



Visual Story

My visit to Night Owls at the Australian Museum

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I will be visiting the Australian Museum

I will use this Visual Story to prepare for my visit.

The Australian Museum (AM) inspires understanding and conservation of our natural and cultural worlds.

Night Owls will open at 6pm, and the event will finish at 9pm, at which time the lights will begin to come back on.

Symbols I will see in this Visual Story

The AM has low, medium and high sensory areas. These are indicated on the AM Map.

Sensory symbols

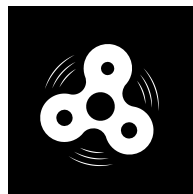
If I have sensory sensitivities, I can bring items that help me to feel comfortable and relaxed, like:



Noise reducing headphones



Hat or sunglasses



Stimming or fidget toy or device

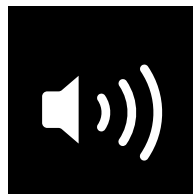
These symbols will help me prepare for spaces that might have bright lights, smells, loud sounds or be very visual.



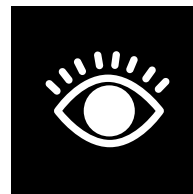
bright lights



smells

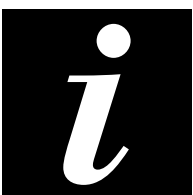


loud sounds

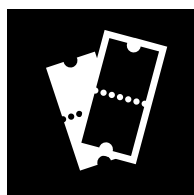


visual

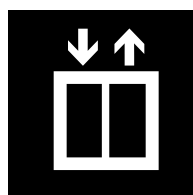
These symbols represent the following general information that can be found on various levels of the Museum



information



tickets



lift



toilets



Behaviour symbols

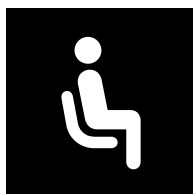
These rules help to keep the museum displays and everyone safe.



I will walk through the AM, so I don't slip or bump into anything or anyone.



There are some display objects that I can touch. Some things may feel rough, smooth, bumpy, soft or hard.



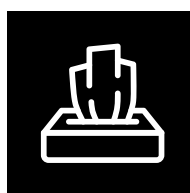
If I need a rest I can take a seat. Or if I am hungry I can use the seats at the cafes to eat.



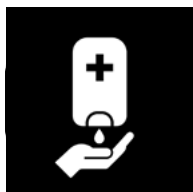
If there is a 'Please do not touch' sign, or when objects are behind glass, this means I won't be able to touch because they need to be kept safe.



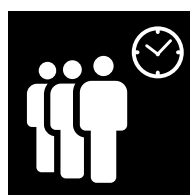
I will not take any food or drink into the galleries and exhibitions. This will help preserve the collections.



I will cover my nose and mouth with a tissue or flexed elbow when coughing or sneezing.



I will make sure my hands are clean before and after I touch something. There are hand sanitising stations and toilets where I can wash my hands throughout the AM.



Sometimes the AM is very busy. I might have to wait in a queue for my turn. I can play with something I have brought from home while I wait.



Where can I find the Australian Museum?



The AM's main entrance is located on the corner of College Street and William Street in central Sydney, across the road from Hyde Park and opposite St Mary's Cathedral.

The entrance is on College Street, which is a main road and can be noisy with traffic.

To plan how I will get to the AM, I can visit the [Parking and Public Transport](#) webpage.

I will know when I am there because I will see the sandstone building with the AM logo.



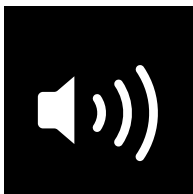


Entering the Australian Museum



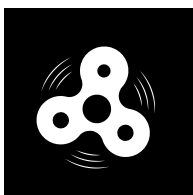
First, I will walk up Museum Walk ramp to the entrance.

A security guard will greet me, check my ID and must be able to see my face. If I have a costume that covers my head, I will be asked to remove it so Security can see my face.



