

# A TARGETED STUDY OF VISITOR RESPONSE TO



## AN EXHIBITION AT THE ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY

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## Overview

The central feature of *Peacock Room REMIX* is *Filthy Lucre*, an installation work by Darren Waterston. *Filthy Lucre* is a near-actual-size re-imagination of James MacNeill Whistler's famed Peacock Room in the Freer Gallery of Art. The gallery surrounding *Filthy Lucre* presents Waterston's preparatory drawings for *Filthy Lucre* on one side, and Whistler's portraits of Frederick Leyland, the original owner of the Peacock Room, and his family, on the other. The display includes two wall-sized video projections. One video details views of the Peacock Room, and the other juxtaposes excerpts from the correspondence of Whistler and Leyland before, during, and after Whistler's work on the room, documenting their disintegrating relationship.

*Peacock Room REMIX* opened on May 16, and continues with *Filthy Lucre* until January 2017, but in January and June 2016 the surrounding displays will be changed. This study was conducted between May 28 and June 13, 2015 using a census sample. Overall 72% of visitors entering or exiting during the survey periods were intercepted, and the cooperation rate was 78%, for a total of 592 completed surveys.

The study focused on the following topics and questions:

- **Publicity and Draw** - What was the impact of advertising and publicity on attendance? Unlike most exhibition studies, this study captured early responses, when the effects of publicity and advertising are most immediate.
- **The Exhibition** - How did the response to the installation compare to that of the exhibition overall? Did the surrounding materials enhance the overall impact?
- ***Filthy Lucre*** - How did visitors respond to the installation? This is the first time that the Sackler Gallery has presented a major exhibition with a contemporary artwork at its core.
- **The Peacock Room Video** - This video was meant as a stand-in for the Peacock Room. Did it play its intended role? This video will remain on view throughout the entire run of the exhibition. Its importance may increase later in the year when the Peacock Room closes to the public in preparation for renovation of the Freer Gallery in 2016.
- **The Correspondence Video** - This video is itself an ambitious production that attempts to communicate the relationship between Whistler and Leyland exclusively through excerpts of letters and images. How was it received? What was its impact on the visitor experience?

## Executive Summary

### Publicity and Draw

Visitors can be divided into three classes according to how they heard of *REMIX*:

- On site – Those who wandered in or learned about it at SI (43%)
- Media – Those who learned about it from a media source (33%)
- Word of mouth – Those who heard about it from family/friends/social media (24%)

Visitors under 30 were more likely to have learned on site and visitors over 54 through the media. Visitors had very low expectations for this exhibition, no matter what their information source, but those who had learned about the exhibition from a media source were much more likely to have rated their overall experience in the exhibition Superior when they exited.

### Exhibition

The exhibition as a whole was very well received by visitors — 29% rated their overall experience Superior. One in five gave a rating below Excellent. This overall experience rating puts the exhibition in the top quarter of all Sackler exhibitions studied over the past eleven years.

This high experience rating on exit is in sharp contrast to what entering visitors expected. Only one in ten entering visitors expected that they would rate their overall experience Superior when they left the exhibition, and two in five expected to rate their experience less than Excellent.

Emotion seems to have played a role in the rating. Those who reported that they were especially satisfied with having felt an emotional connection were much more likely than other visitors to have rated their overall experience in the exhibition Superior. Visitors under 30 were much more likely than visitors over 54 to report feeling excited/inspired.

### *Filthy Lucre*

One-third (33%) rated their experience of the *Filthy Lucre* installation Superior, and one-quarter rated their experience as Poor, Fair, or Good. Those who reported an especially satisfying experience of emotional connection were much more likely than other visitors to have rated their experience in *Filthy Lucre* Superior. Younger visitors, ages 18-29, rated their experience in *Filthy Lucre* very highly, while visitors ages 55 and over were more ambivalent.

Many of those who gave Superior ratings provided favorable comments, emphasizing emotion, the artist, and personal interpretations. A number of those

who rated their experience less than Excellent provided unfavorable comments, emphasizing confusion about the exhibition and personal criticisms.

### **The Peacock Room Video**

This video worked well for two in ten visitors. Two in ten saw none of it; three in ten saw very little of it and rated their experience with it very low (4% Superior), and three in ten saw some of it and also rated it low (5% Superior). But the two in ten who saw most or all of it rated their experience with it very highly (36% Superior).

The more of this video that visitors saw, the more likely they were to report enriched understanding as a satisfying experience in the exhibition. The more they watched the video, the higher their experience ratings for both *Filthy Lucre* and the exhibition as a whole.

### **The Correspondence Video**

This video also worked best for nearly one-quarter of visitors. One third saw none of it. The one-quarter of visitors who saw very little of it rated their experience very low (3% Superior); the one in five who saw some of it also rated their experience low (5% Superior). But the one-quarter who saw most or all of it rated their experience very high (54% Superior).

The more of this video that visitors saw, the more likely they were to report enriched understanding as a satisfying experience. The same was true, but to a lesser degree, for imagining other times or places.

At the same time, unlike with the Peacock Room video, there was no significant association between watching this video and overall experience ratings, either for the exhibition or for *Filthy Lucre*.

### **The Surrounding Displays**

Four out of five said that the displays and films around *Filthy Lucre* had enhanced their experience, and the other one in five said that they had no effect. Although the videos were a factor in this response, one in four visitors saw no videos at all but felt that the surrounding displays had enhanced their experience.

### **IPOP**

First-time visitors had higher IPOP scores in the Physical dimension. The exhibition seems to have been most effective for those drawn to the Idea dimension, because those who gave a Superior overall experience rating had high average Idea scores.

## Analysis and Conclusions

The percentage of visitors who heard about REMIX by wandering by was well above the Sackler median, perhaps because it was the only exhibition on display in the Sackler Gallery during most of the survey period. The percentage who heard through print media was far below the median.

