

## TRANSITIONS

Transitions are bridges or links between each art object. They are the skeleton upon which a tour is built and the glue that holds the tour together. Keep them short and simple, but make them interesting.

### Purpose of Transitions:

- To get the mind working
- To add interest
- To tie the tour together
- To reinforce a point you've just made
- To add information about an artist or art period
- To link one work to another
- To refer to something they'll see later in the tour
- To add mystery, intrigue, anticipation
- To remind them of the theme of your tour

### Example Transitions:

- "This light-drenched scene portraying the daily activity on the river Seine makes you almost feel the heat radiating from the limestone wall; now let's go to America and experience light that portrays a sense of both grandeur and serenity."
- "Degas depicted the dancers and courtesans in 19<sup>th</sup> century Paris, but one of his contemporary impressionist artists could never have painted such subject matter because of society's pressures."
- "Monet's exploration of the light and atmosphere on a foggy day in London allows the viewer's eye to dance across the canvas and experience light for light's sake; but an artist viewing the stars and outer space does something very different with light."
- "This painting was done by a 17-year-old boy; let's explore the differences in one painted by a 73-year-old woman."

### Helpful Hints:

- Don't walk while giving a transition. Be sure to finish the transition before you move to the next piece. Be sure to finish what you're saying before you move or gesture to indicate the direction in which you're going. There is a danger that you will lose the group's attention.
- What if you get to your next piece and someone is already there? Make a positive from a negative situation—"This is a good opportunity to see this work from a distance. What do you notice about the color from across the room?" or "Why do you think this piece is so popular?" Hopefully your fellow docent will notice you waiting your turn and shorten her/his presentation. If all else fails, tell them you'll come back to it and go to another piece or have a backup piece in the same gallery prepared to fill in the time.
- Refer to the transition as soon as you arrive at the next piece.

- Variety is important. Vary your transitions. Don't use the same ones all the time (i.e., "we have just seen this; now we will look at that").
- Transitions offer a great opportunity to add zest. Use words such as *surprise*, *tallest*, *oldest*, *special*, *amazing* to capture the imagination, increase anticipation, and add to the fun.
- Use your transitions to weave your tour theme together. This helps to explain why you are taking the viewer to the selected art pieces.
- Remember: a transition addresses only one discussion point.