

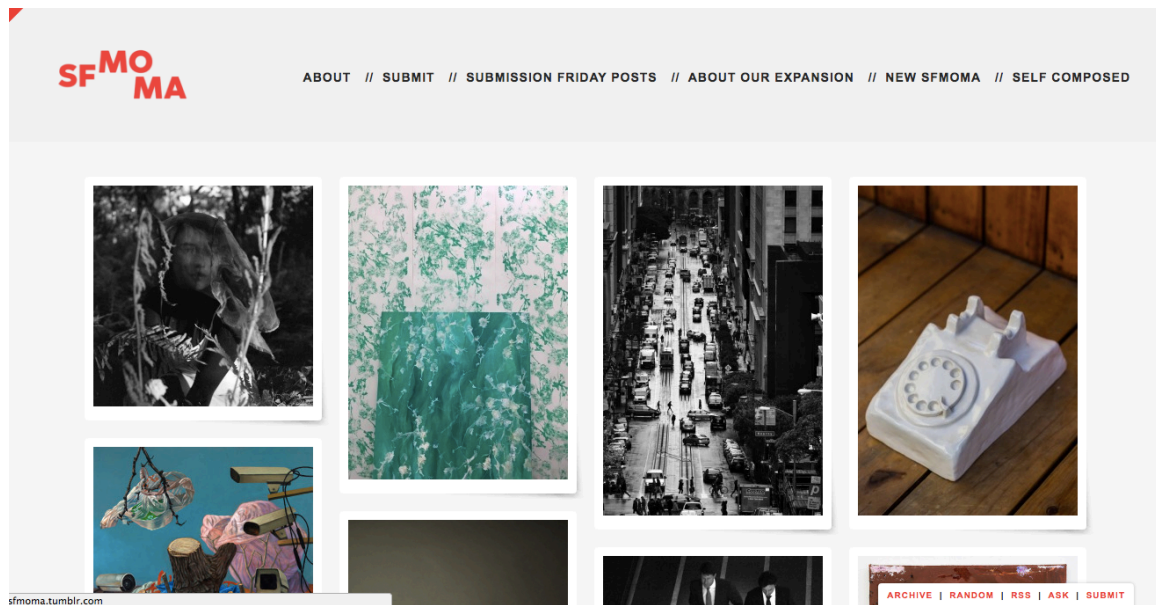
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LIS 258
Social Media Assignment

For this social media assignment, I decided to look at how the social media/blog site, Tumblr, can be used by my museum partner in order to facilitate more interaction between the audience and the collection.

Link

<https://www.tumblr.com>- basic login page

<http://sfmoma.tumblr.com/> - San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's tumblr page, my main example for this assignment



Screenshot of SFMOMA's Tumblr page

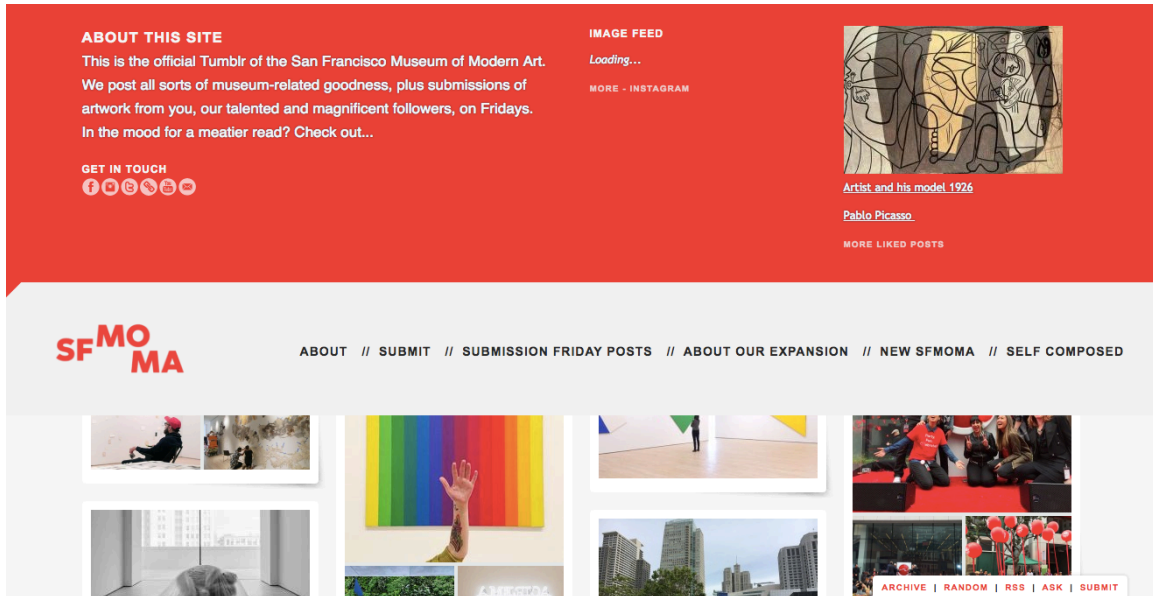
Features

There are many features available on Tumblr that make it a great addition to a museum's social media presence. Tumblr is a blogging platform that is mainly visual, but also allows a user to upload text posts, links to other websites, audio

