



The J. Paul Getty Trust

J. Paul Getty Museum Weegee Listening Station Evaluation

Led by: Tim Hart
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INTRODUCTION

A study of the Weegee listening station was conducted from December, 2005 through January, 2006 to help J. Paul Getty Museum staff assess the usefulness and accessibility of the listening station, as well as the value of the content and its impact on visitor experience in the gallery. We asked listening station users to tell us what they thought of the quality of the audio stops, accessibility, appropriateness of the location, and its effect on their enjoyment of the exhibition. The study was intended to measure the audience's reaction to the listening station and to look for measurable differences in the gallery experiences of those who used the station and those who did not. A stated goal of this study was to assist the Museum as it considers content delivery for future exhibitions via listening stations in the galleries.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Selected from the Getty Museum's permanent collection, this exhibition surveyed the news photography of Arthur Fellig, who became known in the 1930s as Weegee the Famous. Nicknamed after the Ouija board game, Weegee seemed to materialize wherever news was happening. With Speed Graphic camera and flashbulbs in hand, he covered all aspects of New York City nightlife in the 1930s and 1940s, selling his images by morning to the newspapers and international picture agencies. On the police beat, he stepped into scenes of accidents, arrests, fires, murders, and riots. He also took his camera to the opera and the circus, jazz concerts and Greenwich Village parties, Harlem and the Bowery.

The Weegee listening station evaluated in this study was two sets of six push-button audio stops accessible from four different listening "wands." Each wand was connected to three of the six stops. The listening station was located in a gallery entry hall in the West Pavilion, just outside the Weegee exhibition (see Appendix for a photograph of the station). There were entrances/exits at opposite ends of the gallery; the Weegee listening station was available at only one entrance/exit.

Content on the Weegee listening station included radio interviews with Weegee himself. Radio talk show host Mary Margaret McBride interviewed Weegee for station WEAJ on July 11, 1945, shortly after the publication of *Naked City*, his first book of photographs. The WEAJ interview was provided courtesy of the Mary Margaret McBride Estate and The Library of Congress Recorded Sound Division. The six audio stops were: Weegee tells how he got his name; Weegee explains his unusual darkroom practices; How Weegee beat everybody to the scene; Weegee discusses pie wagons, murderers, and fagans; Two murders, \$35 - how Weegee got paid; and Weegee describes the mysterious Park Mugging. These interviews can be found at:

<http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/weegee/speaks.html>

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Weegee listening station evaluation was primarily qualitative in nature, employing surveys and interviews. 383 surveys were taken outside the gallery, giving us a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/- 5%. Data was entered by hand into a Web survey-hosting tool. The interviews were conducted individually until the results began to repeat, for a total of 10 respondents.

Complementary to the study is a set of quantitative data collected for each audio stop as it was played. Measurements like number of times each stop was played, average time per use, and high and low usage dates and times are available but are not included in this report.

Visitors participating in the survey were randomly selected; every 3rd visitor exiting the gallery was asked to participate until 383 surveys had been taken. Underage visitors were not included. Visitors participating in the interviews were also randomly selected; every 5th user of the listening station was asked to participate for a total of 10 interviews.

REPORTING

Through consultation with Museum staff evaluation questions were devised to guide this study. Those questions are listed below in Principal Findings, followed first by the evaluator's discussion of the study results and then by supporting data from each of the study techniques (where appropriate) noted in Study Methodology above.

The survey results can be cross-tabulated to show an additional level of detail not presented in this report. Cross-tabulated survey data is available by contacting the author.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

12% of all exhibition visitors used the Weegee listening station. Increasing the number of wands at a single entrance/exit would not increase usage of the listening station, since only 3% of users had to wait for someone else to finish before using the station. This study can't assess with a high degree of certainty the potential effect of a second listening station at the opposite end of the gallery on the usage rate.

Listening station users were far more likely than non-users to say they liked the Weegee exhibition more than other photography exhibitions they had seen (57% to 35%), suggesting that the Weegee listening station either added significantly to visitor enjoyment or that the most enthusiastic gallery visitors used the listening station at a higher rate. 80% of users agreed with the statement, "My experience in the gallery was enhanced by the listening station."

