

SPECIAL REPORT Museums and human rights HERITAGE IN DANGER Deaccessioning CASE STUDY Public-private partnerships



MUSEUMS FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY MUSÉES POUR UNE SOCIÉTÉ DURABLE MUSEOS PARA UNA SOCIEDAD SOSTENIBLE







INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MUSEES CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MUSEOS







EDITORIAL



n a world torn apart by terrorist attacks, the death of innocent victims who visit museums and the destruction of our common heritage, there is an urgent need for us to respond. A number of meetings are presently being held at UNESCO with the participation of the main international governmental and non-government organisations, in order to carry out a common plan of action to fight against illicit trafficking and save the heritage of Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen.

And so, ICOM is set to launch an updated edition of its 2003 *Emergency Red List of Iraqi Antiquities at Risk* in English and French during its Annual Meetings in June, and in Arabic and German in the coming months. A Red List on Libyan cultural heritage in danger will also be issued in the course of 2015. Our contribution is essential in this fight against the trafficking of cultural goods, unfortunately ever-increasing and expanding worldwide.

ICOM supports all museum professionals around the world. As David Fleming observes in the current issue, there is no more important topic than that of human rights. We are all concerned by these appalling events. We all must respond!

This May, UNESCO Member States will gather at the organisation's headquarters to discuss the draft *Recommendation* on the Protection and Promotion of Museums, their Diversity, and their Role in Society. This meeting will be the occasion for a much-needed debate on our museums, the issues they are facing, and their current and future roles.

The forthcoming ICOM General Assembly in early June will also be an occasion to discuss the future of museums in a world facing change. The decision as to whether the 2019 General Conference will be held in Kyoto, Japan or Cincinnati, US is on the agenda as well.

We very much look forward to seeing you all in June for our annual meetings.

Prof. Dr Hans-Martin Hinz ICOM President

Prof. Dr Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine ICOM Director General

____ Museum News

Events, openings, people...

4 Caso Study

Case Study Plain sailing in Antwerp

In Focus

Museums for a sustainable society

3

Special Report:

Museums and human rights A sense of justice On the rights track Eye on the rear-view

14

Heritage in Danger

In defence of inviolability

General Conference ICOM Milan 2016

18 ICOM Community IMD 2015 ICOM Pakistan

Publications Museum-related literature

MUSEUM NEWS

Dialogue with tragedy

by Cláudia Porto, Independent Museology Consultant and Board Member of the ICOM International Committee for Collecting (COMCOL)

W ednesday, 7 January, 2015 began as any other winter day on rue Nicolas Appert in Paris. However, the events of late morning would be shown *ad nauseam* by the world's media and published on social networks at a speed that only the Internet allows.

In the aftermath of the massacre at the headquarters of French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* that left 12 dead, people around the world quickly sought to show that they would not be intimidated by the threats. The shared desire to defend freedom of expression took form in the slogan *Je suis Charlie*.

In the discussions that emerged, some museums opted for silence; others preferred self-censorship. Works portraying the Prophet Muhammad were removed from view and exhibitions were cancelled.

How to act in such situations is an individual decision, but it is worth noting the initiatives of museums around the world that chose to respond to the tragedy. In Portugal, the National Press Museum announced an exhibition in honour of the dead journalists and promoted a school campaign entitled "Humour yes, hatred no". In Holland, the Persmuseum mounted an overview with the front pages of newspapers showing the reaction of the international press. The Dallas Holocaust Museum published a letter of condolence to the families affected by

the Charlie Hebdo attack and the subsequent related killings of a policewoman and patrons of a kosher supermarket, and drew attention to its temporary exhibition about a cartoonist who



Drawing in the Name of Freedom at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

used drawing to combat Nazi atrocities and human rights violations. The Cartoon Museum in London started a collection of newspapers that documented the tragedy. The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts created a 12 x 4.5m panel with cartoons created after the massacre. The *Biblioteca Nacional* (Brazilian National Library) in Rio de Janeiro set up an exhibition of works from its collection by murdered cartoonist Georges Wolinski, originally published by the magazine *Grillo*, sold in Brazil under the military regime from 1971 to 1973.

Such tragedies can lead museums to propose – with respect and responsibility – broader reflection on censorship, religion and freedom of speech. Around the world, more and more museums are addressing such subjects, notably those dealing with wars, minorities and human rights. It is therefore necessary to deepen discussions on how to collect these events and interpret the memories they create, which encompasses the ethics of acquiring objects originating from sensitive situations; curatorial options; the preservation of intangible heritage; and how to do all of this in a participatory manner, helping to reduce tensions and build bridges.

Museums are increasingly aware of the changes occurring around them. Discussing tragedies such as the Charlie Hebdo massacre can be a valuable way to ensure that similar events are transmitted to future generations, encouraging greater understanding of the world and, we hope, contributing to a fairer society.

The memento mori of Monoprix

arly 2015 saw the very first archaeo-E logical excavation of a Parisian hospital – under the offices of the ICOM General Secretariat! The Hôpital de la Trinité stood in the heart of Paris from the 12th century until the late 18th century, and the Neo-Baroque Felix Potin building, housing part of ICOM's offices, was constructed in 1910 where the hospital's cemetery lay. The building's bottom floors are occupied by French retail chain Monoprix, and when the shop undertook preparations to renovate its basement into storage space, archaeologists from the French National Institute for Preventive Archaeological Research (INRAP) were called in to excavate the site.

From January to March 2015, the small team, led by site director Isabelle Abadie, excavated eight communal graves, the largest of which contained some 200 individuals – men, women and children – deposited in five to six levels organised into three parallel rows. "The bodies lay head to toe, overlapping in highly constrained positions to maximise the space," Abadie explained to visiting ICOM staff members. Victims of a mass mortality crisis of undetermined origin, "perhaps the Black Death or smallpox," the bodies were buried all at once, "very, very quickly with sand, which allowed them to stay intact in the same position" over the course of the centuries.

The easy-to-excavate sand facilitated the work of the team, forced to comply with the store's schedule for beginning renovations, and thus working hurriedly to unearth the skeletons and dismantle each one, member by member. However, the removal of the concrete ultimately poured over the cemetery – "obliterating its memory" during the late-19th



ARA HEFT

century construction of the Parisian grands boulevards, a time when "archaeology was not the priority," according to Abadie – represented a major initial obstacle. She noted that a large portion of the cemetery's bodies lie in the Parisian Catacombs, "but due to their sheer quantity, it wasn't possible to transfer them all there."

At INRAP's archaeological research centre in La Courneuve, on the outskirts of Paris, samples will be taken from the skeletons' teeth, and the results of DNA testing and carbon-14 analysis will be cross-checked with the hospital's archives detailing periods of epidemic in order to accurately determine the date and cause of death. Research will shed light on the hospital's management of the dead and yield particularly valuable contributions to the field, given that less than a dozen such hospital sites have been excavated in France.

"Much remains to be discovered," concluded Abadie. And in the meantime, the historical layers of Paris have come to life in entirely new ways for an office of heritage enthusiasts.

Openings

Armando Guebuza, President of Mozambique, inaugurated the Museu das Pescas (Fisheries Museum) in Maputo on 13 November, 2014. The museum - the first of its kind in the country – stands before the historical city port and next to major monuments in a prime area of the Mozambican capital. The project has been underway since 1987 and benefited from a substantial financial contribution from the Norwegian government. Coastal fishing is a millenary activity, still deeply rooted in the cultural life of Mozambique. The museum safeguards the cultural heritage of the fishing communities through research, as well as the collection, preservation and diffusion of fishing artefacts. It currently holds a collection of more than 300 pieces of traditional fishing material.

