

The Economic Impact of Major Exhibitions at The Metropolitan Museum of Art The Museum of Modern Art The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Overview

In the fall and winter of 1992-93, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum all held major exhibitions at their institutions. Magritte and Jusepe de Ribera: Spanish Realist in Baroque Italy were at The Metropolitan from September 12 to November 22, and from September 18 to November 29, respectively; Henri Matisse: A Retrospective was on display at MoMA from September 24 to January 19; and The Great Utopia: The Russian and Soviet Avant-Garde, 1915-1932 was at the Guggenheim from September 25 to January 3. The confluence of these exhibitions highlights the importance of New York City as a cultural center as well as the importance of the museums in the economic life of the city.

Over 1.75 million visits were made to the exhibitions at the three museums, with roughly 1.30 million of these visitors coming from outside the five boroughs of New York. Roughly half of the out-of-town visitors reported that visiting one or more of the three museums was an important reason in their decision to visit New York. While in New York, visitors stayed in hotels, dined at restaurants, shopped at stores, went to the theater, and took advantage of the wealth of cultural and other tourist activities available in the city.

Altogether, out-of-town visitors brought an estimated \$617 million dollars into the City of New York in terms of shopping and spending on expenses during their visit, which roughly translates to a tax benefit to the City and State of New York of over \$60 million.

Background

The impetus for conducting this joint study was the desire of the museums to investigate the impact of their major art exhibitions on the economy of the city. This joint undertaking was supported by the Department of Cultural Affairs, Luis R. Cancel, Commissioner, and the Alliance for the Arts prepared this report for publication.

The study was conducted by the Office of Research and Evaluation at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, in coordination with the Department of Public Information at The Museum of Modern Art, the Departments of Visitor Services and Public Affairs at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Department of Communications at The Metropolitan. The method for this study was to collect opinions of visitors through the use of surveys taken as people exited the respective exhibitions. Data collection occurred from November 6 to November 18 at the Guggenheim, November 5 to November 18 at MoMA, and from November 4 to November 15 at The Metropolitan. Sampling was spaced over day of week and time of day to be representative of the visiting population. A sample of 1125 was taken at the Guggenheim, 1025 at MoMA, and 1040 at The Metropolitan (700 at Magritte and 340 at Ribera). This document is intended to present highlights of the findings. A more thorough treatment of the statistical data is available. The Appendix of this report contains information on the content of the exhibitions and special ticketing and pricing arrangements as well as the average annual attendance for each museum.

Characteristics of Visitors to the Exhibitions

Attendance at the three exhibitions reflected the continued enthusiasm that residents of the metropolitan region have for great art, as well as the capacity of exhibitions of unusual quality to attract visitors from across the United States and around the world. A total attendance of 1,793,057 was tallied at the three institutions combined. The Matisse exhibition drew 944,913; the Magritte and Ribera exhibitions drew 594,474 (453,586 for Magritte; 141,888 for Ribera); the Great Utopia exhibition drew 253,670. To provide a perspective for these numbers, the total

attendance at the exhibitions was slightly greater than the total attendance for the New York Mets for the 1992-93 season. It speaks to New York's greatness to see that Jusepe de Ribera and Henri Matisse are as popular a draw as Bobby Bonilla and Doc Gooden.

More women than men visited the exhibitions, with 63 percent of the visits to Matisse being made by women compared to 56 percent at The Metropolitan", and 53 percent at the Guggenheim. Visitors to the Guggenheim were somewhat younger than visitors to the other two exhibitions. The median age at the Guggenheim exhibition was roughly 35, with one out of five visitors over the age of 55. At the exhibitions at The Metropolitan and at MoMA the median age was closer to 45, with two out of five visitors over the age of 55.

Residence of Visitors

Visitors came to the exhibitions from almost every state in the union as well as from dozens of other countries. The patterns of visitation are presented in graphic form in Chart 1 at the end of this summary. Visitation from New York City ranged from 25 percent at both the Guggenheim and MoMA exhibitions to 31 percent at The Metropolitan. Over half of the visitors to the exhibitions came not only from outside the City of New York, but outside the New York metropolitan region. For this analysis, the "metropolitan region" includes parts of northern New Jersey, southern Connecticut, neighboring New York State counties, and Long Island. In Chart 1, this area is referred to as "Other Metro."

