further than 40 miles away) also mentioned this reason. "Shop at the museum store" was more frequently mentioned by locals (21%), as was "See a particular art work" (16%).

Visitors who reported having visited a modern/contemporary art museum other than HMSG were significantly more likely to report "Interest in contemporary/modern art" (61%), "See what is new on exhibit" (33%), and "The Hirshhorn collection" (26%), while those without contemporary/modern art museum experience were more likely to report "Visit a museum that I have not visited before" (27%) or "Wandered by/caught interest" (24%).

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<sup>7</sup> Particular art works mentioned included: Palimpsest (7 mentions); Gyroscope (5); Black Box (4); Hodges, Big Man, Ann Hamilton, Kapoor, and Picasso (3 each); Rodin, Bacon, Sawa (2 each); and single mentions (30).

## RATING THE HMSG VISIT

December survey respondents were asked to rate eleven aspects of their museum visits on a five-point scale (superior, excellent, good, fair, and poor) that has been used for several years in surveys of Smithsonian visitors, including the 2004 Smithsonian-wide survey. The data in Exhibit 8 show that “Cleanliness of the building” received the highest rating, with 77 percent of respondents answering either superior or excellent. Other high ratings (combining “superior” and “excellent”) included “Personal enjoyment,” “Places to sit and relax,” “My overall visit

### Exhibit 8

#### Ratings of Aspects of the Museum Visit

Aspects of Museum Visit	Survey	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total*
Cleanliness of building	December	29	48	22	1	0	100
	2004 MVS	41	40	16	2	1	100
Places to sit and relax	December	26	40	27	7	1	100
	2004 MVS	35	34	26	4	1	100
Personal enjoyment	December	22	46	26	6	0	100
	2004 MVS	27	38	26	7	2	100
Helpfulness of museum staff	December	20	32	39	8	2	100
	2004 MVS	26	37	30	5	1	99
My overall visit experience	December	15	49	32	4	0	100
	2004 MVS	18	44	32	5	1	100
Art works on display	December	15	47	31	6	1	100
Relevance of exhibits for me personally	December	13	35	34	14	3	100
	2004 MVS	16	12	41	28	3	100
Directions to find rest rooms, etc.	December	12	35	38	13	2	100
Ease of finding museum entrance	December	12	26	39	17	6	100
Museum shop	December	11	35	39	14	1	100
	2004 MVS	11	28	47	11	2	99
Learning opportunities	December	11	25	37	21	4	100
	2004 MVS	14	29	40	14	4	101

\* Total percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

*Visitors to the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden*

February 2006

experience,” and “Art works on display.” Aspects rated less highly were “Learning opportunities,” “Ease of finding museum entrance,” and “Museum shop.”

Several of HMSG’s ratings were higher in the 2004 Smithsonian-wide survey, while some were higher in the December survey. Rather than indicating that conditions in the Museum have improved or worsened, these differences may be the consequence of a different mix of visitors in the two surveys. For example, the December visitors appear to have included a larger proportion of contemporary/modern art savvy respondents. If so, the dramatically larger percentage of December visitors rating “Relevance of exhibits for me personally” superior or excellent may be the result of more Cognoscenti visitors, rather than improved exhibitions. On the other hand, the increase may actually be the result of improved exhibitions; it is not possible to conclusively determine the cause for the differences in ratings.

About half of Accidental, Explorer, and Social visitors rated “My overall visit experience” as good or lower, in contrast to about a third of visitors in the other segments. Those three segments also rated “Art works on display,” “Personal enjoyment,” and “Relevance of exhibits for me personally” less favorably.

Generation X and Generation Y visitors were slightly more critical of “Learning opportunities” and “Personal enjoyment” than older visitors.

First-timers were the most critical, and frequent repeaters were the least critical, with respect to “My overall visit experience,” “Art works on display,” “Learning opportunities,” “Relevance of exhibits for me personally,” and “Personal enjoyment.”

HMSG December visitors who had visited other contemporary/modern art museums were less critical of their HMSG visit than visitors who had never visited this type of art museum. For example, when looking at the percentage of visitors rating an experience good to poor:

