Art as Peace Education at "Dark" Museums and Sites in the United Kingdom, Europe, and Southeast Asia

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Art increasingly appears at "dark" museums and related formal sites to balance the traditional exhibits of war. This article explores how art might contribute a peace education perceptive in differing countries and a globalizing context. Case studies from the United Kingdom, Europe (West and East), and Southeast Asia (Cambodia and Vietnam) are analyzed. The former deploys new technologies and supports well-known artists who appeal to art markets. Asian curation relies more on creativity, including children's and victim's art. Both deploy artistic devices to symbolize the scale of atrocities and create aesthetic depth—juxtaposition, prominence, perspective, repetition, patterning, and soundscapes. The analysis provides tools and checklists to assist curation and inform artists, and concludes that critical educational processes are as important as the art.

Keywords   peace education, museum education, dark museums, memorials, war art, curation

Introduction

Art increasingly appears in "dark" museums and similar formal sites (Stone 2006), including "war" and "peace" museums, exhibitions, atrocity sites, and public memorials (INMP 2017). This usually reflects a policy to balance the traditional exhibits and symbols of war—guns and bombs, planes and tanks, defeat and victory, heroes and villains—to address criticisms that these familiar representations fuel political violence.

A special issue of the *Journal of Peace Education* focuses on "Peace education through peace museums" (JPE 2015). James Bristah (In Burns and Aspeslagh 1996, 311), Director of Detroit's Swords into Plowshares Peace Center and Gallery, explains the relevance of the arts:

The use of art is a powerful persuader that can reach into the emotions. Art is universal and can be effectively used in conjunction with other education methods to communicate the museum's message. Pictorial art, poetry readings, folk singing and the creation of a drama group are all effective means of peace education.

But this perspective is from a specialist religious museum in the United States twenty years ago. Now, in a cosmopolitan world, the current question is: how might art be "effectively used" at dark museums and sites to contribute a peace education perceptive in differing countries and globalizing contexts? Specifically, this article considers:

- What type of art is presented?
- What are the socio-political contexts of, and constraints on, the curation of "dark" art?
- How do these constraints affect the curation?
- Who is the art trying to influence?
- What (if any) are the stated or inferred educational aims of the art?
- How are these aims implemented?
- What are the likely educational influences and outcomes?
- What can be learnt from comparing diverse national contexts?

Evidence comes from study visits to a spectrum of key museums and sites in the United Kingdom (London), Western, Central, and Eastern Europe (Geneva, Hungary, and Belarus), and Southeast Asia (Cambodia and Vietnam). The settings represent colonizing and colonized countries, capitalist and communist influences, Eastern and European cultures, different economic circumstances, and differing experiences of war and conflict. But many distinctions are contested and evolving (Table 1).

From these countries, globally significant museums and sites ranging from large state enterprises to small private galleries were studied. This permits contrasting analyses of the influences and constraints on these differing contexts to identify and explain similarities and differences in artistic and curational approaches.

The inevitable bias is that less wealthy regions, and places currently experiencing protracted conflicts, are less likely to have relevant museums and galleries, for example Liberia, Syria, and the Philippines. For different reasons, Russia, China, Korea, and Japan would be significant case studies in their own right, but would best be analyzed by local researchers. Other relevant sites for further research include the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, and the new Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA), the Peace Museum in Costa Rica, and the Museum of the Great Patriotic War in Moscow.

The definitions of "dark museums and sites," and why people choose to visit

Table 1. Country Case-studies and Influences

	Higher income (OECD)	Lower income	Capitalist	Former Communist/ authoritarian	Colonizer/ occupier	Colonized/ occupied	Western- style democracy	New democracy	Involvement in WWII	War/ conflict since 1945
UK (London)	XX		XXX		XXX World, Middle East	X Roman French	X		XX	XX N.Ireland, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan
Western Europe (Geneva)	XXX		XXX			X European	XX		Neutral	None
Central Europe (Hungary)	X		X	X	X European expansionist	X USSR	X	X	XX	X Civil unrest, Border control
(Belarus)		X		X		XXX Germany, USSR		X	XXX	X Cold war, USSR
(Cambodia)		XXX		XXX Khmer Rouge, Vietnam		XXX France, Vietnam		X	X	XXX Khmer Rouge
(Vietnam)		XX		XX		XXX France, U.S.		XX	X	XXX France, U.S.

X-XXX Represents an impression of degree or intensity.

Source: Authors

them, are discussed at length in the museum studies and tourism literature (Miles 2002). The old Cold War propaganda/poster art museums (Soviet Union, China, and the United States) have mostly disappeared (perhaps North Korea is an exception) or have been transformed into historical "revolutionary" museums as in Hanoi, China, and Russia. There are also many informal and non-formal "dark" sites, including crime scenes, sites of natural disasters, and "industrial disasters," but these do not have an intrinsic peace education/art aspect.

Observational and documentary methods (Williams 2015, 127, 136) entailed visiting dark museums and other sites to collect visual data, assess visitor interaction, note labelling and signage, and assess books and other materials. The purpose is to identify original and effective ideas and artistic devices, and to develop tools and checklists to assist curation, artists, and educators.

Conceptual Frameworks

In general, formal contemporary dark museums and sites attempt to understand and explain, rather than perpetuate, hatred. But this is not straightforward. There are three problems for curation. First, the feelings of those who were affected by violent events must be respected. Second, these feelings can span many generations. Third, eventually the aim should be to diminish feelings of hatred and revenge, and inspire peace and reconciliation, while retaining the lessons of history. The aim of this paper is therefore to inform curation and to evolve representations of political violence across three phases, from 1) recent experience of violent events, to 2) memory and reflection, to 3) history and understanding. A series of charts suggest how the remit and focus of case studies and examples can be located within this paradigm. The purpose is to develop an analytical tool, not imply criticism.

Three international frameworks provide insights into how to achieve this evolution. The United Nations' (UN) "Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms" (UNESCO 1974) proposes *state obligations* to orient all forms of education towards peace. The text provides a useful formal checklist, and its principles are put into practice through the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Asia Pacific Centre for Education for International Understanding in Seoul (APCEIU).

The principles of *restorative justice* provide a useful guiding framework for policies. This entails disapproval while sustaining a relationship of respect, ceremonies to certify deviance terminated by ceremonies to decertify deviance, disapproval of an evil deed without labelling the person as evil, and not allowing deviance to become a master status trait. The South African "Truth and Reconciliation" trials were a seminal example, and reflected traditional African approaches. "Truth for amnesty" and "know not punish" have proven efficacy and are relevant in museum contexts (Williams 2006, 18-21).

The UNESCO "Disarming History" project evolved useful methods for creating educational materials in places where events are disputed (Williams 2015, 233). Ideally, participatory approaches should involve working-groups of local people, experts, and young people from the disputing parties, and should adopt the following framework: 1) only include things that everyone agrees about, using basic language ("Japanese military in Nanjing," not "Nanjing Massacre"); 2) circulate initial drafts widely for comment, in relevant languages, and discuss responses openly; 3) build acceptance of the process; 4) identify international norms as a basis for discussing contentious material (Children's Rights Convention, International Criminal Court (ICC) Statute, UNESCO declarations); and 5) use international terminology from relevant and objective glossaries and lexicons (World Health Organization

Figure 1. Surreal Art. Bomb and School Desk.

Source: Not to forget Museum in Kuwait; Photo by author with permission

(WHO) and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)). Then, the next tasks would be: 1) work incrementally to agree how to phrase contentious material; 2) if agreement cannot be reached, understand and explain why, and present all views in educational materials; and 3) do not trade facts politically, only used agreed material. Although slow, this builds support for the eventual outcomes.

The challenge in dark museums is to present horror without promoting hatred. The surrealist representation of a shell through a school desk at the Kuwait Not to Forget Museum of the Iraq invasion is striking, but will probably not inspire peace and reconciliation across the Arab world (Figure 1).

