

CONNECTIONS: Engaging Arts and Culture in Airports



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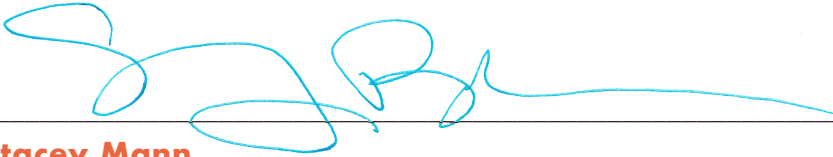
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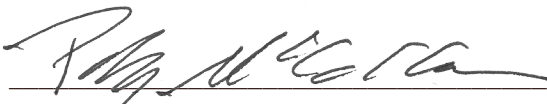
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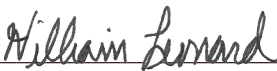
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“It is not the destination where you end up but **the mishaps and memories** you create along the way.”

This is final project is dedicated to
my grandmother, Wanda Gene Gerner
(1930–2014)

She gave me wings.

ABSTRACT

Airports are often perceived as spaces of stress and discomfort. Much of this is due to the large populations of people they see every day. Their priorities have often been on creating a smooth routine for getting that population from curbside to plane cabin. The aesthetic experience has suffered. This thesis focuses on improving airport visitor experience through museum exhibition design practices. It explores the opportunities airports naturally create to emphasize civic pride and establish a sense of place in visitors. By celebrating regional history/individuality they can solidify a sense of place and resonate with travelers regardless of where they're from. Instead of developing designs objectively, this project proposes an approach that keeps the needs of the visitor at the heart of it all. By uncovering topics that relate specifically to a local region but translate universally, the application finds a middle ground between cultural hybridization and total local specificity.



Dear Fellow Travelers . . .

Do you remember driving to the airport at 2am? Perhaps your parents tucked you into the back seat of a 1997 Ford Explorer the night before just so you could squeeze in a few extra sleepy minutes? You'd stumble through security, not sure if your left shoe was on your left foot or in the left-side pocket of your backpack but you made it. It was 4am and your flight didn't board until 7. If you had a father like mine, this sounds all too familiar.

Those long "dead" hours at the airport never bothered me. Even as a child, I always had a fascination with airports and loved the romance of being whisked away to any part of the world. I would watch everyone coming and going, greeting each other with the sincerest of smiles and leaving the most heart wrenching good-byes. It was these emotional and beautifully personal moments that led me to begin this project.

Only in airports can we catch a glimpse into so many lives at one time. Only in airports are we presented with access to the entire world while standing still.

Airports are gateways, not just to physical destinations but into lives and life-styles.

I ask you, adventurers and experience seekers, as you read this think of everywhere you've been and everywhere you have yet to go. What stories are you bringing through the gateways to the world?

Yours affectionately,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lauren". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, looping initial "L" and a trailing flourish at the end.



ARRIVAL

INTRODUCTION

Each airport has the ability to shrink the world within a few solid walls. They are gateways, storybooks, journals, communities, beacons, monuments and homes. They are also unexplored territory for experience designers. Airports hold an incredible amount of potential to impact society. Because by nature, they are fully immersed within cultures and even more integrated into many people's every-day lives, their visitor experience should be taken into great consideration. Currently, visitor experience in airports has an overwhelmingly negative perception. Airports were chosen as the topic for this thesis because of *its desperate need for perception improvement and its abundance in opportunity*.

When first being developed, air travel was an affair to remember. Going to the airport was luxurious; from baggage drop off to cabin dining service, only the best was given so people could enjoy their trip and each other.

Over time, *the airport has become bleak*, commercial and cold. It has forgotten its humanity. That human element is what makes travel and airports such an exclusive experience. Many airports make it a mission to embrace the community of the city they reside in. Through exhibits, artwork and other cultural installations, airports have been attempting to have their space positively impact visitors. The art and culture of a region are assets that make a location unique. They are the elements of a community's personality that stand independently from others.

The ever-developing globalization of our world is blatantly apparent in airports. It is important to encourage global knowledge and acceptance of other cultures; airports become a unique host of many simultaneously.

Through celebrating their region's individual culture, airports can establish an awareness in travelers – combating the mute and

grayed aspects of a globalized society with the embrace and acclaim of what makes their communities tick.

Museum exhibition design looks closely at how the environment impacts visitors and how it can stand out. This thesis looks at methods of design such as place making, meaning making and the aesthetic experience in relation to the airport audience. Because little research has been done linking exhibit design and airport experience, conclusions drawn from relative case studies, public surveys and in depth discussions intuitively guide potential applications. This project creates a small window into travelers' minds to interpret their view of the airport experience. From both exhibit design practices and traveler perspectives, it draws conclusions and presents considerations for airport design that will positively affect visitors and regain their sense of place.

If we think of the airport as a museum honoring the city it resides in, designers can improve traveler's understanding of the city through its art, culture and architecture. Studying the audience and understanding their needs improves not only aesthetics but also functionality and overall satisfaction for visitors.



THE ROLE OF THE AIRPORT

Airports have been able to create a definitive image of themselves that leave impressions on their visitors. Whether it is a giant rocking chair that takes one to an old country home, where birds are chirping and they can forget all worries, or it is a chain of white tents unexpectedly spanning the exterior; it is something particular to this travel hub. These are moments of design when **we're reminded of art and culture and our humanistic desires to create and relate**. Human moments like these are rare within an environment that was ironically, created to bring people closer together. An airport is a community and a space all of its own. It hosts hundreds of thousands of visitors daily and each of those visitors has their own agenda and time zone. They are a place of people, people from all over the globe with stories and perspectives unique to themselves.

In today's society, an airport's role is to temporarily house a community of travelers until it is their time to depart to a new destination. The reasons for passing through an airport may fluctuate from business to various degrees of leisure. Some people travel with companions, some prefer to travel alone and sometimes, a traveler's companion is whomever they happen to meet at the airport bar. According the Atlanta International Airport, about 275,000 people pass through the airport daily on about 2,700 different flights.





944,255,000 travelers a year

THE PROBLEM

Most of the time when we think about traveling, conversation primarily concerns itself with end destinations. Although they are interesting and unique stories to tell, it is equally curious that for however long a time, all 944,255,000 of these people had to go through the same space: the airport.

An airport is seldom an exciting destination. It's not the Grand Canyon or Tibet or an island in the Caribbean but there is an opportunity for airports to reflect a certain amount of excitement to create an experience with their location. Riddled with tense vacationers and solemn businessmen and women, it has become **rigid** and offers **little emotional levity**. Airports are important environments experienced twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. They are responsible for getting people where they need to be. A common perception is that airports are all the same and very uncomfortable. It's easy to get lost among the hustle and bustle and forget you are anywhere besides this ambiguous space. **However**, various methods of museum exhibition design and visitor evaluation could help alleviate and improve this grim perspective of airports. Through design rooted in arts and culture, humanity can be put back into airports.

In a place who's job is to **connect** the world, why do we feel so **disconnected**?



A government data analysis by Airlines for America showed the increase in people traveling by air in 2010 was close to 12 times more than it was in 1960. More people can mean more problems in spaces that haven't adapted accordingly. Because of the mass amounts of people within an airport, visitor experience is a crucial aspect of an airport's maintenance. Many airports have conducted visitor service evaluations and have attempted to implement ways to correct the overwhelmingly negative reports. Their concern for visitor experience has been primarily focused on easing the visitor's path from their initial arrival to their gate for departure. Airports have developed systematic ways to shuffle their crowds from one check-point to another: check your bags, get your boarding pass, suffer security, redress, check your flight status, find your gate, wait. It is routine and systematic; and every airport's system is essentially the same. It is a dreadful process for the traveler but a practical process for the facility.

"I used to love traveling but I hate it," she said. "It's totally exhausting, and I feel like I'm paying so much money for so little. It feels like you're being herded through the airport like animals. I worry about what's in my bag. I feel like I'm always hungry. I would much rather drive."

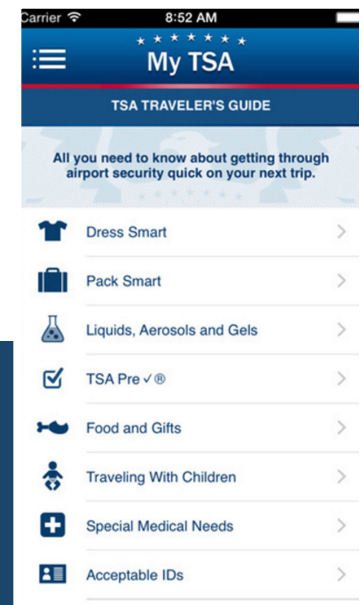
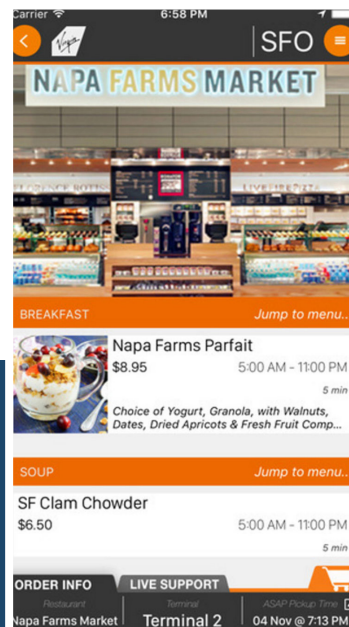
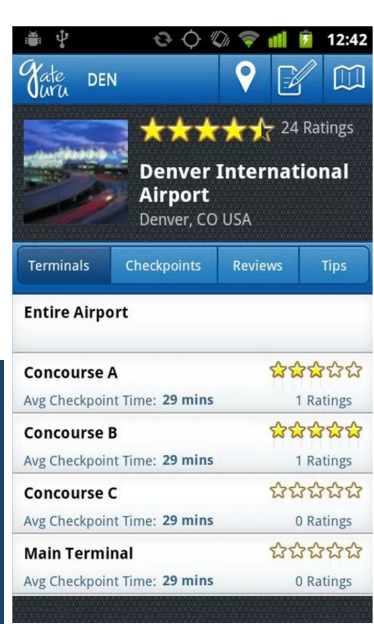
—Mira Patel, med student

The attempts to improve visitor experience lie in way-finding and staff demeanor. Sales and marketing staff prioritize customer service and choose to highlight whatever is most convenient. Regional airports choose to market the airport's broader location away from heavy traffic and construction on beltways. Because they are smaller, they promote efficient security check and convenient timing that doesn't require an uncomfortably early arrival time at the terminal. ³ Larger international airports market competitive prices and a broader scope of destinations.



Applications for mobile devices have improved visitor navigation and eased insecurity involving flight information. “GateGuru” alerts visitors about flight changes, layovers and security wait times. “AirGrub” has information about in-the-airport dining and allows you to order ahead for pick up. Others apps provide maps of the airport and parking information. These are effective in combating any unease about flight technicalities but the disconnection between people and each other and their larger environment still remains.

Elements of travel like good food, refined attire, personal customer service and over all comfort had once reminded travelers of their humanity. Before airports, train stations were constructed with special purpose to unite people with the city they are in. Their uniqueness was primarily found in their exterior architecture. Those luxuries have now been replaced by a carefully planned system designed for efficiency and progress. We’ve forgotten that people are still arriving and departing one place and going to another. They are leaving one community and culture and entering a new one. The reasons for travel are as diverse as the people themselves but that only opens up opportunities for airports to facilitate a human experience and celebrate what it means to be in a place.





SECURITY CHECK

NOMENCLATURE

Globalization

As it relates primarily to culture. The blending of different nations' cultural elements such as food, music, traditions etc.

Cultural hybridization/hybridity

Can be used interchangeably with this paper's definition of globalization. Cultural hybridity is another term for the specific culture branch of globalization whose distinction is being blurred

Culture

Particular traditions, food, music and way of life of a community of people from the same area/city of the world

Community

A large group of people within the same environment and a part of a similar culture. For example, this paper refers to the airport as a community a part of the larger surrounding community of its region.



GLOBALIZATION

One of the reasons airports have become devoid of individuality and facilitators of high stress situations is due to an increase in globalization and cultural hybridity. Globalization is the transformation of individual cultural elements into global phenomena. In addition to the blending of cultures, globalization also encompasses economic aspects of nations, ideology and political exchanges. Important social impacts of globalization include a more **common acceptance and increased**

awareness of other cultures around the world. As a whole, society has become less ignorant to other lifestyles. Globalization through cultural hybridization has created concern among smaller cultures. As the world continues to become border-less, it is starting to weaken individual cultural identity. The global convergence of cultures is inevitable but it isn't eliminating distinction all together. Major differences remain intact. However, within airports, broader disparity is weak.

"People are spending so much more time in airports, they've become a kind of gateway to local culture."

*– Maxwell L. Anderson
Director of the
Indianapolis Museum of Art*

There are cases in which homogenization is being addressed. Small attempts are being done to distinguish one airport from another. Some airports install art and sculpture; others have constructed light displays that create a unique ambiance while travelers move throughout the space. More often than not however, these elements fail to evoke a certain loyalty to the city's specific culture. Although the inclusion of these elements begins to improve visitor experience, the sense of place remains ambiguous because site specification and individual culture elements are missing.

The Golden Age

Airports and air travel weren't always so uncomfortable and miserable. Travelers didn't always dread their journey. When flying was first becoming a popular method of travel, it was a novelty and it was revered. The 1950s and 1960s are referred to as "The Golden Age" of plane travel.

