

Imagined Display Space

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Curation of an Exhibition Marking the 70th anniversary of Formula 1

Introduction

The year 2020 marks the 70th anniversary of Formula One; requiring the curation of an exhibition to acknowledge this milestone, celebrating the history, development and advancements in the sport. The first Formula One race was held at the decommissioned RAF Silverstone aerodrome on 13th May 1950 to a packed crowd of 120,000 spectators, including King George VI. The anniversary is to be celebrated at Silverstone, the spiritual home of Formula One. Over the summer following the 2020 race, the exhibition will be open to the public and include a display of historic cars, equipment, technology and track experiences.

Exhibition Venue

Located in the Silverstone Wing Pit Building, the exhibition will be spread throughout the complex utilising all floor spaces, garages, pit lane and track. The exhibition will incorporate both free and linear flow designs. (Bayer, 1961, p.257)



Silverstone Wing Pit Building

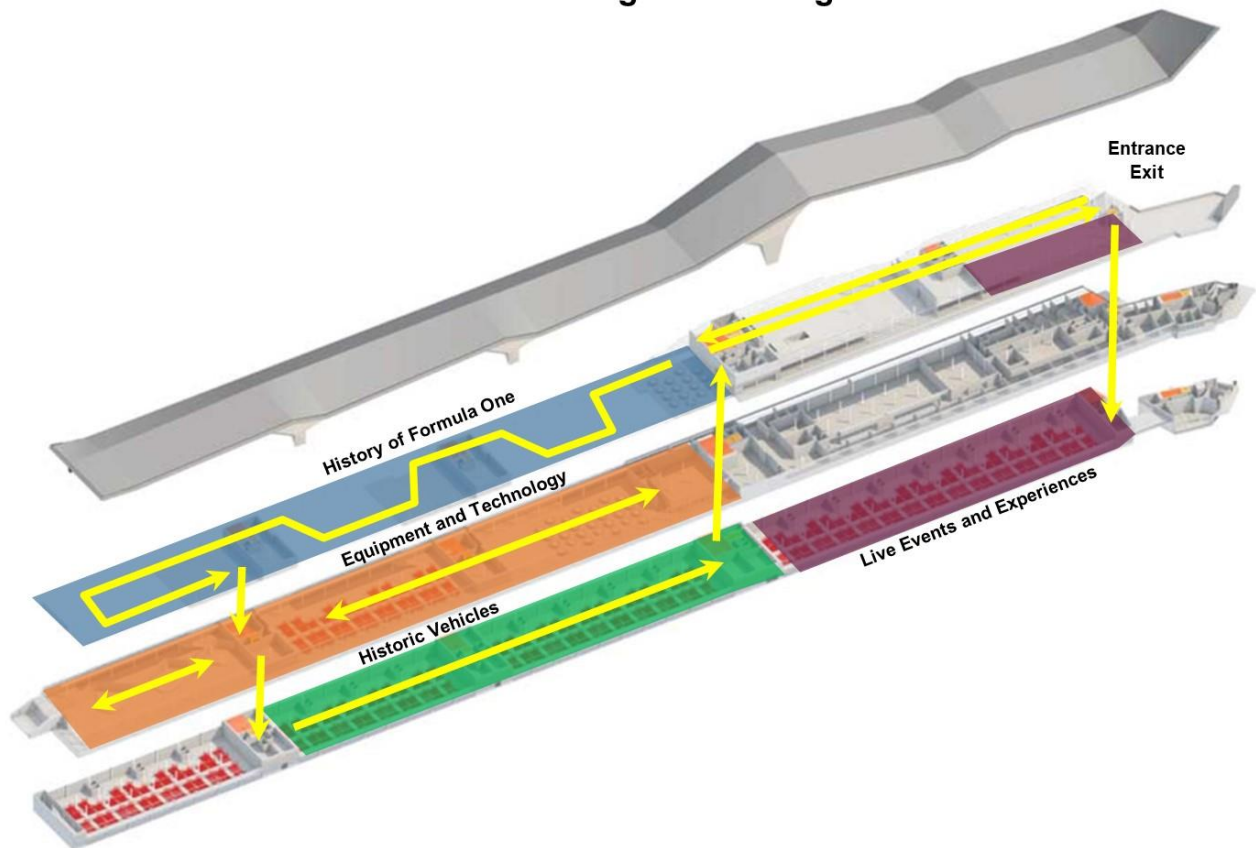


Figure 1: Exhibition Overview

The entrance is accessed from ample parking in the paddock, via a ramped walkway to the second floor. Visitors then flow linearly around this floor through an exhibition of the History of Formula One and then move down one level. Here there will be a free flow design of safety equipment and technology displays. Moving to the ground floor, visitors then flow linearly amongst historic vehicles, before returning to the second floor to access experiences and exit.

