



ICME

ICOM  
international committee  
for museums and collections  
of ethnography

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# ICOM-ICME 51<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE JAPAN 2019

Call for Papers - Call for ICME Fellows

COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS /  
EXHIBITIONS AND CONFERENCES:  
ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REVIEWS / ESSAYS

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On the cover:

Estonian National Museum, Finno-Ugric  
exhibition *Echo of the Urals*. Photo: Arp Karm

# REPORT ON WORKING GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE “WHAT WE DO”

**ICME ICOM Annual Meeting Tartu, Estonia, October 9 - 12, 2018**

Over the past few years, there has been lively discussion among some ICME members about our committee's identity. ICME, ICOM's international committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography, represents a broad range of museums of culture, administered by various governing bodies and reflecting different types of cultures and communities (i.e., local, native, indigenous, migrant, foreign, diaspora, etc.). Some of these museums have undergone tremendous change in the past few decades that have challenged both those who work in and for these museums, as well as the societies they are a part of. In recent conversations, topics no less profound than a name change for our committee and an appropriate mission statement have been addressed, proposed, debated, and ultimately deadlocked.

A solution to carry these issues forward and bring the discussion to the entire ICME membership was to create a Working Group for ‘What We Do.’ ICME President Dr. Viv Golding made this suggestion and invited me, a second-term ICME board member, to form the group.

In spring 2018, a call went out to the entire ICME membership soliciting interested candidates for the Working Group; in May our Working Group was formed. The team includes Susan Faine, independent museum consultant from Australia, Doris Prlic, of Weltmuseum Vienna, Eveline LaMeer, recent graduate in Museum Studies, University of Leiden, and Graeme Were, Chair and Professor of Anthropology at University of Bristol, UK and ICME board member.

The team worked hard and collaboratively to assemble a questionnaire intended to gather basic information about how members identified themselves and the museums where they worked or conducted research. Four groups of questions, the majority of which were presented in multiple-choice format, were asked. The headings were: 1) About Your Museum, 2) Terminology and Attitudes Toward Collecting and Exhibiting at Your Museum, 3) ICME and You, and 4) Defining ICME. To make the questionnaire as user-friendly as possible, it was distributed as both a Google document and a Microsoft Word form. Mario Buletić, ICME board

member and Webmaster, contributed significantly to our efforts in formatting the questionnaire. Both Mario and Sylvia Wackernagel, ICME Secretary, distributed the questionnaire widely on Social Media and provided as many statistics about our membership as possible. Members were given approximately one month to reply to the questionnaire and sent two reminders within that time frame.

The balance of this report summarizes the results of these efforts.

## **Number of Respondents and Statistics**

A broad distribution of our ICME questionnaire to the entire membership of 402 individuals and institutions (as of 2017) resulted in 37 responses. 29 people responded via Google and 8 responded via Word.

29 respondents represented a museum or a collection, and 8 were individual members. Of 16 ICME board members, 7 replied to the questionnaire. In total, we received less than a 10% response rate from the ICME membership to the questionnaire.

36 percent of the respondents came from a National Museum and 25 percent represented regional or local museums. Broken down by number, 14 respondents represented national museums, 10 represented regional museums, and another 10 represented local museums.

63 percent of respondents stated that their museums do not have the term “ethnography” in their title, although 71 percent of respondents identified their museums as ethnographic.

Of seven world continents, respondents represented Europe, North America, Australia and Asia (with only one respondent). No one replied from Africa, Central or South America.

We learned recently from former ICME President and current ICOM ex officio Per Rekdal of Norway that of ICOM's 30 international committees, ICME is the third lowest in terms of members, with only ICR (International Committee for Regional Museums) and the Committee on Glass lower. Along with four other international committees, ICME is among the oldest, founded in 1948.

### **Institutions and ICOM committees represented in the Questionnaire**

The following institutions were mentioned and represented by respondents to the questionnaire:

Ethnographic Museum of Istria, Croatia; Mathers Museum of World Cultures, Bloomington, Indiana, USA;

Museum Studies Program, University of Leicester, UK; Horniman Museum, London, UK; Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo; Norway Ethnographic Collections of Ghent University; Belgium Musée Cantonal d'archéologie et d'histoire, Lausanne, Switzerland; National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka Prefecture, Japan; and The Museum of Urban Everyday Life, Rousse, Bulgaria.

National Museum of World Cultures, The Netherlands (Tropenmuseum, Museum Volkenkunde, Afrika Museum, Wereldmuseum); National Ethnographic Museum, Bulgaria; The National Museum of Australia Ethnographic Museum, University of Zurich, Switzerland; Wallachian Open Air Museum, Czechia Folklife and Ethnological Museum of Macedonia – Thrace, Greece; Volkskundemuseum Wien/Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art, Vienna; Queensland Museum, Australia; Museum of Vojvodina, Novi Sad, Serbia; Slovene Ethnographic Museum, Ljubljana, Slovenia; Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Canada; Estonian National Museums, Tartu; Museum Europäischer Kulturen/ Museum of European Cultures, Berlin, Germany; Museum / Cultural Institute of the James Bay Cree Nation, Quebec, Canada; Library, USA

Respondents listed additional membership in the following international and national ICOM committees: UMAC (2001) International Committee for University Museums and Collections; COSTUME (1962) International

Committee for Museums and Collections of Costume; COMCOL (2011) International Committee for Collecting; ICOMOS (1965) International Council on Monuments and Sites; ICOM-CC (1967) International Committee for Conservation; ICTOP (1968) International Committee for the Training of Personnel; CAMOC (2004) International Committee for the Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities; CECA (1968) International Committee for Education and Cultural Action; CIDOC International Committee for Documentation; ICOFOM (1977) International Committee for Museology

National committees: ICOM Bulgaria-non ICME Member respondent; ICOM Greece; ICOM Germany

### **Reflection by Working Group Members**

#### **1. About your Museum**

Based on member responses and some self-reflection by the Working Group, it became clear in the first section “About Your Museum,” that certain museum types were not included in the multiple choice options. The most notable omission was university museums, which as Doris Prlic points out, often have a slightly different, perhaps more research-based focus and should be singled out as their own category.

Other types of museums not identified in the questionnaire were eco museums, open air museums, and Indigenous/tribal Museums. An



individual from the Cultural Institute of the Cree Nation identified a critical problem in our option categories (i.e., national vs. regional vs. local) when she said national culture is implicitly colonial and that “it is possible for an indigenous culture to be considered their own nation/national culture.” Another respondent from the Glenbow Museum described his museum as non-governmental but with funds from the provincial government, and offered another approach to managing First Nations/Indigenous collections. He said, “Our Indigenous Studies collection used to be called the Ethnology Collection. We work collaboratively with local first nations groups (and other groups when possible). Our Blackfoot gallery is now interpreted by Blackfoot interpreters only.” In the case of the Glenbow Museum, it seemed that the term “ethnology” and collaborative work with local groups did not mean the same thing. From these comments and others, it seems that in some places Indigenous peoples/First Nation peoples want their stories told by them in their own spaces while in others, they want to be respectfully integrated into ‘mainstream’ spaces. In some national museums representing the histories of that nation, the institution may be independent; in other places there may be ‘arm’s length’ involvement from government, or just plain involvement. Either way, Indigenous/First Nation museums and collections need a clearer voice within ICME.