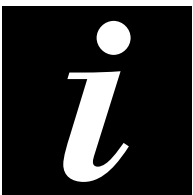
There may be a queue and I might need to wait my turn.

I can play with something I have brought from home while I wait.

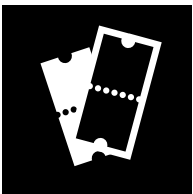




Entering the Australian Museum



If I have pre-booked a ticket to Night Owls, I will show staff my ticket (printed or on device) as I enter.



I can purchase ticket/s to *Ramses* using my credit card at the Admissions desk.

Staff wear a black uniform and have a name badge.

Staff can answer my questions or help me if I get lost.



Australian Museum map

I can pick up an Australian Museum map from the front desk. This map shows the locations of:

- exhibitions and galleries
- cafes
- visitor facilities

I can explore the online map [here](#). I can check the [AM website](#) before I visit to see what exhibits I will be able to explore.



Acknowledgement of Country



I will see the Acknowledgement of Country inside the main entrance.

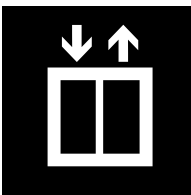
The land on which the Australian Museum stands is Gadigal land.

The painting of the Sydney Shield in Crystal Hall pays respect to the Custodians of this land.

I am welcome to look at and touch this wall.



Lifts



There are three lifts I can use to go to different levels of the AM. I can use the lifts if I am unable or prefer not to use the stairs.

I will need to press the arrow button to use the lift. Once inside, I will press the number button for the level I want to visit.

During Night Owls Level 4 will be closed.

If I have a ticket for the *Ramses* exhibition, I can use Lift C to within the exhibition space.



Cloaking Room



If I have a bag or jacket that I would like to store during my visit, I can take them to the cloakroom on Lower Ground (LG).



If there is a queue, I will wait patiently for my turn. I can play with a stim or fidget toy/device from home, whilst I wait.

I will be greeted by a member of staff who will take my belongings and give me a number tag.

When I am ready to collect my things I will need to hand over the number tag in order to get my belongings.

I must remember to collect items at least 10 minutes before the museum closes.



Toilets



If I need help finding the toilet, I can:

- look for signs
- look on the map
- ask a staff member

The closest toilet to the entrance of the AM is on the ramp, behind the shop on Level G. This is an accessible toilet.

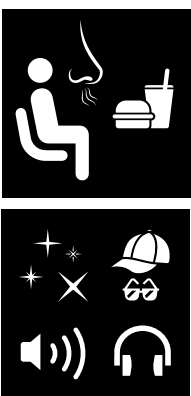
Alternatively, many toilets, including an all gender toilet, are located near the Cloaking Room on Level Lower Ground (LG).

There are toilets on every level of the Australian Museum, including a Changing Places accessible adult change facility on Level 2. I will need to ask staff to access this room.

During Night Owls, the toilets on level 1 will be gender neutral.



Places to eat



There will be a pop-up bar in Hintze Hall where I can buy snacks including pies, sausage rolls and bags of potato chips. An espresso machine will also be serving coffee and hot chocolate which may make some noise and have some strong smells.

I can bring my own food if I like. There will be tables where I can eat my food.

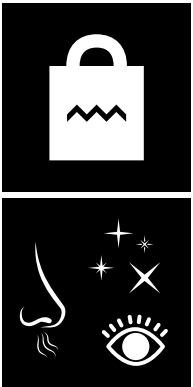
If I am over 18 I can buy a beer or glass of wine. I must remember to show my ID if I am asked to.

It might be busy and loud in Hintze Hall. I can wear my noise cancelling headphones or earplugs if I need to.

I am not allowed to eat or drink in the exhibition spaces. This helps keep the displays safe and clean.



Gift Shop



The AM Shop is near the entrance and exit to the AM on Level G.

I can visit the AM Shop when I start or finish my visit.