No matter where they heard about *REMIX*, entering visitors had unusually low expectations for the exhibition. This might be due to the title or to the difficulty of understanding what the exhibition was about, since it was so different from previous Sackler exhibitions. This confusion was evident during the development phase when visitors were shown various versions of a summary description of the exhibition.

Satisfying experiences were quite different from the usual Sackler exhibitions. Gaining information, enriching understanding, seeing rare things, and being moved by beauty were all considerably below the median percentages, while reflecting on meaning was considerably above the median.

Responses to the videos were rather polarized. The one out of three who saw most or all of the videos rated their experience with them highly, and the other two out of three rated their experience very low. In *Unearthing Arabia* half of the visitors saw all or nearly all of that much longer video but were less enthusiastic (22% Superior; 25% less than Excellent), and across all visitors the *Unearthing Arabia* video had about the same experience rating as the two *REMIX* videos (15% Superior; 38% less than Excellent).

As was true for the *Unearthing Arabia* video, both *REMIX* videos led to more satisfying experiences of enriched understanding. But only the Peacock Room video was strongly associated with higher experience ratings for both *Filthy Lucre* and the exhibition as a whole.

As the low expectations and unfavorable comments indicate, the greatest weakness of the exhibition was the difficulty some visitors had in understanding what was going on with *REMIX*. Survey interviewers noted that a number of visitors were upset because they were under the misimpression that *Filthy Lucre* was a destruction of the original Peacock Room, not a re-imagined copy. Key information was not evident in as clear and direct a way as needed, both before arriving at the exhibition and once inside. Critical information, especially for something as unusual as this, should be provided in a way that is effortless and immediate. After the survey was completed, some changes were made to signs in the exhibition, but it is not known if they were effective in alleviating this confusion.

In addition to the Appendix of frequencies, which follows the text, the summary report also includes three mixtapes of visitor comments that will be transmitted separately from this document.

## Findings: Publicity and Draw

Both entering and exiting visitors were asked where they had heard about the exhibition. One in three visitors (33%) discovered it when they wandered by, and one in five (22%) heard about it from family and friends.

One in seven (15%) read about it in print media, and one in eight (12%) read about it in online sources, such as blogs and news sites. The principal print outlet for these visitors was the *Washington Post*, followed by the *Washington Post Express*. Mentions were also made of the *New York Times*, *Art News*, an un-named tourism magazine, a hotel magazine, *Museum*, and the *Free Lance-Star* (Fredericksburg, VA). The online sites mentioned were Washington Post online, New York Times online, Sosh.com, DCist.com, TripAdvisor, BrightestYoungThings.com, architecture blogs, and “what to do in DC.”

One in ten (11%) learned of the exhibition from the information desks at either the Freer or Sackler Galleries. One in ten (9%) learned about it from the Smithsonian or Freer|Sackler website, and another one in ten (8%) from a poster or brochure. Locations for posters and brochures were cited as Metro stops, bus stops, the Smithsonian Castle, and a local business.

One in fourteen (7%) heard of the exhibition through broadcast media, primarily WAMU or NPR. One in twenty-five (4%) learned through social media, either from the Freer|Sackler profile, or from a friend.

Four out of five visitors (82%) marked only one response to where they heard about the exhibition; relatively few (12%) marked two sources, and very few (5%) marked three or more. Together, family/friends and print media accounted for one-third (35%) of the audience, and wandered by accounted for another third. Other sources accounted for the final third.

Visitors can be divided into three classes according to how they heard about *REMIX*:

- On site – Those who wandered in or learned about it at SI. (43%)
- Media – Those who learned about it from a media source (33%)
- Word of mouth – Those who heard about it from family/friends/social media (24%)

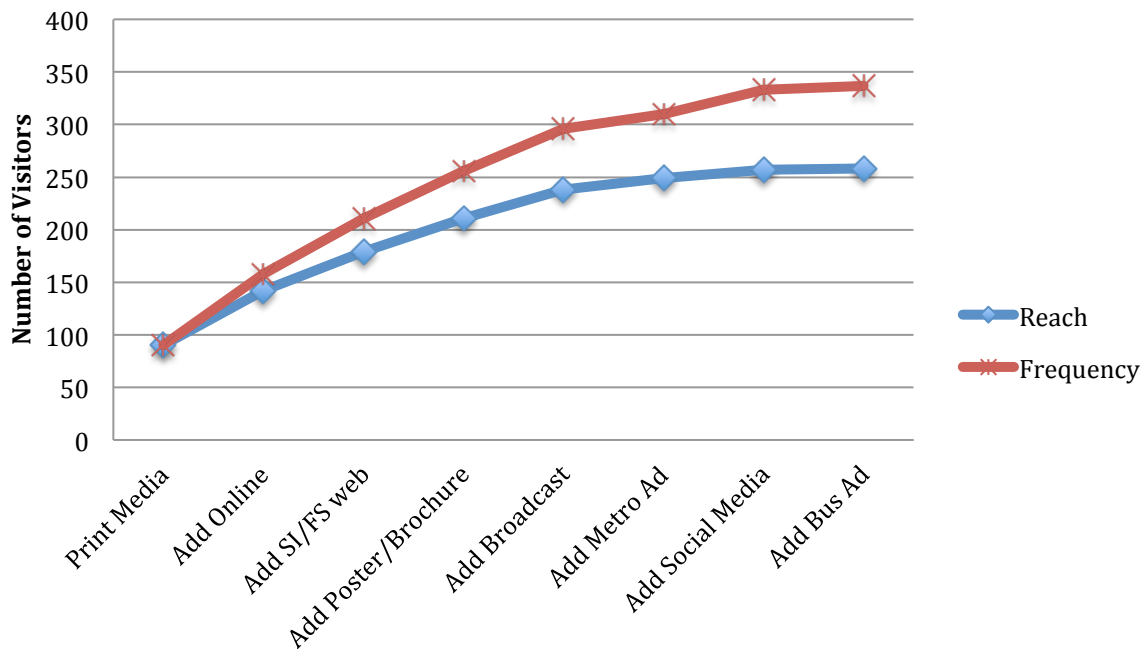
Visitors under 30 were more likely to have learned about the exhibition on site and visitors over 54 through the media.

