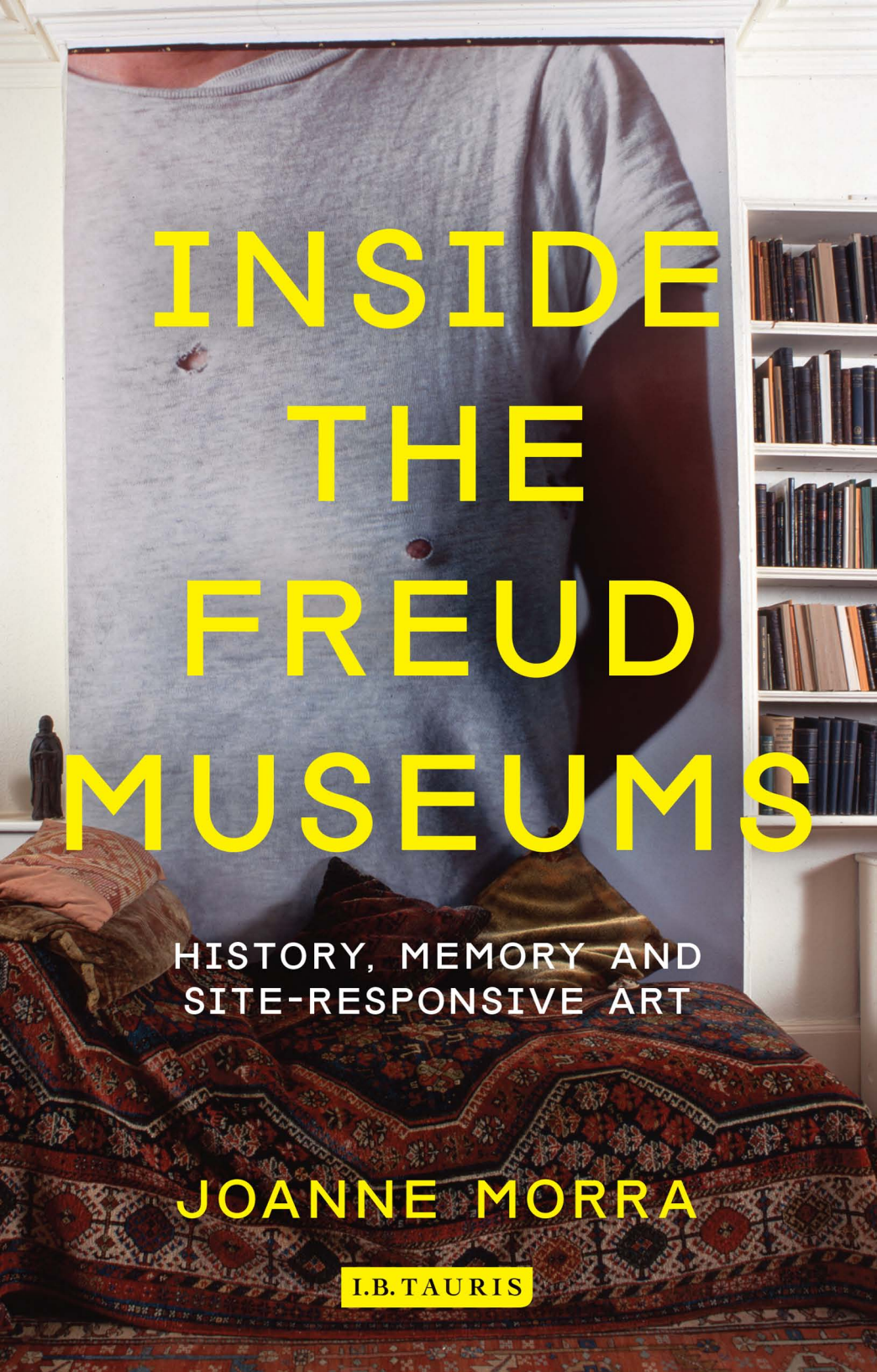

INSIDE THE FREUD MUSEUMS

HISTORY, MEMORY AND SITE-RESPONSIVE ART

JOANNE MORRA

I.B. TAURIS

JOANNE MORRA is Reader in Art History and Theory at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. She is the founder and principal editor of the *Journal of Visual Culture*.

'In this sparkling book, Morra integrates a thorough re-visiting of psychoanalysis, an in-depth study of a number of contemporary art works as installed in a museum not meant for art and, most importantly, she demonstrates the fruitfulness of revising the relationship between site and the art installed there. The concept of "site-responsivity" will transform our thinking about that special spatiality without which art cannot reach its audiences.'

MIEKE BAL, UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

'Rugs and couches, videos and photographs – all play important roles in Joanne Morra's impressive and thoughtful book. Both a cultural and a material history of psychoanalysis, *Inside the Freud Museums* "works through" the charged sites of the two "personality museums" devoted to this titanic figure, via the impressive roster of contemporary artists who have engaged with these historic yet deeply personal sites. For anyone interested in the pervasive influence of Freudian psychoanalytic ideas within conceptual art, this is an important read.'

CAROLINE A. JONES, DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE, MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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I.B. TAURIS
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FOR MARQ AND CARA

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PREFACE

The idea for this book took shape on a beach in the south of France. Thinking about my ongoing interest in art and psychoanalysis as different yet related practices, I began mapping out the research and teaching I was engaged in as a means of formulating a book project. Three events were at the forefront of my mind.

The first was a paper I had given at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in 2007. The lecture was on Freud's conception of working through, and I was particularly interested in bringing together this psychoanalytic process as it occurs within the consulting room as a space of therapeutic practice, with the gallery as a site of curatorial and art-historical thinking, and the study as a location for reflection and writing. As I considered this constellation of very different sites of practice, I became increasingly interested in Freud's technical papers – the texts he wrote about the practice of psychoanalysis. In these, Freud introduced a series of recommendations to psychoanalysts concerning the beginning of a treatment, thoughts on transference between patients and analysts, the importance of dream interpretation, the idea of working through, and the interminability of analysis, all of which are crucial to the process of psychoanalysis. In this particular text, I concentrated on working through and examined its relevance as a mode of understanding how we encounter, curate, interpret and write about artworks.

At this time, I was also teaching an undergraduate seminar for Fine Art students at Central Saint Martins on 'spaces of practice'.

The focus was once more on sites of practice: the studio, gallery, study and consulting room. In preparing this seminar I was very attuned to the students' work as artists. As a result, I combined a discussion of these spaces with what takes place within them, and we considered different processes through which a work of art is made: beginnings, endings, failures, digressions, for instance. The conjunction precipitated discussions around these processes within various spaces of practice. The preparation and delivery of this seminar was a palpable instance of the importance that my institutional and pedagogic setting has on my research. The art school is fundamentally a place of practice. Surrounded by artists, designers and writers, the act of making is key. This relationship to making – to practice – is also key to the approach I take in this book: whether the practice is the production of an artwork, the curatorial strategies of exhibiting work, the interpretation of both, or the practice of psychoanalysis as a therapeutic process, is vital to my thinking and writing.

The third event that motivated this book was artist William Cobbing's exhibition *Gradiva* at the Freud Museum London in 2007. I was invited to contribute to the exhibition catalogue. This opportunity had two consequences. I had the privilege of talking to the artist about his show before it took place, thus garnering insight into the Freud Museum as an exhibition space and the meanings that ensue in the placement of work within such a space. I was also reminded of the Museum's extraordinary history in hosting contemporary art, and the many exhibitions that I had visited there over the years. In contrast to this, I knew very little about the relationship between contemporary art and the Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna, although I had visited the Museum several years before and had found its rather empty display quite shocking and intriguing. It became clear to me, on that beach in Nice, that my next project was going to focus on both of the Freud Museums and their relationship to contemporary art, and psychoanalysis.

Once I returned to England I visited the Freud Museum London and talked to the staff about my idea for a book. I was warmly greeted by them and granted the opportunity to look through the

Museum's archives – about 20 file folders filled with press releases, correspondence, catalogues and other paraphernalia related to its exhibition history. I also contacted the Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna, and there too I had the pleasure of talking to the staff and learning a great deal about the Museum and its relationship to contemporary art. And so the book began in earnest.

In spending time in both museums and with their archives, certain themes began to emerge, and these have come to form the chapters of this book. In the first instance, the themes are based on the exhibitions themselves and the concerns that a diverse group of contemporary artists have with psychoanalysis. This provided the impetus for an analysis of some vital issues related to psychoanalysis as both a practice and a theory, as well as to its history. Although these artworks were by and large not made with either of the Freud Museums in mind, and thus not site-specific, once the artworks were housed within it they acquired a particular interpretative framework. I have come to call this reciprocal dialogue between site and artwork 'site-responsive'. In addition to this archival and theoretical work, in the autumn of 2012 I had the opportunity to curate a show at the Freud Museum London. Working on *Saying It* with artists Mieke Bal, Michelle Williams Gamaker and Renate Ferro gave me valuable insight into how a personality museum functions practically, what issues are at stake in curating and exhibiting work within it, and how this site situates and produces psychoanalytic and artistic knowledge within its environment. In developing this notion of site-responsivity a consideration of the personality museum became vital. The two Freud Museums are at opposite ends of this spectrum in their histories, content and approach to contemporary art. This has resulted in very different interpretations of each museum. It has also given me a chance to think about a general theory of the personality museum. These concerns with artistic and psychoanalytic practice, the spaces within which these processes occur and are exhibited, and the ways in which knowledge is produced through them began this book project, and have remained with it to the end.

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I would like to thank first the staff at both Freud Museums. The London staff have given warm encouragement throughout this project: Carol Siegel, Michael Molnar, Ivan Ward, Rita Aspan, Daniel Bento, Francisco da Silva, Bryony Davies, Lili Spain and Marion Stone. The staff in Vienna have been just as gracious and supportive: Inge Scholz-Strasser, Monika Pesslar, Daniella Finzi, Simona Flaxa and Peter Nömaier.

I have had the pleasure of engaging with the work of the many artists and curators who provided both of the Freud Museums with an extraordinary history of art. Each of the museums' websites provides a brief archive of these exhibitions.[1] I have been fortunate enough to research the entirety of this history. However, I have not been able to discuss in this book many of the fine exhibitions held at both museums. This was simply a matter of limited space. Having said that, this book would not have been possible without the work undertaken by each and every artist who has exhibited in these two museums; as such, I owe a great debt and a big thank you to all of these artists.

I would like to thank the students I have taught at Central Saint Martins for being so clever and engaged in what they do and with what I bring to the table. Thank you to my kind colleagues at Central Saint Martins who have given me professional and personal advice and support throughout: Mark Dunhill, Graham Ellard, Caroline Evans, Alison Green, Kate Love, Janet McDonnell,

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Earlier versions of this research were published as: 'A Resistant Matter', in the exhibition catalogue for William Cobbing's *The Gradiva Project* (London: Freud Museum and Camden Arts Centre, 2007), pp. 24–31; 'Contemporary Art Inside the Freud Museum: Working-Through Transit Documents, Postmemory, and the Holocaust', *Journal of History of Modern Art* 26 (December 2009), pp. 249–73 (English); 274–303 (Korean translation); 'Site-Responsivity, or Listening, Placing, and Saying It', in the exhibition catalogue for Mieke Bal and Michelle Williams Gamaker, and Renate Ferro's *Saying It*, curated by Joanne Morra at Freud Museum London (London: Occasional Papers, 2012), pp. 9–16; and 'Seemingly Empty: Freud at Berggasse 19, A Conceptual Museum in Vienna', *Journal of Visual Culture*, 1/12 (April 2013), pp. 89–127.

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My mother Lucia and my father Giuseppe Morra have been tirelessly supportive of what I do in my work, and the choices I have made in my life. Although we live on separate continents, our daily phone calls make this gap seem smaller. I am deeply grateful for all that they have given me. Thank you.

In the end, it is onto my immediate family that the biggest burden falls, and to which I owe the greatest gratitude. To my partner Marquard Smith, you were there at the beginning of this project, on that beach in the south of France when it was but an idea and were present and intellectually engaged with it through to the end; as always, thank you. And, finally, an enormous thank-you to our 6-year-old daughter Cara: you took many years to join us, but since you have arrived my life is full of irrepressible love and laughter. This book is for them.

INTRODUCTION

Inside the Freud Museums: History, Memory and Site-Responsive Art has three overarching theses. The first concerns the personality museum, a type of museum dedicated to the life and work of an individual. Although the personality museum was very popular in the late nineteenth century, and experienced resurgences in the 1940s and again since the 1970s, scholarship on it is only now beginning to emerge. This book shows that the personality museum is a complex site comprising spaces, objects and practices. The practices that constitute it range from the experience of everyday life and the death of an individual, to the individual's cultural production and its dissemination, and the conservation and curation of the objects that were once owned and used by the individual who resided and worked there. These museums also embody various histories and memories associated with the site and its inhabitants. The Freud Museums in Vienna and London form my case studies: in their particularity they offer two distinctive views of the personality museum and as such are appropriate bookends to a broader theory of this type of museum.

The book's second thesis advances the idea that the intervention of contemporary art into the personality museum, as well as other institutional spaces, warrants a new category of artistic practice, one that I call site-responsive. For the past 50 years, contemporary art has made its way into institutional spaces other than the white cube gallery. These are often museums, for instance large-scale

historical museums, personality museums, small museums dedicated to scientific exploration, or human development, or ecology, or archaeology, or astrology, or art museums large, small and independent. The temporary exhibition of contemporary art in these spaces began in the 1960s and 1970s with various forms of institutional critique, conceptual art, performance art, site-specific work, and has proliferated over the past two decades. Discussion of individual artistic interventions has taken place, but it is only recently that scholars have provided a more general overview of this history, offering a critical interrogation of this complicated phenomenon. The concept of site-responsivity is my contribution to this discourse. I offer this term as a means of understanding the generative and reciprocal nature of this form of art intervention that is temporarily housed within a space that is not primarily meant for contemporary art. In this book I consider the conjunction of contemporary art and the personality museum, specifically the Freud Museums in Vienna and London, to develop a theory of site-responsive art.

Once these art interventions are situated inside the Freud Museums, they confront us with some of the most pressing concerns within psychoanalysis today. In a fundamental way, the artworks immediately become framed by psychoanalytic discourse and therapeutic practice. In response to this, as site-responsive interventions, the artworks, artistic practices and curatorial approaches come to foreground the importance of psychoanalysis, its history, ideas and practice within our culture. The artistic interventions also challenge and extend our understanding of psychoanalysis by enabling us to think about it differently. Thus, the book's third thesis is that contemporary art has the ability to demonstrate the importance of psychoanalysis for art and culture while interrogating it and presenting it anew.

Cutting across these three theses are the figures of history and memory, each considered here in various forms. The history of museums and the history of art are paramount. Closely intertwined with these are the ways in which museums and art

EXTERIOR OF SIGMUND FREUD MUSEUM VIENNA

are constituted through memory: the memory of individuals, of cultures, of nations. I am also interested in the history and memory of psychoanalysis, and the way in which they are bound up with psychoanalysis as a practice and theory. Informing all of the above are historical events and their remembering, moments that alter world history and those that change our individual lives. The remainder of this Introduction opens up these theses and the integral roles played by history and memory.

