

Alex Dirksen

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Serious Play

Walking up to the exhibit, immediately, I noticed that the introduction to this exhibit was already more elaborate and thoughtful than any of the other exhibits that are being shown (figure 1). The “serious” is contrasted well with the very fun and inviting “play” that looks like a word building toy, which fits the aesthetic of the experience pretty well. All of the moving pieces on this first wall give the eye some intrigue and engages the viewer, enticing them to move forward through the exhibit. A good majority of the walls are angled or have some sort of design that has dynamic shapes that take up the space very well. The exhibited furniture pieces are displayed on rounded stages that differ vastly from the other exhibits. It makes the room feel a lot less like a museum and more soft and playful. The titles are very approachable while the pieces sit far enough back so as to not allow visitors to approach, interact with, or sit on the furniture. The way they arranged the rooms was so interesting though because the designers of the exhibit made sure that nothing was flat and boring, that the audience was always engaged. A number of the walls have videos playing of various types of toys, visual elements, and play. There are a great deal of long flat walls so the videos that they projected onto them was a successful use of space, I think. The way the spaces were set up was very approachable and I loved that they had interactive elements such as videos and spin tops, and card houses that kids could play with and interact with. Elements that coincided with each other in terms of time period or by artist were placed together or nearby which helped the viewer to understand what it was that they were looking at. I thought it was effective, as well, that they split the exhibit into three parts, the home, children’s design, and corporate so people could see how this theme applied to many different areas of design and life. The interactive “arrange a room” (shown in figure 2) was really great addition to the exhibit so people are able to use the pieces that they’re seeing in the exhibit and place them into a digital environment and see how they use can and interact with the space and how they can pair the pieces to make it aesthetically pleasing. I really enjoyed this exhibit and seeing the ways that people used creativity in the exhibit design and the pieces that were displayed. They realized that since the exhibit was about ‘play’ that they could use interactive elements to engage the audience and create a more compelling space for the audience.



Figure 1



Figure 2