The shop has all sorts of things for sale, such as mineral specimens, books, Australian animals and dinosaur toys. The putty and sensory toys are popular. Some of the soaps and toiletries for sale have a strong smell.

During Night Owls, the gift shop will close at 9:20pm.

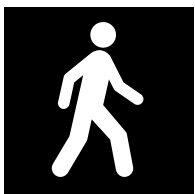
Suggested route to see all Exhibitions

1. Hintze Hall (Level UG)
2. *Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs* (Level UG)
3. First Nations Gallery: *Garrigarrang: Sea Country* (Level UG)
4. *Wild Planet* (Level UG)
5. Theatre: A little bit Fruity
6. Westpac Long Gallery: *200 Treasures of the Australian Museum* (Level G and Level 1)
7. *Minerals* (Level 1)
8. Fascinating Phasmids (Level 1 landing)
9. Drop in Winambuu Card game
10. Burra (Level 2)
11. *Wansolmoana* (Level 2)
12. *Surviving Australia* (Level 2)
13. *Dinosaurs* (Level 2)
14. *Birds of Australia* (Level 2)

The following pages will explain what to expect in each exhibition and gallery space during Night Owls.



Beginning my AM journey



If I want to go to the galleries and exhibitions,
I can use the ramp around the back of the shop or the stairs.



Hintze Hall

- High Sensory
- Busy areas, with a mix of multimedia, loud noises and/or low lighting

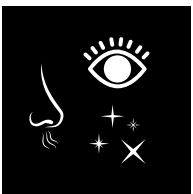


Once I have travelled up the ramp or stairs, I will enter Hintze Hall on Level UG, which is the centre of the AM. I can access many exhibitions from here.



There will be a stage where interviews with specialists will happen at set times throughout the night. I have the opportunity to ask a question to the experts. There will be Auslan interpreters on stage to translate the conversations that are happening into sign language.

There will be a kiosk where I can purchase food, drinks and snacks. There are bins nearby where I can put my rubbish.



There will be face painters set up in the Hall, where I can ask for something to be painted on my face for free. This may be busy, and I may have to queue and wait my turn.

Sometimes, a keyboard player called Jonathan Yung will play music. He will only play for 15 minutes on 3 occasions across the night.

Special Exhibition



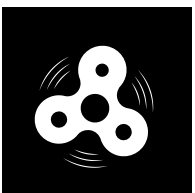
High Sensory
Busy areas, with a
mix of multimedia,
loud noises and/or
low lighting

Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs



I must have a ticket to enter *Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs*.

I can pre-purchase this online, or if not sold out already I can pre-purchase at the admission desk on the day I visit.



Once I have my ticket I will move to Upper Ground (UG) to present my ticket.

My ticket will be scanned and staff will direct me to the designated waiting area.

I will have to wait before I can enter. I will be patient and follow the instructions of staff.

This exhibition is on two levels. I will use the escalators or lift to move between the levels.

Special Exhibition

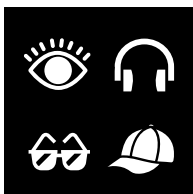


- High Sensory
- Busy areas, with a mix of multimedia, loud noises and/or low lighting

Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs

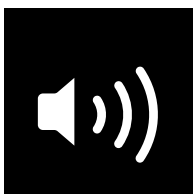


Once instructed, I will move into a darkened theatre. I will sit, or stand as there are limited seats, and watch a 4min video.



I will learn about who Ramses was, his life and accomplishments as a Pharaoh. I will see over 180 artefacts from all over Egypt including sarcophagi, animal mummies, jewellery and masks.

This exhibition uses moving animation images, which may be disorienting. The exhibition also contains several videos playing simultaneously that may feel loud.



I will have to share this space with a lot of other people.

I can listen to the exhibition audio description on my headphones and mobile on this free [Audio Guide](#).

There is a gift shop at the end of this exhibition that I will walk through to exit. I can choose to buy things if I have money.