Fast food chains are an example of how **cultural hybridization can be a positive movement** for bringing the world closer together while still accentuating individuality. Enterprises like McDonald's, KFC and Dunkin' Donuts can be found all over the globe. From each chain, customers can always expect a similar experience and style of food. People are frequently sharing similar experiences through global brands and find community in this type of cultural globalization rather than in cultural diversity. Still, these brands have found a way to remain true to their host culture. Certain styles of food in these restaurants have been appropriated to reflect individuality of particular countries.

The “Black Ninja” burger can only be purchased at a Burger King in Japan just like the Dry Pork and Seaweed Donut can only be found at a Dunkin' Donuts in China. It is this successful middle ground concept that can easily be adapted by airports. Achieving a foundational global view while celebrating its individuality the airport can become a comfortable place for travelers while also standing as a testimony to its unique personality.



The Golden Age

During this time, flying wasn't as common as it is today and it was only affordable to the upper and upper-middle class but it was a pleasant experience designed with the people at its heart. It has even been referred to as “glamorous” and it was. It took a lot of time to get from one place to another but comfort and style seemed to be at the forefront of design.

Air transit is particularly important when it comes to globalization. It is a large contributor to the economic development and tourism industry of a region. Most, if not all, foreign goods are transported by air transit. Governments have created strict policies regarding ownership and control of airlines due to the increased exchange of goods and people. The restrictions are primarily concerned with economic value and how air transit affects a nation's economy however, they also affect where different countries can fly and what airlines are allowed to fly there. In 2007, Europe and the United States created the "open skies" agreement that approved unrestricted flight between anywhere in the United States and anywhere in Europe. The restrictions are a way in which Governments attempt to retain national sovereignty and by extension, individuality but as stated in the Centre for Aviation's CAPA Daily, keeping national sovereignty doesn't mean there has to be foreign control limits. Discussions about changing ownership and control rules reveal a movement to a possible global airline. "The increasingly inventive ways devised to work around the O&C (ownership and control) rules have led to significant change in the world airline industry landscape, perhaps most interestingly illustrated in recent times by Norwegian's attempts to construct a truly global airline." This leads to an increased convergence of varying cultures as people gain more access to travel with each other to all parts of the world. As this happens, the loss of cultural distinction can potentially increase; this creates a greater need to highlight unique personality traits of an airports host city and reaffirm to travelers how great it is that we have access to multiple places that are wonderfully unique in their own way.

"All in all, globalization does mean sameness but it also still means difference. Although the world does have strong homogenizing tendencies, that does not mean the ultimate extinction to the diverse "cultural rainbow" as we know it."

-Manfred Steger

Although most of the luxury took place in the cabins of aircraft after the airport, the concept of human comfort is a mentality that can be learned from and applied to airport experience design. In the 1950s when air travel was fresh, there was only one class of passenger. This is most likely because the cost to travel was only affordable by a small part of society at the time.

MEANING-MAKING

hu•man•i•ty
(h)yōō'manədē/

noun

1. the human race; human beings collectively
2. humaneness; benevolence.
 1. compassion, brotherly love, fellow feeling,

humaneness,

kindness, consideration,
understanding, sympathy,
tolerance

3. learning or literature concerned with human culture, especially literature, history, art, music, and philosophy

cul•ture
'kəlCHər/

noun

1. the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively.
 1. a refined understanding or appreciation of this.
 2. the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group.
 3. the attitudes and behavior characteristic of a particular social group.

The definitions of humanity and culture are integrally linked. Humanity helps define culture and culture in turn, defines humanity.

The Golden Age

The lack of deliberate separation between people during their flying experience created a sense of community among those traveling. The design of the aircraft space reflected this. It created comfortable opportunities to enjoy each other's company.

Humanity is missing and can be placed back into airports through arts and culture. Museums are institutions that place particular concentration on cultures and human-centered design. They strive for **captivation, learning and impact**. The methodology and process of museum exhibition design easily transitions into design for airport experience. A core consideration in exhibition design is meaning-making. Exhibits that encourage meaning-making offer great opportunity to impact the inhabitants of the airport. There are many airports that have been incorporating various programs, exhibits and installations to improve the visitor experience. The audience for those spaces can't be controlled or specifically targeted which challenges design and comprehension of the narrative. It's possible that there isn't a more diverse or captive audience than one at an airport.

As a field, museum exhibition design is prioritizing this idea of an impacting experience. In Leslie Bedford's book "The Art of Museum Exhibitions" she explains Nelson H. Graburn's argument about three kinds of human experiential needs: educational, reverential and associational. The associational need is the one I think most airports struggle with. Bedford, through Lois Silverman iterates how important it is to create meaning in exhibition spaces. Bedford quotes Silverman's definitions of meaning in the museum design context. The definition that holds particular significance to museum exhibitions and airport experience is **"magic."** She calls them **"moments of enchantment that transpire when people react to things."** Incorporating social work to design, Silverman explains that when making objects mean something, people are also developing meanings of themselves, "their relationships and the society in which they live..."



LAX, Los Angeles Airport

meaning-making in museums yields beneficial consequences, rendered more concrete through the perspectives of human needs, outcomes and changes, relationship benefits and social capital, social change and culture change.”

Air travel is a common mode of transportation and therefore airports are a frequently experienced community space. With so many people often run down from the stress of travel it is easy for them to close themselves off from experiencing where they are. The airport is a literal collision of cultures. It can be a place where arts and humanities thrive and are not forgotten. It can be a place where design greatly impacts and reflects unique attributes of a site’s particular culture. The mundane routine when flying from place to place, the stress and anxiety that traveling instigates and the cold commercial atmosphere that occurs naturally in airports, all discourage a person’s desire to interact with their environment. How can we start to change this perception? Where can we begin to fix the disconnection? As an observer, I often see travelers hiding behind their smart devices instead of looking up and being present in their current space. It’s becoming a social norm to close ourselves off from everything and everyone around us. The virtual world we escape to behind smart devices is becoming an ambiguous residence that’s threatening society’s ability to be present and make meaningful connections.

The environment and the physical space of an exhibit greatly affect its narrative and perception. This project uncovers how to design specifically to combat the ambiguity that airports present and how to connect travelers to their environment, whether that is through added elements or in relation to the physical architecture of the airport. In an essay from the Travel section of the New York Times Airport, Designed for Everyone but the Passenger, the author makes the claim that although airport design has

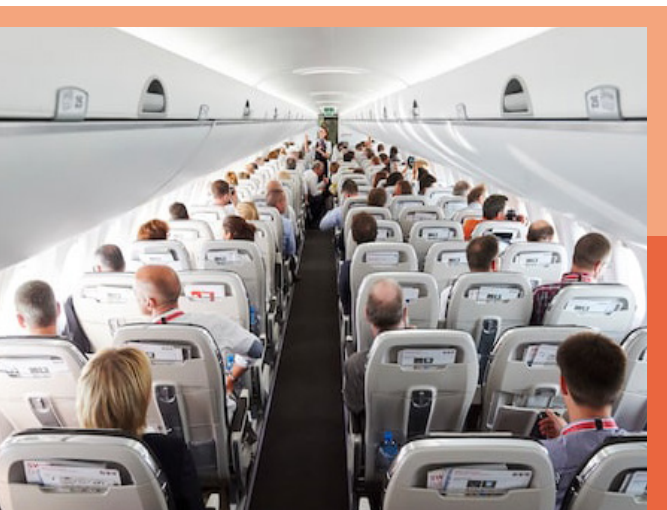
The Golden Age

Passengers dressed in some of their finest attire to fly. Presenting themselves this way implies a certain respect for air travel and for each other. There was more space to sit and sleep. In some planes, the seating was arranged in facing couches. Framed photographs on the walls were not uncommon either.



greatly transformed over the past few decades, it seems architects have forgotten to consider comfort for the people. He also states that too much emphasis is being placed on creating a snap shot of an airport's host city. He says, "But many airports are threatening to be a kind of camera obscura, a simulacrum of a city that, if we're on a layover, we'll never see." He communicates this as something negative however; those layovers are an opportunity for design to be engaging. It's important that airport architecture and design reflect its exterior world. This study places passengers and visitors at the heart of design inspiration and builds upon creative strides airport design is already taking.

A flight attendant of over thirty years, on a flight from Philadelphia International Airport to the Louis Armstrong International Airport, was asked, *how much of the city can you experience when you land?* She responded, "the longer you fly the better layovers you get and she can usually see a lot on a longer layover (2-3 days.) Flight staff doesn't actually spend much time in the airport. Everything they experience is in passing with very little time to engage. The same flight attendant explained that changing signs and city advertisements are what she notices most when passing through an airport. She thinks currently, opportunity for information about the city lies in welcome centers. These centers are great opportunities if travelers' intentions are to spend significant time outside of the airport. Creating exhibits and installations that give these travelers a sense of the city's character in the airport help to discover that lost definition of place and create this sense of familiarity with the soul of the city.



This is not to say that there is a complete lack of respect and care now but it is overshadowed by the automatic system in place.

Successful design in collective space, greatly considers how it can improve the health and well being of visitors. “Are there any “restorative spaces” for you to go to briefly? I asked the flight attendant, Are they a practical consideration?” She said there are quiet rooms for staff and chapels in airports she’s been to. As a whole she’s noticed attempts being made to improve experience for all people in the airport.

Airports are high traffic areas that host multiple cultures simultaneously established in a city with its own particular appeal. Their cities are final destinations, brief pauses over the course of a longer journey and the beginning. Airports have the opportunity to showcase who they are and where they are. They can be a reflection of the city’s individuality. Travelers seek a connection and relationship with their environment. A simple way to establish a relationship with a city is through story telling and establishing a sense of place. Allowing visitors to feel they have gone somewhere, that they have arrived and are a part of somewhere beyond mass-produced merchandise and food chains.

As Silverman had mentioned, meaningful experiences are stronger when rendered through human needs. To design for human satisfaction and stimulation it is important to define those human needs. Manfred Max Neef, a Chilean economist of German decent created taxonomy of human development and fundamental needs. He categorized the needs as existential and axiological then organized them into a matrix. He explains: “This allows us to demonstrate

<i>Understanding</i>	13/ Critical conscience, receptiveness, curiosity, astonishment, discipline, intuition, rationality	14/ Literature, teachers, method, educational policies, communication policies
<i>Participation</i>	17/ Adaptability, receptiveness, solidarity, willingness, determination, dedication, respect, passion, sense of humour	18/ Rights, responsibilities, duties, privileges, work
<i>Leisure</i>	21/ Curiosity, receptiveness, imagination, recklessness, sense of humour, tranquility, sensuality	22/ Games, spectacles, clubs, parties, peace of mind
<i>Creation</i>	25/ Passion, determination, intuition, imagination, boldness, rationality, autonomy, inventiveness, curiosity	26/ Abilities, skills, method, work
<i>Identity</i>	29/ Sense of belonging, consistency, differentiation, self- esteem, assertiveness	30/ Symbols, language, religions, habits, customs, reference groups, sexuality, values, norms, historical memory, work

The Golden Age

In addition to comfortable and communal seating on the aircraft, food was a major commodity that spared no expense for excellence. Frequent fliers in the 1960s and 1970s can remember dining during flight was buffet style. Stewardesses set up tables with a whole assortment of food and poured Champagne generously over the duration of the flight.

the interaction of, on the one hand, the needs of Being, Having, Doing and Inter- acting; and, on the other hand, the needs of Subsistence, Protection, Affection, Understanding, Participation, Creation, Leisure, Identity and Freedom. From the classification proposed it follows that, for instance, food and shelter must not be seen as needs, but as satisfiers of the fundamental need for Subsistence. In much the same way, education (either formal or informal), study, investigation, early stimulation and meditation are satisfiers of the need for Understanding.” When talking about creating environments in light of human needs he proposes that one does not only understand what exists to actualize needs but ask oneself what is the environment doing to stimulate opportunities. A few

of these human needs that are affected in the airport environment are Understanding, Participation, Leisure and Identity. To the right of each need are his “satisfiers” that fall under the categories of “Being, Having, Doing and Interacting.” Neef applies this matrix to determine economical gains but these needs and satisfiers can be applied to determine visitor satisfaction as well.

15/ Investigate, study, experiment, educate, analyse, meditate	16/ Settings of formative interaction, schools, universities, academies, groups, communities, family
19/ Become affiliated, co-operate, propose, share, dissent, obey, interact, agree on, express opinions	20/ Settings of participative interaction, parties, associations, churches, communities, neighbourhoods, family
23/ Day-dream, brood, dream, recall old times, give way to fantasies, remember, relax, have fun, play	24/ Privacy, intimacy, spaces of closeness, free time, surroundings, landscapes
27/ Work, invent, build, design, compose, interpret	28/ Productive and feedback settings, workshops, cultural groups, audiences, spaces for expression, temporal freedom
31/ Commit oneself, integrate oneself, confront, decide on, get to know oneself, recognize oneself, actualize oneself, grow	32/ Social rhythms, everyday settings, settings which one belongs to, maturation stages

F1 Neef’s Needs Matrix



One woman recollected in the late 1970s she and her grandmother were served fillet mignon while en route from Reading, PA to Wisconsin. Today if you fly coach, limited food options must be ordered from the steward or stewardess. If the flight is shorter, there often isn't anything available. The portions are small and the food is hardly gourmet.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ARTS AND CULTURE WITHIN SOCIETY

Other research has shown the human need to create, understand and feel a sense of identity is often satisfied through activities that fall under the “Arts and Culture” umbrella. The Arts Council of England did an evidence review to argue the impact arts and culture have on our lives in various ways and contribute to number physical and psychological benefits. “Try to imagine society without the humanizing influence of the arts, and you will have to strip out most of what is pleasurable in life, as well as much that is educationally critical and socially essential...

