

Matthew Weiner's Mad Men Museum of the Moving Image New York, NY, 2015

In 2015, Walker joined Curator Barbara Miller on a very special adventure that resulted in a very unique and successful exhibition. The adventure started with a long process of interviews that Miller conducted with the team that brought the television show *Mad Men* to life, and the result was a blockbuster exhibition that explored their creative process. As Director of Production and Design for the exhibition, Walker was with Miller throughout her interviews and the excavation and review of props and set elements and other properties that became part of the exhibition.

It was a unique project in many ways, and presented many challenges for Walker. Adapting a set originally built for a soundstage into a confined gallery space—and allowing visitors to access the set without disturbing the various set elements—presented a set of unique challenges. Walker solicited assistance from a team at the Museum's neighboring film production studio to brainstorm and assist with carefully documenting and adapting elements of the sets to enable their new installation goals.

The resulting installation was rich in content, using every square foot of gallery space available with a directional path that successfully channeled thousands of visitors through what turned out to be a blockbuster exhibition.

It was a very special project, and planning it, and digging through the storage facilities in Los Angeles and Santa Clarita to find the set elements was probably one of the most unique experiences I've ever had organizing an exhibition. In addition to several trips to LA to work through the storage facilities, I also had the challenge of turning rented props that had been used in the production into museum loans. The whole project was done with no registrar on that end of the process which meant I ended up arranging all the various agreements as well as the actual packing and shipping, and working out unique arrangements with the individual set shops involved throughout Los Angeles. (WW)

The exhibition was a huge success, breaking all attendance records at Museum of the Moving Image, and getting extensive positive press coverage. Below is a small sample...

- [New York Post](#) [Architizer](#) [Esquire](#) [Wall Street Journal](#)
- [Hollywood Reporter](#) [ABC News](#) [Untapped New York](#) [artnet](#)
- [Gothamist](#) [The Bowery Boys](#) [Architectural Digest](#) [Time Out](#)



Left and below: Costumes combined with various props, all referenced and identified in the exhibition texts, and showing how Weiner used these tools to develop character, contrasting Betty Draper and Megan Draper.

In one area, Barbara's idea was to use the props and costumes from two specific scenes that contrasted Betty Draper (right) versus Megan Draper (left). I installed Betty's world on one side of the gallery and Megan was directly across from her. The Betty installation was very straight forward, but it was actually pretty challenging to recreate the leftover mess from Megan's party! (WW)



Above: Original set and staging of props for Don's Draper's office, featured in seasons four to six of "Mad Men." Note the plexiglas barriers that Walker designed to allow visitors to literally go into the set, while protecting the various set elements from touch by the visitors. **Right:** Alongside the barriers, a long opening in the wall allows a panoramic view of Don's office.



Far Left: Visitors lining up outside Museum of the Moving Image waiting to gain access to see the exhibition. **Left:** The main entrance with visitors immediately engaged learning about Matt Weiner and what led him to *Mad Men*.

One of the main sections in the exhibition was costumes, and it was a strategic selection that Barbara chose to represent each character. I housed monitors in frames that blended with the platform structure, and allowed moving images of the costumes on exhibit to float within the installation alongside relevant objects that went along with each costume, or appeared in scenes alongside the costume. Touching was discouraged by the height of the platforms holding more vulnerable elements combined the use of monitors and display cases as barriers. (WW)



At left: Packing up the actual writers' conference room at the Los Angeles Center Studios in LA where the series was written.

Above and at left: The re-installation of the original writers' conference room from the Los Angeles Center Studio, where the entire "Mad Men" series was written. Walker recreated the room using the actual furniture and accessories used in Los Angeles, and where that wasn't possible, he obtained exact copies (like the ceiling tiles). He even mocked the windows that filled one side of the room using a light behind a window shade—just like the shade used in the actual room.



Above: Original set and staging of props for Betty and Don Draper's kitchen in their Ossining, N.Y., home, featured in seasons one to four of *Mad Men*.