Special Exhibition



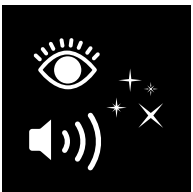
- High Sensory
- Busy areas, with a mix of multimedia, loud noises and/or low lighting

Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs



If I want to do the Virtual Reality experience, I will need to purchase a separate ticket. This is not included in the *Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs* ticket.

I will present my ticket to Museum staff and follow their instruction.



When instructed I will sit on one of the chairs and put on a headset that covers my eyes, I will then put the headphones on over my ears.

I must take care when putting this equipment on, and taking it off, as it is fragile.

The chair will move, there will be a 360-degree immersive animation projected through the headset, and sounds will be heard throughout the experience.

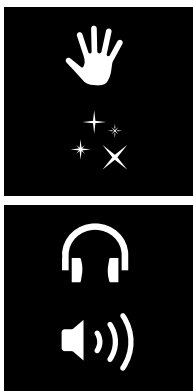
This experience will last for 11 minutes. If I experience motion sickness I may not enjoy this experience.

If I feel sick or overwhelmed, I can take off the headset at any time during the experience.



First Nations Gallery: *Garrigarrang: Sea Country*

High Sensory
Busy areas, with a
mix of multimedia,
loud noises and/or
low lighting



I will walk into *Garrigarrang: Sea Country* from Hintze Hall or *Wild Planet*. I will see Ghost Net sculptures hanging from the ceiling. These sculptures were made using fishing nets which litter the waters of northern Australia and Torres Strait.

This exhibition is dimly lit and has some LED strip lights underneath the displays.

Some displays in this exhibition talk about death. If I find this overwhelming, I can leave this space and explore somewhere else.



Wild Planet

■ Medium Sensory
■ Light areas with few people, some audio and visual noise



I can find *Wild Planet* from Garrigarrang: Sea Country, Hintze Hall, or walk through from Westpac Long Gallery.

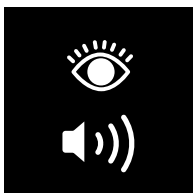
In this exhibition I will see lots of animals and animal skeletons in glass cases. During Night Owls, there will be a Silent Disco in *Wild Planet*. A silent disco allows me to choose whether or not I want to listen and dance to the music that the DJs are playing. If I want to join the *Silent Disco*, I will collect my headphones from a table outside the Theatre. The people distributing the headphones will tell me how to use them and how to change the channels. The music played on the headphones comes from the DJs performing behind a lit-up neon sign that looks like an old cassette player. Each DJ will play different music.

There will be 3 dance lessons held at 6:30pm, 7:30pm and 8:30pm. To listen to the dance lessons, I will change my headphones to the red channel at the appropriate time, and follow along with the instructors.

I can also listen to the exhibition audio description on my headphones and mobile on this free [Audio Guide](#).



Theatre: A little bit Fruity



In the Theatre, I can watch video footage of a variety of fruits up close, as captured by microbiologist Chloe Savard (@tardibabe).

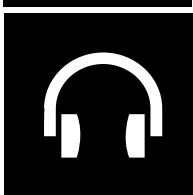
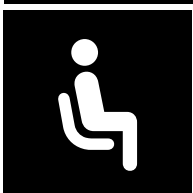
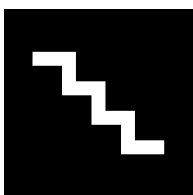
The video will be on a loop, playing from 6pm-8:45pm. While there is no dialogue in this series, there is a soundtrack. Three times during the night, that soundtrack will be performed live by Adoni.

There is tiered seating and I may sit wherever I choose.



Westpac Long Gallery: 200 Treasures of the Australian Museum

Low Sensory
Quiet, well lit areas
with fewer people
and low noise levels



This exhibition showcases 100 treasures of the AM alongside the stories of 100 of Australia's most-influential people. I will walk down stairs to enter the exhibition from *Wild Planet*, Level UG. This gallery is a sensory friendly space. It is quieter, calmer and darker in this exhibition. There are comfy seats I can sit or lie down on if I need to.