Listening station users were also far more likely than non-users to say that a portable audio device would improve their experience (32% to 11%), and less likely than non-users to say that more detailed wall text would improve their experience in the galleries (7% to 16%). This suggests a subset of exhibition visitors who have a strong interest in technology-assisted experiences in the gallery, and a majority of visitors with little interest in the museum technologies presented in the survey.

97% of listening station users thought the station was easy to use, and 87% agreed that the quality of the station was what they would expect from the Getty.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

DEMOGRAPHICS

There was no important statistical difference in exhibition attendance or listening station usage by males or females.

Response rates are given below following questions or statements as they appeared in the survey.

You are:

	Weegee Listening Station Survey		
	All users	Listening Station Non-Users	Listening Station Users
Male	56%	57%	48%
Female	44%	43%	52%

Users and non-users were accompanied by roughly the same mix of family members, friends and guests.

Who did you come to the Getty with today?

	Weegee Listening Station Survey		
	All users	Listening Station Non-Users	Listening Station Users
Alone	7%	7%	7%
Family members	51%	50%	58%
Friends	40%	41%	33%
Out of town guests	11%	11%	9%
Tour group	2%	2%	2%

There was no statistical difference between users and non-users when measuring for attendance with a minor.

Are any children under 18 years of age with you today?

	Weegee Listening Station Survey		
	All users	Listening Station Non-Users	Listening Station Users
Yes	12%	11%	18%
No	88%	89%	82%

Listening station users were only slightly less likely to have a graduate degree, but more likely to have completed some graduate work. Since users were younger than non-users, they may still be in school.

Your highest level of education?

	Weegee Listening Station Survey		
	All users	Listening Station Non-Users	Listening Station Users
Some Middle/High School	1%	1%	4%
High School Graduate	2%	2%	2%
Some College/Associate Degree	20%	20%	20%
College Graduate	31%	31%	31%
Some Graduate Work	9%	8%	16%
Graduate Degree	37%	38%	27%

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

Research question topic sets are shown below in *italics*. These were developed in consultation with museum staff. They are followed by data from the survey and/or user interviews.

Question Set One: Length, Number and Title of Audio Stops

- Are visitors comfortable with the approximate length of each stop?
- Do visitors tend to listen to all (6) stops? Too many? Not enough?
- Does the wording of a stop title or descriptor have any influence on whether a visitor chooses to listen to that stop?

84% of respondents who used the Weegee Listening Station reported the length of the audio stops was “Just right.” 13.2% said they should have been shorter, and 2.6% longer.

On average visitors listened to 3 audio stops with about 70% reporting the number of stops was “Just right.” By looking at the clustering of responses to the question about the number of stops used it’s clear that making more stops available would not have resulted in a higher average number to stops listened to; 88% of the Weegee Listening Station users listened to 4 or fewer stops even though 6 were available.

Most users of the Listening Station selected stops by title (58%) or randomly (29%). It should be noted that the only options for stop selection were title, order, random selection, or availability. There were no other cues to assist users in selecting stops.

How many stops did you listen to?

Weegee Listening Station Survey	
	Listening Station Users
1	10%
2	26%
3	31%
4	13%
5	0%
6	13%
I'm not sure	8%

The stops I listened to I selected because:

Weegee Listening Station Survey	
	Listening Station Users
I chose stops randomly	29%
I was interested in the title	58%
I just picked what was available	8%
Other	5%

Question Set Two: Overall Experience

- Does the station enhance the gallery experience?
- Did the listening station users get more out of the exhibition than the non-users?
- Was it easy to use?
- Are enough listening stations available so people have easy access?

45 out of 383 respondents (12%) used the listening station.

59% of Weegee Listening Station users said they enjoyed this exhibition more than other photography exhibitions they had seen, and 36.4% said it was about the same. Of the Listening Station non-users, only 35% said they enjoyed it more than other photography exhibitions, and 47% said it was about the same. This suggests two possibilities: those who enjoyed the exhibition more were seeking audio content to further enhance their experience, or the Listening Station increased the overall enjoyment of the gallery experience.