clips, and video. There is a mobile app that is free to download, and delivers the same experience you would have on your laptop right to your phone. It is commonly described as a cross between a blog and a social network because users can follow other Tumblr blogs, and the content that is posted or reposted from those blogs automatically appears in your main feed (called a “dashboard” on the site).¹ A user can also “like,” comment, and reblog content so it will show up on their own blog. Hashtags just like on Twitter and Instagram, can be used on a post so other people can search for this content and other posts related to it. A user is also not just limited to one blog; you can create several “side” blogs about concepts or themes that you may not want to feature on your “main” blog.

Tumblr also is highly customizable, and offers thousands of different themes for a user to choose from when creating their own blog. You can also customize the color scheme, font, background, etc. once you choose the theme you would like to use. You can also add different tabs on your blog for different uses. For example, the SFMOMA’s tumblr has several different tabs: an “About” tab that gives a brief description of the blog and museum, a “Submit” tab where other Tumblr users can submit their own original works of art to be featured on the blog, a “New SFMOMA” tab that has visuals of the museum’s new renovations, amongst others.

¹ Katie Moffat. “Arts of Tumblr: The Right Audience Engagement Tool For Your Venue?,” *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2013/nov/15/arts-tumblr-audience-engagement-museums>



Example of SFMOMA's "About" tab

I think that the creators of Tumblr implemented all of these features in order to make the user feel like they have complete control over their experience. You can make your blog about absolutely anything you want, and can dictate what kind of content you see every time you login. Many other social media platforms make users' profiles look pretty much all the same, as they have one standard layout that is not very customizable. Tumblr is the complete opposite of this, which I think is appealing to a lot of people. Also, the Tumblr app that I mentioned previously has all of the same features available on it as the standard website does. That means that people can use it when they are on the go, but are still getting the full blogging experience they would on their computer. The designers want their users to think that the platform is convenient and easy to use, and the mobile app does just that.

Why Would This Be a Good Choice For My Museum Partner/Object?

I think that this would be a good choice for my museum partner because there is no “correct” way to use this platform, so the Morgan can post about whatever aspects of its collections that it may not otherwise feel is suitable for other social media sites. For example, if the Morgan wanted to post extensively about objects in its Music Manuscripts collection, they could do so, and would not be hindered by things such as a character limit like on Twitter or the ability to only post one picture at a time like on Instagram. Furthermore, this could be useful to my own personal object, *Madonna of the Magnificat*, because it could give the object more exposure to people who are interested in this kind of art. For example, the Morgan could post a picture of my object by itself or with a group of other similar objects in the collection, offer a short analysis or comparison of it to the other photographs in the description, and then post it with hashtags that describe it (#Italian art, #religious art, etc.). Anyone who then looks at these hashtags will see this post, and could be drawn to the museum’s page to see what else it is posting about, which could then lead to a physical visit to the museum.

Target Audiences

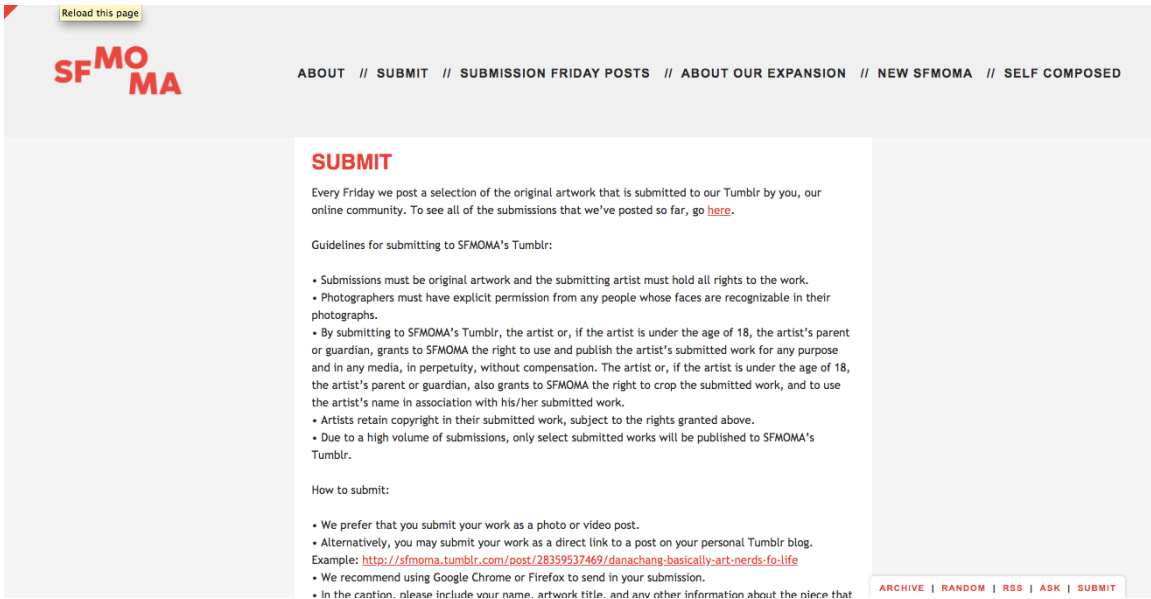
I think that the two main audiences that Tumblr could reach for my museum partner is young adults (teenagers/college-aged people) and those who are deeply interested in the arts. A large percentage of people who have Tumblr’s and are regularly active on Tumblr are people that would fall into the “millennial” category. According to the *NMC Horizon Report: 2016 Museum Edition*, “*The New York Times* points to challenges in engaging a rising key demographic for museums—

