



# Civilizing the Museum: The Collected Writings of Elaine Heumann Gurian

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**Civilizing the Museum: The Collected Writings of Elaine Heumann Gurian** Elaine Heumann Gurian

Written over a thirty-five year career, the essays in *Civilizing the Museum* introduce students to the powerful, sometimes contested, and often unrealized notion that museums should welcome all because they house the collective memory of all.

Drawing on her experience working in and with museums in the US and throughout the world, Author Elaine Heumann Gurian explores the possibilities for making museums more central and relevant to society.

The twenty-two essays are organized around five main themes:

- \* museum definitions
- \* civic responsibility and social service
- \* architectural spaces
- \* exhibitions
- \* spirituality and rationality.

And these themes address the elements that would make museums more inclusive such as:

- \* exhibition technique
- \* space configurations
- \* the personality of the director
- \* the role of social service
- \* power sharing
- \* types of museums
- \* the need for emotion humour and spirituality.

Without abandoning the traditional museum processes, Gurian shows how museums can honour tradition whilst embracing the new.

Enriched by her experience in groundbreaking museums, Gurian has provided a book that provokes thought,

dialogue and action for students and professionals in the field to realize the inclusive potential of museums.

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