Anticipated experience ratings among entering visitors were about the same for each of these three sub-groups (On site: 8% Superior; Media: 10% Superior; Word of mouth: 10% Superior). However overall experience ratings among exiting visitors were much higher for those who had heard about the exhibition from a media source (On site: 26% Superior; Media: 39% Superior; Word of mouth: 25% Superior).

In other words, visitors had very low expectations for this exhibition, no matter what their information source, but those who had learned about the exhibition from a media source were much more likely to rate their overall experience in the exhibition Superior when they exited.

Because there are overlaps among media sources, we can use a statistical technique to determine the most effective media combination, i.e., the fewest sources that gave the broadest reach.<sup>1</sup> The reach and frequency for *REMIX* media is illustrated in Figure 1. The leftmost point shows the reach of print media only, the next point to the right is print media together with online, the next point adds SI/FS websites to print and online, etc. Note that the reach curve flattens after broadcast media is entered. In other words, adding the final three media – Metro ads, social media, and bus ads – had the least impact in reaching additional visitors, although social media postings may have had some value as reinforcements or reminders.

**Figure 1**  
**Reach and Frequency of Media for *REMIX***



<sup>1</sup> This is called TURF Analysis. TURF is an acronym for “Total Unduplicated Reach and Frequency.” These results are likely to have been affected by the fact that some visitors identified Metro and bus ads as “posters.”



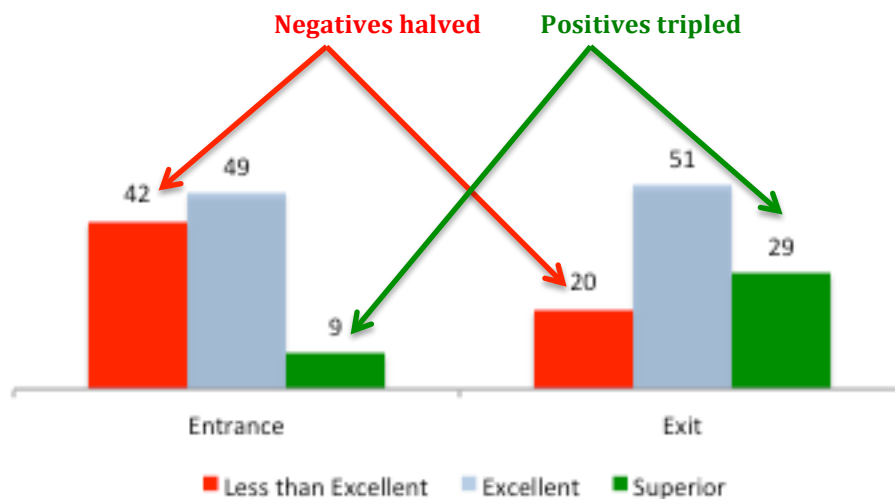
## The Exhibition

The exhibition as a whole was very well received by visitors –29% rated their overall experience Superior. One in five (20%) gave a rating below Excellent (2% Fair, 18% Good). This rating puts the exhibition in the top quarter of all Sackler exhibitions studied over the past eleven years.

Perhaps more remarkably, this high rating is in sharp contrast to what entering visitors expected (See Figure 3). Only one in ten entering visitors (9%) expected that they would rate their overall experience Superior when they left the exhibition, and two in five (42%) expected to rate their experience less than Excellent. This is the lowest anticipated rating for any Sackler exhibition study. The only sub-groups of entering visitors with more favorable anticipation towards the exhibition were:

- those who were looking forward to being excited/inspired (20% Superior vs. 5% for others);
- those very interested in Asian art or Asian history/culture (14%-13% Superior vs. 4%-5% for others); and
- those visiting with youth under 18 (31% Superior vs. 8% for others).

**Figure 3**  
**REMIX Exhibition Overall Experience Rating**  
**Entrance (anticipated) vs. Exit (actual)**



The surrounding displays had a significant impact on the overall experience of the exhibition. Four out of five (79%) said that the displays enhanced their overall experience of the exhibition, 20% said they had no effect, and 2% said that they detracted. For those who felt positive about them, Superior ratings were about 10% higher (Enhanced: 32% Superior; No effect: 20% Superior). For those who felt that the surrounding displays did not enhance their experience, less than Excellent

ratings were much higher (No effect: 39% less than Excellent; Enhanced: 15% less than Excellent). Although the videos were a factor in this response, one in four visitors saw no videos at all but felt that the surrounding displays had enhanced their experience.

Those who felt that the displays enhanced the exhibition were given a choice of specific ways that might have happened. The options most selected were: better understanding of the conflict between Leyland and Whistler (54%) and a new way to think about the Peacock Room (44%). Less often selected were: better appreciation of Whistler's art (31%) and better appreciation of Waterston's art (26%).

A few of the 2% of visitors who felt that the displays detracted from the exhibition wrote specific remarks: "display was not understood by most," "It didn't tell me why this exhibition was needed," and "I don't like the strange sounds."

Feeling an emotional connection seems to have played an important role in the exhibition's overall experience rating, as it did with ratings of *Filthy Lucre*. Those who reported that they were especially satisfied with having felt an emotional connection were much more likely than other visitors to have rated their overall experience in the exhibition Superior (47% vs. 25%). Visitors under 30 were much more likely than visitors over 54 to report feeling excited/inspired (38% vs. 14%).