INSIDE THE PERSONALITY MUSEUM

Much has been written about the museum.[1] These studies have provided us with a wide range of knowledge about this cultural institution. We are now conversant with the history of the museum, the political nature of its formation, how the museum's architecture shapes our visit, and the roles played by the director, curator, collector, donor and sponsor. We know how the museum acquires, conserves, classifies and displays its objects, and the way

VIEW INTO CONSULTING ROOM, SIGMUND FREUD MUSEUM VIENNA

in which these practices impact upon our interpretation of its collections and the discourses within which these objects function. Given this substantive field of study, it is surprising that so little has been written about the personality museum.[2]

The personality museum emerged and flourished in the latter half of the nineteenth century and was primarily founded within the homes of writers across Britain, continental Europe and the United States – although one of the first to be established in the United States was not that of a writer but of the politician and first American president George Washington. In the nineteenth century, the pilgrimage to visit the homes of authors became popular and featured as an important part of the practice of literary tourism engaged in by the educated classes. Visitors wanted to view the space in which the celebrated individual undertook their work: for instance, much was made of the room that inspired the popular novels of the time, with particular attention being paid to the authenticity of the position of the desk, chair and pen. Aspiring to authenticity meant that the objects were rarely, if ever, rearranged. The staging of these rooms was meant to evoke the sense that the author had just recently put down their pen and left their desk, creating the sensation that although their physical

FREUD'S STUDY, SIGMUND FREUD MUSEUM VIENNA

body was absent, their aura remained present. A visitor was also granted access to the private spaces of the individual's life, such as the dining room, or kitchen, or bedroom and even at times the bathroom. In viewing the mundane aspects of everyday life, the voyeuristic desire of a tourist was fulfilled, while at the same time rendering the celebrated person more accessible. This paradoxical institutional practice of both revering and making mundane the individual's living and working conditions continues to the present day and is fundamental to the personality museum. Having burgeoned in the nineteenth century, interest in them revived after World War II and has done once again since the 1970s. Over the last 45 years, an increasing number of personality museums have been established as a part of the micromuseum boom. During this latter period of growth the Sigmund Freud Museum in Vienna and the Freud Museum London were founded.

Sigmund Freud moved into Berggasse 19, Vienna, in 1891. Here he saw nearly all of his patients, wrote the bulk of the major works of psychoanalysis, carried out a lengthy correspondence with colleagues and friends, hosted the significant Wednesday Psychological Society between 1902 and 1922, welcomed guests, and helped raise his family. His daughter Anna Freud began her practice as

EXTERIOR OF THE FREUD MUSEUM LONDON

a child therapist at Berggasse 19 in 1923 and continued her work there for over 15 years. After the German Anschluss of Austria by Hitler's Third Reich in March 1938, Freud and his family were forced to flee Vienna. In May 1938, under constant surveillance by the Nazis, their exit visas were approved. The family escaped to London and were fortunate enough to be granted the right to take all of their belongings with them, including the now famous couch, Freud's desk and unusual chair, as well as his formidable collection of more than 2,000 antiquities. Over three decades later, Vienna finally recognized Freud's contribution to human knowledge and placed a commemorative plaque at Berggasse 19; in 1971 the Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna was founded at this site.

The equally important Freud Museum London is located at 20 Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead NW3. Reconstructed to resemble the working conditions of Berggasse, it was here that Sigmund Freud spent the last year of his life.[3] He completed several manuscripts, worked with a few patients, received visitors and continued his correspondence. On 23 September 1939, after a dose of morphine was administered to him by the family physician,

FREUD'S STUDY AT THE FREUD MUSEUM LONDON

Sigmund Freud died in London. Anna Freud continued to live and work in Maresfield Gardens, establishing an international practice in child psychotherapy. She expanded on her father's theoretical work, developed her own ideas, and formed a loyal following within psychoanalytic circles. Before her death in 1982, Anna Freud ensured that the paperwork was prepared in founding a museum in her father's name at Maresfield Gardens. The Freud Museum London opened to the public in 1986.

A crucial paradox makes the Vienna and London Freud Museums valuable cases in thinking about the conditions of the personality museum. The key presence in the Freud Museum London is the couch: that very couch upon which those women and men lay on in Berggasse 19. The key absence in Vienna is that same couch. The Freud Museum London holds the material objects within it that are phenomenologically imbued with the history of psychoanalysis: the couch upon which the famous analysands lay; the desk at which Freud wrote, the chair upon which he sat; the antiquities from which Freud drew his inspiration in conceptualizing psychoanalysis as an archaeological hermeneutics and practice;

the table at which he and his family dined. However, the greater part of the histories of these objects and the phenomenological encounters with them during Freud's lifetime took place within Berggasse 19: a space that now sits emptied of them. The Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna still carries the histories and memories of these phenomenological encounters, within the spaces that once held and shaped them. Essentially, the Freud Museums Vienna and London tell two very different stories, and manifest the polarities of the personality museum genre. The Freud Museum London functions as a space of hagiography, which is rather typical of personality museums: it sustains a powerful idea and narrative about Sigmund Freud's life and work, and commemorates Anna Freud. The Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna presents us with a radically different understanding of the personality museum. This space is almost entirely devoid of objects, which has prompted the observation that it is 'not a museum' at all. But, in contrast to this absence of objects, it is overflowing with history and memory: both imagined and in the form of photographic documentation and facsimiles. At the outer limits of the personality museum genre, the Vienna Museum requires the construction of a new category of the museum, and I conceive of it as a conceptual museum.

