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LIS 258  
Museum Observation #1

The American Museum of Natural History's Margaret Mead Hall of Pacific People connects its visitors to museum objects primarily through exhibit labels, as well as through group tours. Other museum objects are connected to visitors through interactive videos, but the object, Javanese Puppet Theatre, is supplemented solely by a short description of the puppet theatre, including its historical context and purpose.

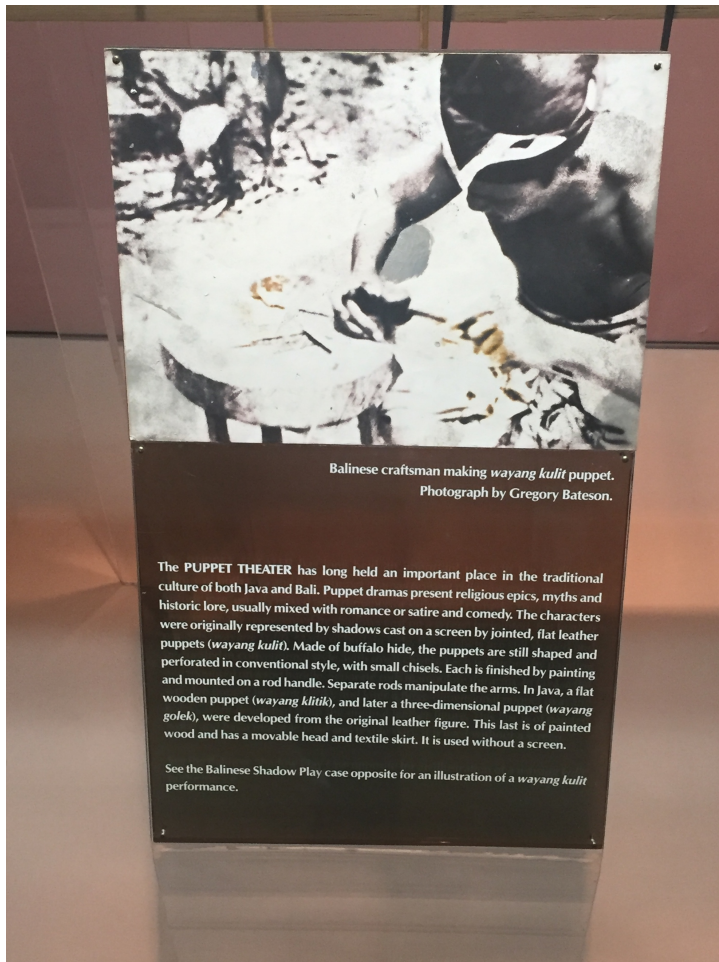


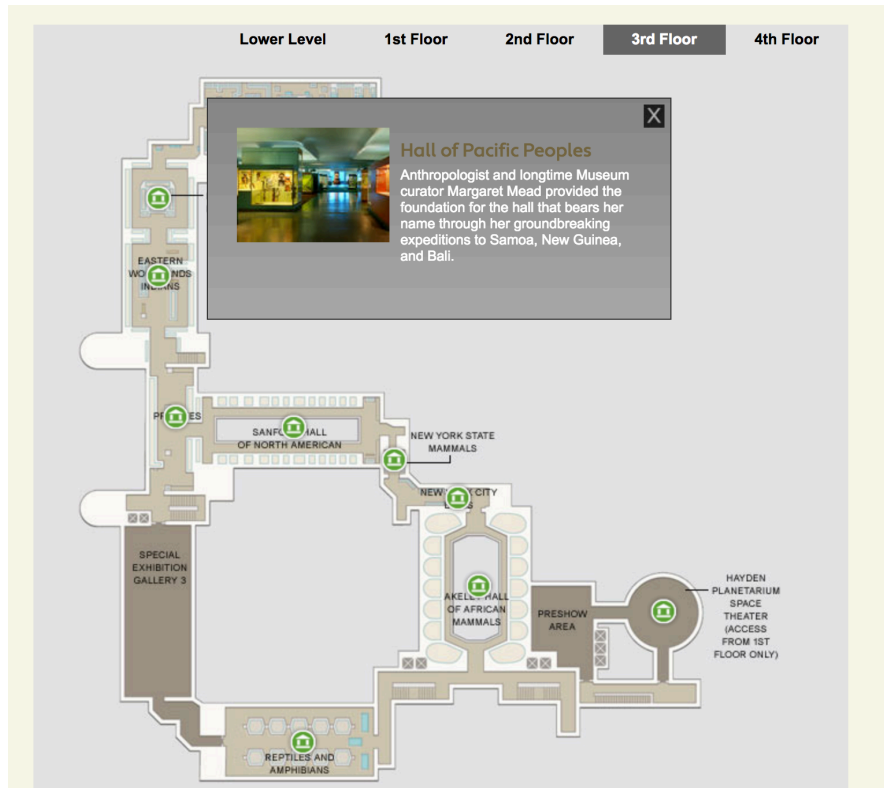
Exhibit Label Description:

*The PUPPET THEATER has long held an important place in the traditional culture of both Java and Bali. Puppet dramas present religious epics, myth, and historic lore, usually mixed with romance or satire and comedy. The characters were originally represented by shadows cast on a screen by jointed, flat leather puppets (wayang kulit). Made of buffalo hide, the puppets are still shaped and perforated in a conventional style, with small chisels. Each is finished by painting and mounted on a rod handle. Separate rods manipulate the arms. In Java, a flat wooden puppet (wayang, klitik), and later a three-dimensional puppet (wayang golek), were developed from the original leather figure. This last is painted with wood and has a movable head and textile skirt. It is used without a screen.*

The exhibit label is located directly next to the museum objects. Following the description is a reference to another exhibit case opposite Javanese Shadow Puppet Theatre for information on Balinese Shadow Play.


For tours, the museum offers public tours, in English as well as Spanish, Chinese and French. The Museum Highlight Tours highlight the Museum's collections, daily. There are also Spotlight Tours focus on specific halls or themes with varying times and topics.

The 2016 NMC Horizon Report, describes that digital strategies must be integrated into museums if they are to relevantly connect museum visitors to an institution's collections. The American Museum of Natural History connects some resources to its visiting public via the digital sphere, like the AMNH's website and object database. The museum offers an interactive floor plan and visitors can locate anthropological object from the Margaret Mead Hall of Pacific People's collection through online databases. For example, anthropological objects can be searched through the Division of Anthropology's database.



**Explore the Pacific Ethnographic Collection**

View images and information on more than 25,000 ethnographic objects from the Pacific Islands in the [online collection database](#).



*Interactive Floor Map and "Explore the Pacific Ethnographic Collection" link to database*

Unfortunately, the object, Javanese Puppet Theatre, is not found in that database. There are many searchable objects, but there are still thousands of ethnographic objects both in storage and on display that have yet to be made accessible to the public. There is work to be done in connecting objects to museum visitors in a digital or interactive way.