Exhibition Catalog Project

As a curator, you have the following information needs:

1. background: information on artists, designers, or artistic movements
2. exhibits: high-quality reproductions of your chosen artworks or design objects
3. arguments: commentary or criticisms by experts (artists, art historians, curators, critics)
4. methods: look to examples on how to build an exhibition catalog and how to cite your sources

Background Information

You will need biographical information about the artists or designers included in your exhibition. For authoritative background information, try our digital encyclopedias: Oxford Art Online and the Bloomsbury Design Library.

➡ https://libguides.cca.edu/oxford-art-online
➡ https://libguides.cca.edu/bloomsbury-design

Eva Zeisel

Oxford Art Online's entry on Eva Zeisel provides an overview on her career. The entry opens with “Hungarian ceramicist, designer, and teacher. Zeisel began her career studying painting at the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest and, after a short tenure at the Academy, began an apprenticeship with a traditional potter.” For my exhibition catalog, I should adapt this information using my own words to avoid plagiarism.

Hungarian-born ceramicist and designer Eva Zeisel initially studied painting as a student at the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts, but her career took a different path after apprenticing with a traditional potter.

Joe Colombo

Artstor provided both the image and the information for my caption about Colombo’s tube chair.

SIT ON THIS!
The Chair: Art or Object? Modernist Furniture Design, 1940-1969

Gaetano Pesce, UP5 chair and UP6 ottoman, designed 1969, manufactured 2000, stretch fabric covered foam with plastic or rubber tether, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN.


Arguments

Your exhibition catalog will be stronger if you include the expert testimony of art historians, critics, curators, and artists. Search Art & Architecture Source for online journal articles to quote or summarize relating to the artists or designers in your exhibition.

➡️ https://libguides.cca.edu/art-source

Methods

The best way to learn how to craft an exhibition catalog is to look at examples. We have over 2,000 in Meyer Library alone. Use this magic trick to find exhibition catalogs that relate to your topic.

➡️ Go to libraries.cca.edu
➡️ Type (SubjectTerms:(exhibition catalog)) AND into the search field
➡️ Add any relevant keywords that relate to your subject. For example:

(SubjectTerms:(exhibition catalog)) AND modernist furniture

Citations

Cite all information sources through captions or footnotes. For examples of Chicago Manual of Style citations, see the CCA Libraries Guide to Citing Sources. Note that all captions in this handout are in CMS.

➡️ https://libguides.cca.edu/citations

Gaetano Pesce

Art & Architecture Source contains an article on Italian designer Gaetano Pesce, making the case that Pesce’s famous Up5 Chair (La Mama) is a feminist statement. To use this argument in my exhibition catalog, I could quote the article’s author, Justin Beal.

Writing for the journal X-tra: Contemporary Art Quarterly, the artist Justin Beal described Pesce’s Up5 Chair as “a political work — a feminist polemic on sexism and a commentary on the homogeneity, severity, and rigidity of an excessively masculine world.”

Gaetano Pesce, UP5 Chair (La Mama), 1969, manufactured 2000, stretch fabric covered foam with plastic or rubber tether, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN.