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## Fitzwilliam Museum: Take a Walk in My Shoes

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## Take a Walk in My Shoes: reflections on the senses

This research project explored experiences of how it feels to 'be' in the Museum and how the experiences of people affected by non-visible disabilities can be used to inform and support health and wellbeing in the Museum.

We've created this postcard blog series as a way of sharing our experiences with you - in each series we reflect on different aspects of being in the museum, and share our thoughts as postcards to a friend.

*Emily, Georgie, Jo, Alex, and Dale*

The research project was facilitated by Dr Emily Bradfield (Practitioner Researcher).



**This series includes our reflections on the sensorial experience of being in the Museum.**





## Take a Walk in My Shoes: reflections on the senses

Many of the people I walked with experienced disorientation in the museum, struggling with navigation and a lack of clear exit signs. Simple fixes, like colour-coded routes, themed maps, or subtle path markers, could make a big difference. Quiet rest areas would help too, as some find the vastness overwhelming.

Staircases can also be a challenge - while some lack handrails, others offer a more accessible route. For many, realising others have these feeling too was validating.

Emily

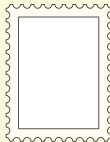
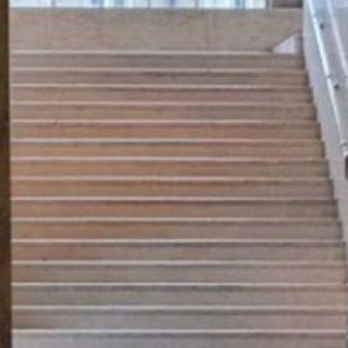


Image: marble staircase.

Take a Walk in My Shoes explored experiences of being 'in' the Museum with people affected by non-visible disabilities.

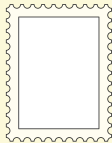


## Take a Walk in My Shoes: reflections on the senses

I'm at the Fitz and I've found the perfect spot to write this from, on a windowsill on the stairs in gallery 33. People are walking past but I'm protected in this spot, and I can watch the world go by. It took a lot to get here this morning, and there are lots of groups visiting so it's feeling a bit too loud. I'm going to go and see my favourite Dutch Still Life paintings and then sit in the reflection space and decompress. It's nice that the museum is large enough that you can find quiet spaces to slow down and reflect. I think you'd like it here, come visit soon.

Georgie

Image: looking through doorway into gallery 33.



Take a Walk in My Shoes  
was funded by the  
Fitzwilliam Museum  
Marlay Group and HEIF.



## Take a Walk in My Shoes: reflections on the senses

Returned to 'Seated Bodhisattva' with her changing expressions that felt as a personal acknowledgement to explore the cabinets nearby. I was enthused by the contrasts of the crowded wonderful objects and discovered a piece by Wedgwood amongst the multitudes of delightful treasures displayed in the inviting glass and wood cupboards. Triggering my own memories of a creative project with Wedgwood...

Dale

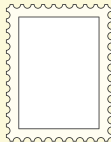


Image: seated bodhisattva in gallery 28.

Take a Walk in My Shoes involved adults affected by non-visible disabilities participating in focus groups.

and his visionary ideas  
and poetry. He made a  
graver but, in his own  
with powerful images  
vation.

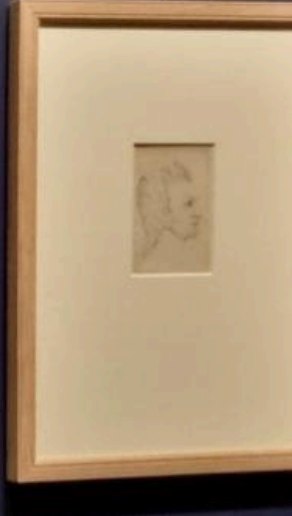
Blake's lifetime, from  
Europe, to the struggle  
ansion of the British  
with the issues of the day,  
of art and poetry could

of artists and writers in  
uality in art and life in  
Flaxman became highly  
his line engravings based  
n Germany, artists Philipp  
edrich explored similar  
not know his work. These  
ense of individuality and  
communicate their visions of

**William Blake**  
Engraving of a head and shoulders of  
William Blake, c. 1780-1790

This engraving of Blake, made after the death  
of a head and shoulders by the  
engraver Thomas Phillips, is the  
only engraving of Blake's head.  
It is a portrait of the artist, and  
not a portrait of the poet. The  
engraving was made by the artist  
and engraver Thomas Phillips.

**Engraving**  
Engraving of a head and shoulders of  
William Blake, c. 1780-1790

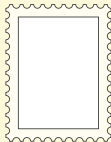


## Take a Walk in My Shoes: reflections on the senses

The Fitzwilliam is large and so may feel daunting if, like me, you have a reduced capacity to engage for any duration. I'd recommend choosing just one collection to visit, so as not to feel overwhelmed. Visiting the William Blake exhibition was enough, or even a bit too much for me to engage with fully, but was still worth the visit. Many of the labels are long, but don't let this put you off (they can easily be overlooked, as I often did, focusing my energy instead on the exhibits themselves).

Jo

Image: temporary exhibition labels.



Take a Walk in My Shoes explored experiences of how it feels to 'be' in the Museum.



## Take a Walk in My Shoes: reflections on the senses

I prize the quiet of the Museum at opening time. If I head straight to the galleries at the back of the museum I can indulge myself in some quiet contemplation. It can be overwhelming when there are lots of people around: you never quite know where to focus your attention. I find that if I pick up a map and know where the toilets are my journey around the Museum feels more comfortable. If I need a moment of rest or quiet, for even just five minutes, I could find it.

Alex

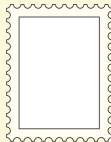


Image: Egyptian gallery (19).

Take a Walk in My Shoes was a research project which took place from March to October 2024.