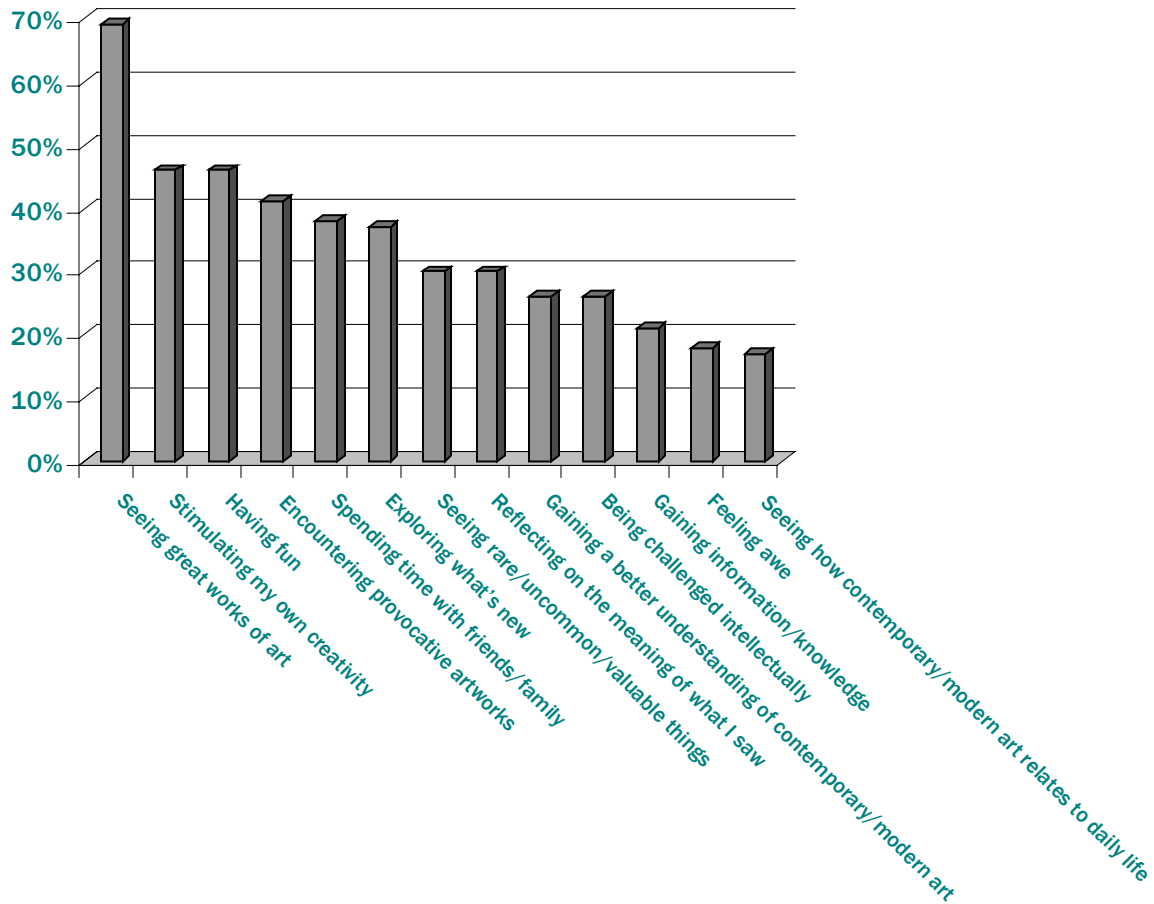
- “My overall visit experience”—53% good to poor rating for respondents who reported never visiting other contemporary/modern art museums versus 33% for visitors who had visited other contemporary/modern art museums
- “Art works on display”—50% good to poor rating for those who never visited versus 35% for those who visited
- “Helpfulness of museum staff”—63% good to poor rating for those who never visited versus 45% for those who visited
- “Relevance of exhibits for me personally”—66% good to poor rating for those who never visited versus 49% for those who visited
- “Personal enjoyment”—49% good to poor rating for those who never visited versus 29% for those who visited

## VISIT EXPERIENCES

HMSG visitors were asked to identify the experiences that they found most satisfying during their visits. They could select as many experiences as they wanted from a list of 13 experiences used in numerous Smithsonian museum surveys or suggested by HMSG (see Exhibit 9). The list did not include an “other” open-ended response as an option.

The most frequently mentioned experience was “Seeing great works of art”—seven out of ten visitors (69%) selected this experience. “Stimulating my own creativity” and “Having fun” were selected by nearly half of the visitors (46% for each). The other ten experiences were selected by decreasing numbers of visitors.

Exhibit 9  
HMSG Visit Experiences





The six segments of the HMSG audience, defined on the basis of reasons for visiting, reported significantly different visit experiences as they exited (see Exhibit 10). Across the largest segments (Cognoscenti and Social cognoscenti) the most frequently reported visit experience was “Seeing great works of art.” In addition, these segments reported “Stimulating my own creativity” or “Encountering provocative art works” more often than Socials or Explorers. Cognoscenti reported having a greater number of experiences on average (5.1) than the visitors in other segments (3.0).

## Exhibit 10

### Experiences Reported by Major HMSG Audience Segments

Experiences	Social					
	Cognoscenti	Cognoscenti	Socials	Explorers*	Shoppers*	Accidentals*
Seeing great works of art **	79	76	51	50	21	40
Stimulating my own creativity **	49	53	37	30	42	44
Encountering provocative art works **	49	45	17	28	22	27
Exploring what's new **	43	44	30	15	28	7
Having fun **	38	63	43	25	50	47
Seeing rare/uncommon/valuable things **	31	39	11	23	28	25
Being challenged intellectually **	30	31	11	13	26	20
Reflecting on the meaning of what I saw **	28	41	17	18	26	20
Spending time with friends/family **	26	71	49	35	60	23
Gaining a better understanding of contemporary/modern art	26	34	25	18	6	13
Gaining information/knowledge	22	25	13	18	33	13
Feeling awe **	18	24	8	18	6	20
Seeing how contemporary/modern art relates to daily life	17	22	13	15	11	7

\* These segments each accounted for small percentages of HMSG visitors.

\*\* Statistically different responses between audience segments.

## VISIT SATISFACTION METRIC (VSM)

Ideally, studies of museum visitors should be able to identify and measure aspects of the museum visit experiences that contribute to or detract from visitors' satisfaction. Analysis of the December HMSG survey responses revealed that the ratings of three aspects of the visit experience—all of which relate to visitor satisfaction—are highly correlated, that is, visitors tended to answer them in a similar fashion:

- My overall visit experience
- Personal enjoyment
- Relevance of exhibits for me personally

Rather than presenting three, similar analyses for each of the variables, or arbitrarily limiting the analysis to only one variable with a consequent loss of information, this study used a mathematical technique to combine the ratings in the three correlated variables into one metric, "Visit Satisfaction Metric" (VSM).<sup>8</sup> The correlation of VSM with characteristics of visitors or their experiences allows HMSG to identify factors that are significant in distinguishing dissatisfied from satisfied visitors.<sup>9</sup>

VSM (used synonymously with visitor satisfaction) varies significantly across HMSG audience segments based on reasons for visiting. Cognoscenti and Social cognoscenti had the highest VSMs, or mean levels of satisfaction (+0.14 and +0.11 respectively), while Socials and Explorers had the lowest (-0.45 and -0.26 respectively).