millennials—citing that static galleries are ineffective.”² I think that by creating a Tumblr page, the Morgan could reach a younger audience that they would not normally be able to within the walls of the museum, or even on other social media platforms. Many young adults could see photographs of objects in the Morgan’s collections, videos of talks given at the museum, etc. and could want to learn more about what the museum has to offer if something appeals to them. This could lead to more followers on other social media platforms, and most importantly, more visits to the actual institution from a younger audience.

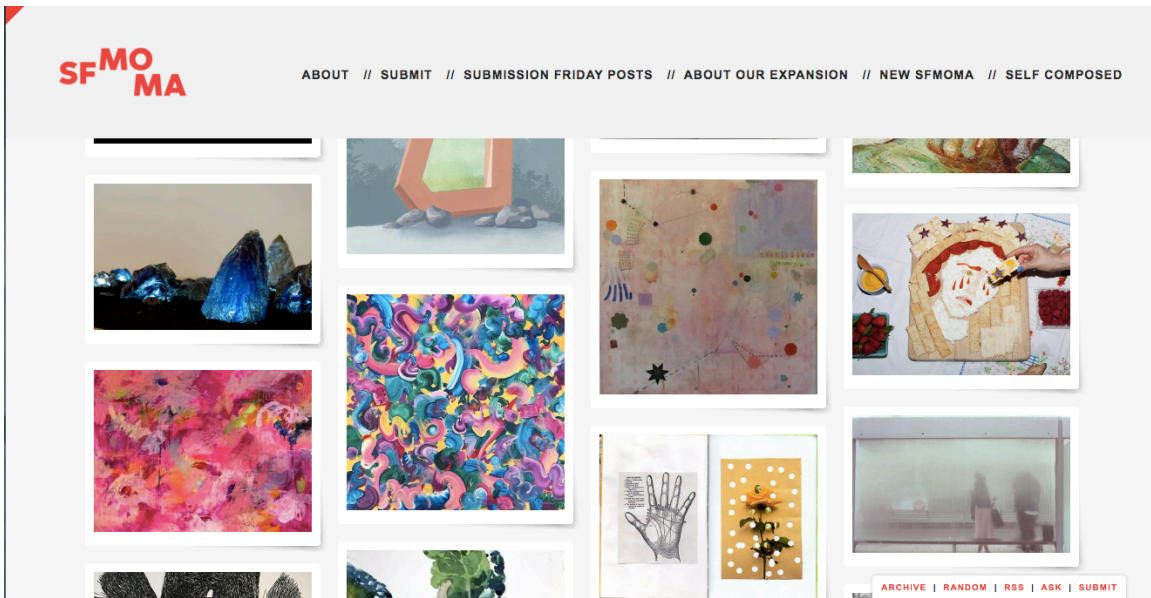
I also think that making a Tumblr page would engage with a lot of people who consider themselves artists or who are interested in the arts. There is a huge section of Tumblr blogs that post about art in a variety of forms (I have personally seen everything from medieval art to modern day photography), and I think that by following the example of SFMOMA, the Morgan could appeal to people that fall into this category. SFMOMA created a space on their blog where people can submit their own, original works of art, and the museum’s tumblr then picks submissions to feature on their blog. This is a great way to engage with young artists, as it makes the museum seem like a “point of influence.”³ If the Morgan did something similar to that, like accepting submissions of drawings, that could not only appeal to a large group of young artists but also draw attention to its large collection of Old Master Drawings.

² NMC Horizon Report: 2016 Museum Edition, “Participatory Experiences” (18).

³ Annie Werner. “Tumblr Tips for Arts Organisations and Musuems,” *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2014/jan/16/tumblr-tips-arts-social-media>.



Screenshot of SFMOMA's "Submit" tab



Screenshot of featured art from submissions