Ultimately, the questions that arise from these two particular museums are significant for a general understanding of the personality museum. In transforming any of the spaces in which an individual lived and worked into a museum, it is important to ask: what is to be done? Which objects should be conserved and displayed? What narratives will be told about the past and present? To whom will these be conveyed, and for what reasons? And how will these tasks be accomplished?

Inside the Freud Museums answers these questions in a multitude of ways, but for now I would like to introduce some key ideas about the personality museum as a site that is fundamentally constituted by diverse spaces, objects and practices.[4] The personality museum is bound by its primary purpose: to honour the life and work of an individual. Life and work are different from one

another and yet they are inextricably bound. On the one hand, the personality museum celebrates the work of an individual writer, film-maker, artist, architect, scientist or collector – or, in the case of the Freud Museums, the founder of a discipline and practice. It aims to present an authentic space in which the individual practised their trade: where an author wrote, where they sat, what inspired them; where an artist placed their easel and stored their tools; where a scientist developed their inventions. In the case of the Freud Museums in Vienna and London, they represent the spaces in which Sigmund and Anna Freud saw their patients, wrote up their case histories, and theoretically extrapolated from them in the formation, and extension, of psychoanalysis as a therapeutics and theory of the human subject. This semblance of authenticity within the personality museum is crucial as it gives the space in which these activities took place an aura. On the other hand, the personality museum also represents the home – the space in which the mundane aspects of everyday life are undertaken. For instance, the dining room where the family gathered for meals, or the living room in which friends were greeted and celebrations took place, or the intimate atmosphere of the bedroom is re-created. The home may also embody the traumas of life. It is the place in which a family bereavement may have occurred, or it may be the final home of the individual being commemorated, or the site may represent the intertwining of personal and historical trauma. In the case of both Freud Museums, they are haunted by the anti-Semitism that led the Freud family to flee from Vienna, and are also deeply touched by the historical event that Sigmund Freud was never to witness, but that greatly affected the family members who lived on in Maresfield Gardens: the Holocaust, which was responsible for the death of four of his sisters and their families.

Although not all personality museums are so closely connected to historical trauma as the Freud Museums, the relationship to death is often important. The personality museum can fall into the condition of being a mausoleum – a museum dedicated to the

life and work of an individual who has died in the location being commemorated. It can also become a tomb, preserving the lifeless objects of its now deceased owner. In examining this, we can elicit the aid of Theodor Adorno's critique of museums, in which he calls them 'the family sepulchers of works of art'. Adorno writes:

> The German word *museal* has unpleasant overtones. It describes objects in which the observer no longer has a vital relationship and which are in the process of dying. They owe their preservation more to historical respect than to the needs of the present. Museum and mausoleum are connected by more than phonetic association. Museums are the family sepulchers of works of art.[5]

Adorno takes issue with the way in which the museum preserves artworks as historical objects rather than works living in the present. This results in a situation in which the observer no longer has a vital relationship to the artwork, as the object is in 'the process of dying'. And yet, in this same essay, Adorno also argues that the museum is essential. It is the place in which the dying artworks are encountered by a viewer and become vital once again. Adorno sets up a dialectic between the negative way in which a museum functions and the impact this has on its collections, and the necessity of having museums as a space in which the viewer is granted access to these same objects, which thus enlivens them.

The personality museum is caught within this condition. Representing the life and work of the individual who lived and or died within it, this museum is a family sepulchre. For instance, in visiting Sigmund Freud's consulting room and study at 20 Maresfield Gardens, we are informed by the Museum's audio guide that Freud died while lying on a cot in this space and that the items we encounter are exactly as the psychoanalyst left them upon his death in September 1939, thus making clear the space's and the Museum's relationship to death. Created as a monument and memorial to an individual's life and death, the objects within the personality museum often need to remain static to maintain their

authenticity, and are thus rarely rearranged. And yet the museum is necessary because it opens up these spaces and objects to the public. Following Adorno, having visitors enter the museum initiates the vital relationship between these objects and the present; they become enlivened by our presence.