Not surprisingly, those who rated their experience with *Filthy Lucre*, the Peacock Room video, or the correspondence video as Superior were also very likely to rate their overall exhibition experience Superior.

On the negative side, visitors less interested in contemporary art were more likely to rate their overall experience as less than Excellent (11% of those very interested vs. 30% of those somewhat interested). Not surprisingly, 65% of visitors who rated their experience with *Filthy Lucre* as less than Excellent also rated their overall experience in the exhibition as less than Excellent.

## ***Filthy Lucre***

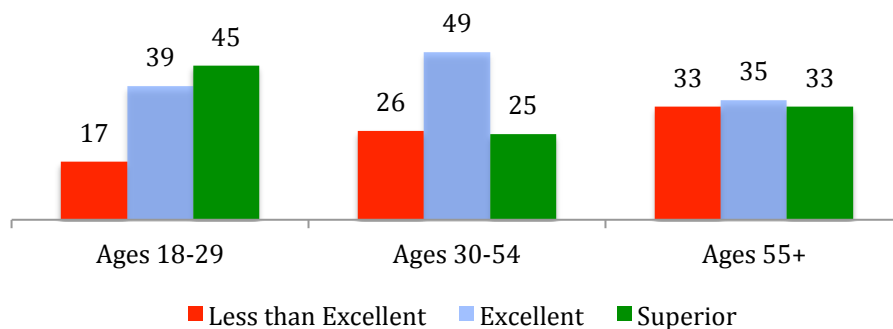
Nearly all exiting visitors (93%) reported that they had entered the *Filthy Lucre* installation, and they rated their overall experience very highly. One-third (33%) rated their experience Superior, the top of the scale. One-quarter (26%) rated their experience as Poor (2%), Fair (4%), or Good (20%). Three in five visitors (60%) had visited the Peacock Room at some point in the past, but the difference between

the ratings of those who had been to the Peacock Room before seeing *Filthy Lucre* and those who had not was not statistically significant.<sup>2</sup>

Those who reported that they were especially satisfied with having felt an emotional connection were much more likely than other visitors to have rated their experience in *Filthy Lucre* Superior (48% vs. 25%).

Younger visitors, ages 18-29, rated their experience in *Filthy Lucre* very highly, while visitors ages 55 and over were more ambivalent. See Figure 2.

**Figure 2**  
**Overall Experience Ratings of *Filthy Lucre* by Age Group**



### Favorable comments

One in four visitors (27%) wrote what they liked best about *Filthy Lucre*. All of them had rated the installation Superior.

The favorable comments can be organized into the following themes (with selected examples):

**Emotion:** decadence, excess, decay, moving, cynical, unnerving, disturbing, “like giving into the nasty desire to break things,” upsetting, amazing, emotional, very moving, terrifying, encompassing, “the music added a layer of creepiness”

**Artist:** “you can see the artist’s own interpretation,” parody, expressionist take, complete attention to detail, imagination, “conceptually brilliant and well executed,”

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<sup>2</sup> In this report *p* values equal to or less than 0.01 are considered statistically significant. In such cases there is no more than a one-in-a-hundred probability that differences are an accident of the sample.

creativity, “learning about the artist’s inspiration and his take on the room was interesting,” imagination of artist

**Interpretations:** “room crushed under its own weight,” “interplay between the roles of art/beauty and money/greed in the human condition,” “intentional destruction of beauty,” “the combination of the original and its antithesis made both more meaningful in a Nietzschean [sic] sense of creation and destruction,” satiric, profound symbolism, “powerful message about just how influential an artist’s life and relationships can be,” “gaining an understanding of the temporal element of perspective,” construction/destruction, “a wonderful play on corruption and degeneration,” the absurdity

**Design:** Well set up, “contrast between the gaudy colors and the destroyed room,” colors, other-worldly environment, “space to react to the piece in your own personal way,” attention to detail

**Story/history:** “the history of the room and the connection between art and money,” “the connection to the backstory of the Peacock Room,” “the combination of the room and art with the story behind it,” “the Filthy Lucre spin on Whistler’s room and relationship with his patron, Leyland, was fascinating,” “the story of Leyland and Whistler,” “a fascinating take on art and friendship and what happens when it decays”

**Comparison:** “interesting to compare the pristine original work and one in a state of decomposition,” “I have visited the original Peacock Room many times over the course of my life being a DC native. It was wonderful to see it re-imagined in such a clever way,” “contemporary work riffing on an historical work,” super great juxtaposition.

**Unique/unexpected:** Unusual, unique, unexpected, “made me leave my normal life”

**Sound/smell:** “the sound and the recreation of the feel of the Peacock Room,” “the smell and how I felt I was intruding where I shouldn’t be,” “sound and images together”

**Videos:** “the narration of the story behind it,” “the letters, putting the story in historical context,” “I especially liked the visual representation of the Peacock Room. Gave a wonderful sense of the colors. Not so easy to see in the room itself”

**Information:** “all the various ways the info about the exhibit are displayed,” information learned

**Sketches/paintings:** “I really like the notes and sketches that were shown. I myself love to see the finished piece of work, but I’m very much interested in the progress of it. Well done!,” artwork

**Other:** tour, the whole experience, “the lack of tons of people,” “the frilthiness,” “it requires little explanation,” “hope you can keep this permanently as a counterpoint,” complete and immersive experience, commentary

### Unfavorable Comments

One in six visitors (16%) wrote what they liked least about *Filthy Lucre*. All of them had rated the installation as less than Excellent.

