

The Curiosity Cabinet as a Decolonial Exhibition Design Practice

MUSEUM

Boijmans Van Beuningen –



DEPOT

Boijmans Van Beuningen –



© Ossip van Duivenbode

DEPOT

Boijmans Van Beuningen –

MVRDV. No date. Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen.
MVRDV website. Available at: <https://www.mvrdv.com/projects/10/depot-boijmans-van-beuningen>
(accessed: 14.8.23)



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to make the collection visible

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to make the collection visitable

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to make the
collection
researchable

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to reveal the
various processes
of conservation,
collection strategies
and other museum
practices

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Boijmans Van Beuningen –



Depot Boijmans Strategies:

- a. to make the collection visible
- b. to make the collection visitable,
- c. to make the collection researchable,
- d. to reveal the various processes of conservation, collection strategies and other museum practices

Domenico Remps,
Cabinet of Curiosities
(c.1690)

Museums
Association –

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

“a prompt for
thinking, discussion
and action on
decolonising”

Museums Association –

01 challenge neutrality

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

How are items selected for display?

Museums Association –

02 acknowledge power and privilege

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

Is everyone welcomed equally?

What restrictions are there to protect the items?

Are there any signs of marginalisation?

Museums Association –

03

build relationships

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

How are visitors engaged with the museum?

Who can interact with the items and how?

Is anyone under/ misrepresented?

Museums Association –

04

value all forms
of knowledge
and expertise
equally

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

How is knowledge displayed about the items?

Who is considered an expert?

Whose narrative is being represented?

Museums Association –

05

be brave

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

Do you need to challenge museum norms?

Museums
Association –

06

be

accountable

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*Are museum practices
transparent?*

Museums Association –

07

do the work

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

Museums
Association –

08

take care

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

Museums Association –

09

be creative

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

Can you work differently?

Museums
Association –

10

aim for justice

Museums Association. No date. **Supporting Decolonisation in Museums.** Museums Association website. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/supporting-decolonisation-in-museums> (accessed: 14.8.23)

Who is the museum working for?

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Boijmans Van Beuningen –



Visible collection

1. Challenge neutrality
2. Acknowledge power and privilege
3. Build relationships
4. Value all forms of knowledge and expertise equally
5. Be brave
6. Be accountable
7. Do the work
8. Take care
9. Be creative
10. Aim for justice

DEPOT

Boijmans Van Beuningen –

the façade
dematerialises
the building

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DEPOT

Boijmans Van Beuningen –

the visitor can
see themselves
reflected in the
façade

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BODE MUSEUM

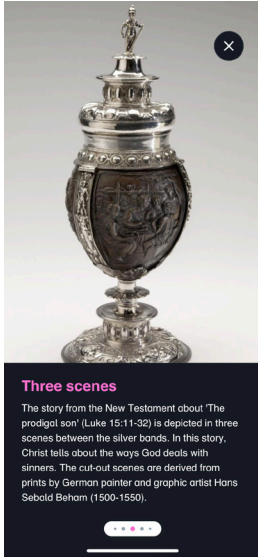
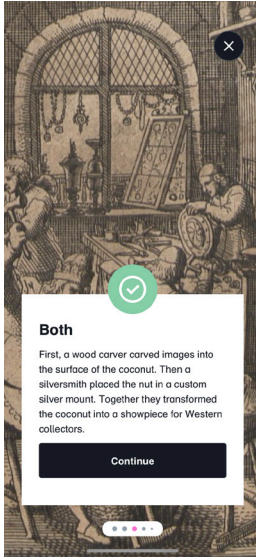
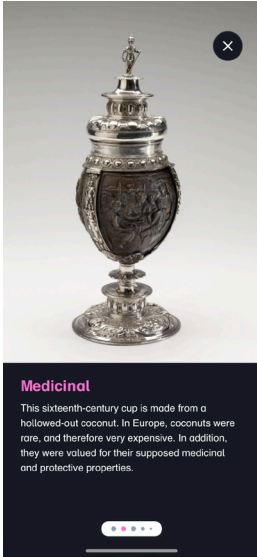
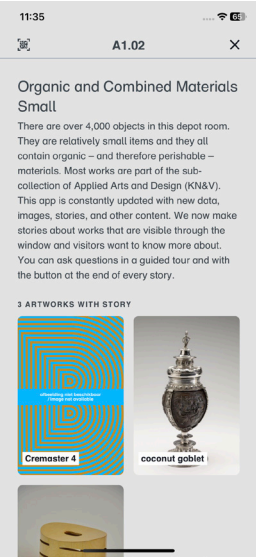
Berlin, Germany –



© Bode Museum

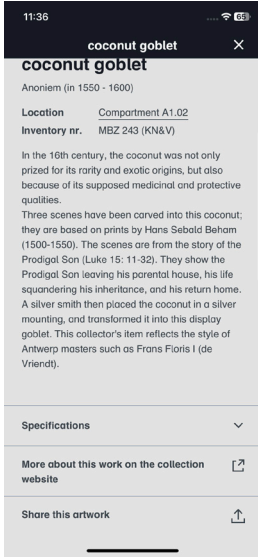
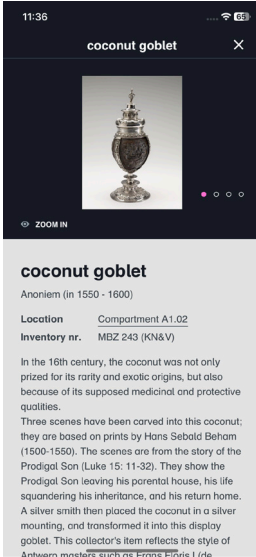
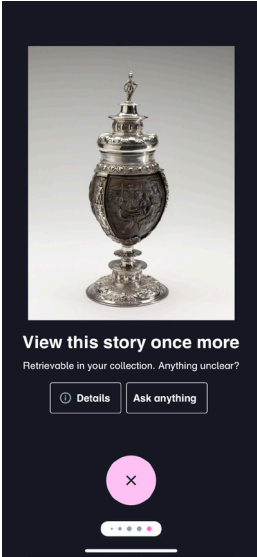
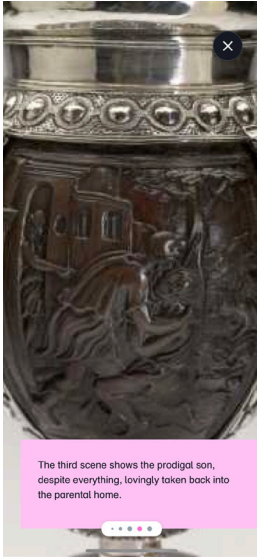
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Boijmans Van Beuningen
Mobile App –



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MULTIVERSITY GALLERIES

Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver –



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Boijmans Van Beuningen –



no dominant
narrative

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Visitable collection

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Boijmans Van Beuningen –



Visitable collection

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Boijmans Van Beuningen –



Researchable collection

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DEPOT

Boijmans Van Beuningen –



A2.03

hout, metaal, glas
en keramiek

wood, metal, glass
and ceramics

Visible practices

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DEPOT

Boijmans Van Beuningen –



a sense
of care

Visible practices

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British Museum

London, UK –



Visible practices

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The Curiosity Cabinet as a Post-Colonial Exhibition Design Practice



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Frans Francken,
The Golden Cabinet
(c. 1619)

“A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability.

They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection, and knowledge sharing.”

The Curiosity Cabinet as a Post-Colonial Exhibition Design Practice



The Curiosity Cabinet as a Decolonial Exhibition Design Practice