Ideas from Britain

British museums are influenced by technological methods from the United States, and artistic aesthetics and originality from Europe. They take account of the long and dubious history of political violence by British political leaders and the military (Williams 2006, 59-127). This history of "state crime" (Green and Ward 2004) is within a daily public awareness of recent and ongoing callous

and cowardly criminal acts against civilians in the United Kingdom, by so-called "terrorists," which are sometimes explained as a form of "blowback" against U.S.-UK aggression (Johnson 2004). Yet historically, the United Kingdom has not suffered invasion and occupation since 1066, and has no conscripted national military service. The guiding principle for British curation is to assume that exhibits will be viewed by people who may have suffered from the events concerned, or know nothing about them, and to consider but not prejudge how this diversity of visitors may respond.

The National Army Museum (NAM) is funded by the Ministry of Defence. NAM addresses the question "why do we have an army?" (not, "do we need an army?"). It aims "to present different views of the military's activity to the public and to allow visitors to make up their own minds" (Sawyer 2007). The visitors include conspicuous serving or former soldiers. Sound absorbent ceilings contribute an appropriate acoustic (as at the Hiroshima Peace Museum), and high-tech immersive exhibits attract young people. In the general galleries, traditional exhibits are punctuated by challenging art works, including anti-war posters, and a work based on clinical facial reconstruction techniques used during World War I by Paddy Hartley.

Displays in the *Soldier Gallery* depict the problems and horrors of war, but the interactive technology is often broken. NAM challenges visitors to consider being a soldier, and walk through "yes" and "no" pathways (Figure 2). The *Soldier Gallery* data, displayed in the main museum foyer, shows that 62 percent walk through "yes" at the entrance, and only 33 percent on exit. Asked why views changed, replies include, "Because the army can't get stuff to work. So I'd get killed."

Figure 2. A Response
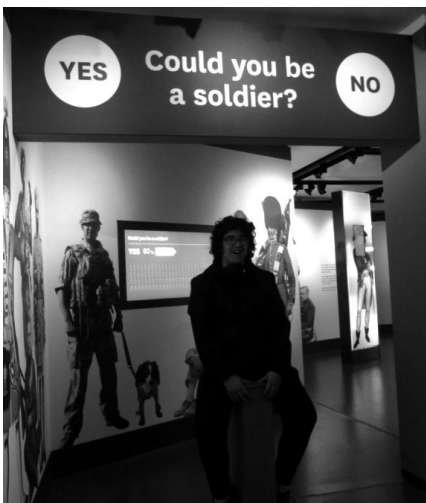
Source: NAM, London; Photo by author with permission of the visitor.

In 2017, NAM installed an exhibition called *War Paint: Brushes with Conflict*, under the headings: *Surveying the Enemy* (visualizations for map-making and strategic planning), *Drawing on Experience* (sketches and paintings by soldiers), *Selling the War* (war artists, many "embedded" with and controlled by soldiers), *Political Statement* (propaganda and anti-war art), and *Making Memory* ("elevates soldiers to heroes and vilifies enemies"). The exhibition did not include current material, such as domestic "terrorist" crime in the United Kingdom, or the ongoing destabilizing violence in Iraq,

Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen. Of the seventy-eight exhibits, there is one anti-war painting by Gerald Lang, *Repetition 2004-5, Iraq*. Another work by Lang, *Truth or Consequences*, which suggested that the "7/7" terrorist bombings in London were a consequence of the Iraq War, was absent. It is owned by NAM, but the popularist press criticized NAM for displaying the work (Sawyer 2007). The curation therefore concentrated on the second and third of the three phases (Table 2).

The Imperial War Museum (IWM) is the main war museum in the United Kingdom, and includes a famous Holocaust exhibition which uses multi-media information sources to make messages accessible. The smaller general displays have recently become more questioning of political violence. The effect is achieved partly through use of graphic art, including anti-war posters (Figure 3).

Another strategy is the juxtaposition of art works with relevant weapons. Colin

Table 2. NAM *War Paint*

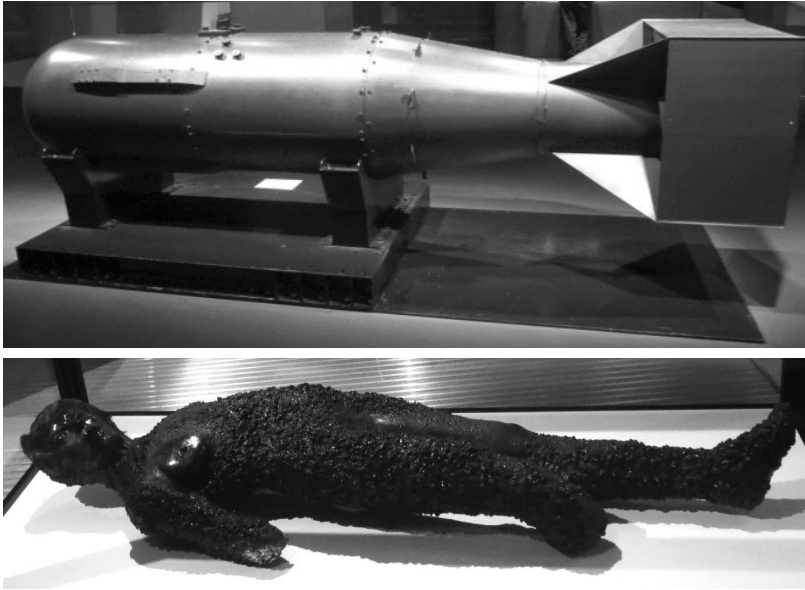| 1. *Recent experience of violent events*	2. *Memory and reflection*	3. *History and understanding*

Source: Authors

Figure 3. Anti-war Posters: Korean War and Iraq War

Source: IWM, London; Photo by author with permission of IWM

Figure 4. Juxtaposition of Exhibits: *Little Boy A-bomb* and *Nuclear Victim (Beach Girl)*, Colin Self, 1966

Source: IWM, London; Photos by Eugenio Savorelli with permission of IWM

Figure 5. *Sectarian Armour*, John Kindness, 1994

Source: General gallery, IWM, London; Photo by author with permission of IWM

Self's *Nuclear Victim (Beach Girl)* (1966)—a realistically charred shop mannequin—and the nearby Little Boy atomic bomb provide a chilling example (Figure 4).

Artists are critical of the absurd horror of war generally, rather than of a particular side or political system. A work called *Sectarian Armour* depicted a funeral scene from The Troubles in Northern Ireland, on a suit of armour. A single split coffin is being carried by protagonists of both sides (Figure 5). The skeletal remains of the bodies cannot be distinguished.

In 2017, the IWM opened an exhibition called *Age of Terror: Art since 9/11*. The exhibition is arranged around four themes: *9/11* is inspired

by the twin-tower attacks, *State Control* shows how "artists have questioned the legal and political practices that developed as a result of the War on Terror," *Weapons* depicts the technological developments to address "terrorism," and *Home* explores how the "War on Terror" has brought insecurity into domestic settings. In contrast to *War Paint*, the *Age of Terror* reflects the first two phases (Table 3).

One reviewer of *Age of Terror* asked an obvious question: "do we really live in an age of terror?" The IWM is full of grim genocidal weaponry (Figure 6). In the context of weapons that have killed and injured millions of people around the world, "terrorism" can appear comparatively insignificant (Jones 2017, 34). An *Age of Terror* intervention in the main gallery, *Drone Shadow*, places the new "terror" in the context of the old terror (Figure 6). If you live in northwestern Pakistan, the drone will probably seem little different from the nearby Nazi V1 and V2 rockets. The accompanying *Drone Shadow Handbook* permits replication of the work.