The survey asked Weegee listening station users if their experience in the exhibition was enhanced by the listening station. Nearly 80% either agreed or

strongly agreed. The survey asked all visitors what they thought would improve their experience in the exhibition. 46% said “Nothing. I thought it was just right.” 14% said “A portable audio device, with narration.” And only 3% said “More listening stations.” The most common response, after “nothing”, was “A bigger gallery.” 20% of visitors said a bigger gallery would improve their experience in the exhibition.

97% of Weege Listening Station users did not have to wait for others to finish before using the listening station. This response combined with the fact that only 3% of visitors said the gallery needed more stations strongly suggests that the number of stations and wands was adequate for user needs. Because the survey did not ask all gallery visitors if they saw the listening station, it only asked if they used it, we can't assess the value of adding a second station at the opposite end of the gallery.

Did you have to wait for others to finish before you used the listening station?

Weege Listening Station Survey	
	Listening Station Users
Yes	3%
No	97%

Did you use the Weege listening station (it's a row of four "wands" outside the gallery with audio information about the exhibition)?

Weege Listening Station Survey	
Listening Station Non-Users	Listening Station Users
88%	12%

I thought the listening station was easy to use.

Weege Listening Station Survey	
	Listening Station Users
Strongly disagree	0%
Disagree	0%
Neutral/not sure	3%
Agree	59%
Strongly agree	38%

My experience in the Weege exhibition was enhanced by the Weege listening station.

Weege Listening Station Survey	
	Listening Station Users
Strongly disagree	0%
Disagree	0%
Neutral/not sure	21%
Agree	62%
Strongly agree	18%

How does the Weege exhibition compare to other photography exhibitions you have seen?

	Weege Listening Station Survey		
	All users	Listening Station Non-Users	Listening Station Users
I haven't seen other photography exhibitions.	8%	9%	5%
I enjoyed it more.	38%	35%	57%
About the same	46%	47%	36%
It wasn't as good as others I've seen	9%	9%	2%

Considering your response to the question above, what would improve your experience in the Weege exhibition?

	Weege Listening Station Survey		
	All users	Listening Station Non-Users	Listening Station Users
Nothing. I thought it was just right.	46%	47%	41%
It needs more supplemental materials	7%	8%	2%
A portable audio device	14%	11%	32%
More listening stations	3%	3%	7%
More detailed wall text	15%	16%	7%
A bigger gallery	20%	20%	27%
Other	10%	10%	7%

I thought the location of the listening station made sense.

Weege Listening Station Survey	
	Listening Station Users
Strongly disagree	5%
Disagree	8%
Neutral/not sure	33%
Agree	46%
Strongly agree	5%

Question Set Three: Listening Content

- Is the listening station content interesting? Does it compel people to learn more about the subject/art?
- Is the listening station content easily understood or does it need more context (i.e. on a label or as audio narration)?
- Are users comfortable with the approximate length of each stop (1.5 minutes) or would they prefer longer or shorter stops?
- What do the users think of having the wands all outside the gallery in one location?

No Listening Station user disagreed with the statement “The quality of the Weege listening station content was what I would expect from the Getty.” 87% agreed or strongly agreed, suggesting the quality of the content met their expectations, and the remaining 13% were neutral.

85% of the users either agreed or strongly agreed that the content was “interesting”, but only 70% said it made them want to learn more about Weege. 89% said the content was easy to understand.

Questions about context performed worse than others in this section: only 67% said they understood why this content in particular was selected, and 51% either agreed or strongly agreed the location of the listening station made sense. 46% gave an additional written response to this question (the highest rate for additional responses in the survey). 8 of the 18 additional responses were coded as negative for the location and 4 were positive (6 were unrelated to location entirely). Complaints about the location were “It’s not easy to find. It was in the middle of everything and got in people’s way... too crowded. Sort of hidden. Should have been placed throughout the exhibition.”

The quality of the Weege listening station in general was what I would expect from the Getty.

