HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA IN ART POPULARIZATION?
CASE: USING INSTAGRAM TO POPULARIZE ART

General Objective

The aim of this Practical Sheet is to present several examples of Instagram Museums feeds, and how to use Instagram to popularize and promote art with your learners during your art workshops.

In this practical sheet, you will:

✓ discover Instagram Museums feeds,

✓ learn how to use Instagram and its possibilities,

✓ re-use your knowledge of the application to create a nice feed with your learners.

You will need:

✓ a computer or a phone with Internet access

✓ an Instagram account

✓ the content used for the feed (text, image, sound, video, etc.)

Challenges and settings

Today, for any organization, it is crucial to be on social media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest etc. Instagram is one of the most important media for art, for artists, museums, and the public. Instagram is

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focused on the image, so works of art (drawings, paintings, sculptures) are perfect. A piece of art arouses emotions, creates discussions, so, they lead to interaction and involvement.

The Instagram public is very large, rather young, and does not necessarily visit museums. Using this social media allows institutions to create links with this public, make the institution more attractive, involve the audience and encourage them to create their own visit experience. Indeed, if someone posts a photo of a work of an exhibition, he participates in the popularization of this work and the promotion of the museum.

However, before launching yourself on Instagram, you have to evaluate your objectives and prepare yourself. Social media requires time, skills, and commitment. First you have to respond to: is it relevant to create an Instagram account for my structure? For what purpose? (Visibility, interactivity...) For which public? Then you have to establish a communication plan. With this tool you will create appointments for users. Also, you will facilitate the work for the museum and the people in charge of social networks: it will be possible to prepare posts in advance and know what to do without searching for what to publish for hours. Eventually, you have to take care of your image by posting quality photos and expressing yourselves with an appropriate tone. Be careful, social media is a long-term investment.
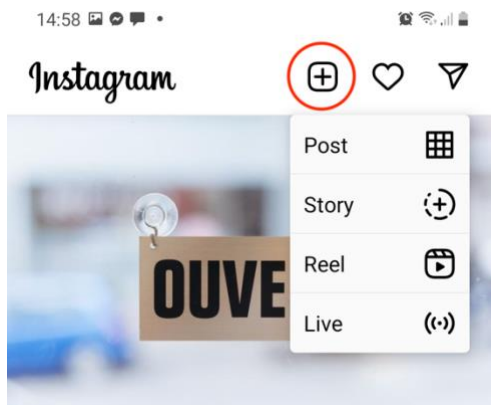
In Instagram, there are many tools to communicate. In this lesson, we will only talk about how to post photos or videos from your computer or your phone on Instagram. The other tools available are the stories, the reels and the live. But you can't create those from a computer, you must use a phone.

Stories are photos or videos available on your profile for only 24h. In those you can add links to your website or your shop, you can also create a survey. Reels are videos inspired by TikTok. You choose music and do a short video (60s maximum) around the sound. The feed, where your posts go, is the showcase for the institution.

Adaptation

1. Preparation

To post on Instagram, we recommend that you have already prepared the content (images, videos, texts) in a folder. The photos or videos must be of good quality. The text must be adapted to the structure and the target audience. Many museums write their texts in the local language and in English too. Don't forget to add hashtags, it is crucial for this social media, we will talk about it later.