The unfavorable comments can be organized into the following themes (with selected examples):

**Didn't understand:** “Wish there was someone there to explain and answer questions about the exhibition,” “Perhaps I needed more explanation that it was NOT Whistler,” “need explanation why it is in disrepair,” “lack of understanding behind the content,” “I wish we had something telling us what/how the techniques were created,” “I was confused because I had never heard of the first room before. I didn't understand that it was a remix until the end. It would have been nice to know it was a remix first, then go in the room,” “I didn't know the history behind most of it,” “I didn't understand it at first,” “I did not understand the point of it,” “I didn't know what it was about”

**Criticisms:** “Trite. Waste of artistic energy for such a simple concept. The facts are much more interesting!,” “The only people who feel compelled to criticize filthy lucre are those who already have it!,” “The flooring material...The artist needed to incorporate the floor more completely into the composition,” “Redundant. Waterston's work is mediocre and actually does what he is trying to avoid, but with the government as patron. This is ‘art light’,” pointless, “It seemed like one idea (not especially profound) that didn't inspire greater appreciation or analysis of the original and seemed more about the artist than the viewer,” “imaginative effort to turn iconic image into a representative symbol of friendship to hatred,” “felt like the installation might have incorporated a bit more ‘destruction’,” “could have been pushed further. Artist seemed too concerned with reproduction, not transformation”

**Emotion:** very distressing, death and decay, “made me feel angsty,” “it was sad,” a bit disturbing, “in your face,” “disturbing, which is ok”

**Comparison:** “the original is better,” “the destroyed Peacock Room,” “the deconstruction and dark aspect,” “prefer the real room,” “it was weird, especially after seeing the original,” “destruction of a beautiful, intricate display”

**Dark:** “very dark, difficulty in adjusting vision,” lighting, “dimness, though I understand it is intentional,” “darkness. We could not appreciate the colors”

**Story:** “seems like a sad story of two friends who refused to forgive each other,” “It was so clear about two men”

**Sound:** “the music was pretty generic,” music

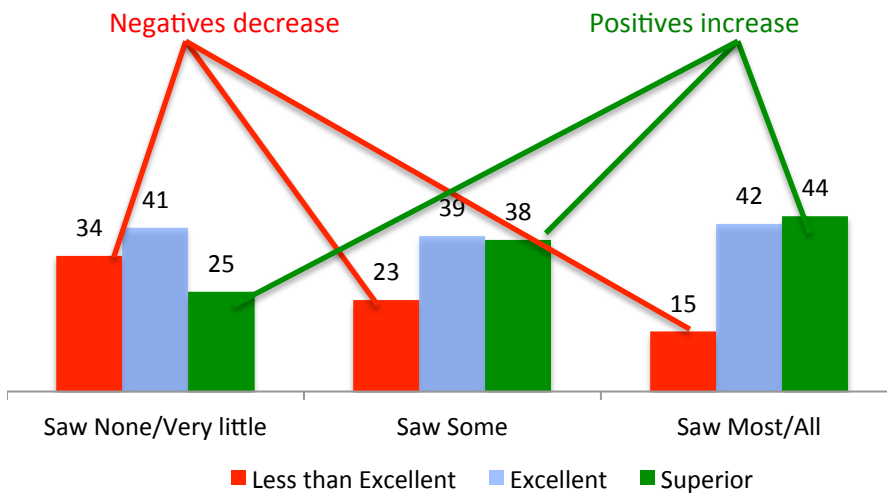
**Other:** “the feel of it,” “not my taste,” “I’m sorry I didn’t see the Peacock Room first,” “I prefer the Freer’s collection of Asian art more. Collection of exhibits of different parts of the world and showcasing them. All the beautiful things that I found,” too small, “too many people talking, could not hear museum/soundscapes,” “the guard following me,” “scale is not effective”

## The Peacock Room Video

This video worked well for two in ten visitors. Two in ten (22%) saw none of it; three in ten (29%) saw very little of it and rated their experience with it very low (4% Superior; 55% less than Excellent), and three in ten (27%) saw some of it and also rated it low (5% Superior; 37% less than Excellent). But the two in ten (22%) who saw most or all of it rated their experience with it very highly (36% Superior; 8% less than Excellent). As a result the overall rating was low – 13% rated it Superior and 52% rated it less than Excellent.

The more of this video that visitors saw, the more likely they were to report enriched understanding as a satisfying experience in the exhibition (Most/All of it: 54%; Some: 49%; None/Very little: 34%). And the more they watched, the higher their ratings for both *Filthy Lucre* and the exhibition as a whole. See Figures 4 and 5.

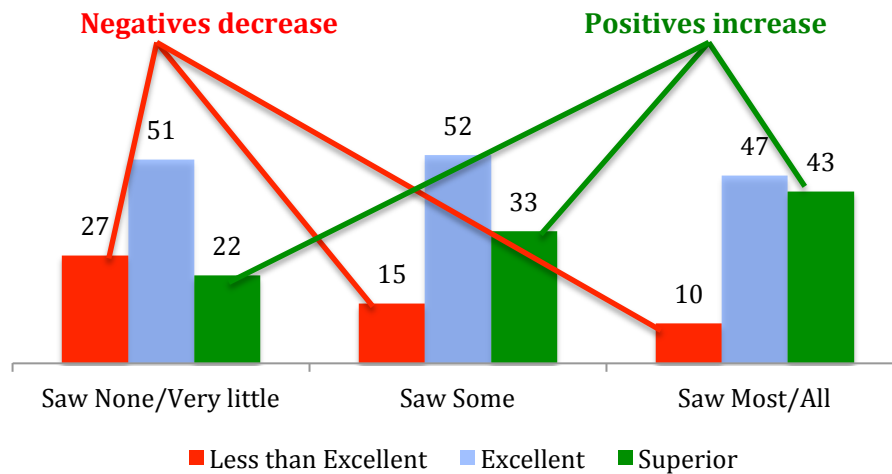
**Figure 4**  
***Filthy Lucre* Overall Experience Rating**  
**by Amount of Peacock Room Video Viewed**



**Figure 5**

## ***REMIX* Exhibition Overall Experience Rating**

## by Amount of Peacock Room Video Viewed



Those who watched at least very little of the video were asked to choose from a set of options how it might have been improved. Nearly one-quarter of visitors (23%) selected one of the three options, divided nearly equally among them: more specific dates of when historic photos were taken, less layering of images, and slower camera movements. A small number (4%) offered other suggestions for improvement: more text, more context, audio commentary, speed up the presentation, have a separate viewing room, and directions at the entrance.