Weege Listening Station Survey	
	Listening Station Users
Strongly disagree	0%
Disagree	0%
Neutral/not sure	13%
Agree	64%
Strongly agree	23%

Audio content on the Weege listening station is divided into segments or audio "stops." I thought the number of audio stops was:

Weege Listening Station Survey	
	Listening Station Users
Too many	5%
Just right	69%
Not enough	5%
I’m not sure	21%

Thinking about the content of the audio stops:

Weegee Listening Station Survey						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral/Not Sure	Agree	Strongly agree	
The content of the stops is what I expected	5%	3%	18%	62%	13%	
I thought the listening station content was interesting.	5%	3%	8%	59%	26%	
What I heard made me want to learn more about Weegee.	5%	3%	23%	49%	21%	
I thought the listening station content was easy to understand.	5%	3%	3%	54%	33%	
I understood why they selected this content for me to listen to.	5%	8%	21%	46%	21%	

I think the duration of the audio stops on the Weegee listening station should be:

Weegee Listening Station Survey	
	Listening Station Users
Longer	3%
Shorter	13%
I thought they were the right length	84%

Question Set Four: Usage Patterns

- Do visitors listen to stops in order of presentation or in a more random order?
- Do visitors tend to listen to stops before, after, or during their viewing of the exhibition?
- Do visitors notice or care that they don't see any art while they're listening?
- What makes the visitors who use the station stop and pick the wand up?
- Do people know what the station is and how it works?

- The station was intended to give the flavor of the period and immersion in the time. Is this done better with stations in/out of the gallery? With audio guides?

Question Set Four was addressed almost entirely by gallery observations and interviews. Visitors listened to the stops in an apparently random order, but stated during the interviews that they listened to whatever was closest to their wand, and chose the stops by title.

There was a clear problem with the grouping of the stops; users frequently pressed audio buttons that played on a neighboring wand. When the second wand was not in use, they pressed the stop several times and many never understood why it didn't play for them. When the second wand was in use by another visitor both visitors became confused; the first wondered why the stop he pressed didn't play for him, and the second found his stop interrupted and the new stop started.

There was no clear pattern for listening before, during or after the gallery visit. But it was clear from the gallery observations that users did not return to the wands after listening once. For example, if they listened before entering the gallery they didn't listen again during or after their visit.

In the interviews visitors did say they thought the wands would make more sense in the gallery, but they did not express this as a strong preference. They thought the hallway outside the gallery made sense because it was between two rooms of photography, but didn't make sense because the hallway was crowded and this made them feel rushed. Although four users discussed the possibility of listening in the gallery where they could see the photographs, only one expressed this as a strong preference.

Most users picked up the wands out of curiosity, and none said they had a clear sense of what they would hear.

It was clear from interviews and observations that users knew what the station was and how it worked. The shape and use of the wand and the function of the buttons were immediately grasped. In discussions with users two said headphones would be better because it was a noisy location, but they were in the minority.

In interviews there was a strong preference for audio guides among 5 out of 10 listening station users. This rate was slightly higher than for survey respondents (32% said an audioguide would improve the exhibition) but because of the small sample size for the interviews this difference is not statistically significant. Why were audio guides preferred by half of the interviewees? They wanted more content, mobility and the ability to look at the art while listening (as noted above)

APPENDIX

COMPLETE SURVEY RESULTS

Is this your first visit to the Getty Center?

	Response Total
Yes	195
No	181
Total Respondents	376
(skipped this question)	7

You are

	Response Total
Male	205
Female	162
Total Respondents	367
(skipped this question)	16

Your age

Total Respondents	381
(skipped this question)	2

Who did you come to the Getty with today? (Check all that apply.)

	Response Total
Alone	26
Family members/relatives	194
Friends	150
Out-of-town guests	42
Tour group	7
Total Respondents	379
(skipped this question)	4

Are any children under 18 years of age with you today?

	Response Total
Yes	46
No	329
How many?	0
Total Respondents	375
(skipped this question)	8

If you live in the United States what is your zip code?

Total Respondents	338
(skipped this question)	45

If you do not live in the United States what country do you live in?

Total Respondents	43
(skipped this question)	340

Your highest level of education?

	Response Total
Some Middle/High School	4
High School Graduate	9
Some College/Associate Degree	77
College Graduate	117
Some Graduate Work	34
Graduate Degree	139
Total Respondents	380
(skipped this question)	3

If you have visited the Getty's web site what did you do or look at? (Check all that apply.)