The "whole-museum" nature of the (so-called) "terror" curation includes a *Short Film Festival*, and publications that are conspicuously contemporary and contentious. The cover photomontage, *Photo Op* by political artists Peter Kennard and Cat Phillipps is one of the most famous images from the Iraq invasion (Jones 2013). Similarly, the *Unofficial War Artist* celebrates Peter Kennard, one of the fiercest anti-war artists of the Cold War era. The cover photomontage, *Crushed Missile* (1980) (a play on "cruise missile"), was internationally provocative (Sierbien 2016) (Figure 7).

In contrast, the small *Living Histories* exhibition at the British Museum (BM), displays works reflecting "the troubled politics in

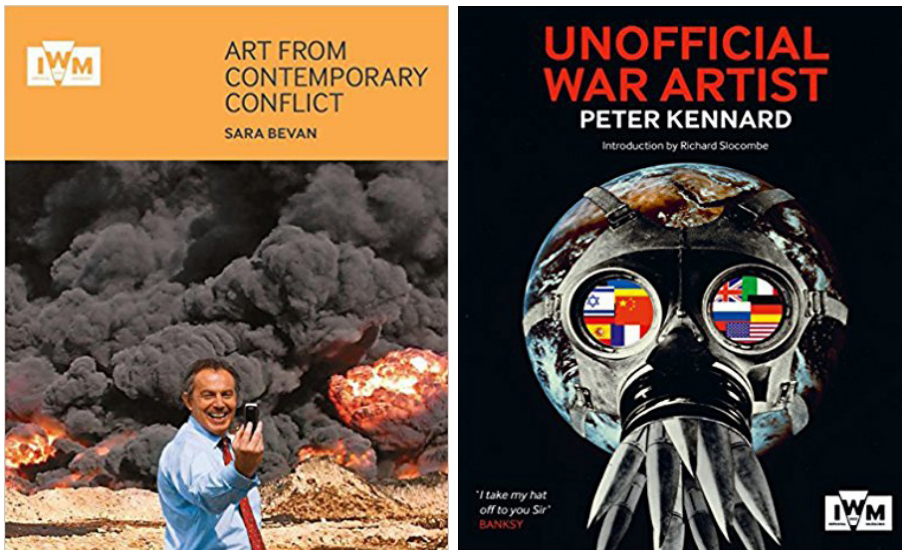**Figure 6.** *Drone Shadow*, James Bridle, 2017
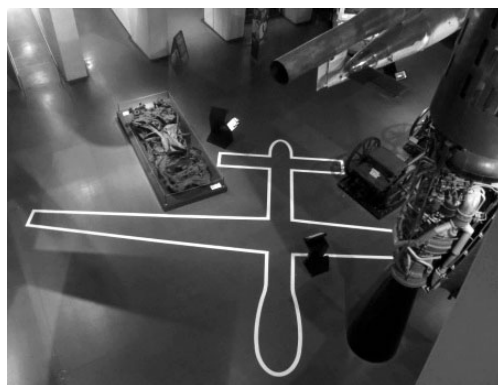
Source: IWM, London; Photo by author with permission of IWM

Table 3. IWM, *Age of Terror*

1. *Recent experience of violent events*	2. *Memory and reflection*	3. *History and understanding*

Source: Authors

Figure 7. Bookshop

Source: IWM, London; Photo by author with permission of IWM

the Middle East today." An anonymous collective, *The Syrian People Know Their Way*, "reflects ideas from the beginning of the Revolution" in 2011, particularly "hope." Azmeh's *The Resurrection Series* features a group of intellectuals given a common task—to add a mark or text encapsulating the current situation on a copy of the state newspaper, *al Ba'ath*. Other exhibits were inspired by objects in the BM collection.

The Bradford Peace Museum (BPM) was set up in 1994 as the result of an MA Dissertation by Shireen Shah at Bradford University's renowned Peace Studies Department. BPM has 7,000 examples of activist art, including banners, posters, and other campaign materials, but few intrinsically exciting objects. The museum is digitalizing these, but the conundrum is that a good web archive may reduce the number of visitors. A well-organized school program (BPM 2017) relates the collection to the British National Curriculum—history, science, citizenship, and art and design. The museum demonstrates the efficacy of highly-motivated local volunteers and museum educators, and of partnerships with local education institutions. Linking with school activities, such as poetry writing, can greatly extend the influence of exhibits (Figure 8).

The Tate Modern is known for its original approaches to the "hang" of its displays. For the *Conflict Time Photography* exhibition (Tate 2014), the "starting point was the great challenge of looking back, and considering the past without becoming frozen in the process." The photos were grouped, proceeding from "moments later" and "days later," at eight intervals to "99 years later." The result

was that photographically each room could have historical, recent, and current events next to one another. This cut-across the phases, but did not ignore them, and showed the commonalities across nations and types of violence (Table 4).

London's independent galleries provide opportunities to meet artists. Dutch artist Dani Ploeger explains that he engages with "the recent (re-) militarization of civilian spaces across Europe in the context of omnipresent digital culture." Inspiration comes from "heavily armed police officers and soldiers, and volunteer militias equipped with Soviet-era weapons inhabiting public spaces in which these developments take place that are highly determined by advanced (mobile) consumer technologies." His *Assault* video depicts the shooting of an iPad with a traditional assault rifle (Figure 9).

Ploeger's exhibition *Fronterlebnis* ("front experience") at the *Arebyte* gallery derives from research while "embedded" with frontline fighters in the Donbass War in Shyrokyne, Ukraine. He used a 360 degree 3D video camera to create a series of "selfies" showing bored fighters with their old weaponry, new e-devices,

Table 4. Conflict, Time, Photography

| 1. *Recent experience of violent events*	2. *Memory and reflection*	3. *History and understanding*

Source: Authors

Figure 8. Extract of Poem by a Child

…So remember those who fight for glory
have never been such sillier fools.
If you'd listen to my story
you'd know that you're only rusty tools.
Raised in memory inspiring others,
forever killing the souls of mothers,
whose sons eager for distraction
are reported back, 'killed in action'.

Killed in Action (extract)
Eugenio Savorelli (aged 13)

Source: Eugenio Savorelli; reprinted with permission

Figure 9. *Assault*, Dani Ploeger, 2016
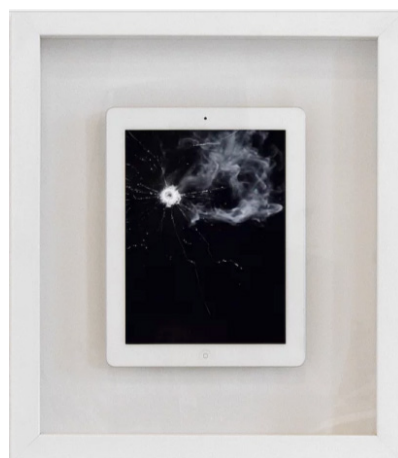
Source: Photo by author with permission of artist

Figure 10. *Selfie #3*, Dani Ploeger, 2017

Source: Photo by author with permission of artist

and fashion-conscious style (Figure 10). The preparation included a tough training course for war journalists and good protective dress.

International site-responsive performances are increasingly significant in a globalizing context. *One Day, Maybe* (2017) by Dreamthinkspeak is inspired by the 1980 Gwangju Democratization Movement and the brutal response of the South Korean generals. It was performed in South Korea and Japan, and then in UK as part of *Hull UK City of Culture*. The creators juxtapose historical atrocity and present-day technology. The audience participates in a maze-escape game—the UK launch of a (fake) Korean global technology company. Participants are given "K-pads" and asked to input personal details. Their shopping patterns and locations are tracked, and at the end visitor behavior is revealed. This e-surveillance is contrasted with oppression during the Gwangju Democratization Movement. The tracking is like *iBeakon*, now used in shops to track visitor flow in galleries.

Independent galleries permit artists to take risks with non-mainstream work, which usually reflects the immediacy of current events (Table 5).