## The Correspondence Video

This video also worked best for nearly one-quarter (23%) of visitors. One-third (33%) saw none of it. The one-quarter (24%) of visitors who saw very little of it rated their experience very low (3% Superior; 83% less than Excellent); the one in five (20%) who saw some of it also rated their experience low (5% Superior; 47% less than Excellent). But the one-quarter (23%) who saw most or all of it rated their experience very high (54% Superior; 10% less than Excellent). As a result, across all visitors this video had a higher Superior rating than for the Peacock Room video, and a lower less-than-Excellent rating (21% Superior; 47% less than Excellent).

Those who were more interested in American art watched more of it (Very interested: 54% watched some/all; Somewhat interested: 30% watched some/all; Not/slightly interested: 27% watched some/all).

As was true with the Peacock Room video, watching the Correspondence video enhanced understanding. The more of this video that visitors saw, the more likely they were to report enriched understanding as a satisfying experience (Most/All of it: 64%; Some: 43%; None/Very little: 33%). The same was true, but to a lesser

degree, for imagining other times or places (Most/All of it: 58%; Some: 37%; None/Very little: 36%).

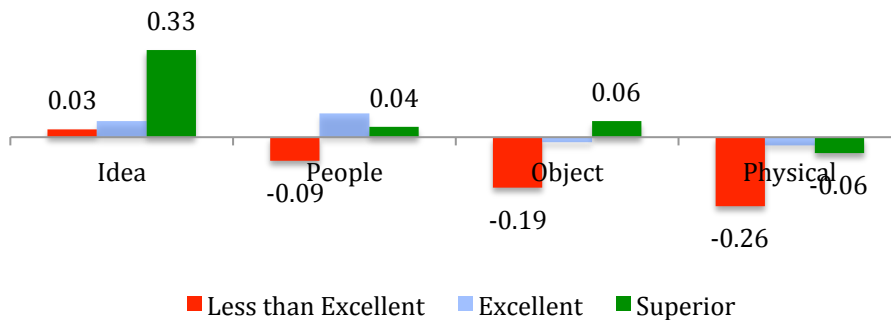
At the same time, unlike with the Peacock Room video, there was no significant association between watching this video and overall experience ratings, either for the exhibition or for *Filthy Lucre*.

About one-third of visitors (30%) indicated possible improvements. The largest number (9%) suggested slower scrolling of the letters. Another 17% were equally divided among three suggestions: more obvious explanation of what it’s about, more information on who Leyland was, and identification of background photos. An additional 4% suggested: a larger viewing space, presenting Whistler’s work and this video in a separate room, faster scrolling, “voice,” seating, and “present more info at once and dissolve to other screen to speed it up.”

## IPOP

First-time visitors had higher IPOP scores in the Physical dimension. The exhibition seems to have been most effective for those drawn to the Idea dimension, primarily because those who gave a Superior overall experience rating had high average Idea scores. See Figure 6.

**Figure 6**  
**REMIX Exhibition Overall Experience Rating by Average IPOP Scores**



Higher average **Idea** scores were also found among those who reported being excited or inspired by the exhibition and those giving higher experience ratings for the Peacock Room video.

Higher average **Physical** scores were found among those who reported being moved by beauty, imagining other times/places, and being excited or inspired.



## Analysis

### **More Wandering by; Fewer Print Media**

The percentage of visitors who heard about *REMIX* by wandering by was well above the Sackler median, perhaps because it was the only exhibition on display in the Sackler Gallery during most of the survey period. The percentage who heard through print media was also far below the median. This is unexpected since local press reviews followed very soon after the opening (although the *New York Times* and the Associated Press had yet to review the exhibition). Even so, print media, online references, and the Smithsonian or Freer and Sackler websites were the top media sources in terms of their reach. A full understanding of the impact of publicity would require a survey that continues through the course of an exhibition.

### **Low Expectations**

No matter where they heard about *REMIX*, entering visitors had unusually low expectations for the exhibition. This might be due to the title or to the difficulty of understanding what the exhibition was, since it was so different from previous Sackler exhibitions. This confusion was evident during the development phase when visitors were shown various versions of a summary description of the exhibition.

### **Strong Impact Despite Unusual Content**

The exhibition itself transformed the low expectations of entering visitors. In the end this exhibition had such a positive impact on its visitors that its overall experience rating placed it in the top quarter of Sackler exhibitions studied to date.

We can get a sense of how different this exhibition was from the usual by comparing the percentages of satisfying experiences on exit with the Sackler medians. Gaining information, enriching understanding, seeing rare things, and being moved by beauty were all considerably below the median percentages, while reflecting on meaning was considerably above the median. This is in line with what we might expect with a contemporary art exhibition. For example, exiting visitors who were very interested in contemporary art were much more likely to report reflecting on meaning (65% vs. 41%). And, although there is not enough past data on emotional connection to have a meaningful median, it is apparent from this survey that both *Filthy Lucre* and the exhibition as a whole aroused a fairly strong emotional response that was substantially responsible for the high overall experience ratings.

