

# Black Creativity Juried Art and Extreme Ice Study

## *Research and Evaluation Executive Summary*

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### Goal

This study was guided by the research question: “What impact does viewing a non-science art exhibition have on the subsequent viewing of a science exhibition?”

### Why

Hosted annually since 1970, the Museum’s historic *Black Creativity Juried Art Exhibition* (hereafter: Juried Art) is the nation’s longest-running exhibition of African-American art. Juried Art also distinguishes itself as an art exhibition with no ties to science content, even though it is hosted within a science museum. It provides an opportunity to study the ways in which viewing art for art’s sake may prime the mind for the intake of science content.

### Who

We compared the experiences of two groups of adult Museum guests:

1. Guests who attended Juried Art and then the *Extreme Ice* exhibit
2. Guests who only attended *Extreme Ice*

### How

**Juried Art and Extreme Ice Condition:** These guests were recruited outside of the entrance to Juried Art in the West Pavilion and asked to walk through Juried Art and *Extreme Ice*. They were instructed to spend as much or as little time as they liked in each exhibit.

**Extreme Ice Only Condition:** These guests were recruited outside of the entrance to *Extreme Ice* and asked to walk through *Extreme Ice* only (without having gone to Juried Art first). They were also instructed to spend as much or as little time as they liked in the exhibit.

Data was collected from guests using two methods: eye tracking and surveys. For each group of guests that was recruited, one adult within that group wore a pair of Tobii Pro 2 eye tracking glasses which record video footage of exactly what a person is looking at as they move through a space as well as audio through a microphone attached to the glasses. Footage was analyzed to look for differences in how guests interacted with the *Extreme Ice* exhibit based on whether they had seen Juried Art or not. After each group finished exploring their assigned exhibit(s), the eye-tracking glasses were removed and all adults within the group were asked to complete a five-minute survey about their experiences within *Extreme Ice* and within the Museum overall.

## When

Data was collected on weekday afternoons in January and February 2019.

## What

Researchers collected a total of 37 valid eye-tracking videos and 80 surveys from guests.

### Major Findings:

- Participants who attended Juried Art first before visiting Extreme Ice spent a higher proportion of their time looking at photographs and signs with text (i.e. art based content) and a lower proportion watching the movie and looking at the digital interactives (i.e. science-based content). This finding could indicate that visiting Juried Art first primed guests to be more receptive to art content.
- Qualitatively, we noticed guests who had visited Juried Art spent more time looking closely at the photographs and tended to fixate more on smaller details and representations of people.
- Participants in both groups rated their overall Museum visit and visit to Extreme Ice similarly high.
- When asked what they connected with most in the Extreme Ice exhibit, participants who visited Juried Art first were over twice as likely to report connecting the most with the photographs in Extreme Ice.
- On average, participants who visited Juried Art first spent about half as much time in Extreme Ice as those who did not, implying a possible opportunity cost in adding non science content to the Museum.

## For More Information

This study was presented as a poster at the 2019 American Alliance of Museums conference. An academic manuscript is being prepared for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

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