It also made a significant difference in visitors' satisfaction whether they said that they were visiting alone (mean VSM +0.23), visiting with someone else to whom they suggested visiting HMSG (mean VSM +0.06), or visiting with someone else who made the initial suggestion (mean VSM -0.20). The implication is that less motivated visitors had a less satisfying experience.

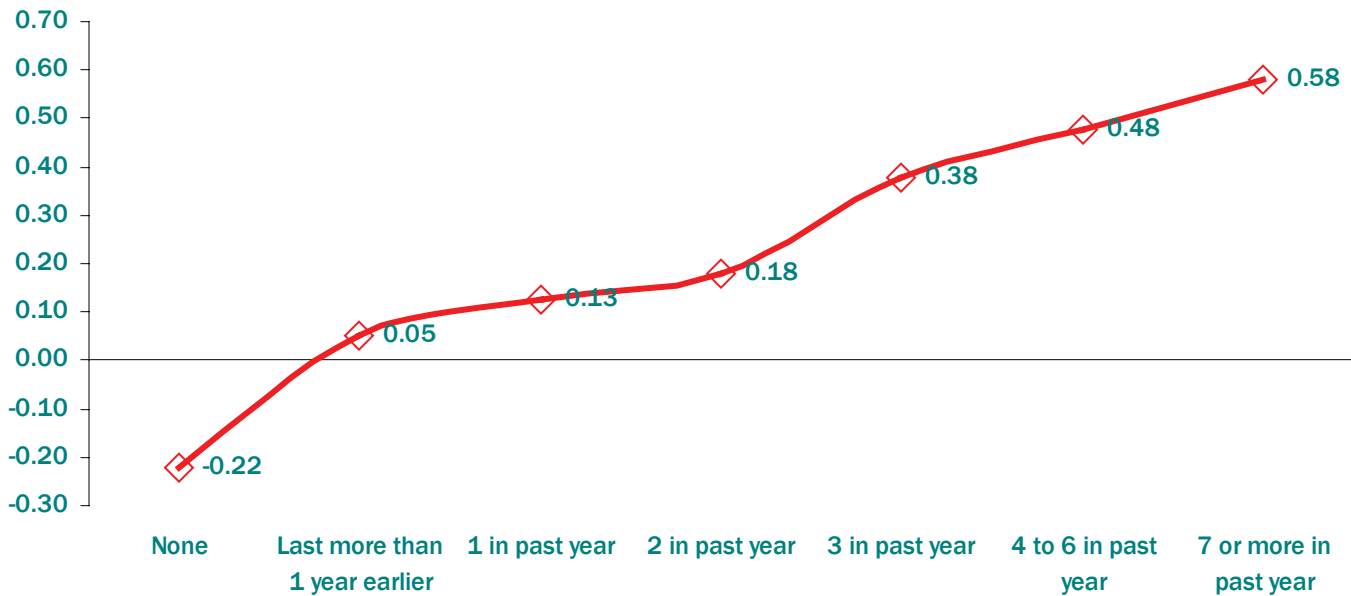
Frequency of visiting HMSG is significantly correlated with satisfaction. Exhibit 11 shows a strong pattern of mean satisfaction scores increasing with repeat visitation. The group with the lowest satisfaction scores were first-timers, followed by returners.

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<sup>8</sup> The statistical procedure used to produce the VSM was a principal components analysis of the three ratings. Further documentation of the technique is available from the Office of Policy and Analysis.

<sup>9</sup> HMSG visitors who rated each of the three aspects of their museum experience "superior" are the most satisfied and had the highest possible VSM (1.78). The few who said poor to one rating and fair for the other two had the lowest VSM (-2.67). No visitor rated two out of the three ratings as "poor."

Exhibit 11  
Mean Satisfaction Scores by Number of Previous Visits to HMSG



In general, visitors who reported visiting HMSG frequently within the last year and those who reported visiting other museums of contemporary/modern art had more positive VSMs than other visitors. A surprising finding is that returners (visited HMSG before, but more than one year previously) who had never visited another contemporary/modern art museum had the most negative VSMs. The mean VSMs for all combinations were:

- Returner and had not visited another contemporary/modern art museum (-0.55 mean VSM)
- First-timer and had not visited another contemporary/modern art museum (-0.39 mean VSM)
- First-timer and had visited another contemporary/modern art museum (-0.14 mean VSM)
- Returner and had visited another contemporary/modern art museum (+0.10 mean VSM)
- Repeater (1 to 4 times within the past year) and had visited another contemporary/modern art museum (+0.19 mean VSM)
- Repeater (5 or more times within the past year) and had visited another contemporary/modern art museum (+0.48 mean VSM)

All of the visitors' experiences, except two, were significantly correlated with VSM; that is, visitors with a high VSM were relatively likely to have marked a specific experience, while those with a low VSM were relatively unlikely to have marked the same experience. The two exceptions were "Spending time with friends/family" and "Gaining a better understanding of contemporary/modern art." The three experiences with the largest positive correlations with the satisfaction metric were (1) "Seeing great works of art;" (2) "Encountering provocative works of art;" and (3) "Feeling awe."

## ENGAGEMENT

One survey question asked, "Was your visit so engaging that you almost lost track of time?" Nearly half of all HMSG visitors responded positively (26% marked "Yes" and 22% marked the category between "Yes" and "Not sure"). "Engagement" was strongly and significantly correlated with VSM.