There will also be some arcade games that I can play. I can line up to take a turn. Once my turn is finished, I can line up again if I would like another turn. This is so that everybody gets a turn.

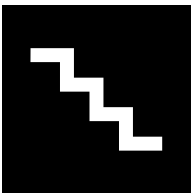
I will see collections of objects, some are very old and some very rare. Throughout the night, the three experts from the stage will appear in this gallery. If I would like, I can choose to talk to them and ask them questions about their speciality subject.

I can also listen to the exhibition audio description on my headphones and mobile on this free [Audio Guide](#).



Westpac Long Gallery: 200 *Treasures of the Australian Museum*

Low Sensory
Quiet, well lit areas
with fewer people
and low noise levels



I can walk up the stairs or take the lift to Level 1 and continue exploring the *200 Treasures of the Australian Museum*. I can discover the stories of 100 extraordinary people who have shaped Australia and made it the country it is today.



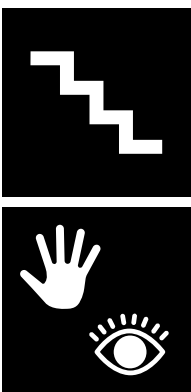
Scientists, explorers, and pioneers; entrepreneurs, athletes, and artists; politicians, an outlaw and a saint.

I can touch the screen to learn more about the people I see on the screen. There is a sign on the right hand side of the screen which explains how I can use them.



Minerals

Medium Sensory
Light areas with few people, some audio and visual noise



I can access *Minerals* from *200 Treasures*, or I can walk up the stairs (or take the lift) to Level 1.

This exhibition is a sensory friendly space. It is quieter, calmer and darker. I can learn how minerals are made and see minerals that glow in the dark.

This exhibition has touch screens and games I can touch and play to learn how minerals are made.



Level 1 landing: Fascinating Phasmids



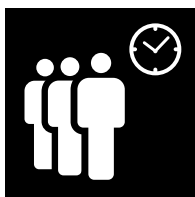
Outside the lift on Level 1 (near the entrance to Westpac Gallery or Minerals) I will find Naomi, who will have a variety of insects including phasmids available.



I may like to hold or gently touch an insect. I must listen to Naomi and follow her instructions. The insects are harmless but I may feel a little tickle as their legs crawl up my arm.



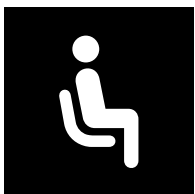
Drop in Winambuu Card game



During Night Owls, the Billabong Waterhole café will be closed. Instead, the room will be set up for First Nations language card game, Winambuu.



There will be two facilitators to help explain the rules and help teach the game.



I may need to line up and wait for a round of the game to end before I can join.



Burra

- High Sensory
- Busy areas, with a mix of multimedia, loud noises and/or low lighting



I can enter Burra by walking up the stairs or catching the lift to Level 2.

This is the AM's learning and play space which explores the migration journey of Burra the eel. This space has interactive features I can touch, listen and see, as well as staff facilitating craft activities, that I am welcome to join in.

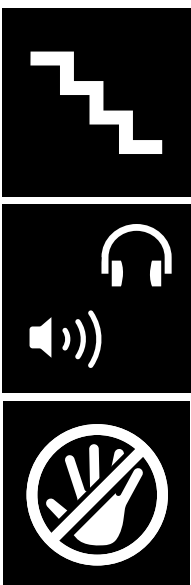
During Night Owls there will also be opportunity to weave with First Nations weaver Jodie Dowd.

There is a quiet space in Burra that I can use, if I need a break.