On 1 April, the newly renovated Museo Egizio di Torino (Egyptian Museum of Turin) opened its doors to the public, following a massive fiveyear overhaul encompassing its modernisation and expansion. The museum, which holds the world's second-largest collection of Egyptian antiquities after the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, features many objects discovered during the excavations conducted in Egypt by the museum's archaeological mission between 1900 and 1935. a period when finds were divided between the excavators and Egypt. With doubled exhibition space and over 6,500

artefacts on display, visitors are invited on a journey that retraces over seven millennia of history.

Exhibits

For nearly two decades, the National Art Gallery of the Bahamas has nurtured local artists, assuming a critical role in the development of the visual arts. This year's 7th National Exhibition, entitled Antillean: An Ecology, was launched on 12 December, 2014. It addresses the issues of identity, memory, religion and politics across a mythical archipelagic landscape affected by global convergences, described by Derek Walcott, Saint Lucian Nobel Laureate, as "a shipwreck of fragments". The 52 artists selected were invited to investigate the hybridity of Caribbean culture through a variety of media. A series of talks and roundtables with leading academics, writers and poets is being held in conjunction with the exhibition, which runs until 10 May, 2015.

Events



The European Museum Forum Annual Assembly and European Museum of the Year Award 2015 (EMYA) Ceremony will take place this year in Glasgow, Scotland from

13 to 16 May, 2015. This annual event is a valuable opportunity for museum professionals from all over Europe to gather together and discuss the changing roles of museums through a series of workshops, panels and interviews involving the nominated museums. as well as a range of social gatherings. Every year, more than 200 participants come from across Europe. For this year's edition, 42 candidates from 21 countries are in competition for the prestigious annual awards and the title of European Museum of the Year 2015.

Conferences

On 1 April, the latest conference organised by CLIC France, a network of digitally oriented museum and heritage professionals in France, examined the complex legal and economic issues surrounding the digital distribution of museum- and other heritage-related collections. Representatives of the Réunion des musées nationaux (RMN), Wikimedia France and legal experts discussed the delicate balance between protecting copyright and encouraging exchange and accessibility to art and culture. Participants unanimously agreed that developments in the digital distribution of images called for an effort to educate the public on copyright issues. Martijn Pronk, head of the publications department at the Rijksmuseum, presented the Rijksstudio project. According to Pronk, Rijksstudio, which invites the public to download images of

artworks from the collection and use them creatively, counted 15m visitors since its creation, and 200,000 private rijksstudios had been created.

People



Daniel H. Weiss was appointed President of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met) in March 2015. An innovative executive and accomplished art historian, Dr Weiss stepped down from his position as President of Haverford College to succeed Emily Kernan Rafferty, who retired on 31 March, 2015. In his new role. Dr Weiss will oversee the institution's day-today operations and 1,500 employees in all areas of museum administration. The Executive Board's priority for the next decade is to secure the Met's future by enlarging its activities to reach a wider audience, ensuring institutional excellence on a national and global level. Exhibition space will therefore be expanded. with the addition of the Marcel Breuer building and plans to redesign the Southwest Wing for modern and contemporary art.



View of the Museum aan de Stroom, Antwerp, Belgium

Plain sailing in Antwerp

Towards good practices in public-private partnerships at the Museum aan de Stroom

by Carl Depauw, General Manager, Art Museums Antwerp; former Director, Museum aan de Stroom

n times of cultural, socio-economic and financial crises, museums, too, find themselves in challenging situations due to restricted budgets and programme cuts. Circumstances differ worldwide, and in certain cases, publicprivate partnerships (PPP) offer good opportunities for museums and private partners to join forces and benefit from cooperative efforts, driven by a shared belief in the need to invest in culture.

Such partnerships are increasingly common, but differ according to the circumstances of their development and the results attained, ranging from ad hoc and short-term partnerships to more sustainable initiatives.

The Museum aan de Stroom (Museum near the river, MAS) in Antwerp, Belgium, which opened its doors in 2011 after five years of construction, has made successful use of a PPP to meet three ambitious objectives: creating an architectural icon for the city; stimulating development in a run-down area; and improving conditions for the presentation of collections and audience experience through the modernisation of the museum concept.

New life by the river

The MAS was the first museum to be built in Antwerp in a century. The effective cultural capital of Flanders, Antwerp has one of the largest seaports in Europe, yet historically, was also a centre for artists (Rubens, Van Dyck and Jordaens), intellectuals and the printing industry. Today it prides itself on its dynamic combination of historical and contemporary, in the fields of architecture, art, fashion, theatre and more. As part of the urban renewal project for the Het Eijlandje (little island) district of the old Port of Antwerp, the MAS is in part devoted to the city's legacy as a historic shipping centre. The collections of the National Maritime Museum, the Folklore Museum

and the Ethnographic Museum, among others, were brought together and linked in a dynamic five-floor layout, alongside a floor for temporary

exhibits and one with the museum depot open for viewing; a panoramic rooftop terrace; a spiral walking boulevard offering sights over the city, the port and the river; a café, restaurant and banquet hall; and four pavilions adjacent to the tower building.

Through cultural tourism and creative industries, the MAS helped revitalise the old port district, transforming it back into a bustling part of the city, attractive for residents, companies and visitors, tourists and locals alike. The building has already become one of the city's most popular and visible landmarks. Renowned Dutch architecture firm Neutelings Riedijk Architecten won over the architecture competition's jury with its warehouse concept consisting of stacked spaces, tying in with the setting's historic function and atmosphere. Neighbouring harbour edge heritage warehouses have all been privately restored by owners inspired by the arrival of the MAS.

Turning to a PPP was a logical step for the MAS: the landmark nature of the museum's construction after 100 years and its innovative ambitions made private partners aware of their potential to contribute to history by supporting the ambitions of the new museum.

The MAS and local government therefore became close partners, together defining new objectives and setting up new business models. As a result of a solid cultural commitment from public authorities, private partners were attracted by this ambitious plan to meet goals embedded in the local community. Meanwhile, the MAS developed alternative ways of finding financial resources. The intensive search for sponsors was led by the Vice-Mayor for Culture and Tourism with support from the MAS Director and Thomas Leysen, an Antwerp-based CEO acting as Patron of the Founders. A fundraising strategy was implemented and despite the financial crisis, the MAS secured four "Founder" sponsors (€800,000) and eight "Major" sponsors

> (€400,000), alongside the possibility of 3,000 small business and individual donors (€1,000). With a required investment of €56m and a construc-

tion budget of €33.5m, the budget was split: 60% came from the public sector and 40% from the private sector.

A helping hand

Private partners were aware

of their potential to contribute

to history by supporting the

ambitions of the new museum

Founders went beyond the call of duty. They invested in side programmes, such as development of the pavilions, focusing on silver history or the Port of Antwerp; assisted in the development of know-how, such as content containing facts and figures on the city; and sought extra visibility, as when a banking company decorated all of its public offices with posters and material spotlighting the new museum. The other end of the sponsor spectrum was made accessible to those who wanted to adopt one of the hand sculptures decorating the museum's facade for €1,000. These hands reflect the legend of the origins and the name of the city, and using crowdfunding, created a community of enthusiastic supporters of the MAS with this club of hand owners. Three years before the opening of the museum, a group of ambassadors was thus established, and went on to grow significantly.