Sigmund Freud made a short cryptic observation about space that is helpful in thinking about the psychic conditions of the personality museum, and the roles played by both the person who originally inhabited the space and the visitor. In the year preceding his death, in exile from Berggasse and living in Maresfield Gardens, Sigmund Freud noted that 'space may be the projection of the extension of the psychical apparatus. No other derivation is probable. … Psyche is extended; knows nothing about it.'[6] For Freud, space is constituted by and imbued with the subject who resides within it. More precisely, the subject's psychic apparatus is projected onto the space consciously as well as unconsciously. We constitute our space with our psychic life, and it constitutes us. For Freud, space was very precisely related to the psyche and one can imagine Freud referring to the way in which the subject's dreams, perceptions and desires constitute and transform it. In following Freud's observation on space, the personality museum, which is founded within the spaces in which an individual lived, worked and died, is imbued with a rich psychic complexity. In the first instance, the psychic apparatus of the individual personality to which the museum is dedicated is embodied within the space. This is noticeable in a room's decor: the arrangement of furnishings in Freud's consulting room, on view at the Freud Museum London, tells us a great deal about psychoanalysis, as the distinctive placement of the couch and the analyst's chair is still key to psychoanalytic practice today. This is but one example, and there are many other instances that corroborate the way in which our individual subjectivity is represented through the spaces in which we live. Beyond our individual self, we share space with family, friends, colleagues, and these psyches also constitute our space. Thus, the psychical projections into and out of a space are multiple. In the case of the Freud

Museums, for instance, they are always linked to Sigmund Freud, but the figures of his analysands are also crucial. The founding of psychoanalysis as a therapeutic practice and theory is dependent upon those patients who visited Sigmund Freud: the women and men who sought him out to relieve the symptoms that made it difficult for them to function in their everyday lives. The history, memory and legacy of psychoanalysis, all that followed on from Freud and what we call post-Freudian practice and theory, are also indebted to many more analysands and their analysts. These, too, resonate within the Freud Museums.

In considering this legacy, it is valuable to turn to social historian Michel Foucault's discussion of the impact of Freud's work, which he considered to be much more profound than the books that Freud wrote. He calls Freud (and Karl Marx) 'founders of discursivity' who 'have established an endless possibility of discourse'.[7] In his view, Freud not only founded psychoanalysis, its techniques and theories, but, importantly, in going back to Freud we are able to modify psychoanalysis itself. In effect, Freud's writings are generative of 'heterogeneity' and 'change' within the field he established.[8] The legacy of Freud's contribution to knowledge, as a founder of discursivity, resonates within the Freud Museums. His original work is embodied within the sites as well as the extension and rethinking of, and opposition to, Freud's ideas.

The most significant materialization of this history and its contemporary revisions is by the Freud Museums themselves. The ways in which they narrate their histories and curate their spaces are forms of what Foucault called a *dispositif*, their ideology. For Foucault, a *dispositif* is the coming together of the workings of a heterogeneous ideological constellation that may include 'discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions [etc…] – in short, the said as much as the unsaid' in order to inscribe 'a play of power' which has a 'strategic function' of 'developing', 'stabilizing' and 'utilizing' its institutional, disciplining ideological regimes.[9] This takes place in all personality museums, and the Freud Museums in London and Vienna are no exception.

Thus the history of any individual personality museum, as well as its objects and spatial arrangements, along with the museum's guides and websites, all work together to strategically mythologize the museum's constitutive elements and tell a singular story about their authenticity and primacy. The strategic play of power required in creating, reproducing and maintaining the myth around the spaces is such that it demands a specific understanding of its own formation, and importantly its repetition, in order to seal the personality museum's history and consolidate its meaning as unchanged, unchanging and unchangeable.[10]

The 'stabilizing' function of the *dispositif* returns us to the personality museum's resistance to change in order to maintain its authenticity, and also reminds us of Adorno's concern with the inanimate nature of the museum – its association with the mausoleum and the death of its objects. However, this condition is not irrevocable. In order to activate and transform a space and enliven its objects we must enter it. In moving through a place, in participating and encountering its objects, the space becomes animated. What a visitor brings to the personality museum is decisive: what a viewer knows about the individual being celebrated, his or her work, historical context, contemporary relevance, and what the person being honoured means to a viewer are essential. A visitor adds a further layer of meaning and psychic projection onto the museum. With each visit he or she brings to life the objects, histories and psychic constitution of these spaces, and transforms the mausoleum into the vital spaces that form the personality museum.

In addition to the visitor, one of the most remarkable ways in which this complexity is activated and interrogated is through contemporary art. By introducing site-responsive art into the personality museum, its ideological narratives are disrupted. As we shall see, site-responsive art engages, challenges and modifies the myths created and maintained by the personality museum, and, in the case of the Freud Museums, the discourse of psychoanalysis itself is enlivened and extended. The richness of the personality

museum's spaces of practice and the diverse conditions that constitute it are fully examined in this book by way of site-responsive artistic and curatorial practices.

SITE-RESPONSIVE ART

Site-responsivity is a new category within artistic and curatorial practice, which is produced when contemporary art enters a space that is not primarily a site for the exhibiting of artwork: a space that is not a white-cube gallery.[11] For instance, we have seen art intervening, in the most productive ways, inside large and small-scale historical museums, natural history museums, literary museums, science museums, personality museums, archive museums and, of course, art museums.[12] This form of art intervention is also a growing phenomenon within the personality museum. One of the primary aims of these site-responsive interventions is to render historical space contemporary, to engage critically with the museum, its collection, display strategies, narratives and history, or to open the space up to a broader cultural context that includes artistic practice. This was certainly the case with the initial charter of the Freud Museum London, which aimed to include historical exhibitions within 20 Maresfield Gardens; exhibitions that by 1994 came to include regular shows of contemporary art.[13] Throughout this book, I examine the way in which site-responsive art produces alternative roles for the personality museum, often ones that embrace the contemporary in activating potential narratives that exist in the margins of those that the museum wishes to tell. As a result of this activation, the contemporary art exhibited within the personality museum often responds to the complexity of the site and enables us to understand it differently. At the same time, the museum initiates a set of unique readings of the artworks. There is a clear reciprocity at play. Site-responsivity acknowledges the way in which the artworks and space dynamically relate to, and respond to, one another.