Although ecomuseums did not seem to be represented in the responses, they are mentioned here as another category that is potentially relevant to ICME, because of their focus on local cultures and traditions, even though ecomuseums do have their own ICOM international committee dedicated solely to them. There was some dialogue between an Ecomuseum consortium and ICME during the Milan triennial in 2016. More follow-up work should be conducted with this group.

At least two open air museums were represented in the questionnaire responses. This is interesting because ICOM has another international committee devoted specifically to open air museums. One respondent from the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History carefully explained that his choice of joining ICME was due to a personal association with Per Rekdal, a former ICME President, and his own disciplinary training in anthropology.

The questionnaire was intended to be museum-focused, addressing the various types, focuses, and terminologies surrounding institutions associated with ICME. Though it was assumed that scholars and others not employed permanently by museums would base their answers on institutions they know from their private research or consulting contracts, a couple of respondents suggested that the questionnaire be more inclusive of independent professionals in ICME

and list them as a category. This was a point well taken and should be pursued in any follow-up associated with this survey.

One respondent suggested that rather than asking for people to sign the questionnaire with their names that they give their ICOM membership number, as this could ensure that respondents were ICOM ICME members and maintain their anonymity if they wanted to. In general, the Working Group thought it helpful to have identifying information about the respondents. Respondents had two chances to identify themselves—one with their email address, which was required, the other with the name of their institution, which was optional.

## 2. Assessment/Analysis

Statistics tell us that 63 percent of respondents stated that their museum does not have ethnography in its title. And whether or not they described their museum's collections as ethnographic, they chose social history as the second most chosen topic with which to identify.

Many respondents checked multiple boxes in the section that asked how they defined their collections, including the terms immigrant, indigenous, ethnic, living history, etc.

Eveline Lameer notes that this statistic may show that some member museums from ICME are not presented as ethno-

graphic institutions toward their public. Susan Faine noted a common language and terminology in much of the respondents' descriptions, with terms such as new voices, inclusivity, community involvement, work with source communities, collaborative approach, multi-vocality, diversity, decolonization, collections about culture, co-curation, power relations, etc.

The Netherlands Museum of World Cultures was explicit in its attention to terminology, stating in the questionnaire: 'we also pay attention to the words we use and the colonial heritage and its consequences that our type of museum brings.'

The problem, we found, was a lack of definition or exploration of what "our type of museum" is. Graeme Were suggests that the responses reveal a lot about the attitudes of members to the term 'ethnography'. It seems that the term is recognized by most as a means to identify, unify, and represent collection types – whether they be in cultural, historical, ethnological, tribal, or art collections. ICME appears to be a go-to committee for representation of such collections and the term 'ethnography' does not seem to be problematized; rather, Were suggests, the important thing to recognize is that the institutions themselves are making changes [vis a vis] their collecting histories, missions, relation to communities, etc – and that ICME seems to provide a way to communicate this.

Several respondents emphasized the need not to politicize ICME; many mentioned de-colonizing practices and co-curation/collaboration – all of which came under the auspices of 'ethnography' – particularly so as a term that incorporates contemporary collecting or a desire to do that.

Mention of politics did come into play in a number of responses. Some individuals felt that human rights had a role to play in ethnographic museums, in terms of representing racism and the cultures of LGBT, refugee, and migrant communities. Others said that even if social action is an approach of ethnographic museums, that political positions and/or social action need not be in the group's title. Susan Faine suggested that ICME should not propose an overarching political platform when it purports to represent members whose situations and contexts vary enormously.

A respondent from the Australian National Museum argued that while not all museums have a department, collection, or exhibition space designated 'ethnographic', many museums have researchers, collections and content that embrace 'ethnographic' in their professions (historians, archaeologists, anthropologists) and in their museum areas (Indigenous Studies, etc). The definitions within ICME should embrace all researchers, curators, etc with an interest in cultures.

At least two respondents discussed a name change in their museums. The

Norsk Folkemuseum is now called in English The Norwegian Museum of Cultural History. (According to curator Leif Pareli, the English term Folk museum was felt to be too narrow for the scope of this museum, which in theory works with all aspects of daily life in Norway since the Reformation in 1537). As mentioned above, at the Glenbow Museum in Canada, the Indigenous Studies collection used to be called the Ethnology Collection.

Current ICME President Viv Golding put forth this view about terminology: 'I think keeping ethnography in the title points to the difficult histories that linger in the present but perhaps the words 'world culture' could be added, and 'diversity'. ICOM President Suay Aksoy advised us to change our name in Paris this year. She said we will lose members to new committees and a couple more are in the pipeline. Former ICME President and Current ex-officio ICOM member Per Rek-dal said that Suay Aksoy 'is keen to get a 'Diversity' group established. The process of name change was so divisive when we tackled that earlier. Perhaps reaching consensus is a long job but necessary ... The 'new' definition is by no means perfect in my view but it does point to VITAL current concerns.'

Some discussion was had among Working Group members over the term 'world culture,' which was felt to be a homogenous term and the

suggestion was made to replace it with 'cultures of the world.' Doris Prlic also noted that the name 'world culture' or 'world cultures' has been a preferred name for many museums in recent years and so an ongoing discussion of these terms is warranted. In 2013, the museum where Prlic works, currently called Weltmuseum-vien (World Culture Museum Vienna) changed its name from Volkerkunde-museum (Ethnology Museum). Such new terminologies are not without ongoing debate. In a May 2013 article from the journal *Modern Ghana*, Dr. Kwame Opaku suggested, 'The notion of 'world museum' as applied by many is obviously more than problematic for these museums are all national museums and the designation is very misleading.'

([www.modernghana.com/news/463317/ethnology-museum-vienna-changes-name-to-world-museum-vienn.html](http://www.modernghana.com/news/463317/ethnology-museum-vienna-changes-name-to-world-museum-vienn.html))

As an addendum to this, at the current meeting, Dr. Golding has proposed a new name for our committee, adding the terms Diversity and Indigenous Peoples to our title, making it ICMEDIP (International Committee for Museums of Ethnography, Diversity and Indigenous Peoples). There was widespread approval for keeping the acronym ICME and discussing the addition of additional descriptive words with the membership via the yahoo list and newsletters prior to making a final decision in Kyoto 2019.

### 3. ICME and YOU

I am not a member, but I fill out this questionnaire for empathy with the problem "What we do" (ICOM Bulgaria)

### 4. Defining ICME

Most respondents answered the final question of the survey, although they offered no clear definitions for ICME. Rather they suggested the types of collecting (collaborative, inclusive) that should take place and many seemed unconcerned with the title ethnography. Some argued that the old definition, based on the profile of the collections, is a fairly good description of what unites us, although qualified that "this should not hinder us from questioning the history and the nature of those collections or to choose a more activist attitude concerning the many issues that can arise from working with such collections."

One respondent from the Open Air Museum in Czechia stated that ICME is rather open to different kinds of museums. As an open-air museum, regional in scope of presentation, we feel we are a 'minority' organization among large national museums oriented towards indigenous collections from all parts of the world. Limiting the definition may mean diminishing the dialogue and variety of views and experience.

A representative of the Queensland Museum of Australia suggested that ICME's definition needs to be broad as boundaries of collection types imposed by museum definitions and

categories does not speak to all communities' sense of self and relationship to material culture.

### Where do we go from here?

This questionnaire was intended to open a dialogue among the entire ICME community about ICME's identity, mission and terminology. Although in reality, very few respondents proposed ideological or terminological changes for ICME, they elaborated on the various approaches that their museums take toward collection interpretation and exhibition, emphasizing how these approaches have changed over time. For many, it seems, the changing approaches and renewed emphasis on working with source communities to collect, interpret and exhibit cultural objects takes the form of a definition in and of itself.

