Touring Exhibitions: The Touring Exhibition Group's Manual of Good Practice, Mike Sixsmith (ed.), Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1995, ISBN 0 7506 2518X

This multi-authored handbook, which provides practical guidance in the organization and hosting of exhibitions, complements the Museum and Galleries Commission's *Standards for Touring Exhibitions* (London). It is an essential source for those intending to tour an exhibition, and for those who conceive of gallery spaces as part of a refurbished or new scheme. After reading, the casually lettered 'exhibition space' can never seem the same again.

Like urban design, touring exhibitions have their manifesto; clear and direct, the publication concludes that 'touring exhibitions are museums: they are the means by which museums will lose their chains.' We should look, therefore, for those sections which hint at this freedom – 'cultural diversity', 'external curators', 'sources of grant aid', 'sponsorship', 'collaboration', and so on. All are covered, but within the three or four pages allocated there is room for little but the basics, with examples and cases requiring more attention to stimulate the user to innovate.

The handbook is certainly directed at those who have an idea for an exhibition, know of some of the possible exhibits and sources, but perceive only a dull blur of frantic activity between idea and execution. As with all areas of presentation to the public, there is potential for financial and legal chaos at every turn, transmuting a great idea into a paperchase, and a 'never again' conclusion.

Clarity, an evenness of approach, current requirements and sample documentation all mark this handbook as an essential library source, which would also enhance your next casual exhibition visit.

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