2. Create your post

On your computer or your phone, open the Instagram website or the app and log in to your account. Click on the box with a cross in it, at the top of the page. On your phone select Post.
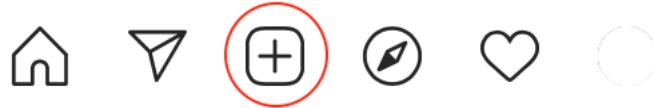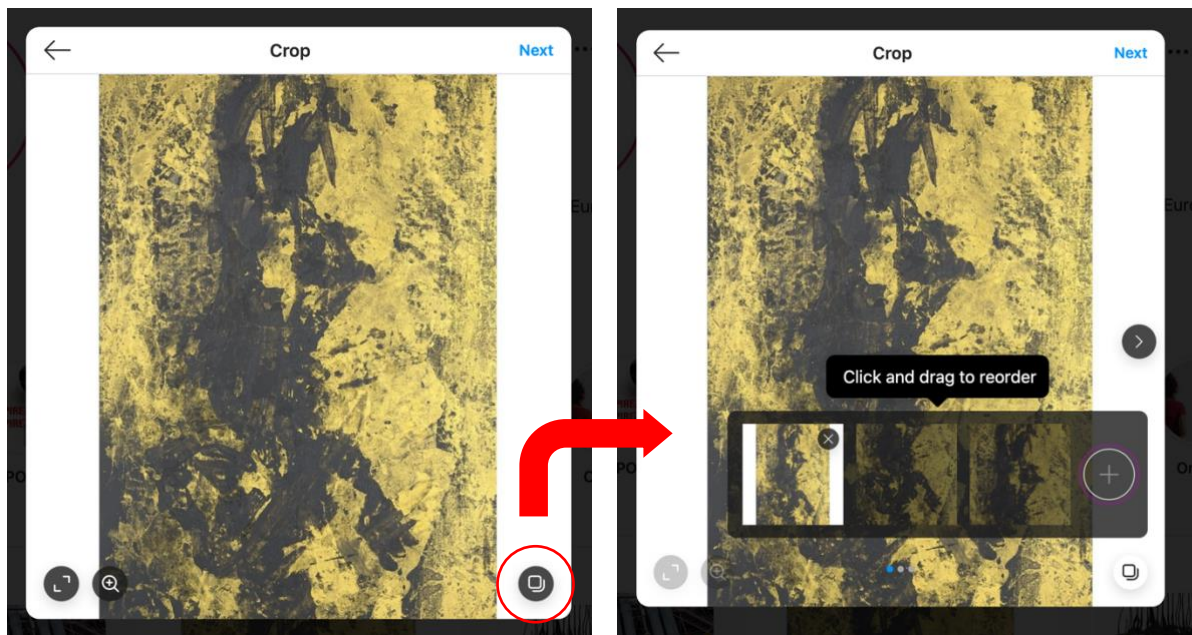

This screen appears.
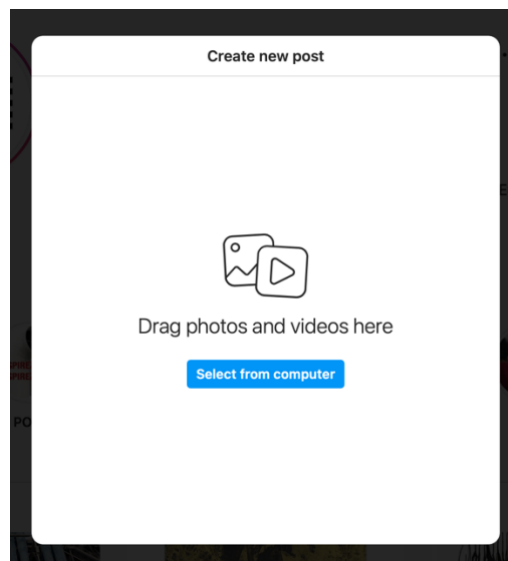
3. Add images or videos

Drag and drop of select images or videos from your computer (or phone). You will be able to add images or videos later, if you forgot one. Be careful, you can post an image of any size, but on your feed, there will be only 1080x1080px visuals, so it is better if your image is a square.

About the subject of the post: it can be a photo of a whole piece of art, or a zoom in it, or a wide shot of your gallery or exhibit. You can also divert the works, by making the painted characters or sculptures speak for example. A very attractive subject for the public is the backstage of your institution. In France, many museums use the hashtag #jourdefermeture (#closingday) to publish pictures of art in progress, or the construction of an exhibit. All those subjects are for information purposes. But you can also create a contest or anything to involve your audience. For example, the Pompidou Center in Paris

offers to the visitors to participate with the hashtag #LeCentrePompidouVuParVous (#ThePompidouCenterSeenByYou). They ask them to post an image taken during an exhibit, and they share it on the Pompidou feed.