Educational Levels and Occupations

As might be expected, the visitors to the exhibitions were exceptionally well-educated; four out of five visitors held a bachelor's degree and almost half held a masters degree or higher. Chart 2 presents the educational levels at each of the exhibitions. A variety of occupations were represented at the exhibitions; "professional" was listed by about one-fifth of the visitors, followed by "executive/managerial," "arts professional," "teacher," "student," and "retired." There were differences across the exhibitions, which are discussed in the summaries of the individual exhibitions.

Income

Although individuals from all income levels were present at the exhibitions, the data indicate that visitors to the exhibitions were a fairly wealthy group. Chart 3 presents the breakdown of income by exhibition. For both the Guggenheim and The Metropolitan, median income was roughly \$50,000 with one fifth of the visitors reporting an income of \$100,000 or more. At MoMA, the median was \$65,000, with one-third reporting an income of \$100,000 or more. At the other end of the spectrum, over one quarter of the visitors reported incomes of \$35,000 or less.

The Contributions of Visitors to the City

The impact of the exhibitions presented at the three museums this fall extends beyond their aesthetic, emotional, and educational value. The exhibitions provide a vitality to the city, which attracts visitors from across the country and around the world. Many of the visitors who attended the exhibitions planned vacations around the exhibitions or extended business trips in order to attend the exhibitions. In the survey, visitors were asked how important their visit to the exhibition was in their decision to come to New York. They were also asked how much money they spent in the city on shopping and expenses, and what cultural and other tourist activities they engaged in during their visit.

Economic Impact

Out-of-town visitors to the exhibitions can broadly be broken into two groups: those who came for the day to see the exhibition, and those who stayed in New York for one or more nights and saw the exhibition as part of their visit. At The Metropolitan and MoMA, the percentage of same-day visitors was 40-45 percent while at the Guggenheim the percentage was 25 percent. About 10-20 percent of the visitors stayed a week or more, with the remaining visitors staying 2-6 days.

Visitors to the city spent money on both expenses and shopping as they stayed in hotels, dined in restaurants, visited the wealth of cultural activities and tourist attractions available, and shopped in the great variety of stores.

Expenditures for out-of-town visitors to the three exhibitions are presented in Charts 4 and 5; for purposes of analysis they are broken out into expenditures on basic expenses (e.g., hotels and restaurants) and expenditures on shopping. The economic benefit to the City of New York of expenditures of out-of-town visitors was estimated to be \$475 million for the Matisse exhibition, \$235 million for the Magritte and Ribera exhibitions, and \$138 million for the Great Utopia exhibition. Since a number of visitors attended more than one of the exhibitions on the same visit to New York, these numbers cannot simply be tallied for a total economic impact. Adjusting for multiple visitations during the same trip, the total impact of out-of-town visitors to the exhibitions is estimated to be \$617 million.

It would be unreasonable to claim that this amount of benefit is solely due to the exhibitions. Many people come to New York for a variety of reasons and visit these institutions as a part of their stay. In an effort to assess this circumstance, visitors were asked how important seeing the exhibition was in their decision to visit New York. Respondents were given a 1-to-10 scale, with 1 being "Not at all important," and 10 being "Very important." For each institution, the number of people responding 8, 9, or 10 was combined to indicate a high level of importance. At The Metropolitan and the Guggenheim, the percentage of 8, 9, or 10 responses was roughly 25 percent; at MoMA, the percentage of 8, 9, or 10 responses was 70 percent (58 percent rated it a "10"). It should be pointed out that the Matisse exhibition required a ticket purchased in advance with a reserved time of entrance into the exhibition.

The total economic impact of out-of-town visitors who reported that visiting an exhibition was an important part of their decision to visit New York City was \$368 million.

Combining hotel taxes with other city and state sales taxes, a figure of 10 percent of total expenditures is used to estimate a direct tax benefit to the city and state of \$61.7 million for all out-of-town visitors to the exhibitions, and \$36.8 million for those out-of-town visitors who reported that attending an exhibition was an important part of their decision to visit New York.

Other Activities in New York

While in New York, out-of-town visitors engage in a wide variety of other activities. They shop, dine, go to the theater, and take advantage of other cultural and tourist opportunities. Respondents were asked to indicate what other activities they engaged in while in New York City. Although not all of the possibilities could be listed, a representative sampling is presented in Chart 6 (cultural activities) and Chart 7 (other activities). As can be seen, visitors at each museum frequently listed visiting the other two museums. Broadway and off-Broadway were popular destinations, as were the Whitney Museum and Lincoln Center. In terms of the other activities that visitors engage in, dining was listed by about 60 percent of the visitors, and sightseeing by about one third. The Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, the World Trade Center, the movies, cabarets and night clubs, Ellis Island, and the United Nations were each listed by about one in ten visitors.