The technology indicates a looming conundrum for war museums and galleries. As modern war becomes more technological, the weaponry becomes less visually interesting. Children will not go to war museums to see a line of laptops and mobile phones. Even interesting e-weapons would probably be better viewed through virtual reality on a website.

London's Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) addressed this challenge when it purchased the laptop that had been used by the staff from the newspaper *The Guardian* to manage the Snowden *WikiLeaks* files. The editor, Alan Rusbridger, was told to smash this computer by British intelligence officers who seem to think that digital data only resides on one disc. This is an amusing story. The V&A

Table 5. Small galleries

1. *Recent experience of violent events*	2. *Memory and reflection*	3. *History and understanding*

Source: Authors

elaborates with a quote from Rusbridger who talks of "icons of the impotence of the state in the digital age, giving a message of hope for countries where information is suppressed by their governments" (V&A 2015). In the future, dark exhibits will need an engaging narrative to make them worth viewing.

Many innovative initiatives concern memorials. Traditionally they displayed weapons and celebrated Britain's war crimes. The Royal Marines Memorial shows soldiers slaughtering Chinese peasants during the Boxer Rebellion. More subtly, both the V&A and Tate Britain Gallery left the damage to their buildings from World War II bombs unrepaired, reminding of the need for the "Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict" (1954).

Artists now challenge the male dominated statues of armed "heroes," and emphasize the unknown heroes. In Whitehall, a Monument to the Women of World War II by John W. Mills shows the lifeless uniforms of the unknown women who died as non-combatants—nurses, fire wardens, and telegraph operators. Another marks the unknown firemen of the London Blitz. Depictions of reality have become central. In 2014, a statue of a war-worn World War I soldier by Ray Lonsdale, called *1101*, showed the realities of posttraumatic stress disorder. Similarly, a small frieze from Paul Day's massive the *Meeting Place* at St. Pancras Station shows the harsh juxtaposition of World War I soldiers going to war on a train being waved off by the returning soldiers injured and blinded by gas.

Transient installations provide a uniquely strong challenge to traditional war memorials. In 2014, Brazilian sculptor Nele Azevedo created a work called *Minimum Monument* on the steps outside Birmingham's Museum & Art Gallery. It comprised 5,000 little ice statues, formed in plastic drinks bottles, representing civilian victims of conflict. For two hours they slowly melted to nothing (BBC 2014). Similarly, in 2017, outside the National Gallery in London, Damian and Killian Van Der Velden installed a sculpture of a WWI soldier, commemorating the half million British soldiers who died or disappeared in the mud at the Battle of Passchendaele. *The Mud Soldier* was made of mud and sand from the battlefield, and over four days it slowly disintegrated in the cold London rain (BBC 2017b).

Ideas from Europe

The advantage that the United Kingdom and other European countries enjoy is the work of the European Union (EU), which was set up in 1957 as the European Economic Community, with the aim of restoring peace and making war unthinkable across Europe. Intensive educational endeavours have proved successful and influence "dark" curation across Europe. Western Europe's war

Figure 11. Place des Nations, Geneva, *Frieden (Peace) Abrüstungskonferenz Genf, 1983; Broken Chair* and UN building, Daniel Berset, 1997

Source: Place des Nations, Geneva; Photo by Yun-joo Lee with permission

art reflects centuries of cross-border conflicts, historical and current. Geneva exemplifies these, and its international persona and neutrality co-exists alongside a nationalist conscripted army. The knotted *Peace* gun and legless anti-mine *Broken Chair* at Place des Nations reminds UN and Red Cross Museum (ICRC) staff daily of their distinctive purpose (Figure 11).

The recently renovated ICRC is a good example of whole-museum curation by experts from diverse countries. Exhibits are arranged around *Chamber of Witnesses*, *Defending Human Dignity*, *Restoring Family Links*, and *Reducing Natural Risks*. Visitors are greeted by Bucher's *The Petrified Ones,* imprisoned by their own shrouds (Figure 12).

Once inside, *Dignity Trampled Underfoot* uses projected images of crushed war casualties and landmine victims. Art by prisoners, made with improvised materials such as a bar of soap during their confinement, is sobering. Interventions, such as voodoo dolls, extend the power of permanent images. To enter *Restoring Family Links* visitors must push apart a chain screen, which clangs chillingly. A remarkable *Théâtre Optique*, by Pierrick Sorin, uses hologram technology and humor to bring attention to health and natural hazards. An exhibition of HIV/AIDS posters shows how

Figure 12. *The Petrified Ones*, Carl Bucher, 1979

Source: Red Cross Museum, Geneva; Photo by author with permission

Table 6. Red Cross Museum

1. *Recent experience of violent events*	2. *Memory and reflection*	3. *History and understanding*

Source: Authors

graphic artists present the same message in different cultural contexts. The museum is rooted in the history of the ICRC, but does not ignore present-day horrors (Table 6).

Ideas from Eastern Europe

The distinctive public art from former Soviet/Warsaw Pact countries is often overlooked. The latter were often victim states of collateral damage from armies fighting wars elsewhere.

Positioned between Russia and Germany, Belarus has experienced constant destruction, death, and domination because of the wars of others, and has an exceptional collection of modernist war memorials, which are often collective or anonymous works. The themes inevitably reflect communist politics, but that does not detract from the quality of the art (Figure 13). At Krasny Bereg, a memorial remembers a 1943 Nazi prison camp with an innocent young woman. Similarly, *The Pit* in Minsk reminds visitors of the Nazi murder of 100,000 Jews in 1943. The *Last Journey* sculpture shows twenty-seven bronze figures descending into their mass grave. Visitors often cling to the figures on their own journey downwards, which turns the sculpture into an interactive work as the visitors depend on the victims for support. Georgy Frangulyan's new *Wall of Grief* (2017) in Moscow, marks Stalin's purges, and similarly invites the public "to step inside gaps to feel the weight of that history on their shoulders" (Rainsford 2017).

Budapest has similar experiences. The plight and sexual vulnerability of women is a common communist victimhood theme, and small anonymous memorials of the abuse by Nazi soldiers appear on private buildings. Hungary found a novel solution to a conundrum in post-Soviet contexts. Many public artworks of the Soviet era are high quality and by famous artists. To keep them suggests no change; to destroy them is vandalism. Also, the new regimes need to preserve evidence of the old regime, to legitimize its displacement. The solution is the Memento Park, which provides a home for old Soviet statues just outside the city boundaries. Works of quality stand beside tacky, but strangely alluring, public propaganda. Unsurprisingly the display of public war art in Eastern Europe is fixed in the recent past (Table 7).

Figure 13. Belarus Memorials: *Krasny Bereg Memorial*, Leonid Levin, 1947, Minsk; *Last Journey*, Zhlobin, Gomel, 1947. Belarus

Source: Photos by author

Table 7. Eastern Europe Public Art

1. *Recent experience of violent events*	2. *Memory and reflection*	3. *History and understanding*

Source: Authors

Ideas from Southeast Asia (Indochina)

Southeast Asia is also influenced by communist legacies. Not least, sites are likely to provide museum staff and guides with direct experience of atrocities. A distinct feature of Asian curation is the placing of stark gruesome images paralleled by optimistic indications of wanting to forget and move on.

Cambodia
Cambodia suffered French and Japanese occupation, and the U.S. military's Operation Menu (1969-70) which entailed the merciless carpet bombing of the country. In 1975, Pol Pot took advantage of this disarray and Cambodians suffered the brutal Khmer Rouge regime. Vietnam took control from 1978-1992, and Cambodians started to rule their own country again from 1993. Three sites provide strong lessons in difficult contexts, as visitors walk in the footsteps and dust of victims.