Responses to this "engagement" question also were significantly and positively correlated with eight visit experiences marked by HMSG visitors:

- Seeing great works of art
- Reflecting on the meaning of what I saw
- Feeling awe
- Being challenged intellectually
- Encountering provocative art works
- Seeing how contemporary/modern art relates to daily life
- Seeing rare/uncommon/valuable things
- Stimulating my own creativity

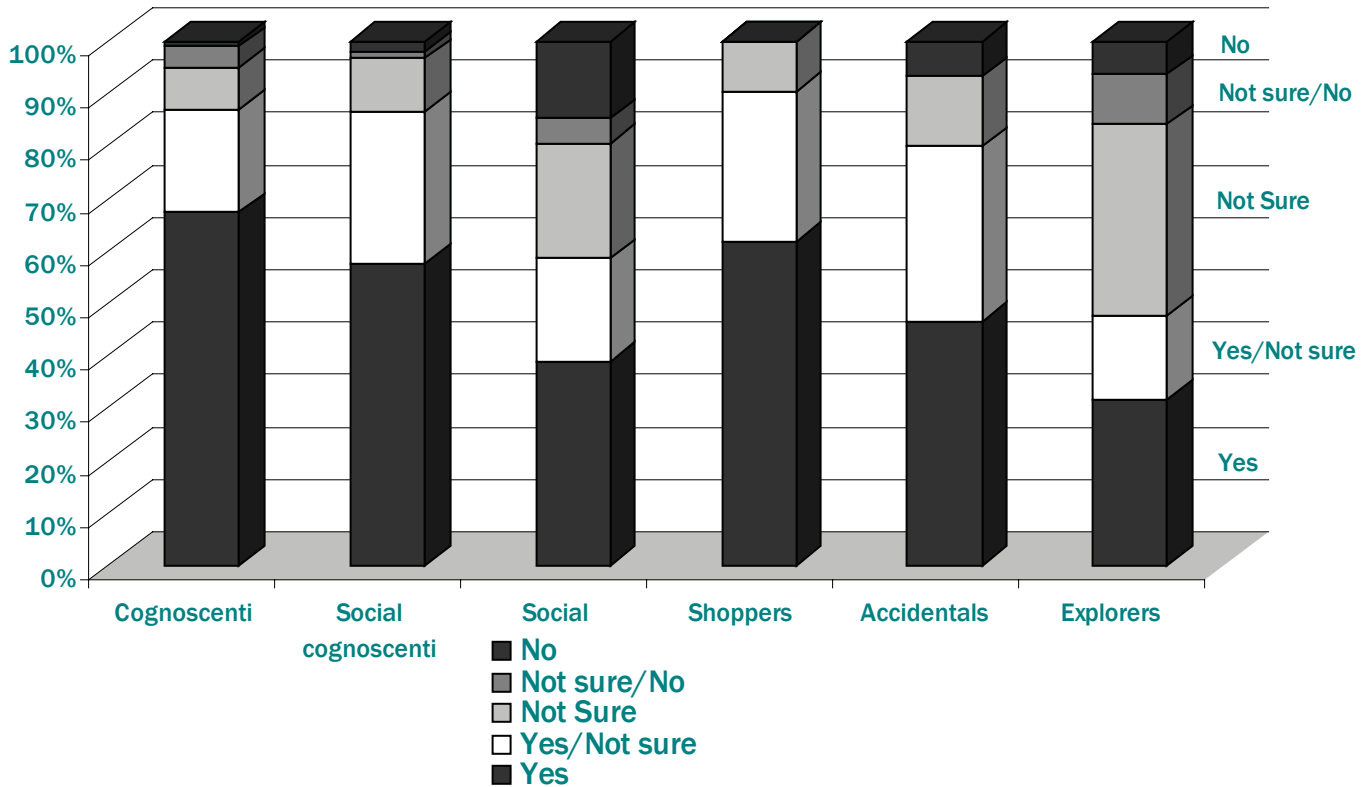
## IS HMSG A MUST VISIT MUSEUM?

One survey question asked the visitor, "Would you tell friends that the Hirshhorn is a 'Must Visit' museum?" Over half of the visitors marked "Yes" (56%), while another quarter (23%) marked the bubble between "Yes" and "Not Sure," for a total of more than three-quarters indicating that they felt that HMSG is a "Must Visit" museum.

HMSG visitors' willingness to recommend HMSG was very strongly, and significantly, correlated with satisfaction. Nearly every visitor (96%) in the top quarter of VSM scores marked one of the two top categories, in contrast to nearly half of HMSG visitors in the lowest quarter of VSM scores (46%). Fewer than one out of 14 (7%) said that they would not recommend a HMSG visit.

Socials were the audience segment least likely to recommend a HMSG visit, followed by Explorers (see Exhibit 12). Socials, again followed by Explorers, were also the two audience segments that were least satisfied with their HMSG visit.

Exhibit 12  
Willingness to Recommend HMSG as a "Must Visit" Museum by Audience



## IMPROVING SATISFACTION FOR HMSG VISITORS

HMSG visitors were asked to select changes that “would have improved your Museum visit” from a list of a dozen possibilities (see Exhibit 13). About one in six visitors (17%) did not mark any possible improvement. These visitors may have felt that everything was perfect as is, but it is not possible to make that inference since a “no improvements” option was not included on the questionnaire.

Among all visitors who marked one or more suggestions, two were marked by nearly half of the visitors and two others by approximately one-third. All four related to having greater amounts of information—more background on the art work, more information on the artists, more text in exhibitions, and more information on ways to look at modern/contemporary art.

### Exhibit 13

#### Ways to Improve HMSG Visits

Potential Improvement	All visitors	Satisfied visitors	Dissatisfied visitors
More background on the art work	47	46	53
More information on the artists	45	48	41
More text in exhibitions	37	37	34
More information on ways to look at modern/contemporary art	30	19	35
Food service	23	24	20
User controlled audio guide	17	18	18
Orientation to the Museum and what it offers	13	11	16
After work (5 to 8 PM) programs	13	16	8
Staff in exhibitions to answer questions	11	11	11
Ways to exchange ideas with other visitors	9	10	4
Weekend social activities	6	6	5
Fewer art works on display	2	1	4

Looking at suggestions from all visitors mixes the preferences of satisfied as well as dissatisfied visitors. Suggestions from visitors with low satisfaction scores may be more useful in deciding on ways to improve their satisfaction and encourage repeat visits, versus trying to increase the satisfaction of visitors who are already satisfied. Therefore, Exhibit 13 presents the percentages of the most satisfied quarter of visitors and the least satisfied quarter of visitors, who indicated different ways to improve their visit.

All categories of HMSG visitors—those with high VSMs as well as those with low VSMs—ranked the potential improvements in similar orders. However, differences appear in the frequency with which improvements are marked by different categories of visitors.

Visitors with lower VSM ratings—including those who entered without an intention to see the art or to “Shop in the museum store”—were more likely to mark:

- “More background on the art work”
- “More information on ways to look at modern/contemporary art”
- “Orientation to the Museum and what it offers.”

The higher VSM visitors were more likely than lower VSM visitors to mark “Ways to exchange ideas with other visitors” and “After work (5 to 8 PM) programs.”

An important question was whether visitors’ VSMs were affected by having initiated the visit versus being “brought” to the Museum by another visitor. In fact, those initiating the visit had higher mean VSMs (+0.04) than those who did not initiate it (-0.22). One significant difference between the two groups was that visitors who initiated the visit chose “After work (5 to 8 pm) programs” more frequently than those who were brought along.

## HMSG GEOGRAPHIC MARKETS

The OP&A study team divided the HMSG audience into six geographic markets on the basis of where visitors live and their history of visits to the Museum. The six geographic markets, and their relative sizes and mean VSM scores, are:

- Local first-timers (10% of HMSG visitors, with a -0.52 mean VSM)
- Local returners (9% of HMSG visitors, with a -0.30 mean VSM)
- Local repeaters (19% of HMSG visitors, with a +0.39 mean VSM)
- Tourist first-timers (24% of HMSG visitors, with a -0.11 mean VSM)
- Tourist returners (23% of HMSG visitors, with a +0.13 mean VSM)
- Tourist repeaters (8% of HMSG visitors, with a +0.01 mean VSM)

The three local markets are within a reasonable travel distance from HMSG and thus offer greater potential for increasing visitation through repeat visitation. There were no significant differences in the suggestions for improvements between locals and tourists.

HMSG Audience Segments. The six audience segments based on reasons for visiting identified earlier in this report are distributed unevenly across the six HMSG geographic markets (see Exhibit 14). For example, tourist first-timers fall primarily into the Cognoscenti and Explorer segments. In contrast, local first-timers are significantly more likely to be Social cognoscenti or Socials. As Exhibit 14 shows, because visitors from different parts of the HMSG geographic market fall predominantly into certain audience segments, they arrive with different reasons for visiting.

#### Exhibit 14

##### Distribution of Geographic Markets by Audience Segments

Geographic. Market	Social					
	Cognoscenti (%)	Cognoscenti (%)	Shoppers* (%)	Accidentals* (%)	Socials (%)	Explorers* (%)
Local first-timers	14	37	3	3	37	6
Local returners	17	48	0	4	22	9
Local repeaters	46	29	18	2	4	1
Tourist first-timers	36	19	1	5	18	21
Tourist returners	55	37	1	2	4	1
Tourist repeaters	50	43	2	0	5	0

\* Segments with small percentages of visitors.



Ways to Improve Visit Experiences. Consistent with the earlier findings, HMSG visitors from all of the geographic markets suggested that more art-related information would improve their HMSG visit (see Exhibit 15). The degree to which suggestions were selected varied across the geographic markets, reflecting the diverse reasons for visits.