Visitor Response to the Exhibitions

Visitors were asked to give their overall response to the exhibition on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high). The results broken down by museum are presented in Chart 8. As can be seen, reactions to the exhibitions were very positive. The median rating for the exhibitions at The Metropolitan and the Guggenheim was 8; for the Matisse exhibition at MoMA, the median rating was 9. Over two-thirds of all visitors rated the exhibition they visited as an 8, 9 or 10.

In sum, we find the impact of the exhibitions to be substantial both in terms of the response of visitors to the exhibitions and in terms of the economic benefits to the city resulting from increased tourist spending.

Findings of Visitor Surveys Magritte and Jusepe Ribera: Spanish Realist in Baroque Italy at The Metropolitan Museum of Art

A survey concerning visitor reactions and the economic impact of the exhibitions, Magritte and Jusepe de Ribera: Spanish Realist in Baroque Italy, was conducted during the weeks of November 4 and November 11 by The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Office of Research and Evaluation. A sample of 700 visitors to Magritte and 340 visitors to Ribera completed surveys as they exited the exhibitions. The sample was stratified by day of week and time of day to be representative of visitation patterns.

A total of 453,586 visitors attended the Magritte exhibition between September 12 and November 22, and 141,888 attended the Ribera exhibition between September 18 and November 19. The results for the two exhibitions were similar and have been combined for purposes of reporting preliminary findings. Highlights of the findings are:

69 percent of the visitors were from outside the five boroughs of New York City, with 22 percent coming from the greater metropolitan region and 29 percent coming from the U.S. outside the New York metropolitan region; 18 percent were international visitors. Visitors from 26 foreign countries were counted in the survey. Out-of-town visitation to the museum is typically closer to 55-60 percent.

Roughly half of all visitors to the exhibitions reported that they came to the museum specifically to see the Magritte or Ribera exhibitions. This figure was somewhat higher for Magritte (62 percent) than Ribera (43 percent). Roughly 1 visitor in 6 was making a first visit to the museum. The typical number of visits made in the past year by respondents to the survey was 4.

56 percent of visitors were female; median age was 45; almost half of the visitors held a master's degree or higher; median income was about \$50,000, with slightly over one-fifth reporting incomes over \$ 100,000; the most frequently listed occupation was professional (roughly one quarter) followed by arts professional (12 percent), teacher (10 percent), and students (10 percent). About one in ten visitors was retired.

The exhibitions were very well-received by the visitors. On a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), visitors were asked to give their overall rating of the exhibition. The median rating was an 8, with two-thirds of the visitors giving a rating of 8, 9 or 10.

Out-of-town visitors were asked how much they spent in New York during their visit on shopping and expenses. Average reported expenses per visiting group were \$751, down from \$957 for last year's Seurat exhibition, but up from the \$688 for the Mexico exhibition the year before. Spending on shopping per group was \$363, down slightly from \$370 for Seurat and \$404 for Mexico. Combined shopping and expenses per group was \$1,114.

If the spending patterns for the sample of surveyed visitors is projected to the entire run of the exhibition, the estimated basic expenses for the out-of-town visitors to the exhibitions is approximately \$158 million. For shopping, the estimate is \$77 million. The total economic impact in terms of shopping and expenses for the exhibition is estimated to be \$235 million. Using an estimate of 10 percent as the tax rate on this amount (a large portion of the amount is hotel cost which has a higher tax rate) the direct tax benefit to the City and State is approximately \$23.5 million.

Out-of-town visitors were asked how important visiting the museum was to their decision to visit New York City. On a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 10 (very important), half of the visitors rated visiting the museum as an 8, 9 or 10 in terms of importance. Almost one-quarter rated seeing the exhibition (either Magritte or Ribera) as an 8, 9 or 10 in terms of their decision to visit New York. The economic impact of visitors who report the museum was important in their decision

to visit New York was \$118 million; those rating the exhibition important in their decision to visit New York was \$55 million.

Out-of-town visitors reported spending an average of \$48 in museum shops for an estimated total of \$8.4 million.