The infamous Killing Fields site is now well organized with effective, graphic

Figure 14. Signage at the Killing Fields

Source: Photos by author with permission

signage. The "mission" includes to: educate Americans, Cambodian Americans, and other nationalities about the factual history of the Khmer Rouge atrocities and help prevent future crimes against humanity; honor and remember the victims and survivors of the Khmer Rouge holocaust; and help preserve the art and literature of Cambodia—nearly extinguished by Khmer Rouge policies—through exhibits, performances, and lectures.

Visitors follow a route around the site, treading on bone and cloth fragments from the victims, and stopping at the locations of atrocities with calm and clear factual labels and accurate visualizations (Figure 14). Notices requesting, "Don't step on bones," remind visitors where they are.

The visit culminates at a new commemorative stupa. The bones are stacked with forensic precision according to the method of injury—"Evidence of…Killing with a stick, Killing by hoe, Killing with axe, Killing by iron tool, Hands tied with wire." The systemization provides a unique "patterned" aesthetic (see below), and perhaps this cold forensic presentation helps local people to move on from hating the perpetrators to hating what they did (see "restorative justice" above). Around the site, local people create informal memorials, with beads and other small tokens of respect, which is an interesting form of participatory people's art at a

Figure 15. Beads and Other Tokens of Respect

Source: Killing Fields, Cambodia; Photo by author with permission

site (Figure 15).

The Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum is a school that was used by the Khmer Rouge as Security Prison Twenty-one from 1975 to 1979. The prison chief, Kaing Kek Iew ("Duch"), had been a math teacher and maintained a cruel regime. Visitors see metal beds used for torture in the classrooms. A school exercise frame, used for both teaching and torture, is illustrated by a sculptural victim, reflecting Christian crucifixion imagery (Figure 16). To a non-Cambodian visitor, local children can seem to represent the potential victims. The site evidences the need for the "UN Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict."

Like the Nazis, the Khmer Rouge kept meticulous records of their victims. For an international visitor, small details can raise big questions. Eyes staring with dignity and defiance, through the camera lens into the future, and dates, especially indicating that the victim is the same age as the visitor, initiate a replay of personal histories (Figure 17)—"Where was I when she was here? What was in the minds of the photographers? Did they have pride in their portraits? Had this happened in the present-day, would the images have ended up on social network sites like the victims of Islamic State, and how would the world have reacted? How might young Muslims perceive the photos?"

The privately run Landmine Museum also runs a center for child victims. The United States dropped more bombs on Cambodia than during the whole Vietnam War (Shaw 2005), and being injured by old munitions is an ongoing

Figure 16. Sculptural Victim of "The Gallows"
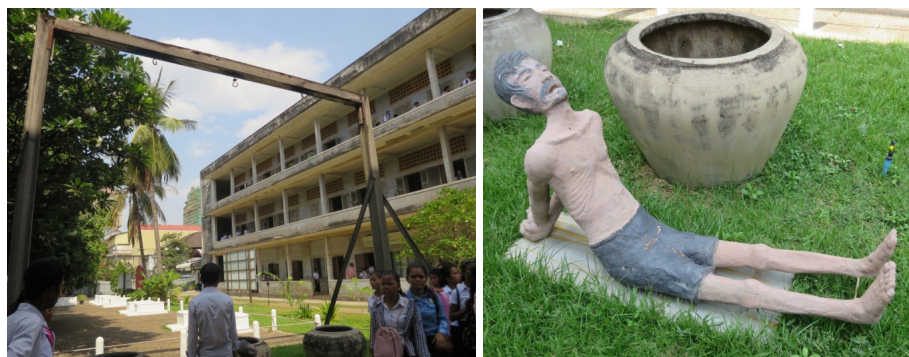
Source: Tuol Sleng, Phnom Penh; Photos by author with permission

Figure 17. Photographic Portraits of Victims; Victim Arrested in 1976

Source: Tuol Sleng, Phnom Penh; Photos by author with permission

hazard. The entrance drive is lined with large bombs, in stark contrast to the "normal" school murals on the walls. Inside, sculptural satire provides dark humour. CNN is one target (Figure 18).

The collection was set up by a former Khmer Rouge child soldier, Aki Ra, and "serves to educate the public on the dangers of landmines," with the belief "that love, support, and education are the essential means to secure a better future for the children that live here and our visitors." It aims "to show the world that, no

Figure 18. Reserved for CNN Heroes

Source: Landmine Museum, Cambodia; Photo by author with
    permission

matter who you are, whatever your background, or your education, you can make a difference."

At the entrance, the patterns of a mine mosaic intrigue and horrify. In the courtyard, a small peaceful wetland is punctuated by an incongruous munitions stupa. The ordinance is organized and labelled, but the repetition of objects is aesthetic (Figure 19). Is this curation or art?

Prosthetic limbs are juxtaposed with their progenitor munitions, and located around the edge of rooms so the visitor is "walking with the legs of amputees." Some are placed in emotive ways. Are those feet walking together, and are those hands trying to hold one another (Figure 20)?

At first, colorful child-painted lanterns seem purely decorative. But they follow a system of personal histories. The inside-back depicts the horror of the injury—an unpleasant but necessary memory. The sides show who provides support. And the front-outside depicts a confident aspiration of the young person's future (Figure 21).

The curation of landmine art seems to celebrate the irony of dark humor in dark museums, which creates optimism but reminds visitors of the atrocities. The humor continues into the shop, where landmine-shaped "clean up" soap is on sale.

Cambodia's three war-museums reflect a particularly grotesque period of recent violence, and naturally emphasize direct experiences, but with respect for victims and an optimistic smile for the future (Table 8).

Figure 19. Patterned Munitions

Source: Landmine Museum, Cambodia; Photos by author with permission

Figure 20. Prosthetics

Source: Landmine Museum, Cambodia; Photo by author with permission

Figure 21. Personal History Lanterns (Injury—Support—Aspiration)

Source: Landmine Museum, Cambodia; Photos by author with permission

Table 8. Cambodia's War Museums

1. *Recent experience of violent events*	2. *Memory and reflection*	3. *History and understanding*

Source: Authors

Vietnam

Vietnam has suffered centuries of invasion and occupation by China, France, and Japan. Then divided into North (Democratic Republic of Vietnam) and South (Republic of Vietnam), the so-called "Vietnamese War" destabilized the country. The United States militarized the people of the South, and South Koreans as well (Chan 2018), from 1965 until the United States withdrew from South Vietnam in

1973. Vietnam defeated all its enemies without soldiers from other state armies fighting in Vietnam, and unsurprisingly it has many revolutionary museums and dark sites.

Visitors to the Museum of the Ho Ch Minh Trail are greeted by Ho and his young followers, framed by an abstract frieze patterning the large scale of events. The sculpture reflects famous revolutionary paintings such as *Uncle Ho Visiting the Village* (Pham Van Don) and *Uncle Ho during a Visit to an Infant Class* (Do Huu Hue). Unlike many depictions of leaders in other communist countries, Ho is usually shown *with* his followers not *above* them. Artists were not afraid to paint Ho as he really was, not tidied-up and made younger (Ushiroshoji 2005, 105, 116). This is why he is remembered locally as "Uncle Ho" and depicted with more affection than his communist counterparts who were responsible for mass atrocities against their own people.

Similarly, the Viet Nam Military History Museum has a gold frieze of the deeds of Ho and his supporters. But this version is a clear graphic presentation of events, which provides a systemized teaching aid for guides. This raises a crucial question: can some forms of teaching about war inspire teaching about peace? The argument that peace comes from strength always needs to be considered, and the strength of the Vietnamese self-defense forces is a pertinent case study. Outside, a U.S. B52 bomber brought down by a single Vietcong pilot has been installed with impressive sculptural effect in the *Garden of Broken Toys* (Figure 22).