### Exhibit 15

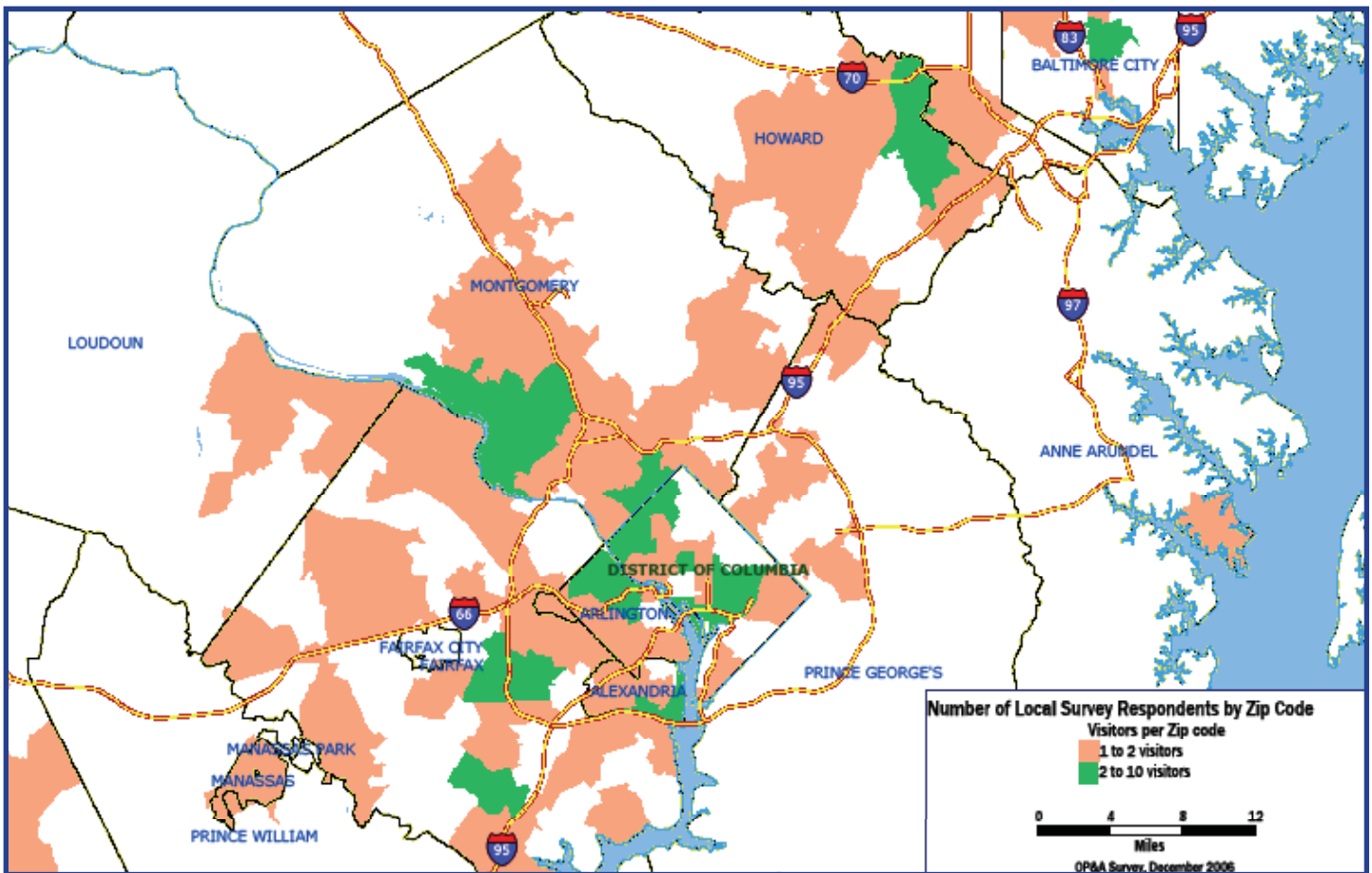
#### Ways to Improve Museum Visits by HMSG Visit Markets

Possible Improvements	Local First-timers* (%)	Local Returners* (%)	Local Repeaters (%)	Tourist First-timers (%)	Tourist Returners (%)	Tourist Repeaters (%)
More background on the art work	58	45	51	48	44	40
More information on the artists	49	41	45	42	45	56
More text in exhibitions	27	45	38	31	39	39
Information on ways to look at modern/contemporary art	24	24	32	33	30	29
Food service	24	29	24	21	27	14
User controlled audio guide	3	12	17	20	12	34
Orientation to the Museum and what it offers	15	12	10	17	10	9
After work (5 to 8 PM) programs	6	12	27	7	11	14
Staff in exhibitions to answer questions	12	19	11	13	9	6
Ways to exchange ideas with other visitors	6	10	11	7	14	14
Weekend social activities	6	10	13	2	5	6
Fewer art works on display	3	0	3	2	2	0

\* Markets with large potential for increasing visitation.

Where Local HMSG Visitors Live. Visitors from the three local HMSG geographic markets—first timers, returners, and repeaters—tended to live in areas in the DC metropolitan region where education levels are highest. Local repeaters tended to live in areas closer to HMSG, while local first-timers came from more distant and different areas. Exhibit 16 shows the number of all local survey respondents (first-timers, returners, and repeaters) living in zip codes within 40 miles of HMSG. This map illustrates that HMSG attracts more visitors from Virginia suburbs, Montgomery County, the Baltimore corridor, and the District of Columbia than it does from Prince Georges County.

**EXHIBIT 16**  
**NUMBER OF LOCAL SURVEY RESPONDENTS**  
**(IDENTIFIED BY ZIP CODE)**



## APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

After discussions with the Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A), the Hirshhorn determined that a survey using a self-administered questionnaire was the best means of getting visitor feedback on a number of different aspects of the museum. Interviewing was not a feasible way to get input from the desired number of visitors.

To develop the survey questionnaire, the OP&A study team:

- Met with Hirshhorn staff to determine their areas of interest for data collection.
- Observed the focus groups sponsored by the Hirshhorn in November 2005.
- Reviewed the Communications and Situational Analysis report prepared by Ruder Finn Arts & Communication Counselors and LaPlaca Cohen in August 2005.
- Looked at the results of the 2004 visitor survey at the Hirshhorn, conducted by OP&A as part of the Smithsonian-wide Survey of Museum Visitors.<sup>1</sup>
- Conducted survey question pre-testing and open-ended interviews with 47 visitors to the museum in early December.
- Developed a list of possible questions, from which the Hirshhorn selected those it wanted and to which it added several questions.
- Developed a draft questionnaire for review by the Hirshhorn.
- Revised and finalized the questionnaire, which consisted of 15 questions on two pages (see Appendix B). The questions can be categorized as follows:
  - Reasons for visiting the Hirshhorn
  - Experience with the museum overall and with different aspects of the museum
  - Ways to enhance visitor satisfaction
  - Demographic and other background information about the visitor

The OP&A study team established a target of at least 300 completed questionnaires. The Hirshhorn needed the data collection to be completed by January 8, 2006, and the team scheduled the survey for December 23, 26 and 28, 2005, with additional days to be added in early January if necessary. A team of 2 or 3 OP&A staff intercepted individual visitors or one member of a group of two or more people visiting together as they were leaving the main entrance of the museum. The survey results, therefore, are based on a sample of “voluntary” visitors to the museum. Employees of the Smithsonian, visitors in an organized tour, and children under 12 were not eligible to be surveyed. The survey was conducted in three sessions per day, 11:00 am to 12:30 pm, 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm, and 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.si.edu/opanda/Reports/Reports/SI2004\\_Survey\\_Booklet.pdf](http://www.si.edu/opanda/Reports/Reports/SI2004_Survey_Booklet.pdf)

The OP&A study team intercepted a total of 720 visitors over the three scheduled days. Of those visitors, 484 completed the questionnaires, and there were 236 refusals (questionnaires whose second page had not been completed were considered refusals). The cooperation rate was therefore 67 percent.

## APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

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Smithsonian  
*Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden*

Visitor Survey -- Winter 2006

- 1. Is today your first visit to the Hirshhorn?**  Yes  
 No, I last visited more than one year ago  
 No, I visited \_\_\_ times within the past year

- 2. Other than the Hirshhorn, have you ever visited a museum of modern/contemporary art?**  No  Yes (specify museum[s]) \_\_\_\_\_

- 3. Have you ever traveled outside of the United States?**  No  
 Yes \_\_\_ times in the last year; \_\_\_ in the last 5 years

- 4. Why did you visit the Hirshhorn today? (Mark one or more)**
- Spend time with friends/family
  - Interest in contemporary/modern art
  - The Hirshhorn collection
  - The architecture of the building
  - The Sculpture Garden
  - See what is new on exhibit
  - See a particular art work (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Word of mouth/recommendation
  - Visit a museum I have not visited before
  - Wandered by/caught interest
  - Shop at the museum store
  - Looking for another museum on the Mall

**5. Please rate your visit to the Museum today.**

	Not Applicable	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Superior
My overall visit experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art works on display	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helpfulness of museum staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relevance of exhibits for me personally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal enjoyment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Directions to find exhibitions, rest rooms, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ease of finding Museum entrance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cleanliness of the building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Places to sit and relax	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Museum shop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- 6. Was your visit so engaging that you almost lost track of time?**  Yes  Not sure  No

- 7. Would you tell friends that the Hirshhorn is a "Must Visit" museum?**  Yes  Not sure  No

**Please Continue on Next Page**

Visitor Survey -- Winter 2006 -- Continued

8. Which of these experiences were most satisfying in the Hirshhorn today? (Mark all that apply)
- Gaining information/knowledge
  - Seeing great works of art
  - Seeing how contemporary/modern art relates to daily life
  - Reflecting on the meaning of what I saw
  - Seeing rare/uncommon/valuable things
  - Exploring what's "new"
  - Gaining a better understanding of contemporary/modern art
  - Feeling awe
  - Spending time with friends/family
  - Being challenged intellectually
  - Encountering provocative artworks
  - Having fun
  - Stimulating my own creativity

9. Which of these would have improved your Museum visit? (Mark all that apply)
- Fewer art works on display
  - More text in exhibitions
  - Orientation to the Museum and what it offers
  - Information on ways to look at modern/contemporary art
  - Ways to exchange ideas with other visitors
  - User controlled audio guide
  - Staff in exhibitions to answer questions
  - More information on the artists
  - More background on the art work
  - Food service
  - Weekend social activities
  - After work (5 to 8 pm) programs

10. What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself to be? (Mark one or more)
- African American/Black
  - American Indian/Native Alaskan
  - Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Indian, etc.)
  - Latino/Hispanic
  - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
  - White

11. Who in your group suggested visiting today?
- Not applicable       Someone else       I did

12. With whom are you visiting ? (Mark one or more)
- I am alone
  - One adult
  - Several adults
  - Child(ren) under 18
  - School group
  - Organized group

13. Where do you live?
- US (specify Zip Code)
- Other country (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

14. What is your age?

15. What is your gender?  Female  Male

**Administrative use only:**

Segment  1  2  3  4  5  6

Session

Status

- Complete
- Ineligible
- Refusal

**Thank you for your time!**

APPENDIX C:  
HIRSHHORN MUSEUM & SCULPTURE GARDEN VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS:  
WINTER 2005

(Note: Some rows do not total 100 percent because of rounding.)

**1. Is today your first visit to the Hirshhorn?**

	December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
Yes	39	53
No, I last visited more than one year ago	34	47
No, I visited 1 to 4 times within the past year	18	na
No, I visited 5 or more times within the past year	9	na
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
 Item response rate*	 99	 99

\* The "Item response rate" is the percentage of survey respondents who answered this specific question.

**2. Other than the Hirshhorn, have you ever visited a museum of modern/contemporary art?**

	December 2005 (%)
No	18
Yes	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
Item response rate	97

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA NY) was the most frequently mentioned museum, with roughly five times as many mentions as the next most frequently mentioned museum. Five museums were essentially tied (Guggenheim, National Gallery of Art, San Francisco MoMA, Tate, and Chicago).

**3. Have you ever traveled outside the United States? (restricted to U.S. residents only)**

	December 2005 (%)
No	11
One or two times in last five years	30
More than two times in last five years	47
Once in last year	5
More than once in last year	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
 Item response rate	 78

**4. Why did you visit the Hirshhorn today? \***

	December 2005 (%)
Interest in contemporary/modern art	61
Spend time with friends/family	45
See what is new on exhibit	29
The Hirshhorn collection	23
The Sculpture Garden	22
Visit a museum I have not visited before	17
The architecture of the building	14
Shop at the museum store	11
See particular art work	11
Wandered by/caught interest	9
Word of mouth/recommendation	4
Looking for another museum on the Mall	3
 Item response rate	 99

\* More than one response was possible.

*Visitors to the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden*

February 2006

5. Please rate your visit to the Museum today.

	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total*	Item response rate
My overall visit experience	15	49	32	4	0	100	98
Summer 2004	18	44	32	5	1	100	98
Art works on display	15	47	31	6	1	100	94
Learning opportunities	11	25	37	21	4	100	80
Summer 2004	14	29	40	14	4	101	90
Helpfulness of museum staff	20	32	39	8	2	100	76
Summer 2004	26	37	30	5	1	99	70
Relevance of exhibits for me personally	13	35	34	14	3	100	86
Summer 2004	16	12	41	28	3	100	96
Personal enjoyment	22	46	26	6	0	100	94
Summer 2004	27	38	26	7	2	100	97
Directions to find rest rooms, etc.	12	35	38	13	2	100	83
Ease of finding museum entrance	12	26	39	17	6	100	93
Cleanliness of building	29	48	22	1	0	100	95
Summer 2004	41	40	16	2	1	100	97
Places to sit and relax	26	40	27	7	1	100	92
Summer 2004	35	34	26	4	1	100	95
Museum shop	11	35	39	14	1	100	72
Summer 2004	11	28	47	11	2	99	68

6. Was your visit so engaging that you almost lost track of time?

		December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
Yes	(1)	26	58
	(2)	22	na
Not sure	(3)	19	na
	(4)	8	na
No	(5)	25	42
Total		100	100
Item response rate		98	98

7. Would you tell friends that the Hirshhorn is a "Must Visit" museum?

		December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
Yes	(1)	56	65
	(2)	23	na
Not sure	(3)	14	21
	(4)	4	na
No	(5)	4	14
Total		100	100
Item response rate		99	98



8. Which of these experiences were most satisfying in the Hirshhorn today? \*

	December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
Seeing great works of art	69	na
Stimulating my own creativity	46	na
Having fun	46	na
Encountering provocative art works	41	na
Spending time with friends/family	38	34
Exploring what's new	37	na
Seeing rare/uncommon/ valuable things	30	34**
Reflecting on the meaning of what I saw	30	42
Gaining a better understanding of contemporary/modern art	26	na
Being challenged intellectually	26	na
Gaining information/ knowledge	21	32
Feeling awe	18	32**
Seeing how contemporary/ modern art relates to daily life	17	na
Item response rate	97	95

\* More than one response was possible.

\*\* Experiences listed in the two surveys were close but not identical.

9. Which of these would have improved your Museum visit today? \*

	December 2005 (%)
More background on the art work	47
More information on the artists	45
More text in exhibitions	37
Information on ways to look at modern/contemporary art	30
Food service	23
User controlled audio guide	17
Orientation to the Museum and what it offers	13
After work (5 to 8 PM) programs	13
Staff in exhibitions to answer questions	11
Ways to exchange ideas with other visitors	9
Weekend social activities	6
Fewer art works on display	2
Item response rate	83

\* More than one response was possible.

**10. What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself to be?\***

	December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
African American/Black	4	9
American Indian/ Native Alaskan	2	1
Asian	12	10
Latino/Hispanic	4	7
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	2	0
White	82	82
Item response rate	95	94

\* More than one response was possible.

**11. Who in your group suggested visiting today?**

	December 2005 (%)
Someone else	27
I did	43
Visiting alone	30
Total	100
Item response rate	86

**12. With whom are you visiting? \***

	December 2005 (%)
I am alone	26
One adult	36
Several adults	31
Child(ren) under 18	20
School group	0
Organized group	0
Item response rate	99

\* More than one response was possible.

**12A. With whom are you visiting?**

	December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
Alone	26	27
Adult(s) without child(ren)	51	51
Adult(s) with child(ren)	22	17
Other	2	5
Total	101	100
Item response rate	99	99

**13. Where do you live?**

	December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
United States	91	90
Other country	9	10
Total	100	100
Item response rate	98	91

**13A. Residence distance from the Mall.**

	December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
5 mile radius	9	12
10 mile radius	10	7
20 mile radius	9	7
40 mile radius	7	5
100 mile radius	5	4
250 mile radius	11	9
Other U.S...	39	46
International	9	10
Total	99	100
Item response rate	98	91

13. Residence geography.

	December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
Metro Washington	26	25
Southeast	23	19
Mid Atlantic	18	16
Midwest	9	10
New England	3	4
Mountain Plains	4	5
West	7	11
International	9	10
Total	99	100
Item response rate	95	

14A. Age grouped into Generations

	December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
WWII/Postwar	12	10
Leading Edge Boomers	11	13
Trailing Edge Boomers	25	23
Generation X	24	16
Generation Y	28	38
Total	100	100
Item response rate	99	98

14B. Age grouped into 5 year intervals

	December 2005 (%)
12 thru 19	7
20 thru 24	13
25 thru 29	12
30 thru 34	10
35 thru 39	10
40 thru 44	12
45 thru 49	11
50 thru 54	8
55 thru 59	5
60 thru 64	6
65 thru 69	4
70 thru 99	2
Total	100
Item response rate	99

15. What is your gender?

	December 2005 (%)	Summer 2004 (%)
Female	46	56
Male	54	44
Total	100	100
Item response rate	99	98