At times, site-responsive art employs various strategies and tactics that we have seen in site-specific work, or art practices

that are involved in institutional critique, or conceptual art, or performance art or relational practices. Take, for instance, site-specific artworks. Although related to site-specific art, there is something uniquely different about site-responsive work. We know that site-specific art requires its situation in order to maintain its integrity. It is often a permanent artwork made for a particular location and requires both the site and the spectator to complete the work. Scholars have mapped for us three overlapping and non-chronological types of site-specific work. The first is work that is made for a 'literal site', one that remains there permanently and is phenomenological in orientation. Richard Serra's *Titled Arc* is often referred to as an example of this form of site-specific work. The second is work that is dedicated to a 'functional site' that the artist understands to have a specific cultural context although the artwork does not privilege the site; rather its relationship to it is based on process, information, photographs or recordings that are exhibited within the gallery. The work of Robert Smithson is important, as is the institutional and social critique of Hans Haacke, Marcel Broodthaers, Daniel Buren, Michael Asher and Mel Bochner. Finally, there is site-specific art that is nomadic in character and concerned with an expanded understanding of discourse and the work's interpretative field, and thus has multiple meanings depending on the specific site in which it is exhibited. Often considered an extension of its predecessors, this form of art practice includes the work of Mark Dion, Andrea Fraser, Renée Green, Christian Philip Müller and Ursula Biemann, for example.[14] Although closely aligned with these practices, site-responsive art nevertheless features several unique attributes and thus warrants its own term.

Site-responsive interventions are not permanent, as is often the case with site-specific work, and they are not made for a particular site whether it be a personality or historical museum, such as the Freud Museums. Site-responsive artworks and exhibitions have often been shown elsewhere, even travelled to several galleries before arriving at their responsive site, and then travel

again afterwards. Even when they are made for the site in which they will be exhibited, once inside the Freud Museums these artworks and exhibitions form a temporary, critical interjection that responds to and casts a new light onto the site. More broadly, I think of site-responsive artworks and exhibitions as interruptions that temporarily stimulate the site, rather than permanently engage with it. Once the site-responsive intervention leaves the museum, it is often the case that the site reverts to its normative interpretative and ideological function. In this way, it is rare that a site-responsive exhibition has a long-lasting impact on the site. However, it does enable a temporary reconsideration of the site, its displays, narratives and meanings. It was clear to me from the beginning of this project that an exhibition held inside a personality museum or any other space in which displaying art was not its primary purpose was crucial to my argument. When an artwork is exhibited inside a personality museum, the meaning of the artwork is both framed and expanded by the context. This occurs because these museums are multi-purpose spaces formed out of a complicated intermingling of their own histories and memories, as well as what we bring to them. The complexity of these spaces engages with and activates the work of art. In a way, the personality museum has too much context. This makes us profoundly aware of the conditions of art's display and its meanings. Inside such a laden space, an artwork complements or competes with the meaning of the space.

In the case of the Freud Museums, the objects within them are imbued with Freud's practice, his legacy and the history of psychoanalysis. What these objects mean to the viewer is highly dependent on what he or she brings to the space. Entering a space in which 'the couch' is based is fundamentally different to entering any other space in which art is exhibited. Artworks displayed inside the Freud Museums are immediately framed by psychoanalysis. This results in a productive series of alternative interpretations for the artworks and their making. In turn, having the artworks within this context shifts how we think about these

museums, about psychoanalysis, and how artworks impact upon the site in which they are exhibited.

The Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna had its first contemporary art exhibition in 1989, when it acquired and displayed 7 conceptual works of art. A further 6 were added and shown in 1997. Together, the 13 works form its permanent Contemporary Art Collection. In 2002 the Museum initiated a series of temporary solo installations. The selection of artworks included in the permanent collection and those chosen for the temporary exhibitions programme form a tight and coherent body of conceptual art. As for the Freud Museum London, a part of its initial remit was to host exhibitions and run a research programme dedicated to Freud's life and work. Soon after it opened, the Museum's programme began to include contemporary art exhibitions. Since that time, it has held 90 interventions, displaying work by emerging national and international artists. The Freud Museum London has not limited the type of art it has shown, as the Vienna Museum has. Rather, the London Museum has exhibited a diverse range of contemporary art. These differences in the Museums' policies on contemporary art are important in understanding the differences between the spaces and the various ways in which a personality museum is constituted, and will be considered in this book.

Through an analysis of the artworks as well as the curatorial strategies employed in the contemporary art interventions that have taken place within the Freud Museums, I have begun to develop a grammar of site-responsivity. I offer a series of active verbs or tropes that bring to light the enactments made by these artworks and their curation. The artworks and interventions are 'inserting' or 'juxtaposing' themselves within the Museum's collection, thereby interrupting our normative reading of the space. Or site-responsive interventions may take on characteristics associated with psychoanalysis as a therapeutic process by 'acting out' or 'dreaming' or 'voicing' or 'excavating' their discontent. These psychoanalytic readings are encouraged because they are situated within the Freud Museum.