In the South, the large War Remnants Museum (WRM) was formerly and

Figure 22. Sculptural B52 Bomber (Found Object)

Source: Garden of Broken Toys, Hanoi; Photo by author

aptly called the Exhibition House for U.S. and Puppet Crimes, and the Exhibition House for Crimes of War and Aggression. The galleries present sculptural reconstructions of prison cages and torture, a French guillotine, and preserved foetuses impaired by Agent Orange. Rather than direct accusatory labelling, the museum leaves statements by independent experts to tell the story, including that of the Bertrand Russell-Sartre War Crimes Tribunal, a forerunner of the UN tribunals and ICC. This exemplifies the UNESCO process (see "Disarming History" above).

In 2015, an exhibition from a children's art competition provided an interesting intervention. Paintings were respectfully framed, like professional work, reflected a balance of war and peace, and were described in a refreshingly honest statement of intent:

> With the aim of educating the children of Thanh An Island on patriotism and determination to protect Vietnam's sovereignty over its sea and islands [we present] an exhibition named 'Vietnam sea and islands: beautiful and peaceful' (War Remnants Museum).

By the museum exit, a small exhibition adds global context, including the visit of (then) U.S. President Barak Obama. The aim is clearly to move sentiments forward towards a global future.

Although impressions of "Vietnam and war" are generally related to the twentieth century U.S. war crimes, the museums try to present this in context of centuries of conflicts, and conspicuously try to move-on from animosity (Table 9).

The Son My (My Lai) massacre in 1968 became known through photos taken by an American war correspondent, Seymour Hersh, which appeared in *Time*, *Life*, and *Newsweek* magazines. This hastened the U.S. retreat from Vietnam. The museum displays the Hersh photos, together with personalized items from young named children, including a slipper and bracelet from infants. Guides often have direct family experience of the atrocities they describe, and their persona brings photos into the present. Is the gun pointing at the head of the person it killed fifty years ago, or at the guide? (Figure 23).

The distinct problem for the Son My curation is that the U.S. soldiers left "nothing alive" and burned all bodies and village buildings. Therefore,

Table 9. Vietnam's War Museums

1. *Recent experience of violent events*	2. *Memory and reflection*	3. *History and understanding*

Source: Authors

Figure 23. Local Guide Kieu Phan

Source: Son My Vestige Site, Vietnam; Photo by author with
permission

reconstructions are important. Dioramas and other visualizations, based on the eventual testimony of U.S. soldiers and others, remind visitors of the details (Figure 24). Reconstructions may seem to reflect the curation of theme parks rather than atrocity sites. But they provide visitors with photo opportunities, which help to educate about Son My globally through social networks.

The full-size reconstructions of buildings are restrained. Most show the remains as found. A few show the original design of village houses (Figure 25).

Figure 24. A Reconstruction of American Soldier War Crimes

Source: Son My Vestige Site, Vietnam; Photo by author with permission

Figure 25. A Full-size Reconstruction

Source: Son My Vestige Site, Vietnam; Photo by author with permission

Figure 26. An American Soldier Views His Victims

Source: Son My Vestige Site, Vietnam; Photo by author with permission

Traditional artistic techniques add another aesthetic dimension. A wood carving depicts children and women victims under the heartless gaze of a ghostlike U.S. soldier. As in Eastern Europe (above), naked women and distraught children are used to evoke strong emotions, but that is also the truth of the events (Figure 26).

The strongest artistic device is easily missed. Visitors may notice a few footprints in the concrete paths, which look like careless workmanship (Figure 27). But they are a reconstruction of the actual footprints in the mud paths on March 16, 1968 from contemporaneous photos. The heavy boots of the U.S. soldiers are imprinted alongside the bare feet of women and children, together with their bicycle tire marks. Visitors suddenly realize they really are "walking in the footsteps of the dead."

The museum and brochure explains

Figure 27. Mud Paths Reconstructed in Concrete

Source: Son My Vestige Site, Vietnam; Photos by author with
permission

the "horrible morning." But it also reminds visitors that some of the U.S. soldiers tried to stop the massacre and help the victims, and shows some of them visiting the site. This provides a dignified exemplar of "truth and reconciliation" (above). Understandably, Son My is very similar to the Killing Fields, but it also presents an evolution of emotions with dignity (Table 10).

Artistic Devices and Curational Techniques

War artists, curators, and educators face a common problem: how to represent the massive scale, power, and relentlessness of mass atrocities, but also tedium. Past war artists often painstakingly depicted hundreds of fighters in battle scenes and used similar artistic devices:

Table 10. Son My

1. *Recent experience of violent events*	2. *Memory and reflection*	3. *History and understanding*

Source: Authors

Figure 28. *The Assault Upon Great Redan*, E. Morin Siers, 1855

Source: Author's collection

- Repetition: funerary art, (China, *Terracotta Army*: 8,000 soldiers, 130 chariots, and 670 horses, 210-209 BCE).
- Prominence: important figures or happenings shown disproportionately large (ancient Egypt).
- Perspective:
  - Vertical - near figures shown under distant figures, but the same size (ancient Egypt).
  - Overlapping Proximity - soldiers close together with overlapping shields, spears, legs, and horses (Assyria, *Alammu Campaign*, 700-692 BCE).
  - Graphical - distant figures smaller (*Alexander Mosaic*, Pompeii, 100 BCE).
  - Linear - figures disappear into a "vanishing point" (Leon Alberti, *De Pictura*, 1435).
  - Positional - [Not formally recognized] overlapping images achieve linear perspective by forcing viewers to look from angled horizontal or vertical positions (Figure 31) (Southeast Asia, *Angkor Wat*, twelfth century).
- 3D 360 Degrees: Ukraine, Ploeger (Figure 10).
- Patterns: repeated symbols indicating related or unrelated groups (Figure 38).
- Time dimensions: immediate, long term (Ploeger, film/video loops).

Many representations merge the devices. The artist who drew the (futile) *Assault Upon Great Redan* foregrounds' dead soldiers (*prominence*, *vertical perspective*), *repeats* the *patterns* of uniforms on the *overlapping proximate* images of soldiers, and uses cannon shots and *linear/graphical perspective* to take the viewer into an infinite world beyond the frame (Figure 28).

In Southeast Asia, the use of *patterning* is conspicuous in dark sites—using munitions, clothing, footprints, beads, bones, and skulls. This usually entails repeating similar not identical imagery to create a mesmerizing aesthetic of an infinite scale. Japan's children provide a seminal example when, each year, they send millions of tiny origami "peace cranes"—all the same, all individual— to Hiroshima and Nagasaki Peace Museums to remember the millions killed by American war crimes (Figure 29). Ai Wei Wei's installation, *Straight* (2015), remembers the children killed in the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake because of corrupt construction. Ai laid countless steel rebars for each child victim on the floor, and thousands of names were listed along the wall.

A frieze at Angkor Wat envisions mass forces through *forced perspective*. Because of the narrow corridor, the frieze cannot be viewed fully face-on, only from the side. The forced angle of viewing creates the illusion of *linear perspective* and infinite actors. Similarly, at the Killing Fields stupa, skulls and bones cannot be viewed directly from above, only at an angle. Leaders, and injuries, are made *prominent* (Figure 30).

Patterning is also evident in Western examples, not least in the war cemeteries in France, and Gerald Lang's *Repetition 2004-5, Iraq* (above). At *Age of Terror* (above) Nele Azevedo's *Minimum Monument* (above) provides an intriguing approach. Steve McQueen's *Queen and Country* (2006) com-memorates the deaths of British soldiers in Iraq by presenting their portraits (chosen by their families) as sheets of stamps, respectfully housed in an oak display cabinet (Figure 31). The repetiton mesmorizes the viewer into trying to comprehend the scale of the impact of war on families, and the scale of combatant victims.

The effect is like that of the photos on a wall in the Red Cross Museum, remembering the 7,000 lost Rwandan children, or the Tuol Sleng prisoners (Figure 32).