The multiple partnerships with the University of Antwerp, the Port of Antwerp, city districts, local heritage organisations and private companies have made innovative practices possible. The educational role of the museum took form through a clear outreach policy and focused responsibilities for young people, through the programme MAS in Young Hands - an initiative that has since been mirrored in the company policy of Founder SD Worx, through the training and education of underprivileged youth. Cooperation between the city and the port furthermore provides an opportunity for the MAS to help forge an important link with the development of the northern part of the city, which is also important for sponsoring efforts.

Nearly four years after its opening, the MAS welcomed its three-millionth visitor, breaking all records as the most frequented museum in Belgium. A museum survey conducted via face to face interviews with 6,000 visitors found that 94% were "satisfied to very satisfied", and 97% would recommend the MAS and plan on returning. The vertical building creates urban space for events, open-air exhibitions and panoramic views of the city. Traditional museology, by which objects are preserved for their intrinsic historical and aesthetic value, has been replaced by a new approach, focusing on the dissemination of values and meanings of heritage for society, and innovative managerial elements encompassing relationships with the community and stakeholders, reflecting the museum's new responsibilities.

The PPP developed was also successful in terms of sustainability: contracts with Founders were drafted in 2010 for a term of four years, and continued in 2015 for the next four years.



Watch "Building Bridges with Communities", the author's 1st prize presentation from The Best in Heritage 2014: http://www. thebestinheritage.com/presentations/2014/ museum-aan-de-stroom,248.html

What is sustainable museology?

Sustainability discourse in the practice of art museums

by Irene Campolmi, Ph.D. Fellow, Aarhus University and Assistant Curator, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark

he art museum is a site for knowledge and cultural representation, and its modes of production change when culture and knowledge paradigms shift. Sustainable museology places importance on the social responsibility of museums, measuring the impact of these shifts on their nature, ethics and practice.

Looking at museology through the lens of sustainability ethics raises the question of whether museums' traditional research methodologies should be sustained in the future, and how alternative curatorial approaches can develop. Over the past five years, museum audiences have rapidly increased due to measured public programmes, but their modes of representation and participation have also required

museums to make dramatic changes. Alternative languages and cultural perspectives have developed through new media, technology and social

networks. Understanding how to dialogue with these audiences and increasing their participation are crucial to sustainable museology.

Rethinking curation

Sustainable museology emphasises the importance of changing the nature and practice of art museums, abandoning traditional art historical canons to display the collection within new narratives that respond

to cultural changes. Art museums such as the Van Abbemuseum (Netherlands), Tate Liverpool (UK) and Mathaf (Qatar) have shown that rethinking curatorial practices allows for new art historical narratives and unexpected perspectives on cultures to emerge. Inasmuch as art history is no longer based on styles, chronology and taxonomy, today, curating is not a means for translating scholarly research into visual representation, but a research tool for exploring how knowledge is produced through the ways it is displayed and communicated. These reflective curating practices acknowledge the ethical responsibility of museums to provide insightful multicultural and heterogeneous narratives as well as meaningful interpretations of them.

The Van Abbemuseum is a particularly valuable example of sustainable museology, turning curating into an ethical practice fostering the co-production of knowledge by the public and the museum, and questioning traditional research approaches to pave the way for alternative interpretative methods.

It is vital for museums to turn curating into a reflective practice bearing ethical responsibility

Since 2002, the museum has exhibited its own collections through various curatorial installations such as *Plug In to Play* (2004-2008), *Play the Van Abbe* (2008-

2011) and Once Upon a Time: The Collection Display Now (ongoing since 2013). The latter features a series of historical constellations with artworks displayed in a simulation of their original socio-political contexts. According to Director Charles Esche, the display expresses the museum's political and ethical commitment, manifesting the active social role played by the institution within the public sphere. Rather than sharpening the relativism that today dominates the entertainment and cultural industries alike, encouraging institutions to be flexible and change their approach to pander to different consumer tastes, the art museum has to be a platform for reflecting on these tastes through the lens of contemporary aesthetics, and interpret the behaviors generated under contingent political, social, economic and cultural issues.

Producing knowledge together

As a great deal of artistic practice today is co-produced between the artists and the public, and experienced through social networks rather than presented in institutional spaces, the museum should no longer be just a place for seeing or experiencing art, but a space for offering new interpretations and uses of the collection in collaborative ways. In this respect, the Van Abbemuseum's exhibitions are frequently co-produced through cooperation between in-house curators and colleagues from other institutions, artists and also the public, whose contributions are solicited via an open call on the museum's website.

In the process of understanding what discourses and practices art museums should explore today, it is vital for our institutions to turn curating into a reflective practice bearing ethical responsibility. This opens up real possibilities, even for considering how technology and social media can produce new knowledge and offer a different perspective on how we perceive and interpret culture and aesthetics. In order to ensure their future existence, museums can consciously search

> for alternative historical discourses for the interpretation and display of art history. Such an approach will inform the public about the museum ethos, revealing a true commitment to producing knowledge and understanding culture in all of its complex and plural definitions.



Once Upon a Time: The Collection Display Now at the Van Abbemuseum

Green way or bust

Transforming sustainable principles into cultural heritage practice

by Alexandra Jeberien, Professor of Conservation and Restoration, University of Applied Sciences Berlin, Germany

he past 10 years have seen growing interest in the principle of sustainability and climate efficiency for cultural heritage institutions. The costs and benefits of high energy consumption by climate control systems of historic buildings, museums and storage facilities have attracted particular focus. Discussion intensified in 2008, when members of the Bizot Group, the International Group of Organisers of Large-Scale Exhibitions, scrutinised wellestablished conservation climate standards and called for complete reduction of climate conditioning in their museums and collections. This request appears reasonable when considering that climate control consumes high amounts of energy, contributing to the carbon footprint and deepening budget

deficits for museums. Conservators and conservation scientists around the world are well alerted to the potential consequences of uncontrolled climate

conditions in exhibitions and storage facilities (see Doerner Institut Munich statement *Stable is safe*¹ or IIC/ICOM-CC Declaration on Environmental Guidelines²).

Cultural heritage institutions should and will take on more responsibility in the use of energy resources. A number of projects have already focused on the reduction of energy consumption or the improvement of buildings and technology, e.g. insulation or energy-harvesting technology. Nevertheless, there is an urgent need for in-depth research regarding the hygroscopic nature of organic collection materials and the impact of recurring and extreme climate fluctuations. In the field of cultural heritage, the interaction between outdoor and indoor climate is well studied, specifically for historic buildings, whereas the interference of extreme climate



fluctuations on highly sensitive objects has only been explored in part. Research so far offers data from laboratory situations and simulations, or represents a small group of organics, generally celluloses. Most sensitive collection material – organic and inorganic alike – is poorly understood in terms of its hygroscopic behaviour, and therefore represents a high-risk potential given uncontrolled climate situations.

Only recently have research projects and publications resulting from this knowledge gap gained recognition. Earlier projects

The conservation community

should widely disseminate

existing and future data

among various disciplines

focused on the improvement of historic buildings and facilities, encompassing insulation or innovative technologies. New results often consider operational

approaches, taking into account improved understanding of climate conditions or reduction of climate control according to seasonal phases. These efforts represent a promising starting point for further investigation. The conservation community should widely disseminate existing and future data among various disciplines, given the pressing need for advanced research and results to meet the requirements of object preservation and conservation standards.

Symposium for sustainability

A podium for a broader discussion on sustainability in the field of cultural heritage is being provided on 4 May, 2015 at the symposium *Choosing the Green Way*. The event is organised by the University of Applied Sciences Berlin (HTW) and hosted by the Berlin Medical History Museum, founded by renowned pathologist Rudolf Virchow in 1899. With its reconstructed historical ruin of Virchow's auditorium, the venue provides a perfect setting for demonstrating how loss and destruction can still supply recyclable resources such as building materials, construction sites and information in order to preserve cultural heritage.