Out-of-town visitors were asked what other activities they had done or were planning to do during their visit to New York. Their answers are as follows:

Activity	Percent Responding
Restaurant Dining	55
Museum of Modern Art	48
Shopping	45
Sightseeing	36
Guggenheim Museum	35
Broadway play	27
Rockefeller Center	17
Whitney Museum	15
Lincoln Center	14
Statue of Liberty	14
Empire State Building	13
World Trade Center	13
Movies	1
Opera	11
American Museum of Natural History	10
Off-Broadway	9
Ellis Island	9
Night Clubs/Cabaret	9
New York Philharmonic	6
Brooklyn Museum	5
New York City Ballet	2

As can be seen from the list above, both The Museum of Modern Art (48 percent) and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (35 percent) were popular destinations for visitors to Magritte and Ribera. We also asked visitors if they were visiting either museum that day. Thirteen percent reported going to MoMA, 13 percent reported going to the Guggenheim, and 6 percent reported going to both institutions.

**Findings of Visitor Survey
Henri Matisse: A Retrospective**

at The Museum of Modern Art

A survey concerning visitor reactions and the economic impact of the Matisse exhibition was conducted at The Museum of Modern Art from November 5 to November 18. A sample of 1050 visitors completed surveys as they exited the exhibition.' The sample was stratified by day of week and time of day to be representative of visitation patterns. A total attendance of 944,913 was recorded for the exhibition from September 24, 1992 to January 19, 1993. Highlights of the findings are:

Almost three-quarters of the visitors to the exhibition came from outside the five boroughs of New York City, with 21 percent of the total sample coming from the greater metropolitan region, 43 percent coming from the U.S. outside the New York metropolitan region, and 9 percent coming from outside the U.S. The remaining 27 percent of the sample were from New York City. Visitors from 31 foreign countries were counted in the survey. The museum normally has an international visitation rate of about 33 percent. The 9 percent reported for this survey may undercount the number of international visitors because of language problems and the necessity of having purchased a scheduled ticket in advance of visiting the exhibition.

The median age of visitors to the exhibition was 46; roughly two out of five were over the age of 55. Sixty-three percent of the visitors were female. Almost half of the visitors held a master's degree or higher; median income was roughly \$65,000 with approximately one-third of respondents reporting total family income over \$100,000. The most frequently listed occupation was professional (26 percent), followed by executive/managerial (17 percent), arts professional (13 percent), retired (11 percent), teacher (9 percent), and student (7 percent).

Only 3 percent of the visitors residing in New York City were making a first visit to the museum; for out-of-town visitors, this figure was 17 percent. For those visitors who had been to the museum before, 46 percent were making their first visit in the past year.

People rated their visit to the Matisse exhibition exceptionally highly. On a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), the median rating was 9 with over three-quarters of the visitors giving a rating of 8 or higher.

Out-of-town visitors to the exhibition were asked how much they spent on shopping and basic expenses during their visit to New York. The average reported expenditure on expenses per visiting group was \$898; average reported expenditure on shopping per visiting group was \$411. The combined shopping and expenses expenditure was \$1,309.

If the spending patterns for the sample of surveyed visitors is projected to the entire run of the exhibition, the estimate for basic expenses for out-of-town visitors to the museum is roughly \$326 million. For shopping, the estimate is \$149 million. The total economic impact in terms of shopping and basic expenses for the exhibition is estimated to be \$475 million.

Out-of-town visitors were asked how important visiting the Matisse exhibition was to their decision to visit New York City. On a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 10 (very important), 70 percent of the visitors rated visiting the museum as an 8, 9 or 10 in terms of importance (58 percent rated it a 10). The economic impact of visitors who report the museum was important in their decision to visit New York was \$332 million.

Of the out-of-town visitors surveyed, 45 percent were in New York just for the day, and 55 percent were staying for more than one day. Of those visitors staying in New York overnight, two-thirds were staying in a hotel or motel.

Out-of-town visitors were asked what other activities they had done or were planning to do during their visit to New York. Their answers (ranked by frequency) are as follows:

Activity	Percent Responding
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Restaurant Dining	63
Museum of Modern Art	39
Shopping	32
Sightseeing	25
Whitney Museum	14
Rockefeller Center	11
Lincoln Center	10
Off-Broadway	10
Movies	9
Metropolitan Opera	8
Night Clubs/Cabaret	6
Statue of Liberty	6
Ellis Island	6
Empire State Building	5
American Museum of Natural History	5
World Trade Center	4
New York City Ballet	3
New York Philharmonic	3
Brooklyn Museum	3
United Nations	2

As can be seen from the list above, both The Metropolitan Museum of Art (39 percent) and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (28 percent) were popular destinations for visitors to The Museum of Modern Art. The survey was conducted while the Great Utopia exhibition was at the Guggenheim and the Magritte and Ribera exhibitions were at The Met. Visitors were also asked whether they were planning on attending one of these museums on the same day as their visit to the Matisse exhibition; 13 percent were going to The Met, 5 percent to the Guggenheim, and 3 percent reported that they were going to all three museums on the same day.