For instance, the use of insertion within one exhibition saw objects of popular culture placed into Freud's collection of antiquities. These site-responsive artworks and curatorial strategy became the impetus through which Freud's passion for collecting objects from popular culture during his time – antiquities – was invoked. This in turn opened up an inquiry into his abiding interest in archaeology as a metaphor for understanding the formation of the subject through repression and the exaction of these buried treasures within the consulting room through psychoanalytic treatment.

In a separate intervention, the site-responsive curatorial juxtaposition of an artwork next to a painting given to Freud by one of his patients – the Wolf Man's dream painting – occasioned an analysis of this case history and the artist's practice that prompted me to read the exhibition in relation to Freud's notion of *nachträglichkeit*, or afterwardsness, a concept he proposed in his analysis of this particular patient. By thinking through this curatorial juxtaposition, in this particular site, I came to align the temporality of afterwardsness, which is the re-emergence and revision of an earlier experience in the present, with the artist's working practice.

In another intervention, the stripping back of the Museum's own objects and its filling up of an artist's writing on her psychoanalysis and her psychic and emotional life produced an environment that played out the psychoanalytic concept of acting out, which involves aggression and retreat. It was the artworks and the density of their curation, as well as the site, that created this tussle known as acting out.

Insertion, juxtaposition, acting out: these are but three of the tropes that enact the site-responsive relationship between art, curating and site. These examples are particular to the Freud Museum London, but site-responsivity is a means of understanding the dialogical relationship that occurs when art intervenes into many other museological sites.

As the curator of the exhibition *Saying It*, which took place in the Freud Museum London in 2012, I asked myself a series of

questions that I imagine the curators and artists before and after me ask. How are works of art to intervene within this space? How are they to do so with critical intimacy?[15] And how to interrupt in such a way as to introduce different ways of understanding the museum, its various spaces of practice and the artworks on show? How to activate the museum? How to rethink the artworks? Each artist, each curator, each artwork that has made an intervention inside the Freud Museums has accomplished this in different ways. Often, listening is necessary. Listening to both what is already in the museum and to the artworks that are installed. But this is not a one-way street. In fact, the personality museum is itself a living, contemporary organism, and it, in return, sheds new light onto the artworks and the interventions staged within it. The artwork animates the site; the site responds to the artwork, and vice versa. In a site-responsive exhibition, there is a reciprocity and dialogue that ensues between the artworks, their context and visitors. This is generative of new meaning. Site-responsivity creates for us alternative roles from which to inhabit and view the museum, and contemporary art.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND CONTEMPORARY ART

The Freud Museums Vienna and London are dedicated to the history, practice and theory of psychoanalysis. Both Museums have selected artworks to exhibit and the Vienna Museum has collected artworks that have some connection to these discourses. Already invested in the discourse of psychoanalysis to some extent, upon entering the Freud Museums, these artworks become further endowed with psychoanalytic meaning. The history of this alliance between museum, psychoanalysis and contemporary art is noteworthy because it represents a unique and long-standing relationship, and speaks to how contemporary art reanimates the history and practice of psychoanalysis.

The radical difference between the Museums, and their contrasting relationship to contemporary art – the focus of the Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna versus the expansiveness of the Freud

Museum London – has meant that the artworks and exhibitions associated with each of them form useful barometers for both the persistence of psychoanalysis within contemporary art and culture and its most significant critical concerns. While spending time within the Museums' archives, I found that particular ideas recurred within and across a group of artistic interventions, their responses to the two sites, and the history, theory and practice of psychoanalysis. From these themes, I created a structure and narrative for this book. As a consequence, *Inside the Freud Museums* is divided into six chapters, and each is devised around one of these themes: the consulting room, archaeology, dreams, trauma, autobiography, the conceptual museum.

My starting point for each chapter is multiple, and layers of storytelling and analysis intersect to form my argument. Each chapter is firmly based upon the close reading and analysis of various artworks, exhibitions and curatorial strategies related to the theme under discussion, and the site within which they respond. Throughout the book, I consider Freud's life and work, and the histories and legacies of psychoanalysis. I also take into account the Museums, their structures, contents, histories and the psychic projections that fill these spaces. In addition, the vital role of a visitor, such as my own encounter with the artworks and exhibitions, is considered and interpreted. In effect, each chapter analyses the productive dialogue between the artworks, the space and viewer.[16]

Chapter 1 is concerned with the Freud Museum London and its staging of the principal space of psychoanalysis – the consulting room. The Museum's primary interest in this space provides a hagiographic narrative dedicated to Sigmund Freud. Theatrical, evocative and functioning as a time capsule, the construction and maintenance of Freud's consulting room at 20 Maresfield Gardens provide us with the fantasy that Freud has just left the room, momentarily, only to return soon. But this mythology is challenged by the Museum's own history, which opens up this hagiographic ideology and takes us back through a series of historical accretions