When we talk about the value of arts and culture, we should always start with the intrinsic – how arts and culture illuminate our inner lives and enrich our emotional world. This is what we cherish.”

This review further explored the impact of arts and culture according to four key themes: Economy, Health and Well-being, Society and Education. It uncovered how engagement with arts and culture has improved cognitive ability in children and young adults and how it has been reported to have positively impacted life satisfaction. It strengthens the argument that arts and culture and therefore design, play a significant role in satisfying human life. The research gathered through this thesis into airport design as inclusive, unique, immersive and creative, could give insight how to balance design and a satisfying visitor experience.

“Try to imagine society without the humanizing influence of the arts, and you will have to strip out most of what is pleasurable in life...”

–Arts Council of England

The Golden Age

Close family and friends used to be a large part of the travel experience during “the golden age.” It was a shared experience with loved ones. It was common to have family and friends wait with you right up until you went through the gate. If you were nervous, scared or sad about leaving, those in whom you found



In the Arts Council's evidence review, they quote a study done about the full range of effects the arts has on public welfare focusing on both intrinsic and instrumental benefits: 'These intrinsic effects enrich individual lives, but they also have a public spillover component in that they cultivate the kinds of citizens desired in a pluralistic society. These are the social bonds created among individuals when they share their arts experiences through reflection and discourse, and the expression of common values and community identity through artworks commemorating events significant to a nation's (or people's) experience.'

The pamphlet "the Art of Life: Understanding how Participating in Arts and Culture can Affect our Values," explains further how **arts and culture benefit people's lifestyle and strengthen their intrinsic values**. The authors present further arguments about how crucial arts and culture are to our core values as human beings. That it is participation and experience of creative spaces that help us feel secure and satisfied. "Arts as cultural practices are some of the most participative, dynamic and social forms of human behavior, are, in our view, integral to this process of transition. The capacity to trigger reflection, generate empathy, create dialogue and foster new ideas and relationships offers a powerful and democratic way of expressing, sharing and shaping values. By helping to create an environment, experience, and state of mind directly conducive to the understanding of others, and through the creation of new ideas, arts and culture challenge the power dynamics of the status quo and provide spaces where anything becomes possible. **They can help us to build new capabilities to imagine and rehearse a different**

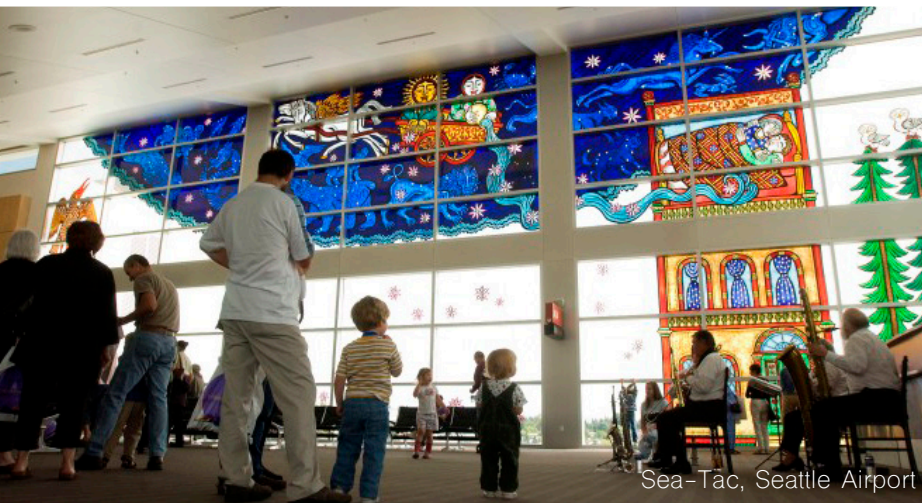


comfort could be with you every step of the way. Watching planes land and take off together left lasting impressions. It is still possible to lose yourself watching airplanes ascend and descend but family must say good-bye before security. The shared experience ends just barely after arrival to the airport. This is due to an increase in precaution since 9/11.

way of being and relating.”

By incorporating artistic design and cultural elements into airports and giving them a stronger presence, visitors feel more inclined to experience them. If this mindset of bringing people closer through art and culture is shaped and applied in a way that connects person to place instead of person to person, the designs in airports will create experiences that can strengthen the connection to its city.

The effectiveness of artistic and cultural spaces is not measured by the amount of facts visitors receive or intellectual conclusions they can draw, but by their emotional responses. Often in airports, travelers are not expecting to learn anything new but to simply experience a common space. Children’s museum professional, Elaine Heumann Gurian believes in the importance of stimulating emotions when experiencing a space. It greatly influences meaning-making. “If we are interested in changing our exhibitions into exhibitions of meaning, we will have to be prepared to include frankly emotional strategies.” Travelers are weary or anxious and more often than not simply tired. This common state places the vast majority of the airport audience in an audience category John Falk and Lynn Dierking refer to as “Rechargers,” people seeking reverential experiences. They don’t seek to learn or contemplate but to be amazed. The ideas presented by Gurian, Falk and Dierking strengthen the particular emphasis of importance on the emotional qualities of an institution like a museum.



Sea-Tac, Seattle Airport

As Neef explained, visitors are very receptive of a creative environment. By designing their travel environment to speak to fundamental human needs through art, expression and culture – things that essentially define our distinct place in society, airports can promote sympathy and provide opportunities for visitors to gain a sense of place. When they feel satisfied or comfortable their overall interpretation of a space significantly improves.

It is human nature to share and talk about what they like. For many businesses word of mouth is the primary way in which they get customers. For something like travel experience, technology creates opportunity through social media. Visitor's love of social media and sharing new and exciting experiences opens up multiple opportunities for promoting an airport and its city.

Cell phones and laptops are so integral in daily life that it is a hard battle to attempt to remove them from the experience. Today's audience's frequent use of social media could be an opportunity. If museums have an active presence in this environment, a creative and unique exhibit could attract millennial attention in a space where they are already engaging new things.



Airports have taken initiative to hire friendlier staff, improve their way-finding method and install unique works of art. There have been a few cases where an airport has constructed an aquarium or has held live music in its space. It seems these airports, whether by reading reports and articles or by conducting evaluations of their own, have realized the importance of incorporating arts and culture into the regular routine of their visitors.

"Cities were always like people, showing their varying personalities to the traveler. Depending on the city and on the traveler, there might begin a mutual love, or dislike, friendship, or enmity. Where one city will rise a certain individual to glory, it will destroy another who is not suited to its personality. Only through travel can we know where we belong or not, where we are loved and where we are rejected."

– Roman Payne, *Cities & Countries*





FIND YOUR GATE

PLACE MAKING

Like many organizations that rely on people to make their operation a success, airports place particular reliance on enticing visitors flying with them. They advertise competitive prices but a part from that they rely on the convenience of their location and the work of the airlines to advertise. If a sense of place is established it will serve as a marketing tool for airports. Place making is important as it creates spaces that people want to come back to and share with others.

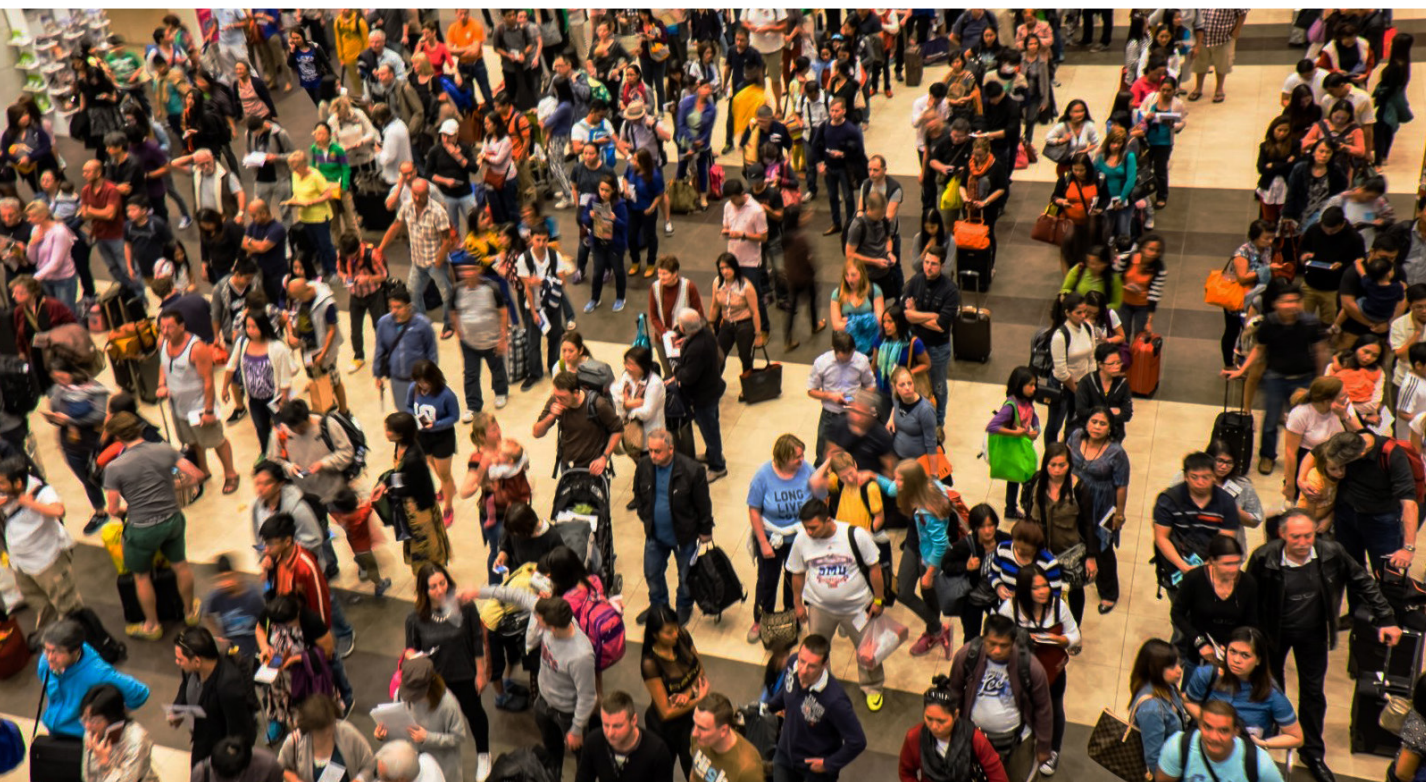
Place making is a method of re-imagining public spaces. With the community at its core, a sense of place is established and the connection between people and the space they share is strengthened. A member of the Project for Public Spaces was quoted saying, “Place making is the art of creating public ‘places of soul’ that uplift and connect to each other.” The process looks closely at unique aspects of the community, what inspires and draws people to it all to create a space that promotes good health and positive well-being. Place-making is a concept primarily associated with larger places like whole towns, neighborhoods or parks. Airports are arguably their own type of city and community. As a vastly populated public place, airports are an integral part of the larger surrounding city or region. They have become a beacon and an icon. Place making will capitalize on everything that makes the city unusual and distinctive and boil down into a meaningful and impactful snap shot.

To apply this method of design to airport spaces, it’s important to think of the airport as a community within a community. The airport audience becomes a community of people visiting a portion of a larger community: the host



city of the airport. The beginning of the place making process starts with the perspectives of visitors and defining their needs. Therefore, gaining feedback from people who spend varying amounts of time in an airport is essential when beginning a spatial design project. When creating exhibits and experiential installations it is important to evaluate the audience. In an environment like the airport, that has large-scale audiences that can spend anywhere from a thirty minute layover to an overnight stay. Iconic moments need to grab the travelers' attentions quickly.

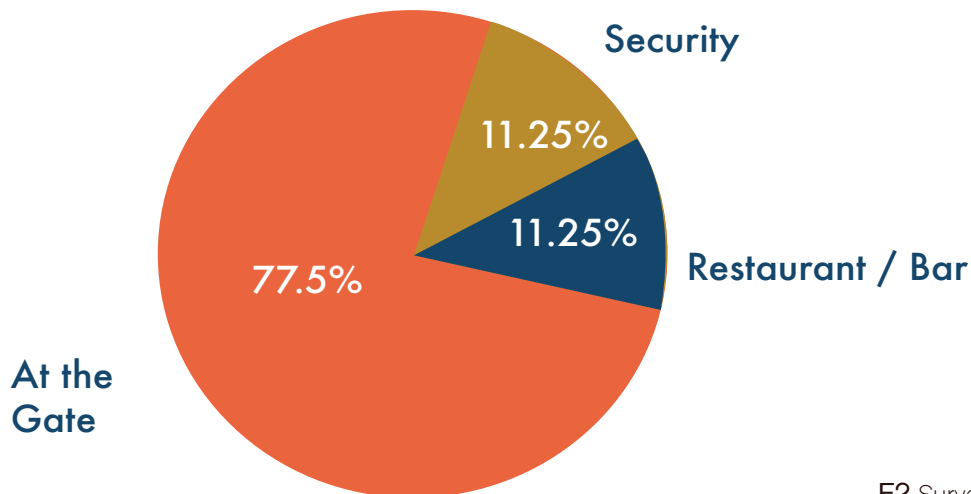
The airport has a vast audience that includes every type of demographic but they all have one thing in common: they just were somewhere, just arrived somewhere else and will be going somewhere else. Defining the audience becomes reliant on their characteristics definitive as an airport traveler as opposed to distinct demographics like ethnicity, gender and home zip code. For example, when designing a space in this context, an architect or artist is much more concerned in the passenger's allotment of time experiencing the exhibit, their familiarity with cultural content and their purposes for being at the airport.