**Findings of the Visitor Survey of
The Great Utopia: The Russian and Soviet Avant-Garde, 1915-1932
at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum**

A survey concerning visitor reactions and the economic impact of the exhibition, The Great Utopia, was conducted from November 6 to November 18 at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. A sample of 1,125 visitors completed surveys as they exited the exhibition. The sample was stratified by day of week and time of day to be representative of visitation patterns. A total of 253,670 visitors attended The Great Utopia exhibition from September 25 to January 3. Highlights of the findings are:

Three-quarters of the visitors to the exhibition came from outside the five boroughs of New York City, with 13 percent of the total sample coming from the greater metropolitan region, 42 percent coming from the U.S. outside the New York metropolitan region, and 20 percent coming from

outside the U.S. Visitors from 31 foreign countries were counted in the survey.

The median age of visitors to the museum was 35; roughly one out of five was over the age of 55. Fifty-three percent of the visitors were female. Almost half of the visitors held a master's degree or higher; median income was roughly \$50,000 with one-fifth of respondents reporting total family income over \$100,000. The most frequently listed occupation was arts professional (17 percent), followed by executive/managerial (16 percent), student (12 percent), doctor/lawyer (8 percent), and teacher (8 percent).

One out of four visitors who lived in New York City was making a first visit to the Guggenheim; for out-of-town visitors, this figure was 44 percent. For those visitors who had been to the museum before, three-quarters were making their first visit since the museum reopened on June 28, 1992, after having been closed for a two-year restoration and expansion.

Nine out of ten visiting New Yorkers knew of the new Guggenheim Museum SoHo, and one-quarter of them had visited that museum location. For out-of-town visitors, 80 percent knew of the new museum and 11 percent had visited it.

People rated their visit to the Guggenheim very highly. On a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), the median rating was 8, with over 60 percent giving a rating of 8 or higher.

Out-of-town visitors to the museum were asked how much they spent in New York during their visit on shopping and expenses. Average reported expenses per visiting group were \$846; average reported expenditure on shopping per visiting group was \$416. Combined shopping and expenses per group was \$1,262.

If the spending patterns for the sample of surveyed visitors is projected to the entire run of the exhibition, the estimated basic expenses for out-of-town visitors to the museum is roughly \$88 million. For shopping, the estimate is \$43 million. The total economic impact in terms of shopping and basic expenses for the exhibition is estimated to be \$138 million. Using an estimate of 10 percent as the tax rate on this amount (a large portion of the amount is hotel cost which has a higher tax rate) the direct tax benefit to the city and state is roughly \$13.8 million.

Out-of-town visitors were asked how important visiting the museum was to their decision to visit New York City. On a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 10 (very important), 28 percent of the visitors rated visiting the museum as an 8, 9, or 10 in terms of importance. The economic impact of visitors who report that the museum was important in their decision to visit New York was \$38 million.

Out-of-town visitors reported spending an estimated \$2.8 million in Guggenheim Museum stores during the run of the exhibition. This would have an estimated tax benefit of \$238,000.

Of the out-of-town visitors surveyed, 33 percent were in New York just for the day, and 67 percent were staying for more than one day.

Of those visitors staying in New York overnight, 63 percent were staying in a hotel or motel. Out-of-town visitors were asked what other activities they had done or were planning to do during their visit to New York. Their answers follow:

Activity	Percent Responding
Restaurant Dining	63
Museum of Modern Art	57
Metropolitan Museum of Art	52

Sightseeing	43
Broadway	36
Rockefeller Center	23
Whitney Museum	20
Empire State Building	17
Night Clubs/Cabaret	16
Lincoln Center	15
World Trade Center	15
Off-Broadway	14
Movies	14
Statue of Liberty	13
Metropolitan Opera	12
Ellis Island	10
American Museum of Natural History	9
United Nations	8
New York City Ballet	4
New York Philharmonic	4

As can be seen from the list above, both The Museum of Modern Art (57 percent) and The Metropolitan Museum of Art (52 percent) were popular destinations for visitors to the Guggenheim. The survey was conducted while the Matisse exhibition was at MoMA and the Magritte and Ribera exhibitions were at The Met. Visitors were also asked whether they were planning to attend one of these museums or the SoHo location of the Guggenheim on the same day as their visit to The Great Utopia exhibition. 18 percent were going to The Met, 8 percent to MoMA, 6 percent to the Guggenheim Museum SoHo, and 10 percent reported going to at least two of the other three on the same day.