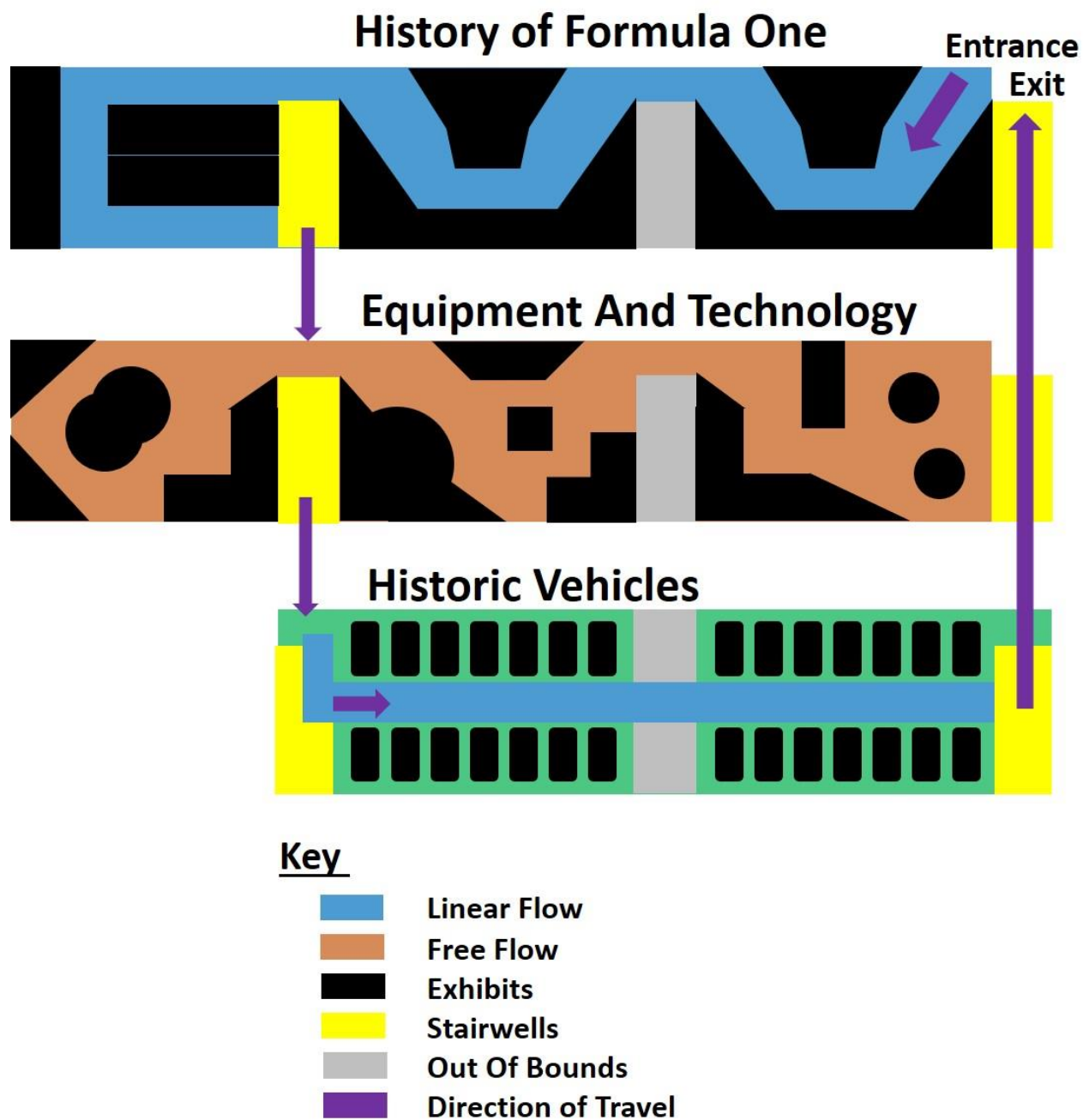


Figure 2: Internal Exhibition Dynamics

Section 1: History of Formula One

Lights out and away we go! This unique journey starts with a drive through the history of Formula One. From its birth and over 70 years to the present day, this thrilling circus of excitement and innovation travels around the globe. The sport provides entertainment epitomised by hard racing, popular personalities and death-defying events. The global phenomenon that is Formula One is littered with spectacle, political conspiracy, intrigue and tragedy.

Following a linear path will provide everyone with the same exciting visitor journey. They will encounter key exhibits in a preconceived succession, to give critical insights into the historical timeline; giving visitors an appreciation of the raw excitement of Formula One.

A single path ensures that all visitors have similar experiences and allows the exhibitor to plan their approach to them in detail, so that they encounter a succession of exhibits in a preconceived fashion.

(Hughes, 2010)

Visitors are channeled through a series of exhibits to set the story and to manage the flow. Using a linear progressive model of exhibition design, means that everyone is educated alike in a preconceived series of progressive steps to achieve a level of understanding.

This linear design will take over the upper floor, utilising the space to showcase the history of Formula One. Following a chronological sequence of events, illustrated with displays and dioramas, the visitors flow along a pathway between the exhibits. These artifacts, pictures, videos and sounds, will immerse them into the world of Formula One.



Figure 3: Example of linear flow at Reims Automobile Museum

Visitors will then appreciate how Formula One has developed over time and how its progressive nature has propelled it toward the pinnacle of motorsport. At the same time as educating the visitors, linear design helps to manage fluidity, speed, safety and security throughout the whole attraction.

Section 2: Equipment and Technology

