**Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History**

Museum websites are multimedia libraries for consistent and dependable research documents. These sites often include citation information which is particularly helpful to researchers and students. One such page, "Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History" is hosted on the website for the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Standard webpage elements used on this page include: background, header, title bar, navigation elements, images and text objects. The layout of this page is particularly appropriate for the content it contains. The title bar for the museum is slim and dark grey. The elegant, yellow-gold title font is in all capitals. Links pertaining directly to the museum and its operation are also located here. The header for the timeline is located directly below. It is a lighter gray with a larger, thicker version of the title font. Additional publication links are located to the right. Underneath are drop-down menus which categorize publication content. Maps, Timelines, Thematic Essays, Works of Art and Index are the drop-down menu headings. The page title has the largest font on the page. This black san serif font is a stark contrast to the golden title font. It is formatted to indicate the beginning of the page content and separate the content from the header. The font is then used throughout the page to associate the body text with the page title. The images are 3/4" thumbnails. The size of the images is important to allow for variety while optimizing page loading time. The overall page design facilitates exploration and understanding by using clear visual language and relevant images. It also incorporates some of the best conventions in web design to provide the user with a broad intuitive format.

Though the structure of the page is critical to visual appeal and usability, content pertinent to the subject is the most important factor to include. The majority of the page is consumed by the essay titled "The Art of Classical Greece (ca. 480-323 B.C.)". This concisely written history is informative and well-structured. It is a chronological presentation which illuminates the age, the artist, and the artwork. This kind of contextual support is critical to understanding the artwork presented on the page. An example of artful correlation occurs in the second paragraph when the authors are discussing Pericles and his monumental building program. Athens had risen to the height of power by essentially commandeering the funds of the Delian League. In honor of their patron goddess, Athena, the acropolis was transformed into a representation of her power, and therefore of the preeminence of her city. "Dedicated to Athena, the city's patron goddess, the Parthenon epitomizes the architectural and sculptural grandeur of Perikles' building program. Inside the magnificent Doric temple stood the colossal gold-and-ivory statue of Athena made by the Greek sculptor Pheidias." (Hemingway, Colette, and Seán Hemingway. "The Art of Classical Greece (ca. 480–323 B.C.)". In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tacg/hd\_tacg.htm (January 2008)). In this quote, the authors provide a wealth of information. They associate the goddess and her attributes directly with the city, with Perikles and his ambitions, and with the sculptor Pheidias who successfully formed an ideology into a work of art.

The inclusion of images identified by accession number is also a critical component on the page. These images tangibly connect the essay to the objects found in the museum. The selection and placement of these images does not follow the chronological pattern of the text. Although many of the images are mentioned in the essay, all are not. This indicates that their inclusion and arrangement are related more closely to page composition, than to a systematic presentation. The aesthetic effect compliments the artwork and presents the museum collection in a way that may inspire a visit to the Met galleries. Another interesting element is the "scroll-over" pop-up. This element shows a larger image or expanded content when a user hovers over an image. It is a well-placed feature as it allows for quick expansion without navigating the user away from the original page. If an image is subsequently selected, the user is taken to a linked page. On this new page, a larger image is displayed and detailed information specific to the object is given. Alternate images and a variety of views may also be included here. The essays on these pages are shorter, but they add detail and help acquaint those unfamiliar with the object or the artist. "As one of the leading vase painters of the fifth century B.C., the Berlin Painter abandoned the rigid frames of panels on the amphora so that the contour of the vase itself focuses our attention on his solitary figures. ("Attributed to the Berlin Painter: Amphora (56.171.38")). In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/56.171.38 (October 2006)

Taken together, the page design and structure, the informative text, and the visually appealing images make the ""Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History" a valuable resource for someone studying Greek art. The links provided on the page are also particularly helpful. There are the links to individual images mentioned above, but links are also strategically placed within the body text. Selecting one of these links elicits a response similar to the "scroll-over". A pop-up window opens with expanded information on the topic. In many cases the pop-up window includes not only information, but also related images not found on the host page. The links included in the drop-down menus under the timeline header assist the user in exploring various components related to the timeline themes. There are World Maps which assist in establishing location and proximity. They also provide spatial information which is crucial for students who are visual learners. The Timelines are ideal for educating linear thinkers. They help those who think in terms of rigid continuity to visualize simultaneous occurrences in order to identify their chronological relationship. Thematic Essays can be sorted by Thematic Category, Department, Geographical Region and Time Period. This function allows the user to choose a broad or specific range according to their specific needs. The pages found here share similar traits with "The Art of Classical Greece (ca. 480-323 B.C.)". Header and overall page appearance is identical, as are the functional elements within the page. Essays are concisely written, informative and well-structured. Images are relevant and well chosen. Works of Art can be searched using Title Description, Artist, Material and Technique, Credit Line and Accession Number. The Index is the final drop-down menu and allows an alphabetical search by either Artist or Subject.

One last page element is perhaps the most beneficial to students. Research in the age of Wikipedia is both stimulating and treacherous. Misinformation is disseminated quickly and debunked slowly. Accountability is essentially non-existent. A healthy distrust of online information often serves a student well. The Met website, with its precise documentation and citation style, is a tremendous asset. Citations and Further Reading specifically assist students who are looking for competent digital resources. The convenient citation information makes quoting and referencing information quick and easy. The list of Further Reading provides concrete direction to those seeking to broaden their knowledge with additional research. This page is remarkably well structured with the perfect amount of content. The website designers have used both convention and creativity to produce an intuitive user experience. The contributing authors combine interesting subject matter with practical research. I would highly recommend this site to other students and will be adding it to my own bookmark list.