For this project, the most informative way to gather such information was through a public survey. This survey was designed to gain visitor feedback that provided insight into their airport habits, preferences and most memorable moments. It became evident that artistic installations and cultural references were the most effective in impacting their experience. The degree in which the installation was grounded in specific personality traits of the city varied. However, all responders agreed that what ever was implemented transformed their space in an unexpected way and made a lasting impression.

Artistic and cultural elements are the most effective connections to implement into airport space, but where to put them? All visitor paths through the airport are similar. The system has been put in place to make visitor flow predictable and easy to navigate. This makes for fairly consistent linger points to engage with visitors.

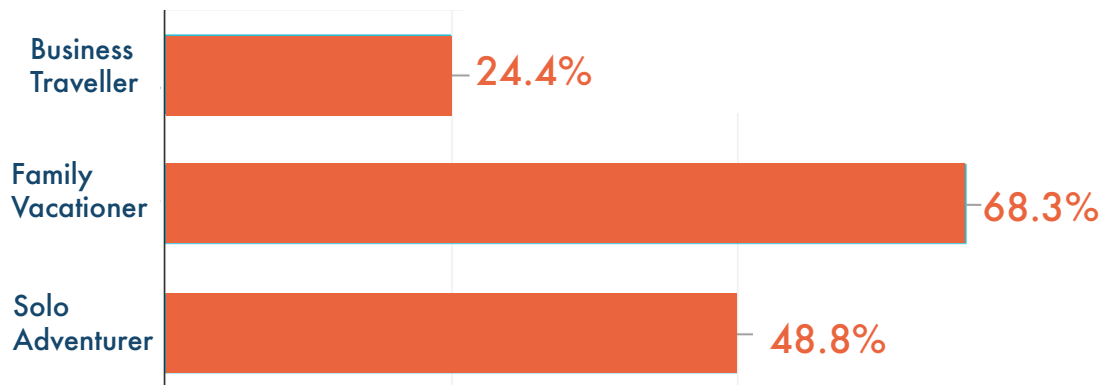
Where did you linger?



F2 Survey result

Based on various responses from travelers and observations done at airports, it can be concluded that the main areas travelers find themselves with spare time are while waiting to go through security, at an eating area, along “people movers” and primarily at the gate. These spaces vary from voluntary resting moments to unavoidable lingering. The unavoidable spaces like check-in, security and people movers offer opportunity for larger atmospheric designs. There are more people occupying this space at one time therefore effective designs should be less individual. In spaces like at the gate or outside the bathrooms the space offers an opportunity for more personalized engagement. This is a chance for narrative applications and interactives. Careful evaluation of opportunity for audience engagement is key to further define an effective airport exhibit.

Would you consider yourself...



To create different possible design applications, it was important to divide the audience into three different personas. Personas bring the audience to a relatable platform. Instead of thinking of the airport passengers as large percentages or generic descriptions personas remind designers that these installations are still for people with personalities. For the purpose of this project, personas were created to embody the business traveler, a family, and the solo adventurer.

Personas, such as these, can be used to guide the design and keep a humanistic approach to the experience. It helps to design with the goal of engaging a specific personality.



Jim
Business Traveller

Key facts

- career focused.
- When traveling he only prefers to surrender 30minutes to an hour.
- In his down time he either reads, grabs a quick coffee or catches up on work emails
- more interested in the economy and statistics than romantic ideas of a location

Goals

- Wants low-stress environment
- Needs an experience that won't take a lot of time to understand and appreciate
- Wants a space where he can rejuvenate

F4-6 Personas for design application



Joan
Family Traveller

Key facts

- Dedicated to giving her kids as many experiences as she can
- Plans extra time in airports to be prepared for anything
- In her down time, she reads or explores the shops
- a child at heart

Goals

- Wants and engaging environment she can experience with her family
- Wants an educational space with new opportunities
- Needs space that allows her to keeps eyes on her kids



Anne
Solo Traveller

Key facts

- currently taking some time off to see the world and write her book on cultural traditions
- budget conscious and looks for the best experience for the lowest price
- she is no stranger to the airport sleepover
- loves a good refreshing story

Goals

- Wants to learn how cities represent themselves
- Wants an educational space with new opportunities
- Needs a place to occupy her attention

There are numerous occasions across the globe where institutions have successfully created an artistic and culture driven design to impact their visitors. **Architecture, fine art, atmospheric light installations and performance** have all created ambiances that resonate with travelers.

Major experiential elements such as the aquarium at Vancouver International, are often experienced at larger airports that can afford to create large experiences for its travelers. Smaller, regional airports don't have the budget to create expensive exhibits. According to Bill Leonard, a member of the board of directors for Harrisburg International Airport/ Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority, larger airports that have multiple flights to many different destinations are large competitors and make it difficult for a small airport like HIA to get travelers to fly through them.

He states, "Customer Service is critical. Our biggest competitors are Philadelphia, Baltimore–Washington, Reagan National (Washington DC) and Dulles. Those airports all offer more flights to more destinations by more carriers than does HIA. We are a regional airport not unlike other airports of similar size throughout the country. Because of the above, competition with larger airports is tough. As a result, we need to do everything we can to attract customers to HIA. We advertise within our region and try to provide on-site perks as much as possible. BUT...everything is controlled by financing and our annual budget. In-house exhibits are primarily advertisements for regional assets within the area – Gettysburg, Lancaster County, Harrisburg State Government, Penn State / Harrisburg, and local companies – Hershey Chocolate, TE Connect (Tyco Electronics), etc. We have an advertising budget and use Clear Channel for in house kiosk displays. The rest is up to the Sales and Marketing staff at the airport. We are constantly challenged by local tourism authorities, who rightfully so, advertise as they best see fit for their company, i.e., Hershey park, Gettysburg / Adams County Tourism, Lancaster County Tourism."

Although, Harrisburg International may not have the budget or resources to construct an actual exhibit or installation they remain acutely aware of what their region offers and use it as a primary source to draw visitors to them.

In addition to advertisements they host opportunity meetings and meet with as many local organizations as possible a year. Although their first priority is customer service and convenience when flying Bill says, "I think it's fair to say we participate where and when it makes sense in order to come up with a good balance of opportunities for cultural institutions, the traveling public and SARAA." The Harrisburg Airport brands itself as "altogether better." Their website's "At the Airport" page immediately tells visitors, "Welcome to HIA, where travelers can enjoy a flying experience that is closer to home in every way." Through this idea of home and their commitment to promoting what their region has to offer, they attempt to help visitors understand where they have arrived and what makes this place unique. Through historical photographs, converted smoking lounges and large observation windows, a core story the airport tells is of its history as a military air base. They may not be able to construct a giant chocolate bar and make the terminal smell like chocolate or create a mock farm field to walk through by the bathrooms but they have begun to tell a story unique to their site.



"As big civic buildings, they're [airports] often used as a way of expressing pride in a state or nation or city,"

*— Richard Gammon,
HOK's global director of
aviation and transportation.*



IMPACTFUL USES OF ARTS AND CULTURE WITHIN AIRPORTS

A positive example of highlighting a city's culture in a simple non-invasive way occurs in Hong Kong's airport. A woman who frequently travels to many different countries and cities spoke about the originality in airports. She told a story about her most recent trip to Hong Kong.

"Immediately after passing through immigration, we were greeted by a beautiful display – getting ready for 2018 Chinese New Year – Feb 15. Symbolic in this picture are two peach trees with pink flowers and the red & gold....year of the dog. There was a line of families waiting to have their picture taken here.....a lot of smiles!"

This example shows how Hong Kong's International airport capitalized on their globally known celebration of their New Year. It draws unique attention to their culture and possibly previews some of the sites and sounds of what visitors could get in the city. Even if a traveler doesn't have the chance to experience the festivals beyond the borders of the airport, Hong Kong's incorporation of the trees and sculpture make enough of an impression that other visitors greatly wanted to photograph themselves with it. This display not only captures visitors' attentions but also creates an atmosphere where they can clearly understand they have arrived in China.



Vancouver has also been known to captivate its audience in the international terminal with its large aquarium positioned along more elegantly crafted sculptures. The aquarium sits below an image titled Orca Chief and Kelp Forest according to the airport's information page about its art installations, "Orca Chief and the Kelp Forest is a collaboration between Haisla artist Lyle Wilson and artist John Nutter. Situated above the enormous aquarium in YVR's International Terminal, the work combines images drawn from ancient myths and cultural traditions of the Haisla people with contemporary Western materials and technology. It tells the story of Orca Chief, ruler of the sea, and demonstrates the Chief's power over its creatures as they swim through a kelp forest toward the viewer." The airport has incorporated living artists to commemorate an important element of the nation's history. Visitors are given a space to rejuvenate and learn about what makes Vancouver and Canada unique. One traveler made a point to speak of beautiful and peaceful moments Vancouver created on escalators for travelers. This brief pause was animated with birds overhead. The traveler reflected, "I remember thinking it was very beautiful and kind of a peaceful moment before rushing down more hallways toward the gates."

The use of arts and culture to impact visitors is not completely removed across the United States. In a survey that asked travelers to describe particular features that were memorable to them, the majority of features fall under an artistic category. Many of the memorable moments also had a strong relationship to the culture of the community or ties to its particular



history. Based on the feedback from various types of travelers three elements to airport interiors were referenced more than anything else: art/installations, lighting and the architecture.

Hong Kong and Vancouver's international terminals chose to create physical installations that encourage interaction and sharing. Other airports have chosen to engage their visitors through other mediums. Philadelphia International Airport is known for its art displays and large-scale installations but apart from those a visitor remembered in baggage claim, there was a game interactive. It involved dropping a ball through different sections and watching various things happen along the way down. It is a unique form of entertainment that makes the frustrating task of waiting for luggage a little more entertaining.

Perhaps the first airport to begin emphasizing arts and culture in their hub; San Francisco International Airport began their own public art program in 1977 provided by the San Francisco Arts Commission. Throughout multiple terminals travelers can see work by local, national and critically acclaimed artists. This program is placed in the airport to reflect the artistic community in San Francisco and the diverse culture in which it resides. Their inclusion of arts and culture doesn't stop at fine artwork. In the International Terminal the airport has converted their space into an architectural adaptation of the airport's 1930s passenger lobby. This space functions as a public aviation museum and library. It acts as a subtle nod to the "golden days" while educating visitors about the development of commercial aviation and how it affects their everyday life.



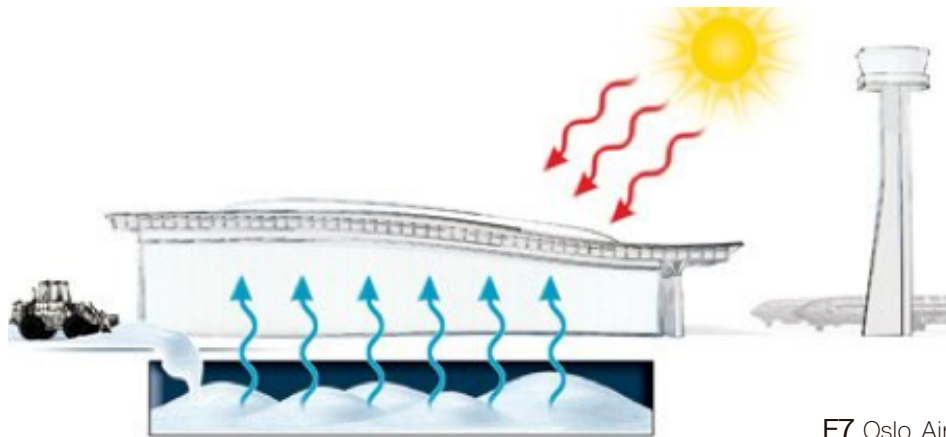
Specific examples given by the participants of the survey include the installations in the Seattle airport. The responder said the environmental graphics on the glass incorporate iridescent/copper images of old growth trees and lumberjacks. They stood out to this traveler because they reminded her of the “epic landscapes and history surrounding the city” when she’s flying in or out.

“Culture” doesn’t have to be represented strictly through paintings or sculpture. National and International airports have chosen to represent themselves through other means. As a music mecca, Nashville has had live music performed throughout their terminals. Evoking southern hospitality and creating a front porch ambiance, Charlotte Douglas International Airport’s (CLT) white rocking chairs became popular in 1997. According to them, “The Airport’s white wooden rocker became popular in 1997, during a photography exhibit at CLT entitled, *Porchsitting*, A Charlotte Regional Family Album. Rockers were placed in the Airport’s tree-lined Atrium to accompany the exhibit and to add the style and comfort of a traditional “southern porch”. The rockers transformed the Airport’s busy Atrium from a fast-paced hub into a tree-lined avenue with a front porch. The unexpected feature became a huge success with passengers and was soon a permanent fixture.” Their hand-made history and restorative purpose these chairs embrace much of what it means to be south in Charlotte, North Carolina.



The majority of arts and culture initiatives airports take are within their interior spaces but the exterior architecture is not to be overlooked. The exterior architecture of an airport is often the first impression of what the experience will be like. According to some travelers, it is the one thing they remember about their experience and it is the part of their travel experience that makes them feel most connected to the city's culture.