Wansolmoana

- High Sensory
- Busy areas, with a mix of multimedia, loud noises and/or low lighting



I can enter *Wansolmoana* by taking the ramp from Billabong Kiosk or by taking the stairs from *Garrigarrang* on Level UG.

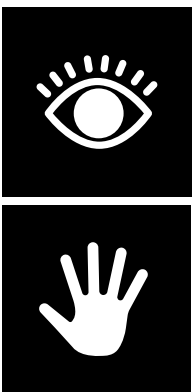
In this exhibition, I will experience the diverse and dynamic culture of Pasifika people through stories and objects across the region. The lights are set lower, however there are touch screens with audio that might be a little loud – especially if more than one screen is playing at a time. I may like to use my headphones.

Apart from the touch screens, I am not allowed to touch objects in this exhibition.



Surviving Australia

Medium Sensory
Light areas with few people, some audio and visual noise



I can find *Surviving Australia* on Level 2, via *Wansolmoana* or *Dinosaurs*.

I will discover the secrets of Australia's weird and wonderful wildlife including giant megafauna from the ancient past.

I can touch these models if I would like to.

Content warning: There are displays of snakes and spiders in this exhibition. I can leave this exhibition if I feel scared.

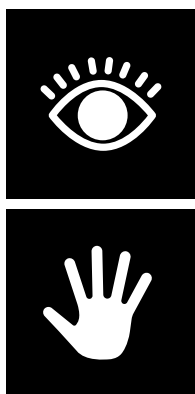
Climate

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Changing Climate

High Sensory
Busy areas, with a
mix of multimedia,
loud noises and/or
low lighting



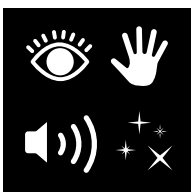
I will find 'Changing Climate' within *Surviving Australia* on Level 2. Here I can learn how Australia has been impacted by the climate crisis and what I can do to help.

There is a large screen in this space that I can interact with. When I have finished with the screen I can wipe it down using a screen wipe which is next to the screen. This will help make sure there are no germs.



Dinosaurs

- High Sensory
- Busy areas, with a mix of multimedia,
- loud noises and/or low lighting



I can access *Dinosaurs* via *Surviving Australia* or *Birds of Australia* on Level 2, or up the marble stairs from *Wild Planet*. I will walk among dinosaur skeletons and life-size models, as well as the fossil teeth, skulls and claws of these ancient creatures.

There are many fossil displays I can touch in this exhibition.

This exhibition has unexpected loud sounds such as dinosaur roars and thunder that I may get frightened by. I can wear my headphones.

I can also listen to the exhibition audio description on my headphones and mobile on this free [Audio Guide](#).

During the night, Winny the Dinosaur, will make 3 short appearances. Winny is an animatronic puppet. If I would like to pat Winny, I will need to be gentle. During the night I will have a chance to talk to Dinosaur enthusiast Mark Radbrun. I can ask him about *Dinosaurs*, or what it was like to be on *In Love on the Spectrum*



Birds of Australia

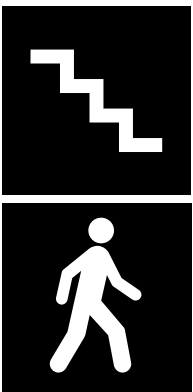
■ Low Sensory
Quiet, well lit areas
with fewer people
and low noise levels

I can discover *Birds of Australia* on Level 2.

In this exhibition I will come face to face with familiar and unfamiliar birds alike, from the iconic cockatoos and budgies to the stunning Regent Bowerbird and adorable Little Penguin.



Exiting the Museum



If I followed the suggested sequence in this Visual Story, I will have now visited every exhibition in the AM.

To exit the Museum, I will need to walk down the stairs or catch the lift to Level G.

The exit is next to where I entered the Museum.

We hope you enjoy your visit to the Australian Museum!

The Australian Museum has worked with Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) to make this an accessible event. "Autism - A Different Brilliant" - Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) Registered Trademark.