In 1950, an average pit stop time was 67 seconds, whereas in 2020, it is now incredibly only 2 seconds. Over the last 7 decades there have been significant advancements in equipment design and production in order to enable the sport to be faster, safer and more efficient. The exhibits that demonstrate this, need to be structured in a timeline to show development. In order to improve the visitor experience, this display can be spread over a large area, allowing for an uninterrupted flow; stimulating the viewer to move to elements of their interest. Free flow thus permits the visitors to spend ample time absorbing the information and learning more about each area.

The organization of the floor plan should insure an uninterrupted flow of traffic and permit and induce the visitor to view all exhibits.

(Bayer, 1961, p.257)

A free flow design lets the visitors browse the exhibits as they pique their interest. As a result, there is a freedom of movement through the exhibition which allows people to explore without interruption.



Figure 4: Free Flow design at the Gaydon Heritage Motor Center

The first floor will be divided into key areas, displays of equipment & technological progression over the previous 70-years; to include: safety equipment, circuit improvements, pit stop technology and car research & development. Each display will contain a mixture of formats and interactive activities e.g. timeline, live exhibits, pictures and physical examples.

Using this method, visitors can create their own path through the developments within the sport and take in the information in an uninterrupted and relaxed manner. Therefore, they are more likely to view all the exhibits as visual and interactive activities spark their interest; whilst also creating a fun and exciting way to engage with the history of Formula One.

Section 3: Historic Vehicles

Over the last 7 decades, the cars have developed dramatically in the quest for safety and speed. Throughout this time, there has been significant improvements in engines, chassis, aerodynamics and driver safety. The exhibition will highlight these advances and allow visitors to foster an understanding.

The very idea of an exhibition is that we live in a world with each other, in which it is possible to make arrangements, associations, connections and wordless gestures, and, through this *mise en scène*, to speak.