Overseas, Oslo's international airport has incorporated culture in a more subtle way. Nordic countries are leading the globe in their sustainability practice. Out of 149 countries included in Sustainable Development Goals Index, they have taken the top four ranks. The Sustainable Development Goals Index evaluates economic development, social inclusion, governance and environmental sustainability. When Oslo Airport expanded in 2017, the Nordic-office of Architecture's designed the building to use snow as a coolant. The design enhanced the passenger experience in additional ways but their creative inclusion of sustainability highlights the regions dedication to sustainability.

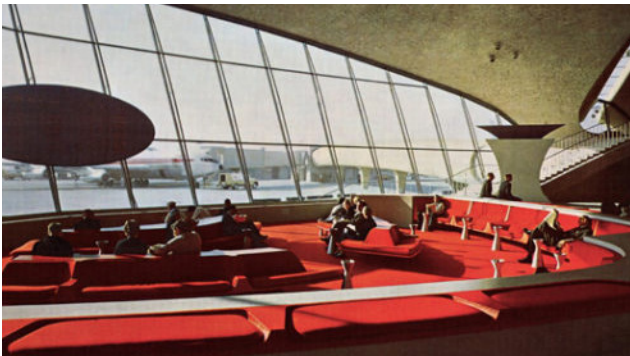


F7 Oslo Airport's cooling system



The United States' notable airport architecture shift began in 1962 with the opening of the Trans World Flight Center at JFK International Airport. TWA flight center was one of the first enclosed passenger terminals. The interior architecture included tube shaped corridors lined with tall windows creating expansive opportunities to view planes landing and taking off, a feature now fairly common within terminals at airports and railroads. The original exterior design by Saarinen included a large wing-shaped shell that references the motion of an airplane taking off. The shell encapsulates the unique interior. Both the unusual interior and exterior were eventually declared a New York Landmark in 1994. It has since been abandoned and will be converted into a hotel.

Since the TWA Flight center notable airport constructions in the United States include hubs like Denver, whose white tent feature is unique to the airport and makes lasting impressions with travelers, and Dulles. Through their architecture, these airports create a sense of place in their travelers. The same influential architect who designed the TWA terminal designed Dulles airport. Similar reflections of a plane taking off are found built within Dulles' architecture making it a staple of Virginia.



There are a few airports that have notable architectural elements of their hub but an argument can be made that airports as a whole aren't known for being beacons of profound architecture. The railroad has a long history of prominent construction of their stations. To learn what makes the architecture of a transportation station successful its important to take a closer look at what railroad stations are doing. In an article written on the present day evolution of railroad stations, the authors states

“What makes these railroad stations especially interesting to me is that, unlike airports, they have outsides that have to mean something, taking on the role of icons and beacons of entry and departure (as well as civic pride), often in the heart of the city.”

For example, the Hague's Centraal station in the Netherlands has a ceiling that allows natural light to come in but has been designed to incorporate a repeating pattern of “X”s. The idea “X marks the spot” implies a number of different things. It becomes an active marker and subtly implies connection, as Aaron Betsky describes in the aforementioned article, it is “a logical element that brings people together and sends them on their way with new vistas and experiences as the architecture continues to unfold and open up around them.”



In addition to tangible additions to airport space, features that are less prominent often impact travelers. Multiple survey responses mentioned unexpected lighting and colorful experiences made their visit memorable.

O'Hare and LAX are two important studies regarding visitor experience through digital means. O'Hare installed artist, Michael Hayden's *Sky's the Limit* in 1987 and since then it has caught and captivated the eyes of millions of travelers. The rippling neon lights connect United Airlines Terminal One with Terminal Two. O'Hare is among the top most memorable airport displays.

LAX has won awards for its new addition to visitor experience. The Integrated Environmental Media System is a series of LED tiles, LCD screens and other multimedia productions that are incorporated into the architecture of the Los Angeles airport's international terminal. IEMS is designed with the enhancement of passenger experience as its core purpose. To accomplish this, the multimedia content focuses on celebrating the best parts of travel while emanating the distinct creative personality that is Los Angeles. In a fact sheet created by LAX they specifically state, this new system is “helping reinforce passengers' sense of place and making the TBIT (Tom Brady International Terminal) experience even more memorable.”



Based on feedback from frequent fliers, aesthetics, be that architecture, lighting or installation, appear to have the greatest impact on the visitor experience. Creating an environment that is visually stimulating and provides new information satisfies these travelers' need for an engaging atmosphere. The artistic transformation of space and story telling of local culture provide interesting opportunities for people to embrace new knowledge about each other. By highlighting unique features that make a location different, design provides a bridge to link history, culture and the present audience together. *The impact on travelers' memories begins to solidify their sense of place and strengthen their connection with each other.*





AND NOW WE WAIT

DEFINE GOALS

These challenges inspire goals that the design applications strive to meet. The global society airports find themselves in has become a hybrid of many different cultures and perspectives. In turn, their physical space has also become muddled – a limbo, an almost purgatory of sorts. It is a struggle for travelers to remain aware of the beautifully unique city or region they're passing through. Airports today are challenged by cultural hybridization, lack of place awareness and an overall monotonous aesthetic.

The mission to combat this dreaded experience and diminish it through humanized arts and culture raises particular design goals.

The goal of these applications is to look at the space in relation to the arguments and over arching concepts explained earlier. Each application considers the general personas designed according to the airport audience. Constructed to illustrate the design method, “Look and Feel,” the assembly of images and key words are meant to evoke the impression of the space, ignite the imagination through a collage of ideas, and begin to form a unique story. The concepts illustrated can be translated to fit other airports: regional, international or any hybrid in-between. Overall, these applications are meant to inspire creative perspectives and not to solve the problem. Each airport has a different legacy and each airport has it's own set of resources.

GOALS

- to re-establish that sense of place
 - Who are we as an airport?
 - What story do we want to tell?
 - If this is the only experience a traveler may have of our city or region, what expression do we want to evoke?
- To highlight artistic expression and unique cultural assets
 - Implement atmospheric design
 - break up the monotony
 - battle the mundane
 - what are we known for?
 - Architecture? Paintings? Crafts? Engineering?
- to take a universal perspective and a globalized world and find the airport's distinct place in it that graciously hosts diverse cultures while proudly illustrating its own



THE PROCESS

To arrive at design applications, the process is formed through a compilation of methods and tools described in the previous sections. Keeping visitor experience at the forefront of each design's mission, various forms of visitor interpretation are developed.

Visitor Experience and Interpretation

cleanliness

wait time

interaction with others

satisfaction with the journey
from taxi to plane cabin

way-finding

meaning-making
place making

designs

story understanding

feelings- relating to displays,
architecture, etc.

what resonates culturally

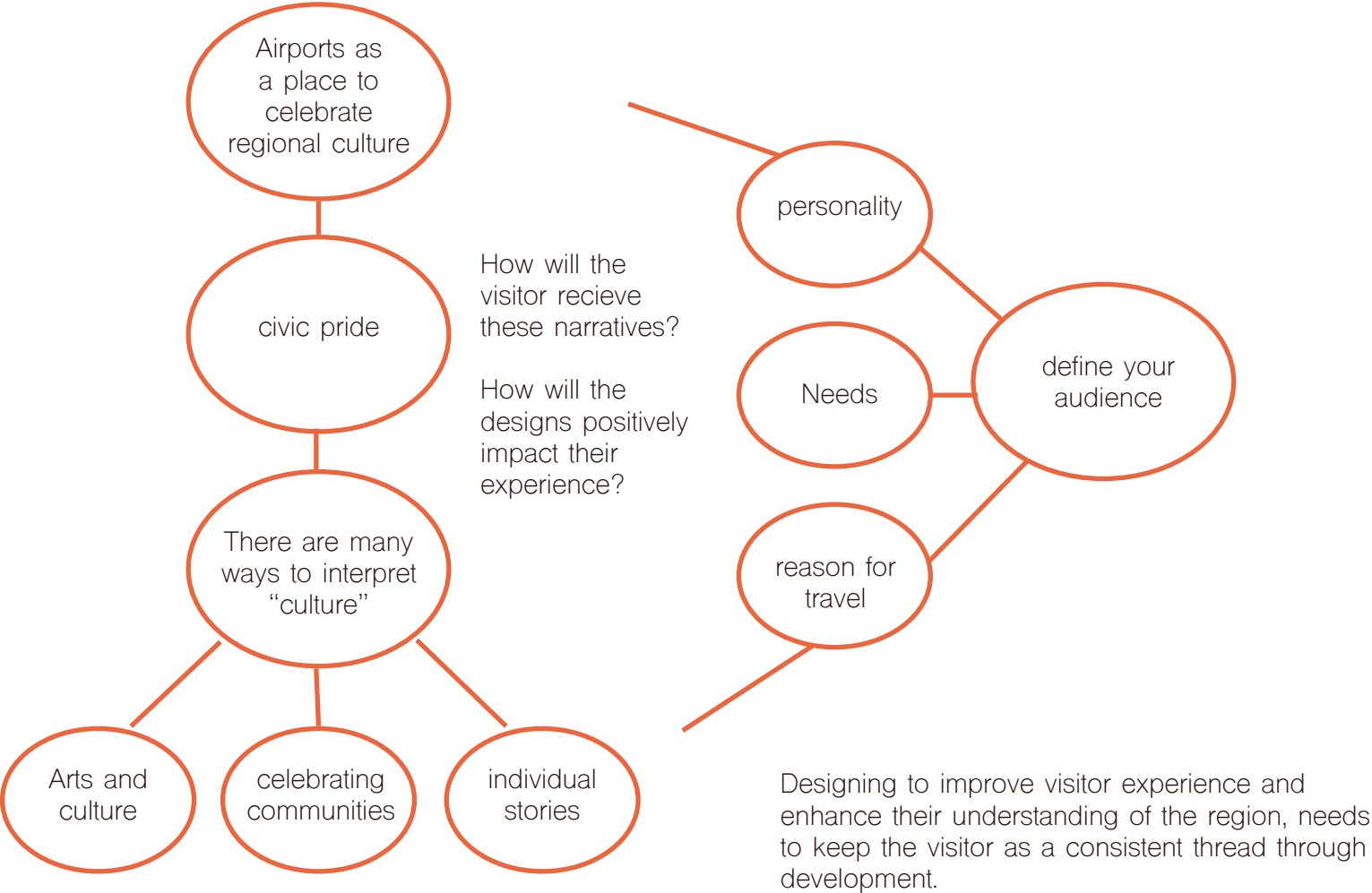
art

Interpretation and visitor experience are not entirely separate. Interpretation influences visitor experience. As a part of the process to design to improve visitor experience, methods of interpretation are entry points.

The previously explained exhibit design strategies, meaning-making and place making, become the bridge that link interpretation and visitor experience.

By considering the philosophies of meaning-making and place making designers can arrive at different interpretation applications that will in turn, begin to help the visitor experience.

Journey Map



A PICTURE'S WORTH 1000 FEELINGS

These design applications use a foundational thought process and concept associations. Through reference photos, atmospheric implications and key concept words, **relationships are formed and stories begin to get illustrated**. These concepts and their visual representations are focused around the regional airport, Harrisburg International Airport. As a regional airport, Harrisburg does not have an extensive customs or immigration center nor do their flights cover extremely large distances. A regional airport's facility is smaller and their crowds stay equally diminished. This poses a potential drawback of the amount of people they can impact as well as the amount of resources they have at their disposal. A regional airport tends to have a smaller budget than international hubs – a fact that pulls priority away from incorporating artistic visitor experience elements. However, a regional airport was used as an example for possible design applications because of its localized territory and approachable audience. Their space offers a more intimate experience.

The Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority (SARAA), which controls Harrisburg International Airport, is looking to expand the facility in the future. Their challenges and priorities are those found among many other airports. One of their current priorities is to uncover a way to attract more travelers. They do not offer direct flights which makes their prices higher than the competing larger airports. However, they offer the convenience of extremely short security lines and pre-flight wait time. According to Bill

Leonard, a member of SARAA's board of directors, the industry standard for pre-flight arrival at the airport for national flights is roughly 2–3 hours, if you are flying internationally it's typically 4–5. If you are flying from HIA, you can arrive for a national flight as soon as 45 minutes before your departure. These conveniences could really impact travelers willing to flying with connecting flights. The airport has much to offer their visitors however, the biggest impact the space has on travelers is the lack of engaging material. White walls and small photographs create a generic atmosphere. For a small regional airport such as HIA, priorities often lie outside of inner aesthetics and spatial design. If the ability to further transform their spaces came into prospect opportunities are abundant and can be executed elegantly on a small budget.



1. HIA's strength and most readily available resources are graphics and wall decoration. This first design example builds upon a thought already in place. A large series of old photographs line the walls leading into HIA's observation deck. This space is a tremendous opportunity to not only engage paying travelers but their companions as well. Unlike many other airports, large windows out to the runways are behind security and available only to fliers. This area would be ideal to animate for passengers and their company therefore, it would be an audience such as "Joan," the mother of two. Joan would greatly enjoy learning the unique historical stories that surround HIA and its region. Bringing these stories to life through, text panels, larger images and pops of color in the space can capture a family's attention and make HIA more relatable. Other possible topics to engage with could be important figures from the region. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the 34th president of the United States and Milton Hershey who established his global enterprise within miles of HIA. Central Pennsylvania is rich with history and art.

This space was ideal to think about as a story telling nook for Joan and her family. It is a contained space where she can easily keep an eye on her children, while she reads the history on the walls. This is a conversation opportunity for Joan to interact with her children – drawing connections between the world outside and the world inside HIA's historic photographs. In addition to Joan, Anne would also benefit from a space activated in this way. She flies on a budget and more often than not has long layovers; a space that allows for longer allotted time, would keep her interest and help her actively pass the time. If it's the serenity of watching planes take off and touch down or the ability to learn new stories about the airports history, her desire for new knowledge of tradition and unique stories could be satisfied in this space.

HIA's World War history is rich with construction, mechanical and innovative strides. Combining historical stories with modern architecture and artists with a shared mentality, convey this story in a new and relatable way. It bridges the past to the present. If Kéré's installation, (or an activity of similar concept) were to be placed in the same room as HIA's historical photographs, visitors, while witnessing snap shots of the past, can actively part-take in the construction of today.



Joan
Family Traveller

Key facts

- Dedicated to giving her kids as many experiences as she can
- Plans extra time in airports to be prepared for anything
- In her down time, she reads or explores the shops
- a child at heart

Goals

- Wants an engaging environment she can experience with her family
- Wants an educational space with new opportunities
- Needs space that allows her to keep eyes on her kids

- Elementary School Teacher
- 43 years old
- Mom of 2 ages 14 and 10
- Travels once a year



construction
maintenance
physicality
engagement with
the past and present
connected



HIA as the Middletown Airport Depot, had warehouses built for airplane maintenance during WWII. (top) Woman played a large part in maintaining aircraft in Harrisburg during the war. (bottom)

(center) German architect, Kéré's, installation encourages visitors of the art gallery to engage with the space he created. They take part in developing how the space transitions and evolves by placing straws in his structure. Much of Kere's work is founded in a convergence of African and European Architecture.

2. This application focuses on aesthetic and atmospheric design. It was inspired by HIA's lobby/security space. This space is one of the main entrances passengers and their company often passes through. Because this is a more heavily trafficked area, exhibits or installations that require more attention and intimacy aren't always the most successful. What makes this space unique is its openness. This space hosts a lot of natural light through large windows on the upper level. Based on visitor research, color and light are also impactful ways to captivate attention. This area of any airport, regional or large and international, is where all passengers are held against their will. This is the space most of the discomfort occurs. Most visitors are primarily concerned with taking off their shoes and surrendering their devices that activating this space with something that needs intellectual capacity beyond placing one foot in front of the other would only add to the aggravation. Jim, is a persona that likes to get down to business. He flies multiple times a year and has a concrete routine for navigating these occasions. Still, it's that monotony that could benefit from an unexpected change in atmosphere. Jim is fully dedicated to his career. Creating a space that for a moment can make him forget about reports and finances and deadlines could lighten his mood. People remember rejuvenating spaces like that.

Applying transparencies to the windows or thin undulating sheets of fabric that allow light to pass through could transform this space. An alternate and whimsical atmosphere speaks to romantic childhood fantasies reminiscent of Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Being close in location to Pennsylvania's very own chocolate factory, animating this space

in this fashion keeps true to local culture while creating a whole new experience for those anxiously waiting to make it through security.

Although the primary inspiration for this space is a business traveler like Jim, this space is not limited to appreciation from just that segment. All ages and all perspectives can experience color and light and value that transformation.





Jim
Business Traveller

Key facts

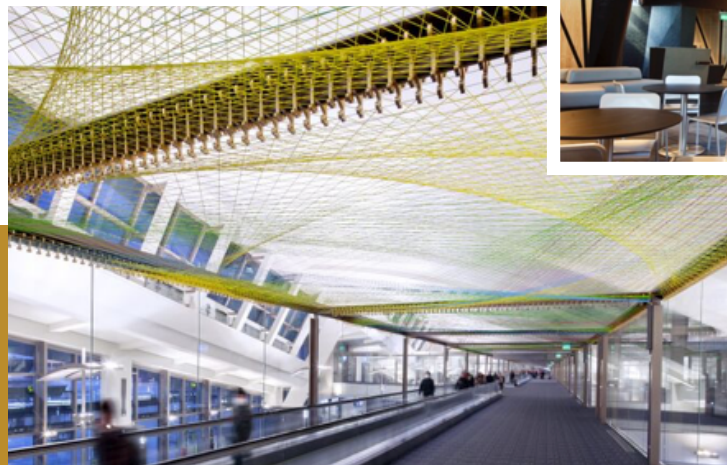
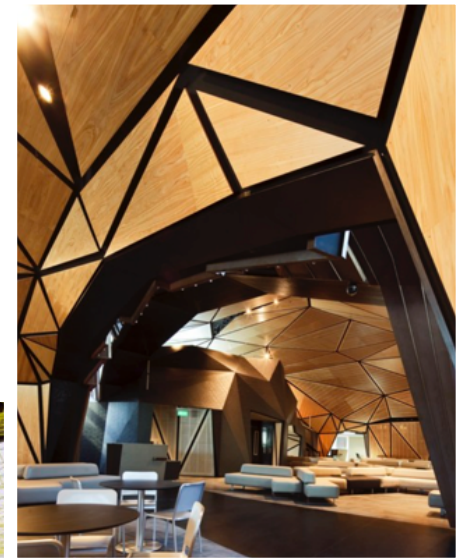
- career focused.
- When traveling he only prefers to surrender 30minutes to an hour.
- In his down time he either reads, grabs a quick coffee or catches up on work emails
- more interested in the economy and statistics than romantic ideas of a location

Goals

- Wants low-stress environment
- Needs an experience that won't take a lot of time to understand and appreciate
- Wants a space where he can rejuvenate



atmosphere
whimsy
story telling
shared experience
architecture
childhood
levity



3. The third persona developed to exemplify a segment of the airport audience, Anne, inspired the design of HIA's third "smoking lounge." Back when smoking was allowed in public spaces, HIA had three small rooms within its terminals. They have recently begun to redevelop them. The space is small but it's secluded. This space could serve as a place to interact without interfering with people outside the room. There are many practices unique to the central Pennsylvanian culture that could be explained and tried here. Central Pennsylvania is known for its Amish and German heritage. The lifestyle is slower and simpler but nonetheless the story of central Pennsylvania heritage could be a story of **sturdiness, hard work, creation and perseverance**. A changing "gallery" would add extra tasks for a development staff but it would also add something new for passengers who frequently travel through HIA. Transforming a small space to an immersion into one of the region's prominent and unique cultures could meet the needs of travelers on a basic level.

Panels and screens could explain the historical context; provide first-hand accounts and opportunities if passengers chose to try their own hand. Exhibiting different local craftsman strengthens the sense of community and creates a home-like environment. **The story of work, legacy and analog approach to life, is part of Central Pennsylvania foundations but it is also a story that anyone from anywhere can relate to.** For

a traveler like Anne, a space that feels like a complete cultural immersion would provide new insight into local life-styles. This space while providing a displacement from the hustle of traveling confirms a placement within the surrounding culture that is central Pennsylvania.



Anne
Solo Traveller

Key facts

- Recent college graduate (Photo-journalism)
- 22 years old
- Single
- Travels about 3 times a year

Goals

- currently taking some time off to see the world and write her book on cultural traditions
- budget conscious and looks for the best experience for the lowest price
- she is no stranger to the airport sleepover
- loves a good refreshing story
- Wants to learn how cities represent themselves
- Wants an educational space with new opportunities
- Needs a place to occupy her attention



humanity
work
legacy
industry
perseverance
analog





DEPARTURE

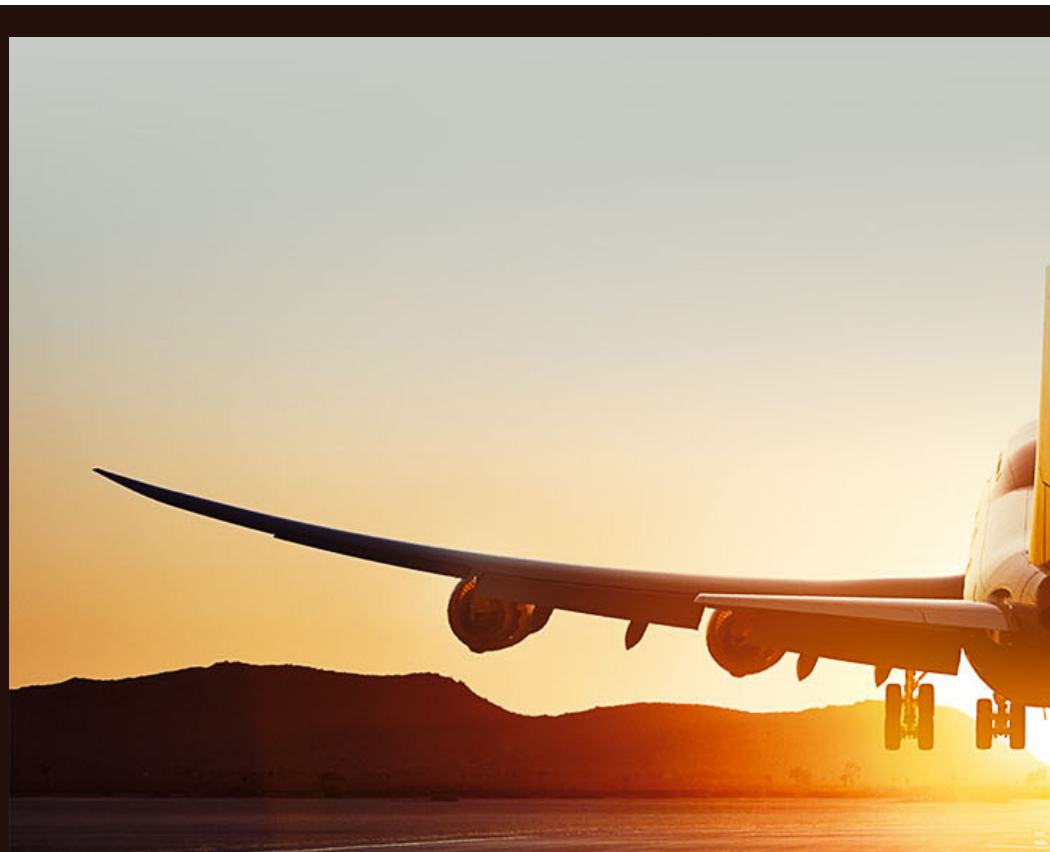
CONCLUSIONS - MOVING FORWARD

Incorporating “arts and culture” is not limited to fine art or large-scale installations. It can be the telling of regional stories, the conveying of character and quirks or access to spaces of extraordinary architecture. The displays and installations can tell global and regional stories. What fills one region with pride and excitement may be a characteristic relatable to another culture. Globalization doesn’t remove all distinction, like a painting or musical composition, it can be the convergence of individual elements to create a cohesive product. Every note, every color, every culture, every story – beautiful on it’s own while expressing a part of a larger picture.

Based on the survey results, most people tend to identify as a family vacationer or solo adventurer, this implies an awareness of space from a learner’s point of view. Most family vacationers seem to fly only about once or twice a year. In an extremely digitally engaged society, when traveling through an airport, visitors gravitate towards experiences that include some level of physicality. Given the option, travelers would rather not engage with a screen in an exhibit experience atmosphere. Their unfamiliarity with airport spaces creates a need for even greater impact and cultural representation.

Giving travelers access to the heart of the facility engages them on intellectual, emotional and

physical levels. Arts and culture are the epitome of individuality; celebrating that and giving it a voice in a space often barren of distinction will improve visitor experience and strengthen their sense of place. These two aspects of who we are as a community help bind and remind us that we all have stories to tell we’re all just human. That familiarity creates comfort and comfort leads to calming. They are a small step towards relieving anxiety and displacement that has been infiltrating airports for years.



Although a goal of this project is to promote looking up from cell phones and engaging with the environment, an intriguing **design challenge** proposed is to use this technology to enhance instead of detract when experiencing the airport.