From the responses, we also gleaned a sampling of the range of museums that belong to ICME (open air, university, First Nation, encyclopedic, etc.) and got a sense of how they relate to the committee. As Susan Faine noted, though, more than defining the varied museums associated with ICME, what is important is to bring together those who work with people and cultures.

However, to gain a further appreciation for the institutional and individual diversity in ICME, a larger sample of questionnaire responses is needed. It is possible that the questionnaire could be translated into additional languages to reach more people. It



*Laurie Kalb Cosmo*

could also be made available onsite at ICME conferences.

In addition, more research could be done on other ICOM international committees and how older ones such as ours have updated their missions to better reflect their goals and constituents, and also to explore how and why newer international committees have been formed. CECA, the international committee for Education, recently became the Committee for Education and Cultural Action, adding agency to the topic they represent.

While the ICME membership has grown over the years it is true that

ICME has lost members to other international committees over the past few years, and we should understand where 'our' members have gone and why. More statistics and other data are needed to explore the issue of waning membership in ICME. Susan Faine has asked if an international committee becomes a threatened species if numbers drop to a threatened level (50 members). A deeper problem may be with the engagement of the existing membership. Only about half of ICME board members responded to this questionnaire as did less than a tenth of its members. It would be helpful to know how many members subscribe to the ICME

yahoo groups and follow us on FB and other social media. A priority for ICME should be how to engage better with its members.

The Working Group's efforts have been just a beginning. We hope that this questionnaire and the points it has raised will offer a stepping stone for continued dialogue about this critical topic.

Respectfully submitted on October 11, 2018,

**The ICME Working Group on "What We Do": Laurie Kalb Cosmo, Susan Faine, Eveline Lameer, Doris Prlic, Graeme Were**



# RE-IMAGINING THE MUSEUM IN THE GLOBAL CONTEMPORARY ICME'S 51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE

9 - 12 October 2018, Estonian National Museum Tartu

Dr Viv Golding

## Introduction

ICME are very grateful that their 51st annual conference was so generously hosted by the Estonian National Museum (ENM) Tartu, Estonia, from 9 to 12 October 2018. Director Alar Karis opened the conference with a warm welcome address. In his historical outline of the National Museum, he highlighted the way the stories and artefacts of common people, their diverse backgrounds, worldviews and life stories take centre stage in the museum today.

Our staggeringly beautiful conference venue, designed by the DGT Architects (Dorell.Ghotmeh.Tane) and completed in 2016, speaks poetically to the landscape and the history of Estonia. ENM has justly won multiple awards including: Best Exhibition from the Republic of Estonia's Ministry of Culture in 2017 for *Echo of the Urals* and the Kenneth Hudson Award in 2018 for making an 'inclusive and creative learning environment for all'.

## Conference numbers

The theme, *Re-imagining the Museum in the Global Contemporary*, and four internationally renowned keynote speakers – Professor Andrea Witcomb, Professor Wayne Modest, Dr Philipp Schorch and Dr Pille Runnel – attracted considerable interest and an overwhelming response to our call for papers. Despite some unresolvable visa problems we were delighted that there were 90 participants from 30 different countries attending this annual meeting, which makes 2018 one of our best attended conferences for some years. The precise attendee figures are: Australia 2, Belgium 2, Benin 1, Bulgaria 3, Canada 1, Croatia 1, Denmark 1, Egypt 1, Estonia 27, Finland 1, France 2, Germany 5, Hungary 8, Israel 1, Italy 1, Japan 2, Latvia 3, Lithuania 1, Mongolia 1, Netherlands 1, Norway 3, Poland 1, Republic of Korea 1, Russia 4, Serbia 1, Sweden 2, Switzerland 1, Thailand 2, UK 5, USA 5.

The conference programme was organized over four long days to include a range of experiences and so we all

felt energized and inspired rather than tired. At ENM, delegates really appreciated thirty hugely interesting and well-presented Paper Sessions (excluding our keynotes) and seven excellent Lightning Talks and Poster Presentations organized under eleven sub-themes 1: Museums and the World at Stake; 2: Cooperation and Partnership; 3: Migration and Belonging; 4: Museums and the Digital; 5: Object Focus; 6: The Affective Museum; 7: Collections, Representations and Cultural Dynamics; 8: Visitor Engagement; 9: Ownership: Whose Knowledge Whose Truth?; 10: Museums and Stakeholders; 11: Shared Knowledge, Shared Power, Shared Authority. Four extremely thought-provoking keynote papers served to introduce key themes presented.

## Framing the conference days

Professor Andrea Witcomb, whose scholarship inspired our 2018 meeting, opened the conference with 'From "a Place for All of Us" to a Place that Explores "What It Is to Be Human"':



ICME 2018 participants. Photo Arp Karm

Museums in the Age of Global Mobilities'. Andrea began by sharing her auto-ethnography and life story of migration, which has long been of concern for ICME conferences. She continued to pursue her theme by discussing pedagogies of looking, reading, listening and feeling as ways to recognize our common humanity in museums. Andrea left us pondering Paolo Freire's Pedagogy of Hope and the possibilities of its impact on the contemporary museum.

On the second day of the conference, Professor Wayne Modest delivered 'Spaces of Care: Rethinking the (Eth-

nographic) Museum in the Global Contemporary'. Wayne began with the words 'I am afraid', pointing to the fear of 'Others' and rise in racism as governments worldwide turn to the right. In outlining his understanding of 'Care', and drawing on the feminism of authors such as Audre Lorde, Wayne explored current work on the value of the museum to society today. He specifically considered the conceptual shifts, creative and cultural action needed when global warming threatens humans and non-humans – the homelands of Indigenous Peoples – memorably illustrating his argument with a video of Kathy

Jetnil-Kijiner performing her poem 'Tell Them', which creatively reflects on the colonial history, enduring traditions and dynamic cultures of the Indigenous Peoples of the Marshall Islands in Oceania.

In his keynote speech 'Conceptualising Curatoria' on day three, Dr Philipp Schorch discussed the concepts underpinning his forthcoming volume of essays, *Curatopia: Museums and the Future of Curatorship*, co-edited with Conal McCarthy and to be published by Manchester University Press later this year. The book *Curatopia*, which has a geographical span across Eu-

rope, North America and the Pacific, includes chapters from esteemed colleagues such as James Clifford, Ruth Phillips, Andrea Witcomb, Jette Sandal, Wayne Modest, as well as myself. Philipp's presentation noted 'the mutual, asymmetrical relations underpinning global, scientific entanglements of the past'. He further examined how Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems and traditions of safeguarding cultural heritage might benefit museums around the globe to become effective sites and forums for more 'reciprocal, symmetrical forms of cross-cultural curatorship' today. He made a strong argument that this might progress meaningful curatorial practice.

Dr Pille Runnel's presentation 'Searching for Cultural Participation in Museum Practice' discussed the extraordinary research and community collaboration that underpinned the public opening of the Estonian National Museum (ENM) in 2016. Her paper focused on the engagement of audiences within a framework of cultural participation. Making reference to a wide range of key theorists, including Nina Simon and Shelly Arnstein, she outlined the diverse ways ENM serves as starting point for discussions that progress critical thinking and active citizenship amongst audiences. Her talk was illustrated with creative examples of the ways ENM facilitate different modes of cultural participation 'as a form of cultural consumption, as shared decision making and as

a more performative aspect of mundane everyday practices'. To take just one example, Pille shared with conference some really beautiful drawings and comments from youth audiences, noting the need for positive changes to the living spaces outside of the museum walls and making suggestions to fulfill their ideas.

### **Programmes outside of the conference hall**

Alongside the paper sessions, ENM arranged eight Behind the Scenes tours of the Museum (including the *Encounters* and *Echo of the Urals* exhibitions, the conservation and collections departments and the cultural heritage study centre).

We also greatly enjoyed three study visits to the museums and heritage sites in the nearby regions of Seotoma and Peipsimaa on the Estonia Russian border as well as Tartu City Museums. It was my great privilege to join the Seotoma group where we first visited a farm museum, where the freshness of the clean air and the autumn colours had a wonderful calming effect as we wandered around the traditional buildings. Our second visit, to a maker of traditional soaps, gave us the chance to buy some gifts, including a soap made with holy water. Finally, we visited the traditional crafts museum where we were able to not only touch the precious costumes but also volunteer to wear them. Our excellent guide gave me a once in a lifetime experi-

ence, the clothing journey of a Seto woman, from her girlhood costume through to her wedding day when she wore a great weight of beautiful silver jewelry, most notably the domed 'soul protector' at her breast. We were invited to join the *leelo* song circle that was added to the UNESCO world cultural heritage list in 2009. To be part of a Seto woman singers group, enveloped in what seemed to be a protective cloak of sound harmonies and improvisations, was remarkable. I came to a better understanding of the final chapter in Toni Morrison's Nobel prize winning novel *Beloved*, where the women gather in a circle and raise their voices in song to protect the shero Sethe. At all these locations our knowledgeable guides proved to be riveting tellers of tales, outlining how they develop the museum sites and safeguard their crafts.

### **Concluding thoughts**

This richly varied programme, the superb receptions and entertainments as well as our delicious lunches and coffee breaks kept everyone alert and engaged. We cannot thank ICME board member Agnes Aljas and her wonderful team at the ENM enough for making the annual conference this year so thought provoking and successful. Overall, our 2018 ICME meeting allowed us to not only learn a lot, but also to enjoy ourselves, strengthen our collegiality and deepen our friendships. We are looking forward to Kyoto in 2019 and we hope as many of you as possible can join us!



# 51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL ICOM ICME FELLOW'S CONFERENCE REPORT

**Tatjana Bugarski**

ICOM Estonia and the Estonian National Museum hosted the 51st Annual ICOM-ICME Conference 'Re-imagining the Museum in the Global Contemporary' (9-12 October 2018). Almost 100 museum professionals from more than 20 countries joined the conference that took place in the astonishing new building belonging to the Estonian National Museum. Viv Golding, ICME president, opened the conference. In his welcome, the Director of the Museum, Alar Karis, pointed out the role of infrastructure, but also the passion and knowledge that made this museum so successful. It was also what made us all feel so welcome in this museum during the conference.

Keynote speakers Dr Andrea Witcomb (Australia), Dr Wayne Modest (Netherlands), Dr Philipp Schorch (Germany) and Dr Pille Runnel (Estonia) presented their experiences and analyses of past and present ethnographic museum practices. They emphasized the responsibilities of museum ethnography and the importance of seeing it as a very delicate form of human interaction with a constant need to question its own legacy for the human and non-human world that we live in.



*Keynote presentation by Dr Andrea Witcomb*

In the spirit of keynote presentations, other presenters also shared their professional experiences, introducing the perspectives of feelings, fear, hope and care. Presentations were based on museum practices and studies, questioning and rethinking museum objects, histories and biographies of collections, visitor engagement, decolonization, repatriation, current environmental and economic

crises, cooperation and partnerships, migrations, knowledge production, the role of digital media, and art, power and authority. I appreciate the opportunity I had to present a poster and talk about my work and the Museum of Vojvodina.

During the conference, participants enjoyed inspired guided tours of permanent exhibitions, conservation de-





Keynote presentation by Dr Wayne Modest



Dr Philipp Schorch

partments and collections and a cultural heritage study center. *Encounters* is one of the permanent exhibitions of the Estonian National Museum, presenting everyday life and culture in Estonia in different historical contexts. The exhibition is organized as a plurality of interpretations of various aspects of the everyday: language, housing, statehood, food, trade, and religion, introducing many personal stories related to specific objects that show how important historical moments are reflected in life or people through the interaction of the natural environment, social structure, traditions and creativity. The design of the exhibition is an interesting combina-



ICME president Dr Viv Golding with ICME fellows: Suvdaa Sampil, Tatjana Bugarski and Abdelrahman Othman



*Echo of the Urals guided tour by professor Art Leete*

tion of the showcases and a variety of digital media, with e-ink texts and labels that can easily be changed and adjusted to visitors in several

languages. *Echo of the Urals* is a permanent exhibition which is dedicated to Finno-Ugric peoples. The exhibition is an astonishing combination of eth-

nological knowledge, rich collections and effects that present folklore and natural environment, which creates an almost fairytale-like atmosphere. The temporary exhibition *DIY Estonia* was also very interesting to conference participants. For me it was a chance to learn more about recent Estonian history, and, at the same time, to make connections to my own memories and experiences of my generation from the transitional, post-socialist period.

As a part of the conference program, we also had opportunities to join study trips to Setomaa or Peipsimaa, or to visit Tartu museums. My choice was Setomaa, where we experienced the warm welcome of the Seto people and a presentation of their culture, especially Seto Leelo, a polyphonic singing tradition which is inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

After four days of conference, a number of participants joined the post-conference tours in Tallinn, Estonia (October 13th) and Helsinki, Finland (October 14th and 15th). The Estonian History Museum is a complex museum with new permanent exhibitions, focusing on the Estonian history of the 20th century, with interesting and unusual presentations of Estonian contemporary culture (social and cultural movements, economy and other aspects of everyday life). Children's Republic is a special part of the museum, created as a place for creative, interactive and



fun learning. The Estonian Maritime Museum, Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom and Kumu Art Museum also welcomed participants of the conference with their fascinating exhibitions.

The Helsinki tour was organized with ICOM Finland and we visited the National Museum of Finland, Helsinki City Museum, Helinä Rautavaara Museum and Gallen-Kallela Museum on the first day, with the special experience of a traditional smoke sauna. On the second day we visited the Collections and Conservation Centre in Vantaa, the National Archives of Finland and the National Library, where we were welcomed by our hosts who also shared their “passion and knowledge” with us. Some of the visits inspired discussions that became small workshops on various themes.

I joined the 51st Annual ICOM-ICME Conference and post-conference tours as an ICME Fellow and I wish to thank ICOM-ICME for the Fellowship and the opportunity attend the conference. I also wish to thank the organizers and hosts who made my whole trip so special and all the colleagues and presenters who selflessly shared their experiences and thoughts.



Poster presentation by Dr Tatjana Bugarski

# 51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL ICOM ICME FELLOW'S CONFERENCE REPORT

**Suvdaa Sampil**, Museum of Tuv Province, Mongolia

First of all, I would like to express my great gratitude to the 2018 ICOM-ICME team and ICOM-ICME Fellowship Committee that gave me the chance to participate in the 51st Annual Conference held in Tartu, Estonia. I was granted a Fellowship award from Mongolia to attend the conference, and this gave me the full possibility to gain knowledge of contemporary and future trends in international ethnographic museum practice, but also to exchange my experiences about recent projects and activities of Ethnography museums throughout the world and their results with their staff.

The conference was held under the title *Re-imagining the Museum in the Global Contemporary*. The presentations about ethnography and anthropology were presented in different areas and in different conditions and they were all connected by the general idea of Ethnography. The differences between the countries in the world are their culture, tradition and language, as well the ethnographic artifacts and the exhibits in the museums and the museums that display them. So all the presentations were newsworthy and showed their own countries best features.

During the conference I observed the differences between Asian and European museums and their displays. Previously, I have seen several museums in China, Estonia, and

which visitors can be curious about and understand the exhibits. As a result of economic growth, cultural heritage storage is being improved. In some developing countries, cultural



*During the conference, in Estonian National Museum*

Finland that used modern technology. Using modern technology in the museum display is a key means by

heritage storage is facing some problems because of poor economic situations, and the problems are mostly





*During the conference, in Estonian National Museum*

the same. The conference and tour certainly showed me the possibilities for display and strategy in small museums with small budgets.

I had chosen to participate in the ICME Annual Conference 2018 in order to gain higher knowledge and experiences. This participation gave me a unique opportunity to gain a wide range of useful knowledge and experience in the management of ethnographic museums and collections, as well as to study the research and exploration work regarding regulatory and legal practices, and to register objects kept in memory of



ethnography and culture, to form information data for heritage, to advertise heritage to citizens and society.

Even though the museum situation in Mongolia is not highly developed as yet, museum staff still need to be highly educated in order to be of benefit for the further development of this field of human culture. So I am happy to pass the information to my colleagues from Mongolia about the conference. I deeply want to implement my work exchanging ideas with the members and participating in the activities that are held by ICOM-ICME.





*During the conference, in Estonian National Museum*







*Setomaa and the Obinitsa museum in Estonia*







Setomaa and the Obinitsa museum in Estonia



Estonia Seaplane Harbour (Estonian Maritime Museum)



# TOWARDS DEVELOPING ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS IN EGYPT: AN ICME FELLOW REPORT

**Abd Elrahman Othman**, Curator, Religions Museum, Bibliotheca Alexandrina

Last October 2018, I had a great opportunity to add new achievements to my museological experience when I gained an ICOM-ICME grant to participate in the ICOM-ICME Annual Conference 2018 in Tartu, Estonia.

During the ICOM-ICME conference in Tartu and the post-conference days in Helsinki, Finland, I met international professionals in ethnographic museums from around the globe and discussed many issues related to my paper presented there, on the idea of establishing a museum of religion in Egypt and the possibility to develop this concept according to international standards. It was my first time participating in a general conference of ICOM-ICME and also visiting Tartu, Tallinn, and Helsinki city; I felt it was a dream to be there, in the 'City of good thoughts'.

As one of ICOM-ICME's objectives to encourage young professionals to participate and interact with new trends of ethnographic museums, I was awarded one of ICOM-ICME's



grants this year to present my paper 'Is it time for new approach at Ethnographic Museum in Egypt?' to many hundreds of international professionals in Ethnographic museums. Through my presentation, I discussed the importance of ethnographic museums in Egypt and their role in preserving the cultural heritage and their attempts to engage their communities in my educational initiative 'My Museum in Your Classroom' along with our objectives, and the procedures, outcomes and challenges we face. It was a dream to do that!!!

My participation in ICOM-ICME conference and post conference was very important for many reasons; Recently, I've been promoted to work as a curator for Regional Museum, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, as one of Egypt's new 16 ethnographic museums and got a great opportunity to discuss a lot of issues with ethnographic professionals there related to the religion museum scenario, concept, collection process, community engagement and building contacts with some curators who are



working in museums of religion - I was lucky to receive a lot of scientific materials from these professionals.

During the conference days all speakers were rock stars and presented wonderful presentations and ideas. There was some presentations dealing with ethnographic issues related with my culture and I had the opportunity to discuss those speakers. Dr Denis Chevallier's presentation was

'Museums and the Anthropocene: an exhibition on Waste in the Museum for European and Mediterranean civilizations' (Marseilles). I knew of the project, and I was so curious to see the results of his field study on many countries in Mediterranean regions including Zabbaleen community in Egypt. Denis succeeded in showing the results of his exhibition and other public manifestations linked inside and outside his museum such as

workshops for reuse or repair leftovers or collective rubbish collection in the town. What an amazing lecture!

On the other hand the presentation of Kristel Rattus, Curator for the Estonian National Museum presented 'Displaying Cultural heritage with digital Means: the case of Estonian national Museum's core exhibition "Encounters"'. Through her presentation, she discussed the role of digital media in





displaying and interpreting multiple and continuously changing cultural heritage in a museum exhibition. After this amazing lecture with the opportunity to visit the Encounters exhibition and to identify examples of how digital technologies were used in interpretation and interactivity.

On the last day I attended an important brainstorming discussion, about changing the name of ICOM-ICME from International Committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography - ICME to International Committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography, Diversity, and Indigenous Peoples – ICME DIP. The attendees discussed the proposed name suggested by the ICME board and in the end postponed this suggestion to make a working group to study this idea and implications.



The post-conference tours were fantastic and so were the study trips, where we had chance to explore the local heritage and many institutions. Finally, I felt very welcome at ICME group, I'd like to thank ICME's Executive Board for awarding me this grant, and the chance to meet highly respected colleagues from around the world.

# THE POST-CONFERENCE TOURS TO TALLINN AND HELSINKI

**Agnes Aljas**

## **Tallinn**

Estonia is famous for its numerous museums and visitor numbers, having around 1.3 million inhabitants, 250 museums, and an annual number of approximately 3.5 museum visits. So for the organisers it was a hard choice to choose which museums would suit the ICME post-conference tour the most.

On the morning of the 13th November the trip started from Tartu. At Kumu,

the new building of the Estonian Art Museum, guide Ruth Rappold spent two hours showing the group through the permanent exhibition and temporary galleries. In 2008 Kumu was awarded the EMYA (European Museum of the Year Award) and in the years which followed it has become known for its exhibition quality, diversity of programming, and its pedagogical work in supporting cooperation between Estonian and Russian communities.

The second group selected the newly opened Estonian History Museum, which has a complex by the sea comprised of the History Museum's new permanent exhibition, the Estonian Film Museum, the Music Museum's exhibition of pop-music and also the Soviet Sculpture Park. Cäroly Antons had to repeat the tour also after lunch, when the other two groups were running to the impressive building of Seaplane Harbour (the





Estonian Maritime Museum) and to the Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom. The Seaplane Harbour exhibitions, collections and concept were introduced profoundly by the researcher Teele Saar. In Vabamu, director Merilin Piipuu presented the new multimedia centred museum permanent exhibition which was opened only a few months ago.

## Helsinki

ICME also had the pleasure to have a post-conference tour to Helsinki. This conference tour was organised by ICOM Finland's Eero Ehanti and Heli-Maija Voutilainen.

The trip started with a boat trip from Tallinn to Helsinki, with the views to the Tallinn old town and harbour. Travelling across the Gulf of Finland, in two hours we had arrived in Helsinki. The first stop was in the National Museum of Finland, where the Head of the Conservation department and Chair of ICOM Finland Eero Ehanti welcomed us. We had overview of the museum and a tour of the temporary exhibition '10 000 years of design – Man, Matter, Metamorphosis'. The exhibition intrigued us with its interdisciplinary and fresh view on material culture, as it was presenting the development of Finnish material culture and design as the result of a dialogue between society and ecosystem, starting from the Ice Age to nowadays.

A walk through the sunny Helsinki centre took us to the Helsinki City Museum, where director Tiina Merisalo and Head of Collections Minna Sarantola-Weiss welcomed us in



the 1980s style meeting room. The museum is well acknowledged, two years after opening, for being a meeting place, and one of the most child friendly museums in the country. And

of course the best award for museum has been the 1 million visitors who they received this autumn.

The bus trip took us to the WeeGee Centre, where the Helinä Rautavaara Museum is located. The producer Kristiina Tohmo introduced us to the amazing lady Helinä Rautavaara was, and the collections from all around the world she collected to introduce Finland to the richness of world culture. The dinner took us to the Gallen-Kalle Museum, where Head of Collections Minna Turtiainen welcomed us with an introduction to the museum and a delicious Finnish dinner. For sure the main surprise was the 150 year-old smoke sauna, which the ICOM Finland members had been heating from 8 o'clock that morning.

The second morning took us to the Collection and Conservation Centre of the Finnish Heritage Agency. Eero Ehanti guided us through thousands of square meters of amazing stores, isolators, laboratories and databases. The trip continued to the other heritage intuitions and to their work – for example, to the National Archives of Finland, where researcher Pertti Hakala introduced us to Finnish archival treasures and contemporary duties, as well as a look in the stores. The last stop was the National Library of Finland, where Communications Officer Marko Oja introduced us to the amazing building and different archives.



# DIVERSITY AND UNIVERSALITY

ICOM-ICME 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference 2019

September 1-7.2019, Kyoto, Japan

## CALL FOR PAPERS

(Deadline for submissions 15 February 2019)

ICME is the international committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) devoted to ethnographic museums and collections from local, national, and/or global cultures and societies. Our annual conference brings together diverse museum scholars and practitioners from across the world.

The 2019 annual meeting of ICME will be held as part of the 25th General Conference of ICOM. Within the larger

ICOM scheme 'Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition', ICME is shaping its own programme for the triennial, consisting of panels, collaborations, and off-site meetings throughout the week.

ICME are approaching the ICOM theme with an emphasis on **'Diversity and Universality'**. We want to draw on our work at recent ICME conferences to examine how museums, through their

research, conservation, exhibitions, marketing and programming, engage diverse audiences in better understanding what unites human beings around the globe, without eliding their differences. The poet Audre Lorde expresses our aim for museums when she asks us 'to take our differences and make them our strengths' since museums offer an ideal site to see the 'other' in ourselves, and to think beyond your history and mine to our present and future.

In other words, our 2019 conference theme draws on humanist anthropology to explore what it means to be human and for human beings to live a human life that respects our common humanity, and the fragile planet on which we live, together with non-humans, around the globe today.

The theme is timely. It asks us to examine how human beings might join to care for and safeguard humanity, our diverse cultural traditions (material and intangible heritage) and the non-human world that we share, for future generations.

These are large aims. They especially resonate with ethnographic museums and collections. Perhaps most importantly, the theme invites us to attend to the traditional knowledge, care, and safeguarding practices of Indigenous Peoples around the world today. Professor Wayne Modest's keynote speech at ICME's 2018 conference in Estonia highlighted this point, with reference to Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner performing her poem 'Tell Them', which creatively reflects on the colonial history, enduring traditions and dynamic cultures of the Indigenous Peoples of the Marshall Islands in Oceania. Jetnil-Kijiner's poetic activism gives powerful voice to the ancient stories of her birthplace and the ways that the Gods and Peoples have long protected the human and non-human world they share. She speaks of personal and community identities, local and global issues, and, notably, on behalf of civil society about climate

change and global warming that threatens her homeland, which is sinking into the sea as the oceans rise.

We invite you to join us in Kyoto to reflect upon '**Diversity and Universality**' in the context of the museum. Proposals from diverse disciplinary backgrounds (including artists, designers, educators, social historians and ethnographers) on the myriad ways that museums might work to care for the human and non-human world are welcomed.

### Submitting a proposal

ICME invites proposals for contribution to our one of these programmes.

1. Paper presentation (15 minutes)
2. Panel discussion (30 minutes)
3. Pecha-Kucha presentation (6 minutes and 40 seconds)

In Pecha-Kucha (Japanese:

ぺちゃくちや) presentations 20 slides are shown for 20 seconds each (6 minutes and 40 seconds in total). The architects Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham first developed this format in 2003 in Tokyo, to keep presentations concise and fast-paced (<https://globaldigital-citizen.org/how-to-make-great-presentations-with-pecha-kucha>).

### Proposals should include the information below in English

1. Which programme you are applying for (paper presentation / panel discussion / Pecha-Kucha presentation)
2. Title of submitted paper presentation / panel discussion / Pecha-Kucha presentation

3. Abstract (do not exceed 200 words)
4. Name(s) of Author(s)
5. Affiliation(s) & full address(es)
6. Support equipment required
7. All submissions must include a 100 word bio for each presenter.

### Deadline for submission:

**15 February 2019**

Please send proposals as soon as possible as a Word Document attachment to the e-mail: [icme2019conference@gmail.com](mailto:icme2019conference@gmail.com) with the subject of '**ICME proposal (your name)**'.

The proposals will be evaluated by at least two members of the ICME 2019 Conference Committee.

Acceptance of submissions will come by **31 March 2019** to allow registration at the early-bird rate.

To allow for the preparation for translation, complete papers with images must be submitted by **1 June 2019**.

### ICME 2019 Conference Committee:

**Keiko Kuroiwa (Japan)**, ICME Board member (Leader of ICME 2019 Conference Committee) / Director of Learning Innovation Network

**Dr. Viv Golding (UK)**, ICME Chair / University of Leicester, Museum Studies

**Dr. Ulf Dahre (Sweden)**, ICME Board Treasurer / Lund University, Social Anthropology

**Sylvia Wackernagel (Germany)**, ICME Secretary / Silesian Museum

**Mario Buletić (Croatia)**, ICME Webmaster / Ethnographic Museum of Istria



## Diversity and Universality

### ICOM-ICME 52st Annual Conference 2019

September 1-7.2019, Kyoto, Japan

# CALL FOR ICME FELLOWS

(Closing date Monday 10 December 2018)

Applications are invited for four (4) ICME Fellows, who must be individual members of ICME from category 3&4 countries or ICME youth members (under 35 years of age, but under 40 years of age considered), to join the 2019 ICME conference (see below).

ICME Fellowship funding (up to 2.000 €) will be used to pay for conference registration, accommodation, airfare and a reasonable daily allowance in Kyoto Japan for participation in the conference (1-7 September), with a view to offering opportunities for enriching the on-going research of candidates through global interaction with ICME members from different parts of the world. Candidates are expected to remain active in ICME. We do not require each fellow to deliver a paper at conference but we do ask that they each write a report (500-750 words) with photographs for the ICME Newsletter.

Please send your CV (including your ICOM number), a statement (around 500 words) of how the Fellowship will benefit your career and 1 letter of recommendation from your employer to the conference committee at the email addresses below. We are sorry that

applications received after the closing date of Monday 10 December 2018 cannot be considered). If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Very best of luck!

Ralf, Tone, Laurie, Viv

[ralf.ceplak@etno-muzej.si](mailto:ralf.ceplak@etno-muzej.si); [t.c.s.karl-gard@khm.uio.no](mailto:t.c.s.karl-gard@khm.uio.no); [lauriecosmo@gmail.com](mailto:lauriecosmo@gmail.com); [vmg4goldring@gmail.com](mailto:vmg4goldring@gmail.com)

Follow the updates about the conference on our official website: <http://network.icom.museum/icme/conferences/annual-conference/>

**ICOM 25<sup>th</sup> General Conference / ICOM - ICME 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference**  
**Kyoto, Japan, 1-7 September, 2019**

### ICOM Kyoto 2019

The ICOM General Conference will be held at Kyoto International Conference Center (ICC, <http://www.icckyo.or.jp/en/>) in Kyoto, Japan from September 1 to 7, 2019.

The theme of the conference is 'Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition.' The theme "Hubs" aims to highlight two key concepts: Museums





as 'Networks'—supporting collaborative partnerships with one another; and Museums as 'Cores'—invigorating communities at the local level. The sub-theme 'The Future of Tradition' aims to link museums to the future whilst respecting traditions.

The registration will start on November 1. The early bird registration ends on April 30. The application for Young Peoples' Travel Grants will soon be announced on the website.

Further Information can be obtained from ICOM Kyoto 2019  
Website: <http://icom-kyoto-2019.org/>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/icomkyoto2019/>

### ICME 2019 Conference

The theme of the ICME 2019 Conference is 'Diversity and Universality.' The call for papers is on the ICME website: <http://network.icom.museum/icme/>

The ICME off-site meeting will be held as a joint program with the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Instruments and Music (CimCim) at the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku, <http://www.minpaku.ac.jp/english>) in Osaka on September 5.

Professor Kenji Yoshida (Director of Minpaku) will give a keynote speech on behalf of ICME and Kazuhiko Shima (Director of the Hamamatsu Musical Instrument Museum) will be



the keynote speaker for CimCim. There will be joint panel sessions, gallery visits (to the permanent & special exhibitions) and behind the

scenes tours as well as a reception at Minpaku.

**Do join us!**

# UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE AT THE BEST MUSEUM – THE BRITISH MUSEUM

**Rema Zeynalova**, Chief Specialist, Azerbaijan Carpet Museum

Hello everyone! My name is Rema, and I work as the chief specialist of the Azerbaijan Carpet Museum. I have been an active member of ICOM-ICME since 2016. As a museum professional I am always keen to learn new trends and innovations in the museum sector and implement the same in my museum for further improvements. This summer I got a wonderful opportunity to participate in the British Museum International Training Programme (ITP).

Every summer, the British Museum's six-week long 'International Training Programme' provides opportunities to museum professionals from around the world to get this amazing experience. The programme is helpful in the creation and promotion of a sustainable global network of museum and heritage professionals through sharing knowledge, skills and experiences.

Since founding of the ITP in 2006, 276 fellows from 43 countries have taken part. I am honored because this year I became Azerbaijan's first representative on the Programme, among twenty three representatives from seventeen countries (i.e. Azerbaijan, Myanmar,



*My first day at the British Museum*



*ITP 2018 Fellows*





*Session at the Blythe House, the British Museum's textile collections storage*

most useful one for me was in Blythe House, where the British Museum textile collections are stored. As I am more interested in textile history, and methods of storing, displaying and describing the story of the object, this visit provided a great opportunity to enhance my knowledge and I learned how to use materials in the mounting & display of textiles. A mini workshop by Textile Collection Manager Helen Wolfe explained to us useful display methods for textiles.

One of the interesting parts of the ITP was the day trips: I got to see some beautiful places and learned about interesting UK heritage.



*My partner Cherry from Myanmar and I presenting our object - a Shabti of King Taharqa*

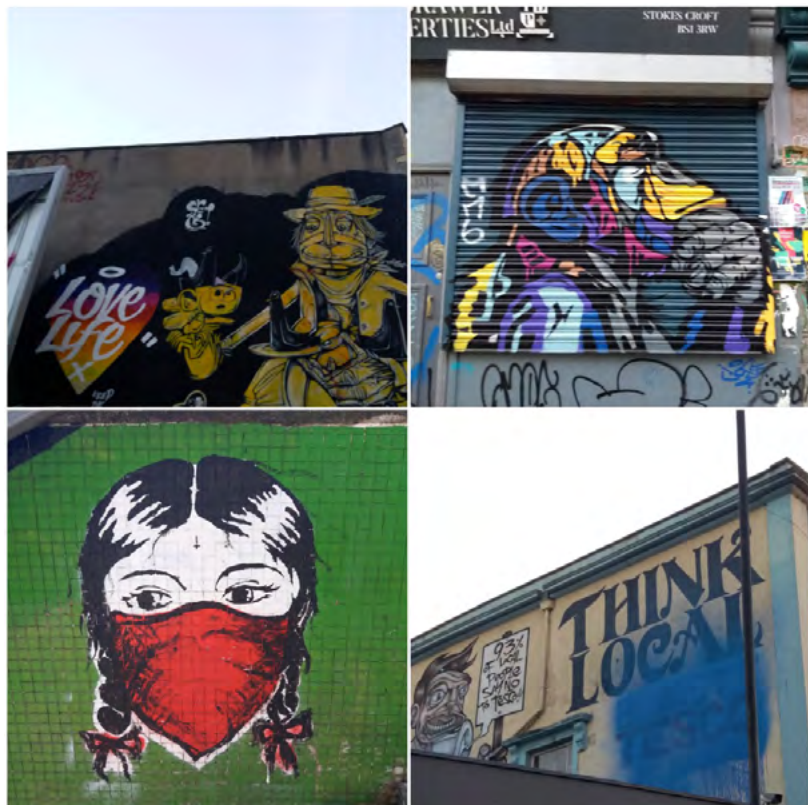
China, Croatia, Egypt, Greece, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Oman, Philippines, Rwanda, Sudan, Lebanon, Turkey and Uganda).

ITP's intensive interactive sessions were quite different than other training I have attended so far. I liked almost every ITP session, but the

Project *Object in Focus* was an exciting part of ITP, where we were asked to plan and propose a temporary display while using our experience, knowledge and the skills learned during the programme. Working with an assigned partner, choosing one museum object from a different culture and then presenting it creatively was a real challenge. But by exploring this object I discovered a new culture and also enjoyed the experience of partnership where working together helped us to make our project more dynamic and creative.

My placement at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery where I spent around 10 days was a hugely memorable part of ITP. I found Bristol a wonderful city in the UK, with a creative and dynamic cultural scene, especially the enor-