The difficult dimension is *time*. How can artists depict the Hundred

Figure 29. Peace Cranes

Source: Photo by author in Hiroshima

Figure 30. *Churning of the Ocean of Milk*, Angkor Wat, Twelfth century; Skulls in the Stupa, Twenty-first Century (Photo Turned Forty-five degrees)

Source: Photos by author in Cambodia with permission

Figure 31. *Queen and Country*, Steve McQueen, 2006

Source: IWM, London; Photos by author with permission

Years War (1337-1453), or the U.S. War in Afghanistan from 2001 to an infinite present? Film/video-based works can use looping. Ploeger's 360-3D *Frontline* (2016-2017) depicts the endless tense tedium of the fighters through a one minute loop, but segments run a series of shorter loops, so the repetition is not obvious.

Religious art also needs to envision eternity, omnipresence, and the infinite scale of heavens and hells, as in William Blake's *A Vision of the Last Judgement*. Music provides another line of thought: does the monumental scale of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* and Britten's *War Requiem* achieve more than Olivier Messiaen's minimalist *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (*Quartet for the End of Time*) written and performed in Stalag VIII-A, a prisoner-of-war camp in Görlitz? Why do dark

Figure 32. *Victims of the Iraq War*, McQueen; *Lost Rwandan children*, Red Cross Museum; *Victims of Pol Pot*, Tuol Sleng.

Source: IWM, London; Red Cross Museum, Geneva; Tuol Sleng, Cambodia;
    Photos by author with permission

Figure 33. Vietnamese Resistance Radio and Directional Speakers
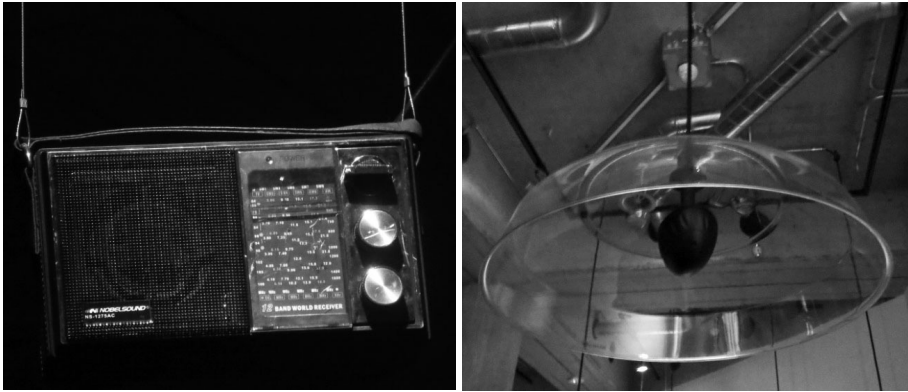
Source: Red Cross Museum, Geneva; Photo by author with permission

museums rarely use "dark" music to expand perspectives?

Sound can also contribute to the sensations of scale, atrocity, and tedium by adding aesthetic depth. It can also make exhibits more accessible to people with vision impairments. Audio can reconstruct historical moments by using archive recordings such as broadcasts played through vintage radios or directional speakers (Figure 33), or by using the music or sonorities of the era alongside photos or artworks. Diorama reconstructions (above) are often accompanied by explosions and gunfire. As Ploeger's work (above) reminds us, much of the time the frontline may be tranquil and tedious—birdsong would be more appropriate than bullet shots. Alternatively, soundscapes can be created/composed to illuminate contrast with art and exhibits, for example war poems read by the poet or pseudo-religious music back-grounding scenes of slaughter. Audio devices and techniques include:

- Intimacy: headphones or isolated booths.
- Repetition: to generate sensations or manipulate time dimensions.
- Prominence: emphasizing certain information or sound effects by changing the volume or content (e.g. *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*, Penderecki; Vietnamese revolutionary songs).
- Juxtaposition: contrasting different sound content (e.g. military/religious music).
- Perspective: manipulating the direction/source of sound (e.g. 3D surround-sound; focused ceiling or under-floor speakers; "leaked" distant sound to create depth).
- Patterns: repeated sound-symbols indicating related or unrelated groups (e.g. allies, enemies, civilians, prisoners).

Another significant decision is how curation *controls*, or not, the visitor-flow (see *One Day, Maybe*, above). Are the messages to be imbued/pushed by the curator or absorbed/pulled by the visitor, or deployed through a continuum of push-pull experiences? The experiences of the audience may be controlled in various ways: *design*, *collection*, *information*, *display* and *spatial manipulations*. These can be considered within three headings: *empathy*, *interaction*, *message,* and *route* (See Appendix 1). Curational decisions may depend on recognizing factors such as culture and nationality (e.g. organized East Asian tourists, random "drop-in" locals), age/experience (e.g. children, war veterans/victims, engineers), and expertise (e.g. professional artists/designers, military personnel, non-military/pacifists).

Conclusion

Whether or not art in dark museums amount to effective peace education is hard to assess, not least because the efficacy of all forms of peace education is usually indirect, intangible, diffuse, and long-term. Herbert Read (1967) concluded, "education through art is education for peace," which suggests that the *educational processes* may be as important as the art. Artists cannot paint peace or sculpt serenity, but teachers can encourage critical discussion of art. Museum stamp collections provide good material. The United States produces many "peace" stamps, but why "ATOMS" from the only country to use atomic bombs, and why "world LAW" when the United States has a very poor record of ratifying international agreements, worse than China and Russia (Williams 2006, 206-9)? Countries like the United Kingdom and its colonies, and Hungary, raise similar questions (Figure 34).

Museums can provide the materials and ideas for peace education in schools and similar settings, but rarely the curriculum which is usually controlled by states, yet the conclusions are always created in the minds of the viewers. States

Figure 34. Peace stamps

Source: Author's collection

might control what is taught, but not what is learned. Certainly museums reach audiences beyond schools, and can influence the "up-system" elites who cause, perpetuate, and cure political violence (Williams 2012, 1). But perhaps the most significant educational influence is overlooked. All museum staff may well think differently through engaging with artistic input, and this may influence a whole museum including educational activities and publications. Does "dark art" feature adequately in the education and training of museum professionals generally?

The obvious difference between Western and Asian presentations is that, in the West, most artists and museums can access cheap and effective technologies to develop and inform original work, and e-novelty is attractive for the press and art markets. New techniques are evolving quickly, around the world. Old World War I film has been transferred to High Definition (HD) video and colored in New Zealand. In Israel, speaking holograms of dead holocaust survivors can use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to answer questions that have never before been asked. Now, 3D images can be projected anywhere by images Free-Space Volumetric Display. But a likely difficulty is that young people will increasingly own very sophisticated e-devices, and museum-tech may be no match for the latest computer war game.

In contrast, the lack of technology in Southeast Asia pushes artists and museum staff to be creative, and there is little that is aimed at art markets. It is also striking that few of the artists in the Asian settings are named. Perhaps the names are lost or forgotten, or the works are "community art" or anonymous, as in Syria at present (above), to avoid recriminations from oppressive regimes. In Europe, every attempt is made to name or identify artists. If described as "anon," details of date and location, and provenance, are mentioned. European artists are now well aware of copyright and royalties. The use of children's and other victim art in Asia is strong and straightforward, and stark juxtapositions and interventions, sometimes with humor, emphasise atrocity. But, of course, most children's art is free, and there may be good reasons to protect their names.

Potential technical contributions by artists at dark sites are wide-ranging, and artists will adopt many different personas which constrain and explain what they do (See Appendix 2). Recognizing this potential provides a basis for planning the curation of art in dark sites, which can be assisted by a checklist drawn from the discussion above (See Appendix 3).

The diversity of exhibits shown throughout this article highlights important omissions. Where is the "peace art" about domestic violence, child abuse, hate crime against people with disabilities, racism, cyber bullying and cyber war, violence against refugees, environmental victims (Williams 1998), and insidious "state crime" (Green and Ward 2004)? Does the conceptualization of' "peace education" fully consider and address these forms of violence and would more inter-issue thinking by artists inspire change? Aesthetically there are further seemingly obvious questions: Must we paint war to inspire peace? What is "art"

in the context of dark museums and sites? How do we distinguish between artistic curation and the curation of art? But, perhaps most importantly, do these questions even matter?