### **Videos Helped**

Three out of five visitors saw at least some of the two videos. Overall experiences at the two videos were rated about the same as for the narrative video in *Unearthing Arabia* (16% Superior; 40% less than Excellent), although they were less viewed

than the longer one in *Unearthing Arabia* (where 30% saw all or nearly all of it). Visitors in *Unearthing Arabia* who saw none or less than all of the narrative video rated their overall experience very low. In other words, the *Unearthing Arabia* video saved that exhibition from a much lower rating.

As was true for the *Unearthing Arabia* video, both of the *REMIX* videos led to more satisfying experiences of enriched understanding. But only the Peacock Room video was strongly associated with higher experience ratings for both *Filthy Lucre* and the exhibition as a whole. The Correspondence video did not have an impact on the visitor experience of either *Filthy Lucre* or the exhibition as a whole, although it did also help visitors imagine other times and places.

### **Informational Issues**

As the low expectations and unfavorable comments indicate, the greatest weakness of the exhibition was the difficulty some visitors had in understanding what was going on with *REMIX*. Survey interviewers noted that a number of visitors were upset because they were under the misimpression that *Filthy Lucre* was a destruction of the original Peacock Room, not a re-imagined copy. Key information was not evident in as clear and direct a way as needed, both before arriving at the exhibition and once inside. Critical information, especially for something as unusual as this, should be provided in a way that is effortless and immediate. After the survey was completed, some changes were made to signs in the exhibition, but it is not known if they were effective in alleviating this confusion.

### **A Typical Sackler Audience**

The audience for *REMIX* was not notably different from the usual Sackler audience. Although there were a few more visitors between the ages of 20 and 24 (14% vs. a median of 8%), the levels of interest in Asian and American art were typical, as were other demographic characteristics.

## **Supplementary Materials**

In addition to the Appendix of frequencies, which follows this text, the summary report also includes three mixtapes of visitor comments that were gathered, edited, and assembled by Allison Press, an intern in the Office of Policy and Analysis. Because of their length and medium, they will be transmitted separately from this document. In listening to them, note the difference in evident enthusiasm between comments about *Filthy Lucre* and comments about the videos, a difference reflected in their respective overall experience ratings.

## APPENDIX

### Peacock Room REMIX Frequencies

	Entrance	Exit	Combined	<i>Sackler Median</i>
Number of completed surveys	267	325	592	
Percentage of visitors intercepted	67	75	72	
Percentage Cooperation rate	80	76	78	
Percentage of all visitors who responded during the survey period	54	57	56	

#### Is this your first visit to the Sackler Gallery?

Yes	54	57	56	<b>50</b>
No	46	43	44	<b>50</b>

(If no:)

#### How many times have your visited in the past 12 months?

Not at all	35	22	27
Once	22	28	25
2-3 times	26	36	31
4-10 times	13	10	11
More than 10 times	5	5	5

(Among all visitors:)

#### How many times have your visited in the past 12 months?

Not at all	16	10	12
Once	10	13	12
2-3 times	12	17	14
4-10 times	6	5	5
More than 10 times	2	2	2

How do you think you will rate your overall experience in this exhibition, *Peacock Room REMIX* today when you leave it?/ Please rate your overall experience in this exhibition, *Peacock Room REMIX* today.

Poor	0	0	<b>0</b>
Fair	2	2	<b>2</b>
Good	40	18	<b>22</b>
Excellent	49	51	<b>51</b>
Superior	9	29	<b>23</b>
Less than Excellent	42	20	
Excellent	49	51	
Superior	9	29	

	Entrance	Exit	Combined	<i>Sackler Median</i>
<b>Where did you hear about this exhibition, Peacock Room REMIX?</b>				
I wandered by	28	37	33	<b>18</b>
Family and Friends	22	23	22	<b>20</b>
Print media	17	14	15	<b>27</b>
Online Sources (blogs, online news sites, etc.)	9	14	12	
Smithsonian or Freer Sackler website	9	9	9	<b>12</b>
Poster or brochure	8	7	8	
Broadcast media	5	9	7	
Information desk in the Freer Gallery	6	5	6	
Information desk in the Sackler Gallery	7	3	5	
Social media	4	4	4	<b>2</b>
Smithsonian Castle or a museum other than Freer or Sackler	3	0	2	

If Print media:

**Where do you recall reading about it? [Mark all that apply]**

Washington Post	12
Washington Post Express	3
Washington City Paper	1
Washingtonian	0
Other	3

If Online sources:

**Where did you learn about it online? [Mark all that apply]**

Washington Post online	2
New York Times online	1
Wall Street Journal online	0
Blog	1
Other	6

If Poster or brochure:

**Where do you recall seeing it? [Mark all that apply] f all entering visitors**

A Metro stop	3
A bus stop	1
Smithsonian Castle	1
A local business	1

If Broadcast media:

**Where do you recall seeing or hearing about it? [Mark all that apply]**

WAMU/NPR radio	3
Television	0
WTOP radio	0
WETA radio	0
Other	1

**Sackler  
Median**

If Social media:

**What was the source? [Mark all that apply]**

	Entrance	Exit
Freer Sackler profile	2	
A friend's profile	1	
Smithsonian profile	0	
Other	1	

**Which of the following experiences were you especially looking forward to in this exhibition today?/ Which of the following experiences were especially satisfying for you in this exhibition today?**

	Entrance	Exit	Sackler Median
Gaining information or knowledge	48	46	57
Enriching my understanding	48	42	56
Reflecting on meaning	33	42	25
Seeing rare/uncommon/valuable things	37	42	60
Imagining other times or places	33	41	49
Being moved by beauty	44	33	52
Feeling excited/inspired	28	27	
Feeling an emotional connection	23	25	
None of these	5	2	

**Have you ever visited the Peacock Room in the Freer Gallery of Art?**

Yes	65	57	60
No	31	40	36
I don't know what the Peacock Room is	4	3	4

**Did you enter the central room, Filthy Lucre, in this exhibition?**

No	7
Yes	93

If yes:

**Please rate your overall experience inside the Filthy Lucre room.**

Poor	2
Fair	4
Good	20
Excellent	41
Superior	33
Less than Excellent	26
Excellent	41
Superior	33

	<b>Entrance</b>	<b>Exit</b>	<b>Combined</b>
<b>How much of the video showing the Peacock Room in detail did you watch?</b>			
None of it		22	
Very little of it		29	
Some of it		27	
Most/All of it		22	

If very little, some, or most/all: (in percent of those who watched)

**Please rate your experience with the video showing the Peacock Room in detail**

Poor	0
Fair	8
Good	44
Excellent	34
Superior	13
Less than Excellent	52
Excellent	34
Superior	13

If very little, some, or most/all: (in percent of those who watched)

**Which of the following would have improved your experience with the video showing the Peacock Room in detail?**

More specific dates of when historic photos were taken	9
Less layering of images	8
Slower camera movements	7
Other	4
No improvement needed	40

**How much of the video showing letters between Whistler and Leyland did you watch?**

None of it	33
Very little of it	24
Some of it	20
Most/All of it	23

If very little, some, or most/all: (in percent of those who watched)

**Please rate your experience with the video showing the letters between Whistler and Leyland**

Poor	1
Fair	9
Good	37
Excellent	33
Superior	21
Less than Excellent	47
Excellent	33
Superior	21

	Entrance	Exit	Combined
If very little, some, or most/all: (in percent of those who watched)			
<b>showing the Peacock Room in detail?</b>			
Slower scrolling of the letters		9	
More obvious explanation of what it's about		6	
More information on who Leyland was		6	
Identification of background photos		5	
Other		4	
No improvement needed		31	
<b>How did the displays and films surrounding the Filthy Lucre room affect your overall experience of the exhibition as a whole?</b>			
They enhanced my overall experience		79	
No effect		19	
They detracted from my overall experience		2	
If enhanced: (in percent of those who marked "enhanced")			
<b>In which ways did it enhance your experience? [Mark all that apply]</b>			
Better understanding of the conflict between Leyland and Whistler		54	
A new way to think about the Peacock Room		44	
Better appreciation of Whistler's art		31	
Better appreciation of Waterston's art		26	
Other		2	
If enhanced: (in percent of all visitors)			
<b>In which ways did it enhance your experience? [Mark all that apply]</b>			
Better understanding of the conflict between Leyland and Whistler		43	
A new way to think about the Peacock Room		35	
Better appreciation of Whistler's art		24	
Better appreciation of Waterston's art		21	
Other		2	
<b>Did you take a REMIX brochure?</b>			
Yes		31	
No		69	
If no: (in percent of those who marked "no")			
<b>Why did you not take a brochure?</b>			
I did not see it		68	
There were no more brochures available		1	
Other		31	
Among Other: Did not need/want it		8	
Among Other: Didn't want to waste paper/Ecology		6	
If yes: (in percent of those who marked "yes")			
<b>Did you look at the brochure while you were in the exhibition?</b>			
Yes		42	
No		59	

		Entrance	Exit	Combined	<i>Sackler Median</i>
<b>How interested are you in the following?</b>					
American art					
	Not/slightly interested	5	4	4	
	Somewhat interested	41	43	42	
	Very interested	54	54	54	<b>58</b>
Asian art					
	Not/slightly interested	7	7	7	
	Somewhat interested	44	45	45	
	Very interested	49	48	49	<b>48</b>
Contemporary art					
	Not/slightly interested	11	10	10	
	Somewhat interested	38	39	38	
	Very interested	52	51	51	
Asian history/culture					
	Not/slightly interested	6	6	6	
	Somewhat interested	42	47	45	
	Very interested	52	46	49	<b>44</b>
<b>Where do you live?</b>					
	United States	89	88	89	
	Other Country	11	12	11	
<b>Residence (Distance from the Mall)</b>					
	5 mile radius	24	18	21	<b>15</b>
	10 mile radius	7	10	9	<b>12</b>
	20 mile radius	11	8	9	<b>10</b>
	40 mile radius	4	4	4	<b>6</b>
	100 mile radius	4	4	4	<b>4</b>
	250 mile radius	8	9	8	<b>11</b>
	Other U.S.	32	36	34	<b>32</b>
	International	11	12	11	<b>8</b>
<b>Metropolitan Washington</b>		40	34	37	<b>34</b>
<b>What is your age?</b>					
	18-19	4	6	5	<b>5</b>
	20-24	14	14	14	<b>8</b>
	25-29	8	11	10	<b>10</b>
	30-34	9	10	9	<b>8</b>
	35-39	7	7	7	<b>7</b>
	40-44	7	7	7	<b>8</b>
	45-49	7	6	7	<b>8</b>



	<b>Entrance</b>	<b>Exit</b>	<b>Combined</b>	<b>Sackler Median</b>
55-59	12	8	10	<b>10</b>
60-64	9	10	9	<b>11</b>
65-69	8	7	8	<b>7</b>
70 & over	4	6	5	<b>7</b>

**What is your sex?**

Male	42	36	39	<b>44</b>
Female	57	63	60	<b>56</b>
Transgender	0	0	0	
Other	0	0	0	
Prefer not to answer	1	0	1	



**Who are you visiting with today?**

I am alone	25	29	27	<b>24</b>
One or more adults	69	64	66	
One or more youth under 18	6	6	6	

**Mean IPOP Scores**

Idea	0.04	0.13	0.09
People	-0.07	0.04	-0.01
Object	-0.07	-0.03	-0.05
Physical	-0.06	-0.09	-0.07

Note "Significance" is defined here as a chi-square p value less than 0.01

Significantly high	
Significantly low	

Sackler Median refers to median values across up to 22 prior Sackler exhibition exit studies