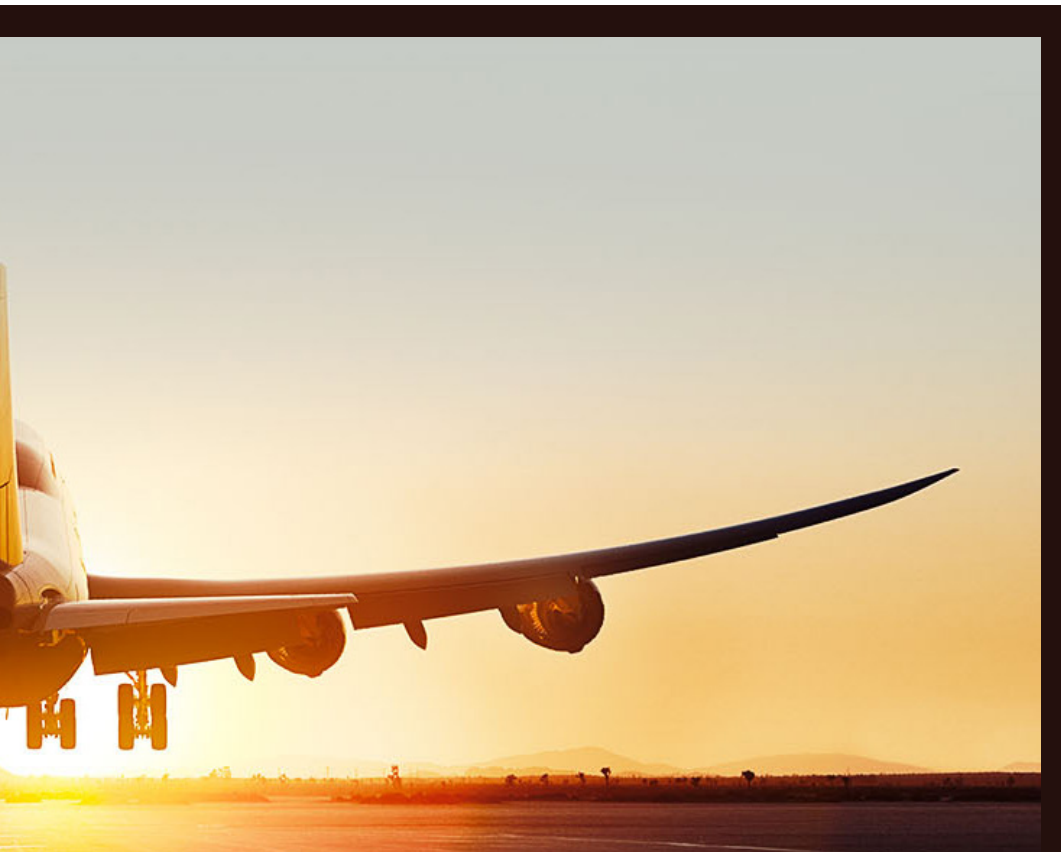
Further **design exploration**, would include exhibiting and interpreting various definitions of “arts and culture” and how they are incorporated into society. The current applications in this project are artistically and architecturally based. Their stories include global topics with regional examples of implementation. Given more time and opportunity, it would be beneficial to explore travelers’ reactions to these relationships.

This project has established an argument for the importance of celebrating individuality as it pertains to the single regional culture of an airport while still resonating with individuals regardless of where they’re from. Moving forward **other questions** arise :

Is there an opportunity to exhibit relational stories of other regions?

Cultures are wonderfully different but there are similar stories among them. *How would those relationships be featured in the airport?*

Can we promote and combat globalization by celebrating each other’s differences or highlighting the values we share?



APPENDIX

SURVEY INSTRUMENT ENGAGING ARTS AND CULTURE IN AIRPORTS

1. What is your age?

- <17
- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50>

2. How do you identify?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer Not To Say
- Other _____

THINK OF THE LAST TIME YOU TRAVELED . . .

3. What was the reason for your trip?

- a solo business trip
- a solo trip
- vacation with friends
- vacation with colleagues
- family escapade

4. Would you consider yourself . . . (check all that apply)

- A business traveler
- family vacationer
- individual adventurer

5. How much time would you feel comfortable wasting while waiting for a flight?

your answer

6. Where did you linger?

- before security
- at the gate
- other _____

7. How frequently do you travel by airplane?

your answer

8. What do you tend to do in your spare time at the airport?

(check all that apply)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| read | grab a quick snack/coffee |
| wander | hang out at the bar/restaurant |
| look at exhibits/installations | other _____ |
| work | |
| watch a movie on your device | |
| work | |

9. What exhibit or feature in an airport has stood out to you the most? why?

your answer

10. What airport do you remember? Why?

your answer

11. Based on your experience at the airport, did you learn about the city? What did you learn?

your answer

12 What makes you feel truly connected to a city or region? is it the people? the food? the architecture? etc. tell me a story.

your answer

13. Would you engage with a physical exhibit?

no 1 2 3 4 5 Absolutely

14. Would you engage with something in the gate area?

no 1 2 3 4 5 Absolutely

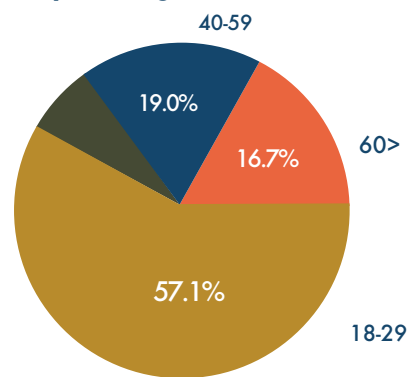
15. Would you engage with a digital installation or application?

no 1 2 3 4 5 Absolutely

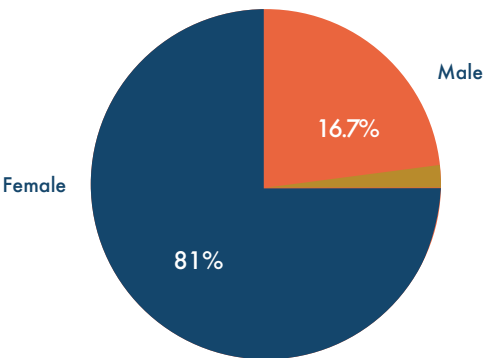


Survey Results

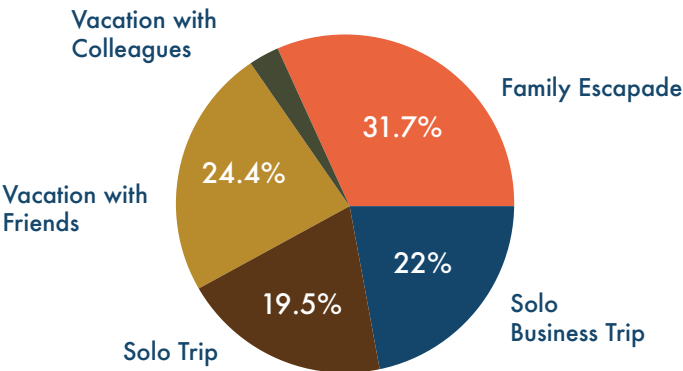
1. What is your age?



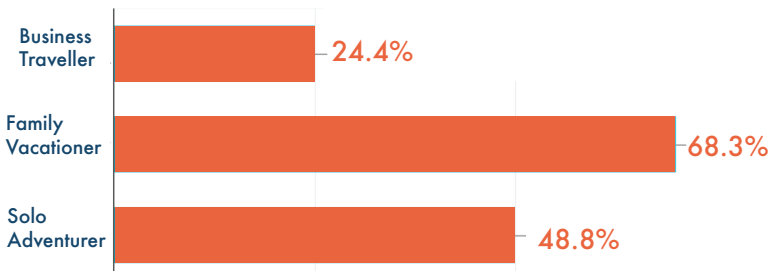
2. How do you identify?



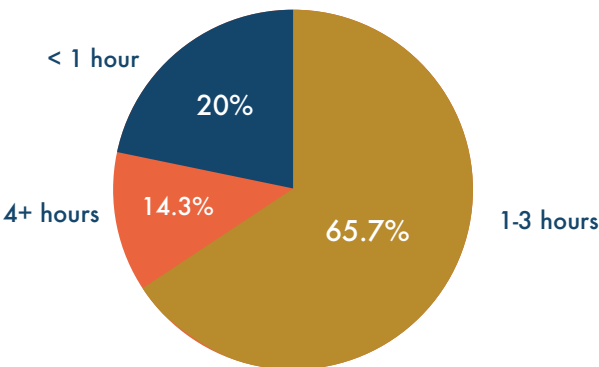
3. What was the reason for your trip?



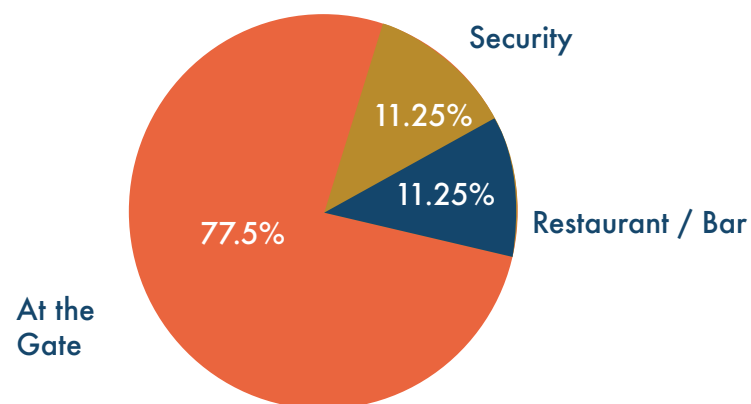
4. Would you consider yourself...



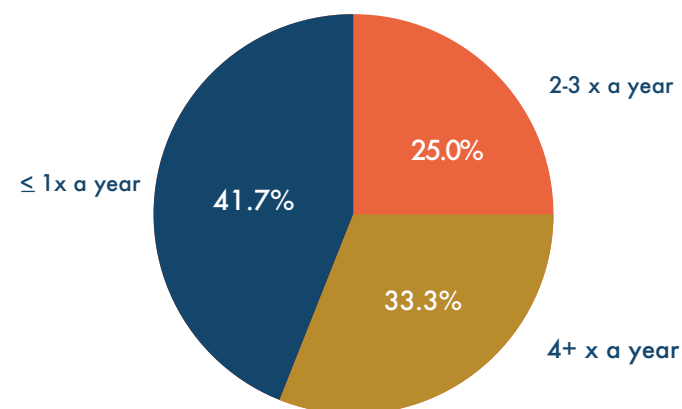
5. How much time do you feel comfortable wasting?



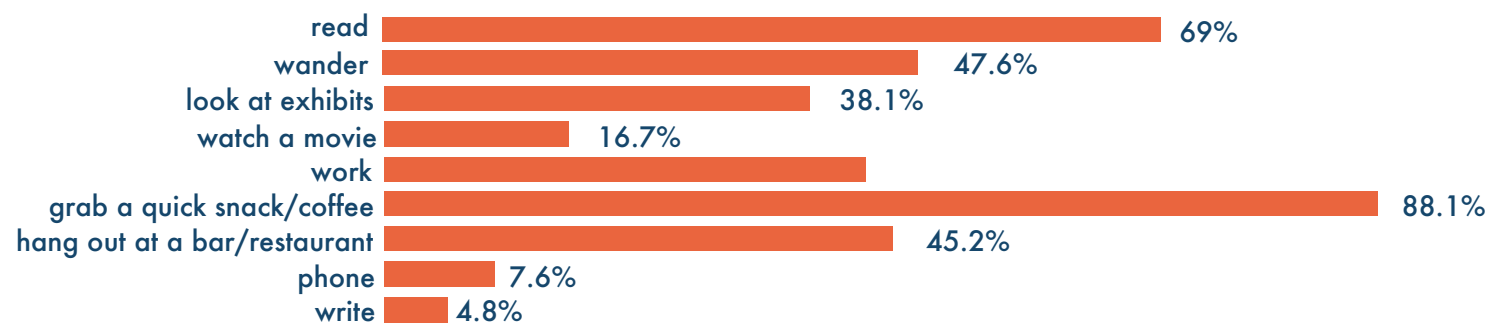
6. Where did you linger?



7. How frequently do you travel by airplane?



8. What do you tend to do in your spare time?



9. What feature or exhibit in an airport has stood out to you the most? why?

Information about the airports locale.

I think it was the Vancouver Airport that had lots of birds overhead as you were going down the escalators. I remember thinking it was very beautiful and kind of a **peaceful moment** before rushing down more hallways toward the gates.

Things with moving parts or lights. They catch the eye more and are a little more exciting. A good example is the moving statue in Boston airport (I think, or Manchester) and the lighted tunnel in Chicago.

Usually large sculptures because of their size and presence
seating- its terrible

I really don't pay much attention to anything but where I have to be, etc.

Nature exhibit with live turtles in Madrid

Tech centers

Musician playing guitar

The Philadelphia airport has one where a ball drops and it goes through a series of sections that make noise and other fun things and the cycle keeps repeating. This one was by the baggage pick-up and it made having to wait for a while for my stuff way more entertaining.

The like changing light color with music in the New Orleans airport. Because it is really cool

The ceiling in the Madrid airport because it was very colorful and different.

Art and visuals while walking through terminals

the seats... whether they look new or old, comfortable or not

Art exhibits and local history

changing lights displays

The installations along the escalators in the Seattle airport.

They're glass environmental graphics that incorporate i
ridescent / copper images of old growth trees and
lumberjacks. They stand out in my mind because
of the number of times I've seen them and because
**they remind me of the epic landscapes and
history surrounding the city I'm flying in or out of.**

Hartford Bradley's light exhibit, where your shadows scatter
tiny particles that make up the Traveler's insurance
umbrella logo, is most memorable because you
always scatter it when you walk down the only main
hallway (forced to interact with it and notice it), and it
is my hometown airport, so the installation delighted
me as a kid.

an exhibit of polar bears

Photographs by Bard College community (students? Faculty?)
in a hallway in the Sky Club (Delta Airlines) at JFK. Lovely
pix of interesting places. Probably would not have noticed
except for personal connection with Bard.

Blue glass crab, because it was a giant crab made of glass
Newark airport (New Jersey) has such a good wayfinding
and full of staff that help you to find your way around.

I think the windows that allow you to see the planes while
waiting at the gate

Installations because they are most likely to draw people in
Chicago O'Hare, the light-up ceiling when moving between
terminals

lego Mark Twain house at Bradley International Airport, pretty
views from the windows of planes taking off at sunset
and sunrise

Philly- the first time I was ever here I was flying in to nail
down a spot to live. It was a very important point

9. What feature or exhibit in an airport has stood out to you the most? why? (cont)

in my life and I remember the exhibits on past political conventions in the city. (It was during the Democratic National Convention in Philly.) Thought it was pretty cool.