(Obrist, 2014)

Hans Obrist suggests that a *mise en scene* or telling a story, can create an exhibition that allows the visitor to wordlessly make connections and associations; appreciating the narrative through the scene setting. To tell the story of vehicle development, the exhibits will be placed in linear progression within the pit lane and garages, alongside the racetrack where active racing and driving experiences are being undertaken. The garage area will be divided up into decades with the cars placed in a pit environment equivalent to their period. The development features can then be highlighted through supporting information and displays.



Figure 5: Pit garage diorama at Ferrari Museum, Maranello

The linear progression enables the visitor to walk through the display in a chronological order, observing the continual changes made to the cars in pursuit of safety and ultimate speed. In particular, the development of the monocoque chassis, aerodynamics, body shape safety cell and safety features. The display will include both iconic and championship winning Formula One cars, including: the Brabham BT46 'Fan Car', the Tyrrell P34 'six-wheeler', the most successful F1 car - the McLaren MP4/4 and the debut championship winning Brawn GP001. Locating the exhibits in the pit lane garages alongside the active racetrack, enhances the visitor experience by being close to the cars, track, noise, smells of racing and Formula One.

Conclusions

The visitor experience commences with a linear progression through the History of Formula One; which controls the overall movement into the exhibition, and it permits everyone to have a similar introduction. This regulates the visitor speed and safety throughout the whole attraction. Evaluating Phillip Hughes' principles of designing for exhibitions, shows that a linear design facilitates the delivery of information in the order planned by the curator. This guides the subject in a preconceived fashion, allowing for everyone to be immersed into the world of Formula One, whilst safely flowing through.

The concepts of Herbert Bayer recommend that the visitors be encouraged to browse the exhibits as they pique their interest by means of a free flow design. Applying this to the section on Equipment and Technology, the more technical elements of the exhibition can be fully absorbed by all, at their own pace, by having freedom of movement to explore without interruption. The visitors take in the information in an uninterrupted and relaxed manner, as they are not restricted to a set route. They can experience all the exhibits in a fun and exciting way, engaging with the technology utilising the visual and interactive activities to further spark their interest.

The Historic Vehicles section shows the evolutionary progress of cars through the ages; in a series of dioramas set in their working environment. This enlivens the exhibition, creating a chronicle of progression, innovation and development. The idea that exhibits should be displayed in a narrative, or scene, comes from the curator Hans Ulrich Obrist. He suggests that by 'mise en scene', the visitors can make connections and associations

from one exhibit to the next. To this end, the vehicles in the pit garages, create a scene as authentic as possible; together with the noise and smells of Formula One.

Summary

In exhibition design it is essential to consider the fluidity, ergonomics and content, to ensure visitor safety, engagement and greater appreciation of the subject. Implementing both linear and free flow design within the museum, allows visitors to be exposed to similar experiences in a continuous flow, which can also be unique to each individual. Utilising Obrist's '*mise en scène*' scene setting principles and creating sensory opportunities related to the setting, lets the visitor's imagination to be stimulated and engaged. Using these key concepts creates an attraction that is both interactive and uninterrupted.

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List of Figures

Figure 1: Exhibition Overview

Composition created specifically for assignment with aspects available at:

<https://www.silverstone.co.uk/plan-your-event/capacities/>

<https://www.e-architect.co.uk/england/silverstone-pit-paddock>

(Accessed, 25 March 2020)

Figure 2: Internal Exhibition Dynamics

Created specifically for assignment

Figure 3: Reims Champagne Automobile Museum

Available at: <https://www.champagne-ardenne-tourism.co.uk/what-do/visiting/sites-visit/reims-champagne-automobile-museum-127592>

(Accessed, 10 April 2020)

Figure 4: Gaydon Heritage Motor Center

Available at: <https://britishheritage.com/great-british-motor-museums>

(Accessed, 13 April 2020)

Figure 5: F1 garage diorama Ferrari Museum, Maranello

Available at: <https://www.sportscardigest.com/ferrari-museum-in-maranello-photo-gallery/>

(Accessed, 28 April 2020)