Choosing the Green Way focuses on sustainable climate solutions for heritage buildings, museums and collections. Given radical decreases in resources and budgets for cultural heritage, innovative solutions for sustainable approaches and best practices for the protection of cultural heritage are being highlighted. There is a special emphasis on object conditions and the necessity as well as potential to explore, measure and control hygroscopic objects in real situations. Speakers will explicitly present on-site studies that have been selected as best practices, and all papers will offer information and open doors for the implementation of sustainable measurements in cultural heritage institutions. The symposium aims to connect researchers and practitioners from all areas of cultural heritage, including site and monument conservation, collections management, object conservation and conservation science.

With this event, the organisers are seeking to reinvigorate discussions on inevitable changes for cultural heritage institutions and call for further development processes. It is intended to connect researchers with stakeholders and inform the public about these challenges.

Choosing the Green Way : Sustainable Strategies in Cultural Heritage 4 May, 2015 Berliner Medical History Museum

Contact : Choosing-Green@htw-berlin.de http://krg.htw-berlin.de/aktuelles-termine/green-way/

2 https://www.iiconservation.org/sites/default/files/news/attachments/5681-2014_declaration_on_environmental_guidelines.pdf

Notes

¹ http://www.doernerinstitut.de/downloads/Statement_Doerner_Bizot_en.pdf

SPECIAL REPORT MUSEUMS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

A sense of justice Museums as human rights actors

by David Fleming, Director, National Museums Liverpool, UK; President, UK Museums Association; President, Federation of International Human Rights Museums; Chair, ICOM Finance and Resources Committee; Board member, INTERCOM



The Cut Cotton Crimes campaign zone at the International Slavery Museum, Liverpool, UK

here is no more important issue in the world than that of human rights – their abuse, and their protection. And there is no more important cultural institution in the world than the museum. Museums that examine human rights are thus of huge importance, socially,

intellectually, educationally and politically.

While each museum is different, the lingering idea of museums as "neutral" places that deal only with the distant past, or the elitist world of art, is now outdated. No longer do all museums take refuge in dealing with safely remote histories; many today engage with the recent past and the contemporary world, where controversies rage and moral courage is essential.

Museum neutrality is not merely the avoidance of a position; it is the covert adoption of a position, disguised as neutrality. The world is full of falsely neutral museums that mislead the public by pretending to adopt no position at all – more disturbing than museums that adopt an overt, campaigning position. As British graffiti artist Banksy recently wrote on a wall in Gaza City: "If we wash our hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless, we side with the powerful – we don't remain neutral". Human rights have to be fought for; rarely are they won without resistance. For example, women's suffrage in many of our most revered democracies was achieved in the face of fierce resistance, and sometimes within living memory (UK 1928, France 1944, Italy 1946, Switzerland 1971, Portugal 1976). Black women in South Africa gained full suffrage in 1994. In some nations, women's suffrage was achieved in the 21st century (Kuwait 2005, UAE 2006), and women will supposedly be able to vote in municipal elections in Saudi Arabia later this year.

A shared ethos

Human rights museums exist all over the world; some are in Western democracies where there is considerable freedom of speech, others in countries where the quest for human rights is more basic, and freedom of expression, limited. What they share is a sense of social responsibility. The modern museum takes its social responsibility very seriously, and increasingly, is expected by the public to do so. These museums do not sit idly by while abuses rage all around them.

Human rights can cover a host of issues, and as such, there are many types of human rights museums. But across the board, these issues relate to inequalities or discrimination of some kind

in education, welfare, economics, health, politics, employment, opportunity, wealth distribution; arising from gender, sexuality, ethnicity, social background, physical or mental ability, and age.

From among the world's human rights museums I will cite just a few examples.

The Vietnamese Women's Museum, founded in Hanoi in 1987, explores Vietnam's cultural diversity and the role of women in the nation's development, highlighting their contributions to revolutionary activities. This museum shows a healthy regard for the role of women, from which many museums in other parts of the world could learn much.

In Cape Town, South Africa, the District Six Museum explicitly campaigns to build a post-apartheid nation. The museum is unambiguous in its social commitment, desire for social reconstruction and analysis of post-apartheid identities. It is a living indictment of the apartheid regime in South Africa and a beacon in the struggle against racist ideologies.

The Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington, New Zealand has a tangible "whole museum" approach to acknowledging the first peoples of New Zealand, the Maori, contrasting markedly with practices in many other nations. No one could claim that equality for all has been achieved in New Zealand, but Te Papa plays a prominent role in illuminating the issues arising from the disadvantages that Maori people have suffered since the arrival of Western colonists.

The International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, UK, opened to the public in 2007, and has since welcomed over three million visitors. The museum campaigns openly against racism and other forms of human rights abuses. One of its strengths is that NGOs such as Anti-Slavery International (ASI) are interested in working with the museum. The museum is thus able to access ASI's

The modern museum takes its social responsibility seriously, and is expected to do so

contacts, expertise, and at times, funding, which would otherwise be unavailable, while ASI gains visibility for its work and a safe place to preserve contemporary slavery artefacts. One joint project was *Cut Cotton Crimes*, highlighting child labour in the cotton fields of Uzbekistan. Another campaigner for human rights in the region is the Museum of Liverpool, which has recently featured exhibitions on transgender issues and on people living with AIDS.

In Canada, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights opened in 2014. A national museum located in Winnipeg, Manitoba, this museum has attracted predictable controversy about what it does and does not contain, but is a landmark in the development of human rights museums worldwide.

A museum in the making is the Museum of International Democracy in Rosario, Argentina, an initiative of the Fundación Litoral and its President, Guillermo Whpei. This venture aims to consider what democracy means globally, and to reflect upon the loss of democracy in Argentina in the 20th century, the age of Peronism, the Dirty War and Forced Disappearances. The museum will be an indictment of tyranny and the denial of human rights that it always entails – sure to be controversial in a nation where wounds are still open.

A vocal network

The Federation of International Human Rights Museums (FIHRM), founded in 2010, is a membership network for museums dealing with human rights, and an ICOM Affiliated Organisation.

FIHRM has made two important declarations: the first, the Rio Declaration 2013, was made jointly with INTERCOM, the ICOM International Committee for Museum Management, at the triennial ICOM General Conference. It reads: "INTERCOM and FIHRM reject all forms of intolerance and discrimination and call upon governments in all nations to respect and celebrate different political, sexual and religious preferences and to encourage their museum communities to explore issues, free from the fear of censorship or political pressure."

The second, the Taipei Declaration 2014, was also made jointly with INTERCOM, and reads: "Museums make a central contribution to the democratisation of nations by encouraging free debate and confronting authoritarian versions of the truth."

If museums can work together across borders, then we can make a difference in the ceaseless struggle against human rights abuses. The time to get political is now.



Further information at www.fihrm.org

On the rights track

Devoted to the memory of struggles and oppression past – and their lingering reality – these examples of museums remind us that human rights must never be taken for granted

by Sara Heft, Publications Officer, ICOM Secretariat



The interior of Cape Town's District Six Museum

The District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa

The District Six Museum opened its doors in 1994 in Cape Town, South Africa, on the site where a vibrant mixed community of freed slaves, merchants, artisans, labourers and immigrants had been established 127 years prior as the Sixth Municipal District of Cape Town. The forced removal of blacks from District Six began at the turn of the 20th century, and it was declared a white area in 1966 under the Group Areas Act of 1950, which forced residents to live apart in racial group areas. By 1981, some 60,000 residents had been forcibly removed to barren outlying areas of the city and their homes razed.

The first community-based museum in South Africa, District Six is housed in an old Methodist Church on the edge of the eponymous area. Within this intimate setting, a permanent exhibition entitled *Digging Deeper* was created by ex-residents, artists and activists. The result is "a multilayered exhibition, drawing on an archive of Cape Town's history that is both lived and documented," says Chrischené Julius, Collections Manager at the District Six Museum. Photographs depict personal experiences of everyday life in District Six: "Because the area was physically demolished, many people still carry a strong visual connection to the District – almost as if they carry a memory map with them wherever they go," she adds.

Ex-resident storytellers recount their personal experiences and guide visitors, whose number reached nearly 50,000 in the last financial year. The museum runs a number of holiday programmes involving an older generation of District Sixers and younger Capetonians. High school students are notably invited to curate exhibitions every year – a valuable opportunity for intergenerational learning, with "much respect and awe shared between the generations, particularly as young people tackle issues of present-day racism, xenophobia and constitutional rights," says Julius. Participatory strategies, critical reflection and storytelling fuel District Six, and "memory is the organising principle of all our work," she concludes. "We believe museums and institutions working with the memory of apartheid are able to become transformative sites: creating critical citizens, but also nurturing a respect and sensitivity for a traumatic past."



The construction of the Mémorial ACTe, Pointe-à-Pitre

Mémorial ACTe, Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe

The month of May 2015 will see the inauguration of the *Mémorial ACTe*, the Caribbean Centre for Expression and Memory of the Slave Trade, located on the site of the former Darboussier sugar factory in Guadeloupe's largest city. A genuine public cultural space, the vast complex of 8,000m² encompasses exhibition halls, a research library, a multimedia library, a genealogical research centre and a multipurpose auditorium, as well as an expansive terrace, restaurants and a shop, set along the *Morne Mémoire*, a panoramic garden overlooking the sea, mountains and Pointe-à-Pitre cityscape.

"Up until now, Guadeloupe was lacking a veritable museum, historical interpretation centre or even proper exhibition hall," according to Thierry L'Étang, Mémorial ACTe Scientific and Cultural Project Director. "This institution should thus contribute to filling a structural void." The permanent exhibition, presented in French, Antillean Creole, Spanish and English, brings visitors through a series of archipelagos, made up of 39 educational "islands" leading from ancient times to 1492; from the post-Columbian slave trade to its abolition; from colonial times to independence; and through today, featuring historical artefacts, artworks, films, sound installations, models and more. A pluri-disciplinary approach was used, says L'Étang, "to move from factual to interpretationbased reasoning by evoking the origins, logics and dynamics of systems as social, economic and ideological mechanisms [...] placing the facts back into a longer, broader memory allowing for the interweaving of universal and particular, and contributing to the building of collective memory."

With a sharp focus on learning and transmission for schoolchildren, students, teachers, archivists and the general public, education will adopt an array of forms, from library and research centre resources to workshops, conferences, seminars and exhibitions, and a range of publications. Research grants will be available for targeted projects examining poorly known features or mechanisms – historical, sociological, cultural, psychological and more – unique to slavery societies. For L'Étang, the *Mémorial ACTe* is "a symbolic reference point for the Caribbean, a part of the world that historically has been moulded by the phenomenon of slavery." Beyond its missions of collection and commemoration, he concludes, the memorial "will attempt to contribute to the existence

of a living and open memory, [source of] creation and mediation in a world marked by intolerance for its religious, cultural and racial diversity."

Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

The Memorial da Resistência is located in a landmark downtown São Paulo building that from 1940 to 1983 housed the State Department of Political and Social Order (DEOPS), the police branch charged with political repression under the Estado Novo and military dictatorship. Founded in 2009, the memorial is devoted to the preservation of memories of political repression and resistance of Republican Brazil (since 1889). Unique on the country's museum landscape, it is at once a place of memory and an art museum – devoted to the "cultural output that distinguishes society, while bearing witness to the atrocities that this very same society is capable of committing," according to Katia Felipini Neves, Coordinator at the Memorial da Resistência.

A long-term exhibition is housed in the former prison space, divided into sections addressing the building's history, sociopolitical context and respective episodes of control, repression and resistance, including accounts of daily life in prison. Additionally, three temporary exhibitions are organised annually, in which "the past is recalled as a starting point for discussions of [contemporary themes], generally reminiscent of the dictatorship," says Neves.

In 2014, the memorial welcomed some 80,000 visitors from all horizons, largely hailing from greater São Paulo, of which one-third participated in educational tours. Projects such as "Resistance Saturdays" are the fruit of collaboration with social actors defending the interests of former political prisoners, involving round tables, films, plays, book launches and more – partnerships that are "a source of particular pride" for the memorial's team, notes Neves. "From the start, one of the memorial's most valuable assets has been the choice of shared curation, involving professionals from different disciplines, and especially, former political prisoners."

Learning takes multiple forms at the *Memorial da Resistência*: notably, a human rights education programme geared for formal and informal educators as well as professionals acting directly within society (civil and military police, municipal guards, etc.) "demonstrates the interest that exists in human rights issues and how sorely learning options in this field are lacking," states Neves. In addressing themes related to human rights violations, "we gain understanding that goes beyond the Brazilian sphere, connected to political affairs of other countries." For her, the institution's vitality lies in its collaborative efforts "to educate critical citizens, aware of the past and present, and enable reflection on the importance of enriching democracy and culture with human rights."

© PABLO DI GIULIO/ACERVO MEMORIAL DA RESISTÊNCIA DE SÃO PAULO



Part of the long-term exhibition of the Memorial da Resistência, São Paulo

SPECIAL REPORT MUSEUMS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Eye on the rear-view Memorial museums for public crimes against humanity

by Julie Higashi, Professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan

IE HIGAS



Entrance of Oradour-sur-Glane, France

ow we narrate the past is often shaped by what we want to hand over to future generations. We preserve the sites where crimes against humanity have taken place, and the objects found therein, for those who never experience them. Preserving a site where a mass crime took place is not a task limited to law enforcement officers and investigators; museum professionals seeking to provide a narrative through objects, buildings or even space, are also involved in this arduous task of recovering the voices of the repressed.

The Japanese experience

It took more than 20 years for the Hiroshima City Council to reach a consensus about whether to permanently preserve the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome. The Dome was deteriorating, and many called for its demolition so that local people would not be constantly reminded of their past. Conversely, others sought to preserve it so that people would never forget, and could learn from the experience. Today, visitors to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and the Dome are able to experience "the power of place", to use urban historian Dolores Hayden's term. Museums built on authentic or relevant sites assert their presence and serve to commemorate those victims who perished in the area.

Similarly, people are still torn as to whether objects and buildings that survived the 2011 Tõhoku earthquake and tsunami and Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster should be destroyed or preserved, four years after the fact. In January 2015, Governor Yoshihiro Murai of Miyagi Prefecture finally submitted a proposal to the Minamisanriku Town Council not to decide on the fate of the surviving Crisis Management Department building. Instead, he requested that the prefectural government be allowed to administer the preservation of the building for 20 years. This move was based on the historical experience of the heated and long-running debates in Hiroshima on the preservation of the atomised ruins. To date, the local community is still divided about whether to accept Governor Murai's proposal.

Experience teaches us that facing history requires time, which in turn gives us the critical distance allowing for assessment of events. Historical objects, remnants and ruins are capable of telling a real story, or a distorted one. However, preservation comes first, and is crucial prior to making any important decisions that concern a shared experience of humanity. The culture of memory evolves with the shift in political circumstances.

The 1996 designation of the A-bomb Dome as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the inscription on the Memorial Cenotaph in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park highlight the memories of the Japanese as both aggressors of war and victims of the indiscriminate bombing. The words inscribed on the Memorial Cenotaph are carefully decided, ambiguous to some, but clear to others: "Rest in Peace. We will never repeat this mistake." Furthermore, it was only in 2002 that the Japanese government built the Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims, with a plaque acknowledging that the Hall commemorates "the many lives sacrificed to mistaken national policy" (the author's own emphasis).

Negative remembrance

Wulff E. Brebeck, the late Director of Wewelsburg District Museum in Germany, played an instrumental role in founding the ICOM International Committee of Memorial Museums for the Remembrance of Victims of Public Crimes (IC MEMO). Brebeck served as the first Chair of IC MEMO (2001-2007) and I had the privilege of visiting Hiroshima with him prior to the 2004 ICOM General Conference in Seoul, Republic of Korea. He foresaw that as the political context changed with the unification of Germany, new forms of remembrance and new types of museums were coming into being, and it became increasingly necessary to form an international network of museums dealing with "negative remembrance". Institutions that commemorated the victims of state and socially determined, ideologically motivated crimes were making use of historical objects and buildings to serve as museums. As was the case for traditional museums, the missions of preserving, documenting, educating and collecting were central to these institutions.

Frequently located at the original historical sites, IC MEMO member museums include the Museum of Gulag (Russia), *Museo de la Paz Gernika* (Spain), Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum (Poland), Centre de la Mémoire d'Oradour-sur-Glane (France), Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island Immigration Museum (US), Museo Memorial de la Resistencia Dominicana (Dominican Republic), Memorial Democrático (Spain), Topography of Terror (Germany), Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos (Chile), and Falstad Memorial and Human Rights Centre (formerly Falstad concentration

camp, Norway), to name just a few. This year, many of the war-related memorial museums will feature special exhibitions to

commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. For example, Terezín Memorial (Czech Republic), known for its collection of artworks drawn and created by inmates incarcerated in the Terezín transit camp before being sent to death camps, will open a new permanent exhibition entitled *Czech Art against Nazism and War* in its Small Fortress Museum in May 2015.

Brebeck believed that when these museums convey information about historical events, they "are morally grounded and aim to establish a definite relationship to the present, without abandoning a historical perspective". However, attracting visitors to the museums

involved can be challenging given the "difficult" nature of the heritage on display. Yet facing history is not just about going back to

darker days – looking at our surroundings through a rear-view mirror – but about choosing to participate in the present, and contemplating what kind of society we wish to strive for.



Facing history is about

contemplating the society

we wish to strive for

GLASBAU HAHN GmbH 60314 Frankfurt · Germany · www.glasbau-hahn.com

HERITAGE IN DANGER DEACCESSIONING

In defence of inviolability

The value of museum collections

by David Anderson, Director General, Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales; former President, UK Museums Association

IK DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SI



The Sekhemka statue, sculpted between 2400 et 2300 B.C.

n July 2014, the auctioneers Christie's in London sold Sekhemka, one of the finest Old Kingdom statues to be found outside Egypt, for 15.76m GBP (€22m). Sekhemka's owners, Northampton Borough Council, declared that the profits would go towards the redevelopment of the town's museum, whose holdings include the English national shoe collection, a trade in which Northampton had once been pre-eminent.

So all is well? Not quite. Back in 2012, when the Council's plans to sell Sekhemka first became public, and it was valued at only 2m GBP (€2.8m), the UK Conservative administration had said that an urgent sale was necessary to fund "front line services" – which most people understood to mean the wages of staff at the museum.

Over the next two years, the reasons given by the Council for proceeding with the sale changed constantly. At one point, the intention was not to plug a funding gap for front line services at the town's museum after all, but to improve visitor facilities at its three historic sites, including Delapre Abbey. A year later, by the time of the sale, the Council's focus had switched back to the museum, but now the cash would apparently go towards an ill-defined capital development.

And so it went on, with confusion continuing even after the sale. Some critics unkindly suggested that the Council had no considered plan other than to get their hands on an extremely large amount of money, and decide later what to do with it.

To make matters worse, the ownership of Sekhemka, and hence the Council's right to sell it, was initially disputed by the descendants of the original donor, the Marguis of Northampton. Northampton Council appeared to be unable to bring clear evidence into the public domain that Sekhemka had originally been legally donated to the museum. It is understood that the family's concerns were set aside after the Council promised that they would get just under half the profits of the sale - which meant, after payment of commission to Christie's, that only half of the financial value found its way back to the Council.

An ethical breach

The Code of Ethics of the Museums Association (MA) of the United Kingdom permits the sale of collections on certain conditions, including that the purpose of the sale be exclusively for the benefit of the remaining collections, and that all other possible sources of funding have been sought without success. The MA's Ethics Committee decided that Northampton Council had breached the Code, and as a consequence, Arts Council England has stripped the Council's museums of accreditation.

Northampton Council is not the

first museum in the UK found to have conducted an unethical sale of its collections; Croydon Council lost accreditation a few years ago for the same reason.

However, the quality and rarity of the statue, its high sale price, and the Council's dismissive attitude towards the Museums Association's Code of Ethics have sparked unprecedented controversy and debate across the world. To make matters worse, in the UK, a survey of the MA's members found that the governing bodies of one in 10 UK museums were considering sale of collections - a shocking statistic. As a result, the Museums Association, together with other smaller museum membership bodies, major UK public and private funders and a number of important museum services, is now considering further possible sanctions for unethical sales.

Some of the most cogent arguments against the sale of Sekhemka were made not by museum professionals, but by

the Egyptian Ambassador to the UK, Ahsraf Elkholy. Before the auction, he warned that the sale would be an abuse of Egyptian archaeology and cultural property, stating: "Our objection starts with this basic principle: how can a museum sell a piece in its collection when it should be on display to the public?" To this he added: "We are concerned this piece may be moved into a private collection. A museum should not be a store. Sekhemka belongs to Egypt, and if Northampton Borough Council does not want it then it must be given back. It is not ethical that it will be sold for profit and also not acceptable. The Council should have consulted with the Egyptian Government."1

The foundations of the Ambassador's statement are the concepts of ownership, responsibility and trust. Sekhemka, he suggests, was not the exclusive property of Northampton Borough Council to dispose of as it pleased. He argues that collections belong in a much more profound sense to the public – not just the people of the town, but anyone who wished to see it on display. Should

Notes

that responsibility for any reason be abandoned, an ultimate and deeper ownership – that of the people or nation of origin – must be asserted.

Precedence of the public

The claim that ownership of collections brings with it responsibilities as well as obligations of trust is a powerful one, and one that would probably have widespread support in the profession. However, the Ambassador's argument that the duty of fulfilment of the public's right to access collections should take precedence over other claims, including but not limited to the right to sell those collections to private collectors, challenges the MA's current professional Code of Ethics, which does in principle allow such sales. It also has implications going beyond the sale of objects alone.

> Is there any merit in the Ambassador's analysis? Speaking personally, I believe there is. The ideology of neoliberalism that currently holds Europe

and North America in its grip, together with austerity policies, is committed to neither the past nor the future. It cares not for individuals or communities, nor for culture or identity, nor for place or environment. Its manifestations are everywhere, yet nowhere, appearing among us and then melting away again before our eyes.

The sale of collections into private ownership by public museums, impoverished by austerity, is the inevitable consequence of neoliberalism. The Egyptian Ambassador is right to challenge the process on grounds of principle, and to remind us that the one and only purpose of collections is the achievement of public good, now and in the future.

Our codes of ethics and the sanctions that go with them should, so far as humanly possible, enforce this principle of inviolability, before it is too late.

Related reading: "Bids on the rise, objects on the go" by France Desmarais and Marc-André Haldimann, *ICOM News* Vol 67 No 3, September 2014

1 BBC, 10 July 2014, "Equptian statue Sekhemka sells for nearly £16m". Available at: http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-28257714

The one and only purpose

of collections is the achieve-

ment of public good, now

and in the future



The best way to file and store

- LAB BOXES STORAGE BOXES
- EUROCONTAINERS TRANSPORT BINS
- STORAGE DRAWERS
- SHELVES AND CABINETS

CUSTOM MANUFACTURING





10 route de Brie-Comte-Robert 94520 Perigny sur Yerres - France Tet : +33 (0)1 45 10 15 20 Fax : +33 (0)1 45 10 15 95 E-mail : info@multiroir.com

www.multiroir.com

General Conference alla Milanese

July 2016 will see ICOM's 24th General Conference in the capital of Lombardy, featuring a rich and inviting cultural programme and social activities that include excursions and tours of the great open-air museum that is Italy. Time will also be set aside for off-site encounters with local museum professionals. Keynote addresses and discussions on the theme of *Museums and cultural landscapes* are sure to captivate colleagues gathering together from around the globe for this landmark event on next year's cultural calendar. But first...

Expo Milano 2015

From 1 May to 31 October, 2015 an agora of countries will gather for the World Expo in Milan, Italy, around the theme *Feeding the Planet: Energy for Life*. The event will feature a rich programme of cultural activities, and the museum world will be at the heart of many of these offerings.

In the best tradition of world fairs, the Leonardo da Vinci National Science and Technology Museum will be opening its doors to the public to celebrate the legacy of the great Renaissance genius. In the ever-growing collection dedicated to aviation, navigation and exploration, the Leonardo Gallery will exhibit the largest collections of historical models based on the prolific inventor's drawings, as well as modern feats such as the giant catamaran "Luna Rossa". The museum also has a newly opened area dedicated



The Leonardo Gallery at the Leonardo da Vinci National Science and Technology Museum

to space exploration, which features, among other curiosities, globes from the 17th century, telecommunication satellites and a moon rock brought to Earth by the Apollo 17 mission.

To foster curiosity and encourage debate, the interactive workshop spaces will be accessible to the general public and schools. Intrigued minds will be able to interact with cultural heritage experts during a series of encounters on the conservation, restoration and exhibition of material objects relating to the history of science, technology and industry.



Highlights

- Expo 2015 by Dante Ferretti: The connection between industry, culture, and food technology is unveiled in this brand new exhibition inspired by the work of Arcimboldo. (#foodpeople on Pinterest)
- Arts and Foods Rituals since 1851: The discovery of objects and environmental representations that since the first Expo in London in 1851 have revolved around food culture, through a plurality of objects and visual language. http://www.expo2015.org/en/explore/thematic-areas/art-and-food
- Childrenshare: An educational opportunity for all, but one that is especially relevant to today's children tomorrow's citizens of the world in collaboration with the Museo dei Bambini di Milano. http://www.expo2015.org/en/projects/childrenshare--children-and-sharing
- Aquae Venezia 2015: A variation on the Expo 2015 theme, this exhibition, held in Venice, explores the profound influence of water in our lives.

http://www.expo2015.org/en/projects/aquae-venezia-2015



Unravelling cultural landscapes

An examination of the theme of ICOM Milan 2016 by Daniele Jalla, Professor of Museology, University of Perugia; Chair of ICOM Italy

In many languages the word "landscape" designates either "a portion of visible territory", a painting that represents it, or a coherent whole, when employed metaphorically. This inherent semantic ambiguity can be a source of confusion. And so. from a theoretical point of view, it may well be worth taking this polysemy into account. If all the meanings were to be comprised therein-that is, as it is understood by geographers, historians, anthropologists and philosophers-then we could overcome our simplistic apprehension and ordinary use of the concept.

In everyday speech, the word "landscape" is ordinarily associated with all things "natural" or "beautiful", leading it to evoke paintings or postcards: both serve as a framework for something that is altogether rare, remarkable and particularly pleasant. Yet the theme of the 24th ICOM General Conference, which addresses the relationship between museums and cultural landscapes, was articulated differently at first. Reference was made to the idea of "perception" -an idea intrinsically related to the word itself.

In the European Landscape Convention¹, a cultural landscape is defined as "an area, as perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors". Beyond its aesthetic quality, landscape corresponds to the environment of a given community. It is the expression of the diversity of its cultural and natural heritage, a context that belongs, first and foremost, to a territory whose identity not only stems from its physical characteristics, but also from our own perception of it as the result of an interrelation between ever-evolving natural and cultural factors.

The use of the plural, cultural landscapes, thus evidences the innate diversity of landscapes. It also echoes the definition provided by the World Heritage Convention²: "combined works of nature and man" bearing witness to the long and intimate relationship between a people and their environment. Landscapes thus fall into three categories: i) a "clearly defined landscape [...] designed and created by man", ii) an "evolving landscape" which can either be "a relict or fossil landscape" or an "organically evolved landscape", and iii) a "continuing landscape" which "results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/ or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment".

Museums are directly responsible for the landscapes we refer to in the General Conference theme. They invoke not only physical contexts (territories), but the social contexts (communities) and many environments (whether natural, rural or urban) to which they pertain and of which they are the direct or indirect expression. As

the Sienna Charter stipulates³, cultural landscapes are "the country/countries where we live, which surrounds us with the blend of nature and history" as well as "images and symbols that identify and characterise the landscape itself".

Cultural landscapes, then, embody the many landscapes that define us - all in all, they are living landscapes that combine physical, social, material and immaterial elements. They fall under museum patronage, if indeed, "The museum is humankind, with all that surrounds it, and therefore also the environment", as André Desvallées once claimed.4

Through which actions and activities is it so?

For the Milan 2016 General Conference, we call upon ICOM's National and International Committees to reflect upon the role of cultural landscapes in museum studies, which will be combined with an analysis of good practices.

International Museum Day goes green in 2015!

A number of festivities celebrate springtime throughout May, but this month also marks a special time every year, when the global museum community comes together on International Museum Day

by Ninon Sordi, Communications Officer, ICOM Secretariat

In the lead-up to 18 May, excitement will be building among the international museum community, which will celebrate the 38th anniversary of a universal, unifying event: International Museum Day. The ritual dates back to 1977, when ICOM created this landmark event. Thousands of participating museums will organise events and activities around a common theme, engaging with the public and highlighting the important role of museums as institutions that serve society and social development.

According to tradition, the day is celebrated on 18 May, but organisers can decide to hold festivities for an hour, a night, or even a whole week. This unique day, which puts museums in the spotlight, now belongs to everyone. In 2014, more than 35,000 museums participated in the event in 145 countries on five continents. This year's theme, Museums for a sustainable society, rings out like a good omen. Sustainability is something museums believe in, because as guardians of age-old history, their mission is to pass on cultures and bring them to life through the ages. As promoters of sustainable development and genuine laboratories for good practices, today's museums play an essential role in humankind's evolution towards a new lifestyle compatible with the limits of nature and soci-



MUSEUMS FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY MUSÉES POUR UNE SOCIÉTÉ DURABLE MUSEOS PARA UNA SOCIEDAD SOSTENIBLE



INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DES MUSÉES DÍA INTERNACIONAL DE LOS MUSEOS



ety. In this race against the clock, museums are vital to educating the public about the need for a more economical and caring society and a more measured and environmentally-friendly use of resources.

This year, to improve the visibility of this opportunity for meeting and sharing ideas, ICOM is launching new means of communication. In addition to the usual posters, postcards and banners, it has also created an interactive map that can be continuously updated by ICOM committees and participating museums, who can add their own events to participate in International Museum Day, a movement of cultural gathering and cooperation that continues to grow, year after year.

More information:

www.imd.icom.museum www.facebook.com/ internationalmuseumday #MuseumDay on Twitter

ICOM Pakistan relaunched

The International Council of Museums is pleased to announce that the Pakistan National Committee of ICOM (PNC-ICOM), based in Islamabad, started functioning again in 2014 after a 15-year period of inactivity.

The project was spearheaded in January 2014 by Muhammar Akhtar Javed, former Director of the Pakistan Museum of Natural History (Islamabad) and current President of PNC-ICOM.

The Executive Board was formed on 27 May, 2014 and counted 10 members in December 2014. Abdul Rahim was appointed Vice President, Muhammad Abbas, Secretary, and Muhammad Kashif, Treasurer. Additional members will be integrated in the next Board meeting. To date, PNC-ICOM counts 36 new individual members and five institutional members. Its expanding network includes major cultural institutions, among which one of the country's oldest museums, the Lahore Museum, as well as the National Science and Technology Museum (Lahore) and the Pakistan Museum of Natural History.

The network also comprises the College of Arts and Design of Punjab University, the National College of Arts in Rawalpindi, the National College of Arts in Lahore, COMSATS University in Islamabad, the Kinnaird College for Women University and the Lahore College for Women University.

Partnerships with a number of

educational institutions for training and outreach programmes in museum-related subjects have been implemented, mainly with the DA'Art Institute and the Museum Education Resource Club in Lahore. The PNC-ICOM website will be launched by mid-2015.



Smart Storage Solutions





We organise your space www.bruynzeel-storage.com





Centre National des Arts Plastiques, Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Louvre Lens, Musée Aan de Stroom (MAS), Musée d'Art Moderne de Strasbourg, Musée de la Céramique de Sèvre, Musée des Confluences, Musée de la Guerre, Musée Ingres, Musée Royal des Beaux Arts d'Anvers, Musée Soulages, Musée Van Gogh, Museum d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris.



Guiding light

Review by Claire Merleau-Ponty, Instructor and Head of the M.A. in Interpretation, École du Louvre; Museology Consultant



First, the author reminds us that exhibition lighting to museum exhibitions, has many merits. First, the author reminds us that exhibition lighting originated in the theatre, to which it owes a great deal. This historic basis introduces the reader to the understanding and practice of this art and its techniques. As the author explains, a museum's specific objectives and spaces – related to its collections and audiences – require careful design, as in stage lighting. He provides the technical foundation and history of museum lighting and its intricacies (such as variables related to plastics, geometry, space and time). As the author explains, "To build lighting, you must first write it." He describes the philosophical aspect of lighting and its role in supporting the concepts behind a collection's layout. Finally, he teaches us about the specific techniques used in simple and complex lighting designs. He outlines the benefits as well as the risks of deterioration due to lighting and how to prevent them. The book's final chapter is highly technical and very useful, recounting the latest technological developments and looking into the future of lighting design.

The appendices provide information on training for lighting professionals and a glossary of specific lighting-related terminology, along with a specialised bibliography.

Jean-Jacques Ezrati draws on his experience and supports his arguments using expert interviews (Stéphanie Daniel, Richard Zarytkiewicz, etc.) and a number of concrete examples of his own lighting designs (*Museo de Arte de Lima*, Turner exhibition, Madeleine Vionnet exhibition and more).

The information is presented and reinforced by a convenient book format with a clean layout, enhanced by photos, images and colour-coding.

The author, a learned technician with extensive hands-on experience, successfully explores the roots of the art of exhibition lighting. Not only does this book teach the reader a great deal, it is also highly useful for museum professionals for whom lighting is an essential tool that must be mastered.

Éclairage d'exposition Author: Jean-Jacques Ezrati Publisher: Eyrolles, 2014 ICOM PRESIDENT

Hans-Martin Hinz

DIRECTOR GENERAL Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine

EDITORS Sara Heft Aedín Mac Devitt

CONTRIBUTORS

Mayte Bernabeu Mélanie Foehn Elisabeth Jani

TRANSLATION Kristina Jackson

DESIGN AND LAYOUT, ADVERTISING, PRINTING

France Edition Multimédia 70 avenue Alfred Kastler - CS 90014 66028 Perpignan Cedex Tel: +33 (0)4 68 66 94 75 Email: francedit@francedit.com

COVER IMAGE © NATIONAL MUSEUMS LIVERPOOL

Next issue

In Focus: Museums for a sustainable society

Special Report: Museum architecture

Case Study: Conservation techniques

If you wish to contribute to the next issue of ICOM News, please contact Sara Heft at sara.heft@icom.museum for details.

ICOM Maison de l'UNESCO 1, rue Miollis 75732 Paris Cedex 15 France Tel +33 1 47 34 05 00 Fax + 33 1 43 06 78 62 secretariat@icom.museum http://icom.museum



ICOM News is a magazine published by the International Council of Museums in English, French and Spanish, with the financial assistance of the French Ministry of Culture. Opinions expressed in signed articles do not commit ICOM in any way and are the responsibility of their authors.



MUSEUM



The journal for museums and museum professionals worldwide

A new edition published by ICOM

Published since 1948 by UNESCO, *Museum International* is an important and influential academic journal for museum professionals in a variety of disciplines. In 2013, UNESCO transferred the journal to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), and it is now published by ICOM in partnership with the existing co-publisher, Wiley.

The second issue of *Museum International* published by ICOM is devoted to the theme of International Museum Day 2014, *Museum collections make connections*. Coordinated by the ICOM International Committee for Collecting (COMCOL), the issue explores a series of assumptions pertaining to museum collections, and reflects on their implications for different types of collections in different parts of the world.

ICOM members can access this issue free-of-charge on their ICOMMUNITY page:

http://icommunity.icom.museum/en/content/ museum-international

For further queries, please contact:

publications@icom.com





GOOD REASONS TO JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS

BE PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM COMMUNITY

CONNECT with 35,000 world-class museum experts

BUILD a strong international professional network in every speciality you can think of

BROADEN your horizons with over 200 conferences organised yearly around the globe

PARTICIPATE in the extensive programme at the Triennial General Conference including the next edition in Milan in 2016

GET INVOLVED IN INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

SHAPE the future of the museum profession

ADVOCATE museum standards of excellence and museum ethics

PLAY A ROLE in the fight against illicit traffic in cultural goods

COOPERATE in emergency preparedness and response actions in museums worldwide

BENEFIT FROM ICOM SERVICES

GET INSIGHT ON trends and innovation in museums thanks to *ICOM News*, the magazine for museum professionals, and monthly electronic newsletters

SEARCH the 2,000 publications produced by ICOM's Committees through the online publications database

STAY CONNECTED with ICOM's brand-new interactive online platform

JOIN any of ICOM's 30 International Committees and have your say

SETTLE your art and cultural heritage disputes through the ICOM-WIPO mediation procedure

AND MANY OTHER BENEFITS WITH YOUR ICOM MEMBERSHIP

Training and professional development opportunities ICOM Card: your international entry pass to museums worldwide Discounts and preferential rates to museum shops

For more information, check the website http://icom.museum



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MUSEES CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MUSEOS