10. What airport do you remember? why?

The Anchorage airport had some beautiful artwork – Native Alaskan carvings and local cultural art. Seattle's airport has a spectacular view. One of Chicago's airports has a wonderful mobile of flying birds. I always enjoy murals showing local scenes

I am most familiar with the XNA airport in Northwest Arkansas because it is the one in my hometown, so I use it the most.

I haven't been to many, but I think the architecture of an airport helps you to remember which one is which.

I remember the Newark, NJ airport because it is so close to many of the attractions in Northern Jersey. e.i. Ikea, the Meadowlands, Giant shipping yards for imported/exported cars, and another airport Teeterboro.

Denver– very modern , fastest luggage arrival in the country !!

Iceland – very modern and clean

Philly airport, I was there for 15 hours.

Stockholm Arlanda for its deep wood themed gates

Tampa, because we had a delay in departure

Baltimore. Traveled from here the most

Philly. I've been in it the most.

O'Hare

The Philadelphia airport and the Fort Lauderdale Airport. Both bc that's the usual trip I take to go see my mom.

Another airport that stands out in my mind is the London Heathrow Airport. I remember it being very open and having great food and it was just beautiful.

The New Orleans airport because of the light installation
Madrid airport because it was the first airport I had been to outside of the US and the ceiling there stood out to me because of how colorful it was.

London Heathrow

Philadelphia because I change planes there most frequently
Newark, the closest, most often used

Sea-Tac, because of how I described above. ATL, because of riding the airbus and the art installations there (they're on the ceiling as you ride the escalator.) Vancouver, because they have an incredible massive stone sculpture you can walk around– full of animal-people – which has to do with Native American mythology.

Philadelphia– I fly out of it often

Raleigh/Durham had beautiful architecture and wooden beams, but I also can never forget Las Vegas because it had slot machines everywhere.

Orlando because happy place with all the people coming to visit Disney

10. What airport do you remember? why? (cont)

Chicago OHare

Remember many airports for different reasons. Will say De Gaulle in Paris when it was new in the 1970s, for its wonderful architectural design. Now it is a hell hole. I also remember taking a very long exercise walk at Salt Lake City during a particularly long layover. The layout of the airport was a convenient "spokes of a wheel" so you always came back to the center after walking down to the end of the spoke and back, which made it easy to get back to waiting husband and child.

BWI, its got a cool crab

Denver/ tent like

I remember Paris Beauvais Airport because the staff is not helpful at all and they barely talk english so is hard if you go for the first time and you don't know how works.

Chicago because I got stuck there over night and I cried.

Hawaii because it is different than what I'm used to

Indianapolis Airport, because they had race cars on display and it struck me as being such a clear declaration of their identity by showcasing these items

11. Based on your experience at the airport, did you learn about the city? what did you learn?

XNA is in my hometown, so I already knew everything about it, but if I didn't I would still know I had entered Razorback country because of all the sports paraphernalia in one of the cases.

Not really.

I never really learned about the city of the airport I was in

I learned about trade and the cuisine of other cultures.

Discount lyft or Uber

friendly, welcoming, quite modern emphasis

Nothing too much

No, nada.

Nothing stood out

No

Not as many travelers as I would have thought.

I think the airport reflect the city a bit. The Fort Lauderdale one feel very beachy, there's murals of the ocean and all the colors are very tropical pastel.

I learned that music was a big part of that city

I didn't really learn about the city when I have been in any airports.

N/a

yup a bit. the airport displays the culture and city attributes

Already know about the city but the have a passageway with the posters from all the movies filmed in the city – lots!

no

Usually I get more of a sense of the iconic parts of that place's history and culture, or a general sense of how that place might self-identify.

No

Sometimes the art or exhibits are relevant to the city, but I don't usually spend time engaging with them to learn anything significant. Exhibits I remember have been artful, not informational. Ads tell a lot about a city, though.

About things to see

because I missed my plane and had to stay overnight

Cannot think of anytime this happened because of what was specifically in the airport. The feeling you get from the airport comes from how it is different from the place you are coming from, some of it the people, some of it commercial, some of it the temperature. Sometimes you don't have any sense of learning about the city until you are outside and on your way.

I certainly did! Madrid Barajas Airport has all the amenities connected with the culture of the country so you will still feeling the experience even when you are leaving.

i learn the most about the city in the shops and what kind of items they sell.

The tropical vegetation and nature

I didn't really learn anything more than I already knew, but I also didn't stop to read anything

Not really, not that anything I can remember now at least, I haven't flown in a couple of years

I learned about past conventions.

12. What makes you feel truly connected to a city or region?

if they're [people, food, architecture] unique to the region and appealing. Novel food probably makes the most intense connection as it's such a visceral experience. And architecture that is different from home creates a heightened sense of being in a different place (space). I like it when an airport conveys that feeling – as when I land at St. Thomas and disembark to an airport that is open to the outdoors, built in the same materials as the local residences. The vacation begins when I hit the airport!

I think it is the **shared experiences** that a city offers. I can be traveling all alone but if there is a sight that takes everyone's breath away, or something happens that makes me make eye contact with a random stranger and smile or laugh with them, that's when I feel the life of a city. This can be caused by the view from a skyscraper, a juggler in a park, a trip to the local icon, etc.

Probably food the most, assuming I eat it and not something I'm more familiar with. Food really shows culture of an area.

It's the people and the food, the smells, the culture. Observing how people live differently and the same as you.

Food, climate/horticulture, and industry are the most defining factors in a city's geography.

People– love meeting people in the airport – and hearing their **stories and adventures**

Both food and architecture, which then often give me a sense of the people. As a tourist, I like to engage with people, but it is often difficult to interact with everyday people in a way that feels genuine. I usually try to go to museums and architectural sites and learn a lot about the local culture in that way.

Food and architecture: it's interactive and allows you to continually learn about a place. Plus people watching and talking is pretty entertaining.

Architecture in my opinion is the great connector to a region or city's culture. Architecture is created for a city or town by people with visions for a particular place. The way a building or structure is constructed architecturally can represent what the people want to see or use. When looking at beautiful cathedrals in cities around the world, I notice that each cathedral has different aspects that are most pronounced. Some cathedrals have elaborate paintings and light filled corridors while others have intricate carvings throughout their pews. It all connects me more personally to the story the creators wanted to express in their structures.

The food and the excitement to see new things

Walking around it mainly

I think feeling connected to the Philadelphia/Suburban Eastern PA area has a lot to do with the sports culture in the region. In many places sports are a superfluous thing but Philly brings sports together with the community. Many current and former athletes are directly involved with music, sports and arts within the community especially working with children. I think that makes me feel very connected as sports have always been a big part of my life and as a male I've never felt comfortable admitting that music and arts are something more than athletics and with the way the Philly area brings all of together it's comforting.

When I travel I like to eat local, go to where the locals go and get out of my comfort zone. I'm from Colombia but I had never been to Medellin in my life and I took my girlfriend this past summer. We spent some time in the city and for three days we went to a natural reserve

where we ate only local and went on a crazy hike up a mountain, then had to go through a cave with flowing water and complete darkness to finally come out by a waterfall. It was wild and I was definitely out of my comfort zone since I don't know how to swim very well. I felt more connected to my home country even though at this point I've lived in the US longer.

I feel like it is the people the architecture and the food that really bring out the essence of the city.

The history, culture, and architecture are all things that help me to connect to a city or region. I love history so that is something important to me to learn about and I feel that also leads into culture and architecture. For me one of the trips I have gone on that has really stuck with me and has connected me to a city and region is when I travelled to Spain. When I was there I got to learn the history of the city, region, and country while getting to experience the culture through visiting different locations that connected with the history and the many different types of architecture that are throughout the cities I visited.

The food and architecture – cultural experiences

architecture, food, anything that pronounces the city's uniqueness

The people, food and architecture all connected for me. When I have time I like to find local food, see some of the significant/historical buildings or museums but also like to drive through neighborhoods to get a sense of the place. On visiting (early 2000's) Natchez Mississippi for business I was lucky enough to be there when they had a self-guided tour of ante-Bellum houses – some no private residences, B&Bs and museums. This when combined with local food, walking the main street and a getting oriented in a visitor center made for a nice sense of the area.

The architecture, **the services in the city** like recycling and public transit, the landscapes / public parks, and the public art and street art or lack thereof. The first time I traveled to Philadelphia a year ago there was a blizzard so I was very focused on the ground as I walked. I was struck by the combination of trash and grime, and old classy marble steps and brickwork.

The architecture and the scenery

The landscape architecture is pretty important. I.e. enough green spaces, and innovative art installations or public transportation options.

To a degree, finding people like me and vegetarian restaurant options also connect me to a city. By the way, I only wouldn't engage in physical exhibits readily for fear of all the airport germs. Staying around long enough to take a walk, not just "see sights" or go to a museum.

I think the food and architecture are the most significant features to me since both are ways of expression and have been changing along with the history.

The food makes me feel connected to a city.

I feel truly connected to a region after being there for a couple days and finding myself used to the new elements around me such as food, time, weather

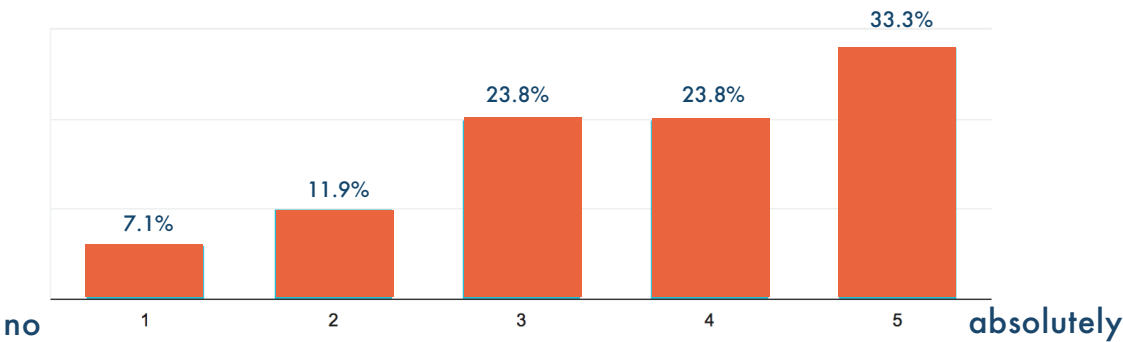
I usually feel most connected because of the food and the architecture – being immersed in the actual culture and not the tourist spots. I also feel really connected by the natural world and like to get out to nature preserves, parks, wildlife preserves, etc. (not so much zoos/aquariums, but wildlife rehabilitation centers and the like). I have a hard time being brave enough to interact with people at

say, a bar or cafe, if I'm by myself, but the experiences I have had interacting with locals – when I've been with people I already know – also has been very rewarding.

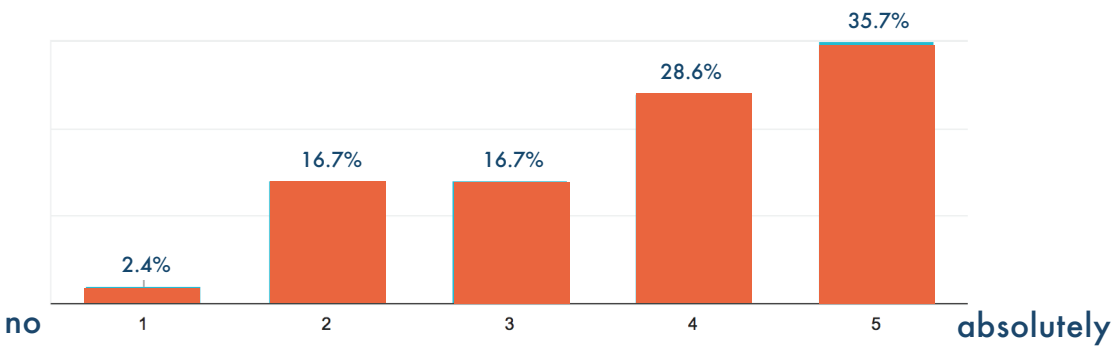
The architecture and parks, seeing locals living their lives in that setting, hanging out in local cafes and eateries, exploring, going to museums

I think **it's the sum of its parts**—multiple aspects that do or don't come together.

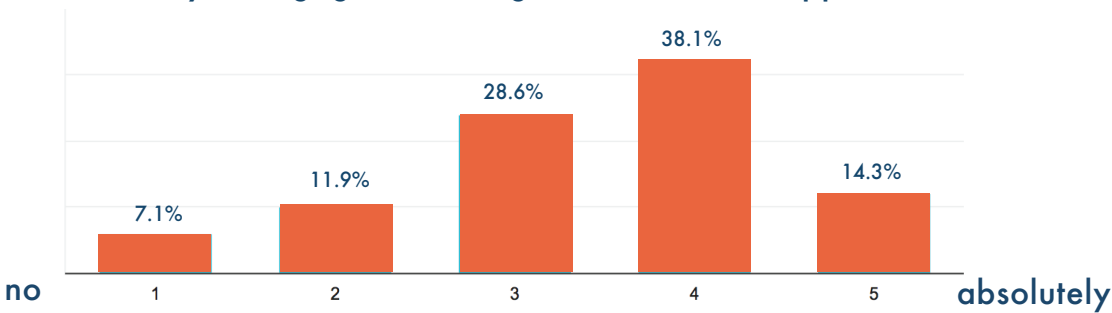
13. Would you engage with a physical exhibit?



14. Would you engage with something in the gate area?



15. Would you engage with a digital installation / application?



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“ I just want to bring the world together. Togetherness is what I want for this planet.”