Once you have added your image, this screen appears. You can crop the image or zoom in it. You can also create a carousel, that means add other photos.
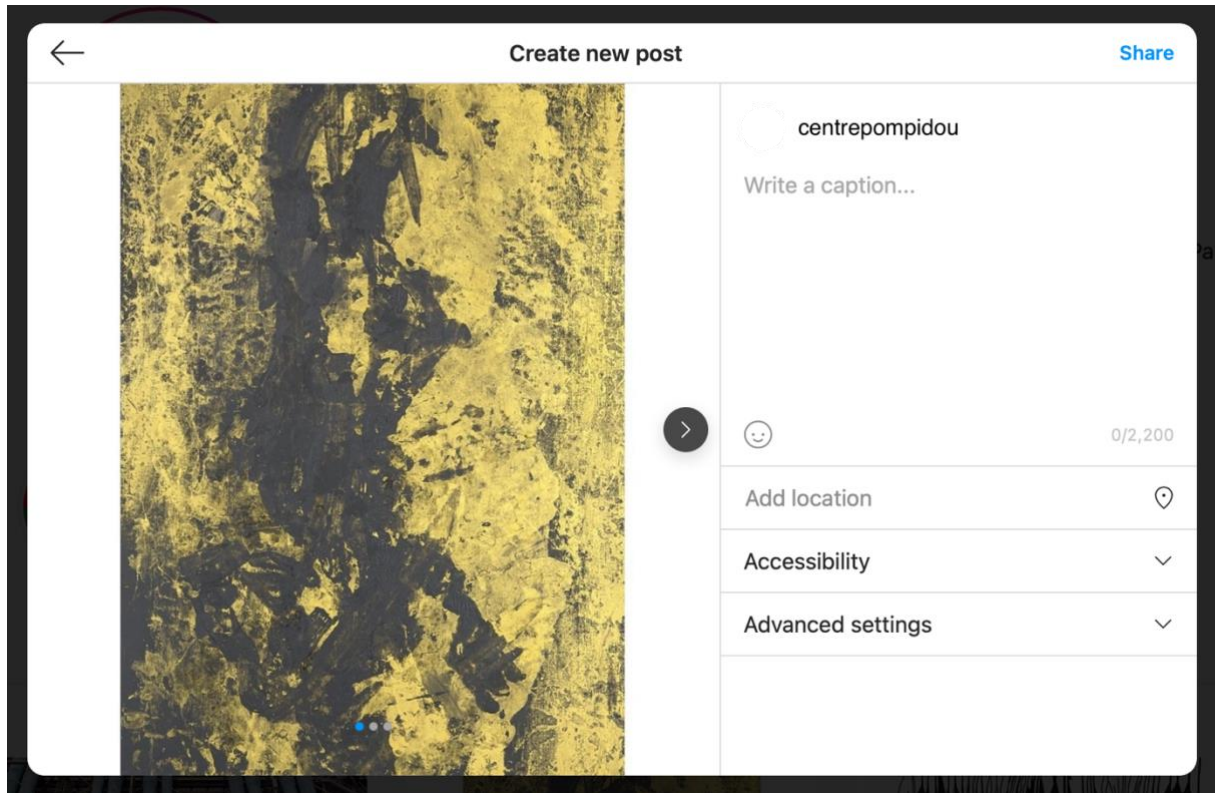

Once you are done, click on the "Next" button. A screen for editing your post appears. You can apply filters, adjust brightness, contrast…
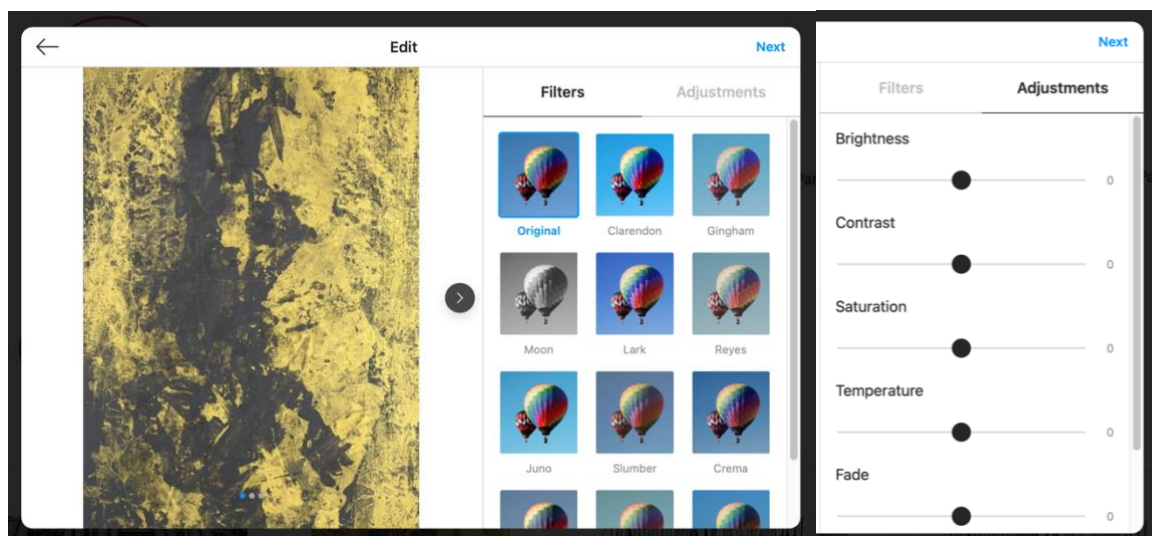
Once you are done, click on the "Next" Button.

4. Add text

This screen appears. It is the moment to add a description for this image.

This description could be only the main element of the art: name, artist (mentioned if s/he has an Instagram account with the @), short description. It could be longer. You can add emoticons, but it must correspond to the structure's image. Another thing you need to add are hashtags. They are used by Instagram to attribute a category to the post and show it to people who like similar posts. For this image posts by the Pompidou Center, it can be: #CentrePompidou #Museum #Paris #Art #ExpoBaselitz #GeorgBaselitz #Exhibition #ContemporaryArt #Painting.
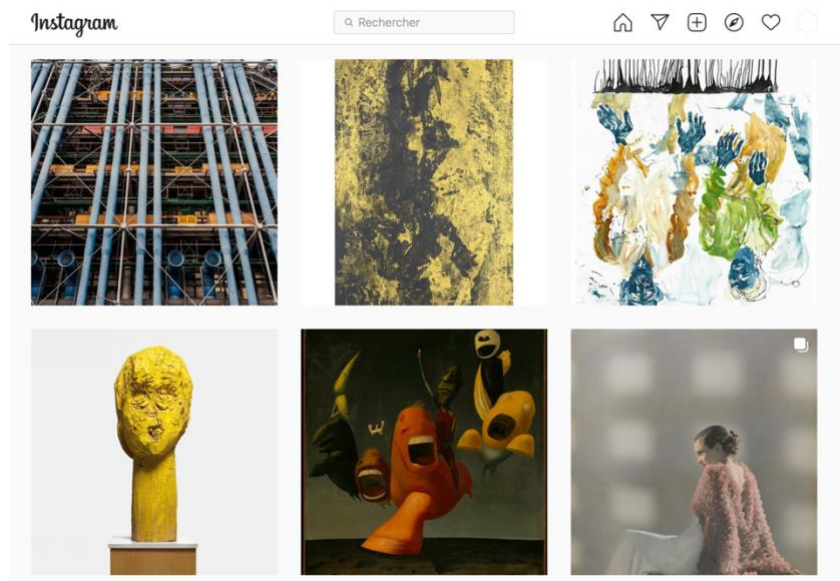
On this screen you can add the localization of the art, or the exhibit you present. The accessibility tab is a box where you can write a description of the photo or video for visually impaired persons.

5. Publish it

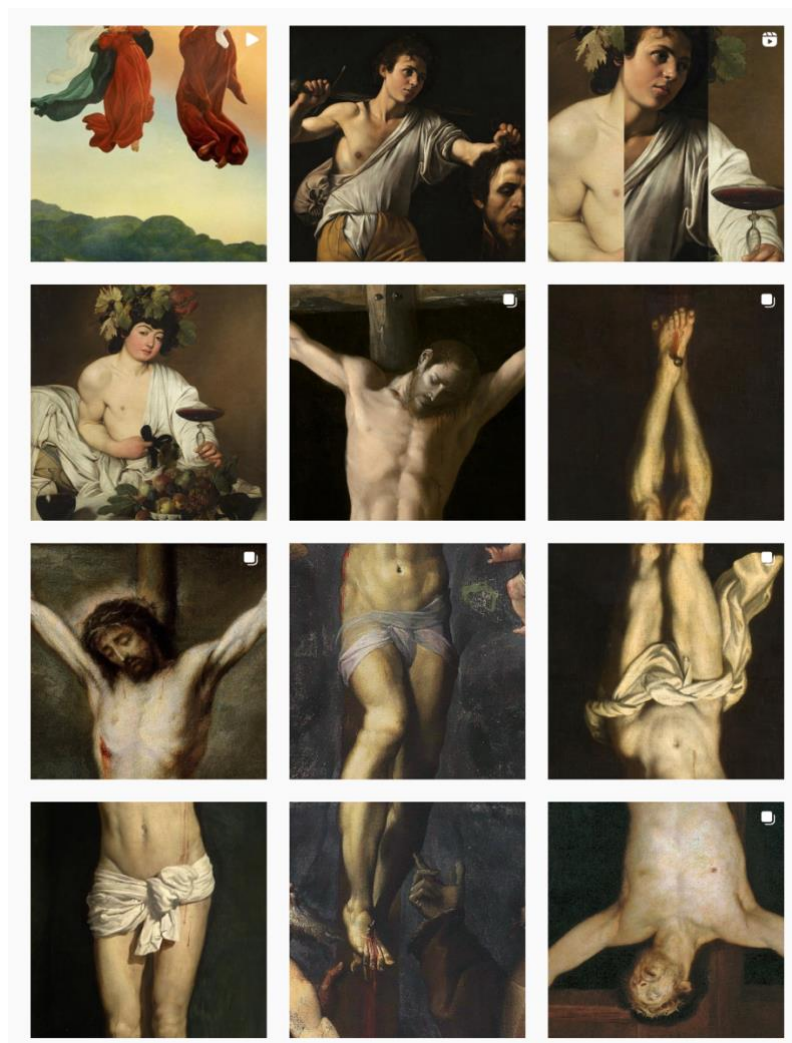Once you have added everything, you can publish your post.
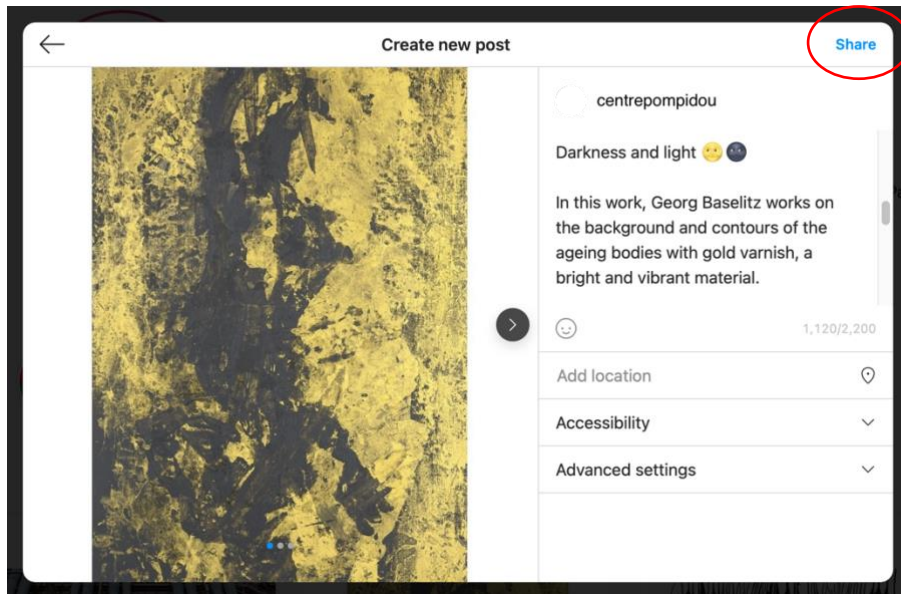
It will look like that on your feed.

And like that if someone clicks on it.

You can try to create a nice feed for example by doing that. (@mr.bacchus)

Practical examples and inspiration

Active Instagram accounts of museums:

- [@themuseumofmodernart](#) (MoMA in New-York)
- [@metmuseum](#) (The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New-York)
- [@museelouvre](#) (Louvre Museum in Paris)
- [@centrepompidou](#) (Pompidou Center in Paris)

Additional resources

Other Instagram account, not museum account, who popularize art:

- [@mr.bacchus](#)
- [@arthistoryhaggards](#)
- [@la.minute.culture](#) (the culture minute post every week a picture of a painting with a joke. In a story she gives more details about the art, the artist, the movement)
- [@daily_paintings](#)