	Response Total
I haven't visited the Getty's web site	175
Information for today's visit	89
Museum hours	102
Methods of transportation	21
Information on the Weegee exhibition	18
Directions	62
View the art before visiting	14
Anything else?	21
Total Respondents	324
(skipped this question)	59

Do you think you'll look for more information about Weegee on line after your visit today?

	Response Total
Yes	170
No	198
Total Respondents	368
(skipped this question)	15

Was your reason for visiting Weegee today informed by stories or ads in any of the following? (Check all that apply.)

	Response Total
LA Magazine	9
The Daily News	3
Impacto/La Opinion/Hoy	2
Radio Station	1
Street banners/Other outdoor signage	25
Getty web site	37
School, University, club or community group	5
Getty e-newsletter	4
Getty newsletter Re:View	6
Relative, friend, coworker	72
Guidebook, concierge, tour group	45
Other (please specify)	71
Total Respondents	251
(skipped this question)	132

How does the Weegee exhibition compare to other photography exhibitions you have seen?

	Response Total
I haven't seen other photography exhibitions	30
I enjoyed it more.	141
About the same.	173
It wasn't as good as others I've seen.	32
Total Respondents	376
(skipped this question)	7

Considering your response to the question above what would improve your experience in the Weegee exhibition?

	Response Total
Nothing. I thought it was just right.	167
It needs more supplemental materials like brochures	27
A portable audio device with narration	50
More listening stations.	11
More detailed wall text.	53
A bigger gallery.	74
Other (please specify)	35
Total Respondents	361
(skipped this question)	22

Did you use the Weegee listening station (it's a row of four "wands" outside the gallery with audio information about the exhibition).

	Response Total
Yes, I used the Weegee listening station.	45
No, I did not use the Weegee listening station.	335
Total Respondents	380
(skipped this question)	3

The quality of the Weege listening station in general was what I would expect from the Getty.

	Response Total
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral/not sure	5
Agree	25
Strongly agree	9
Total Respondents	39
(skipped this question)	344

I thought the listening station was easy to use.

	Response Total
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	1
Agree	23
Strongly agree	15
Total Respondents	39
(skipped this question)	344

Did you have to wait for others to finish before you used the Weege listening station?

	Response Total
Yes	1
No	38
Total Respondents	39
(skipped this question)	344

Audio content on the Weege listening station is divided into segments or audio "stops."

I thought the number of audio stops was:

	Response Total
Too many	2
Just right	27
Not enough	2
I'm not sure	8
Total Respondents	39
(skipped this question)	344

How many audio stops did you listen to? I listened to:

	Response	Total
1		4
2		10
3		12
4		5
5		0
6		5
I'm not sure		3
Total Respondents		39
(skipped this question)		344

The stops I listened to I selected because: (Check all that apply.)

	Response	Total
I chose stops randomly		11
I was interested in the title		22
I just picked what was available		3
Other (please specify)		2
Total Respondents		38
(skipped this question)		345

Thinking about the content of the audio stops:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The content of the stops is what I expected.	2	1	7	24	5
I thought the listening station content was interesting.	2	1	3	23	10
What I heard made me want to learn more about Weegee.	2	1	9	19	8
I thought the listening station content was easy to understand.	2	1	1	21	13
I understood why they selected this content for me to listen to.	2	3	8	18	8
Total Respondents					39
(skipped this question)					344

I think the duration of the audio stops on the Weegee listening station should be:

	Response Total
Longer	1
Shorter	5
I thought they were the right length.	32
Total Respondents	38
(skipped this question)	345

I thought the location of the listening station made sense.

	Response Total
Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	3
Neutral	13
Agree	18
Strongly agree	2
Please explain	18
Total Respondents	39
(skipped this question)	344

My experience in the Weegee exhibition was enhanced by the Weegee listening station.

	Response Total
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	8
Agree	24
Strongly agree	7
Total Respondents	39
(skipped this question)	344

Are there additional comments you'd like to make about the exhibition?

Total Respondents	12
(skipped this question)	371

The Weegee listening station as it appeared during the exhibition.