Acknowledgments

Appendix 1: Controlling Visitor-Flow

1. Empathy control

| Nondramatic ←————————————————————→ Dramatic	
Emotionally dry contents Gentle diverse narratives Contextualized events and characters	Emotionally provocative contents Strong narratives about a few clear victims Vivid emphasis on specific events and characters
Neutral lighting Accessible readable text "White box"	Sensational lighting Imposed text display (size, bold or italic font, etc.) "Black box"

2. Interaction control

Active interaction ←————————————————→ Passive interaction	
Visitors can make choices (interactive tablets/ PCs, games, participation)	Little visitor choice interaction (video loops, background soundscapes/music, buttons to highlight)

3. Message control

Subtle ←————————————————————→ Direct	
Indirect exposure to message in text, image, and display	Direct exposure to message in text, image, and display
Indirect political statements	Direct political statements
Non-judgmental	Clear distinction between right and wrong, good and bad

4. Route control

Open space ←————→ Multiple open routes ←————→ Single route		
Diverse options, route determined by individual visitor preference	Visitors have options about their routes	Single option Directional (designated entrance to exit route)
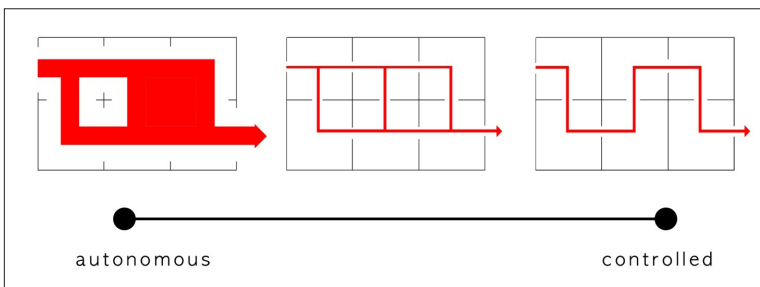
Diagrams: Hae-eun Lee

Appendix 2: Technical Contributions and Artistic Personas

Technical contributions
- Reconstructing events (sculptures, models, dioramas, full-scale sites)
- Representing differing perspectives (victims, families, combatants, political and military leaders)
- Illustration, graphic art, design, calligraphy (depicting events, posters, signage)
- Web design (archives, interactive materials)
- Photography and film-making (press, media, documentaries, and war films)
- Curating art from experience (children, victims, combatants, activists)
- Sustaining memory (memorials, photos, videos, holograms)
- Creating merchandise (museum gifts, catalogues, guidebooks)

Artistic personas
- Embedded artists (Formally part of a military group which controls them)
- Soldier artists (Historically those with duties to map and record the terrain; now military personal who create as a personal interest)
- War artists (Specialize in recording war later through painting or illustration)
- Design artists. (Create posters, propaganda, statues, memorials)
- Computer/video artists (Create war games and military training simulations; Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) works)
- Sculptural artists (Involved in reconstructions and memorials)
- Photojournalists (Create immediate visual records to provide material for press and other media)
- Inquiring artists (Research and raise questions about what they experience, often soon after a war zone has been stabilized)
- Satirical/cartoon artists (Create awareness of abuses of power)
- Anti-war artists (Direct critiques of war and what participants experience)

Appendix 3: A Planning Checklist for Curating Art in Dark Museums and Sites

Stage	Considerations and Questions
Planning	How do the aims of the exhibition reflect international understanding, restorative justice, and disarming history?
	How are the aims located across the three phases of recent experience, memory and reflection, history and understanding? Do some exhibits reflect the start of an event?
	How will museum staff be trained to manage "dark" presentations?
	How can a balance of the personas of artists and genres of work be achieved, including "dark" music?
	Might commissioned artists, including anonymous or collectives, work around a common theme, or be inspired by museum objects?
	What is on elsewhere, within the same building, and local museums? How does the proposed exhibition relate?
	How do developments in public art—memorials and sculpture—relate to the exhibition?
	How does curation relate to full diversity of visitors? Is the gallery fully accessible to war veterans and others with disabilities? Is there flexibility to adapt to unexpected reactions, including withdrawing or re-presenting exhibits? How might visitor groups change the atmosphere, e.g. children, veterans?
	How can the strengths of small galleries be optimized in large galleries—risk-taking, immediacy, access to artists?
	Are "invisible" groups represented in displays?
	Can evaluative and other visitor data be collected automatically, and displayed.
	Might historical materials be reconstructed and transferred to modern formats, e.g. holograms, old film to HD color.
	Could a whole-museum ethos work—cultural activities, food in cafes, ceremonies, films, performances, shops, gallery acoustics, sound-scapes, and music?
Selecting commissioning and curating exhibits	Will exhibits be permanent or transient? Where will transient exhibits be sited, how will they be timed, advertised, presented, and recorded?
	Can public art (memorials, sculptures, murals, stamps) and people's art (shrines, flowers, children's work) be represented?
	How might strange and bizarre objects contribute to the exhibition?

Stage	Considerations and Questions
Selecting commissioning and curating exhibits	Would a team of experts, reflecting different cultures and nationalities, be appropriate? Is participatory curation appropriate using the UNESCO "Disarming History" process?
	Might art help to present the same message in different culturally appropriate ways?
	Is collective and anonymous art represented?
	Would art that invites visitor interaction, be effective, including sculptures, especially for vision impaired visitors?
	Can visitors interact/participate by leaving tokens of respect or memory?
	How can art by victims, prisoners, and children be used? Will it be displayed like professional art?
	If the exhibition reflects phases two and three, might the ideas of restorative justice be relevant?
	Are the aims of the exhibition explicit and honest?
	How will the "hang" reflect the aims? Are there interesting, cross-cutting ways to do this?
	Is the technology more interesting than young people's personal devices? Will the repair and maintenance of e-displays be immediate and effective?
	Would keynote work at the entrance set the tone? What will be the final artistic memory/message at the exit?
	Can architectural design features in the museum reflect the exhibition—chain screens, flooring, lighting, and acoustics.
	Might exhibits be juxtaposed, subtly or starkly, to achieve an appropriate effect?
	Can an exhibition be critical of the absurd horror of war, rather than of a particular side or political system?
	Can the aberrant nature of the atrocities be emphasised by the context of the calm normality of the site?
	How can interventions elsewhere in a gallery be used?
	Will any exhibits be publically replicable, using instruction books?
	Might some of the exhibits suggest visitors are "walking with" victims or others?
	Might "patterning" help to show the scale of atrocities?
Explaining and displaying	Is signage clear, presenting a dignified but appropriate impression? Can calligraphy reflect local normality?
	How can war-art that exploits the sexual vulnerability of women be presented?

Stage	Considerations and Questions
Explaining and displaying	How can "good" art from former despotic regimes be explained?
	How can people with direct experience of relevant violence contribute as guides or by selling their books?
	Can humor make appropriate contributions?
	Might details like dates trigger a personalized response in visitors?
	How can line drawings and cartoon-style representations assist understanding?
	Are the artists named and credited, including children and victims, or is there a good reason to keep them anonymous. (Ensuring personal safety may entail more than removing names, but also hiding faces, dates, locations, friends, and networks, etc.)
Educating	Will there be partnerships with schools, universities and other educational entities?
	How can websites improve understanding without reducing visitor numbers?
	Are clear graphic representations more educational than abstract forms?
	How will materials in the bookshop or online extend the educational reach?
Future challenges	How can museums recognize when to progress through the phases towards peace not conflict? Will new technologies make the progression quicker, and is that desirable?
	How might war museums respond to new weaponry that is not visually exciting?
	How will tech-expert children with the latest e-devices, respond to museum/art technologies?

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