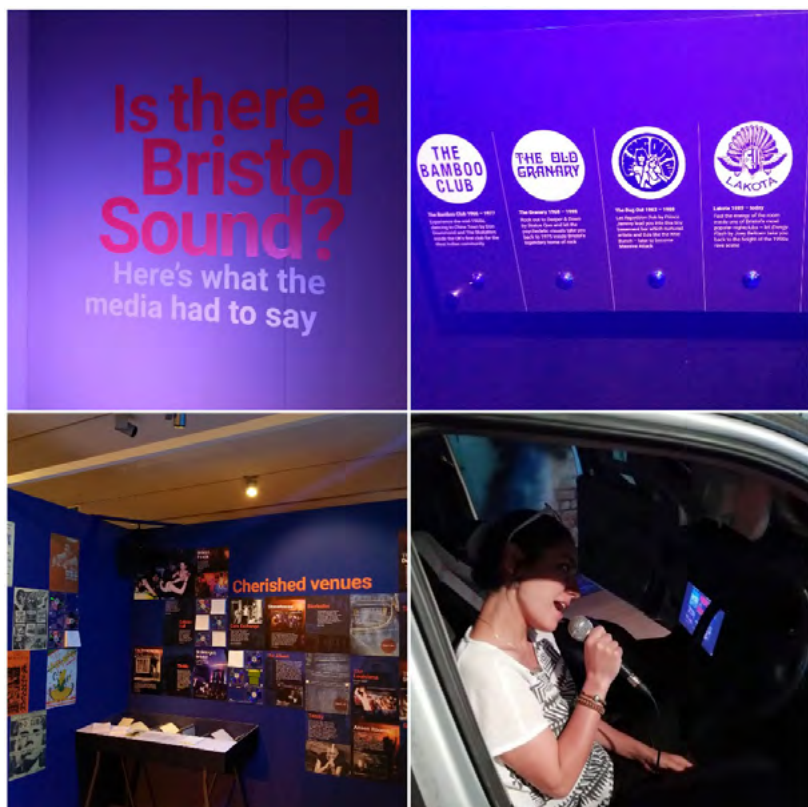




mous amount of street art around the city. Though the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery was not huge like the British Museum, this small museum with a small number of staff doing such big projects really amazed me, especially the *Bristol Music* exhibition, which was one of the best exhibitions I have seen in the UK. From my Bristol experience I gained some innovative ideas regarding preparing exhibitions. I will always remember Bristol and its friendly people, especially Kate Newnham and Sue Giles, curators of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, who took great care of us during the 10 days.

For me, ITP was like an ocean which gives you lot of chances to see different aspects of life, to make friendships with people from different societies, culture, languages and countries, irrespective of their color, race or religion. Participants may have different personalities but, they can live, work and learn together, and help each other in improving themselves as well as museums around the world.

Besides offering experience in the different fields of museums, ITP also broadened my views and I learned to look at things from a wider and more international perspective. ITP helped me to strengthen my global networking.



above: Street art in Bristol  
below: Exhibition Bristol Music





Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the British Museum ITP team – Claire Messenger (ITP Manager), Rebecca Horton (ITP Coordinator), Jessica Jukes (ITP Assistant) and its UK Partners, and The Altajir Trust for the opportunity given to me and for all the support extended to organize my participation in the training.



*above: Dinner with Kate Newnham's family  
right: ITP team – Claire Messenger, Rebecca Horton,  
Jessica Jukes and I*



# STATE - AN EXHIBITION

**Saamia Ahmed**

Titled 'State', the exhibition - which was conceived under the uniting lens of South Asian history - took its point of entry through a shirt made of raw silk, woven in Kashmir and embroidered with elegant paisleys in gold thread. A personal favorite, the red and gold shirt became symbolic of my own heritage and what it has come to mean in terms of re-location, dislocation, colonization, migration and politics - a symbol of the personal histories of every person belonging to South Asia. The strange dystopia of current times, an 'Alice in Wonderland' meets 'The Dying Inayat Khan' situation.



The ironic 17th Century Mughal miniature painting of a dying nobleman, lying on a plush sofa amidst gold embroidered velvet and silk cushions and blankets, is reminiscent, to me, of my world today. The increasingly isolated social classes, polarized geographic boundaries, living in a state of perennial historic amnesia, spirals like Lewis Carroll's tunnel around me. Like Alice's Looking Glass, the world I look at has ceased to make sense. Through the ideas and objects depicted in my pieces, an inquiry is attempted toward an understanding of the influences that fuse together to create the forms in my surroundings.





The Robe of Inayat Khan  
2018  
"Sroote"





# THE TIME OF THE HUACAS: QUESTIONING THE EXHIBITION OF AMERINDIAN HUMAN REMAINS THROUGH ART AND ACTIVISM

**Filipa Cordeiro and Rui Mourão**

Despite the increasing public scrutiny of the social role of museums, many European Archaeology and Ethnography museums still possess objects from other cultures and human remains acquired in colonial and imperial contexts. Since this history is almost two centuries old, its origins

may seem remote and, above all, distant from the concerns that drive museum professionals today. Seen from this angle, the movement for the decolonization of museums is nothing but an anachronistic dispute with a problematic but resolved past, whose material expression museums pres-

ent in a neutral fashion, claiming to honor a commitment to knowledge. By contrast, the movement for the decolonization of museums departs from the crucial insight that *the past is not over yet*. The past is conceived as a contested field, whose interpretation was historically monopolized by co-

lonial and imperial powers. Since the museum is an apparatus that constructs and normalizes representations, it will never be a neutral space: it helps shape a common world, with its uneven distribution of opportunities and ordeals.

Considering these questions, the collaborative project *O Tempo das Huacas* [The Time of the Huacas] aimed to start a dialogue of many voices around the exhibition of the mummified bodies of two young Chancay Amerindians in the Carmo Archaeological Museum, in Lisbon. The two bodies were brought from Peru in the late 19th century by one of the museum founders along with Chancay artifacts, both acquired under undocumented circumstances. They have been exhibited in glass cases with little contextualization ever since. Due to the current inability to identify descendants of the Chancay – a research that should nonetheless be pursued – an artistic and activist project was initiated as a first step to restore dignity to the deceased and raise public debate.

On the one hand, five South-American artists who share their claim to an Indigenous identity were invited to create videos in which they took a

stand regarding the display (Alberto Alvares, Denilson Baniwa, Ibã Huni Kuin, Jaider Esbell and Marilya Hinos-troza). A diversity of contemporary Indigenous languages and identities could thus be presented. Their video responses addressed two questions: *How do you stand towards the exhibition of the two bodies in cases in the museum? What could be done to dignify their memory and the representation of Indigenous peoples?* All the videos affirm different ways of existing and resisting via performative acts, moments of sharing and informed reflection. A second invitation was addressed to thinkers from the fields of Museum Studies and Visual Culture, as well as to museum professionals, who were asked to share their thoughts and experiences (Jacqueline Sarmiento, Nicholas Mirzoeff with Inês Beleza Barreiros, Oscar Róldan-Alzate, Viv Golding and Winani Thebele.). They have in common their commitment to looking for images of what could be another kind of museum. In some cases, this is an empty museum, or a place resembling something other than a museum; in others, it is a museum-home that houses a plurality of perspectives and narratives. In other cases still, it appears to be similar to the museums we already have, but it is open to change in order to rise to the challenges of the

present. Finally, an unanticipated performance was made by Rui Mourão inside the museum itself, aiming to poetically reconnect to the bodies. All the elements are documented in a small publication, available in Portuguese and in English, which takes the shape of an 'alternative guide' to the room where the bodies are exhibited. The materials are also accessible online in both languages.

After the project's presentation, it became clear that these debates are still in a very early stage in Portugal. Correspondingly, there isn't yet an institutional framework regarding the presence of human remains and Indigenous artifacts in Portuguese collections. This points to the urgent need of a twofold effort: on the one hand, to take into consideration the experience of source communities, international museums and experts; on the other hand, to further scrutinize the country's history, with emphasis on its largely unexamined colonial past. Departing from the field of art and dialogue, *O Tempo das Huacas* started a conversation that will hopefully be taken on by Portuguese institutions to bring about change.

Website: <https://sites.google.com/view/otempodashuacasenglish>



# DECOLONIZATION IN BRAZILIAN MUSEUMS

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**Adriana Russi**

In Brazil, processes of decolonization are a reality in ethnography museums. Since the 1990s, anthropologists and museum professionals in our country have been preoccupied with inclusive practices, trying to make the balance of power less asymmetrical. The term 'collaborative practices' was not yet in vogue at the time, but the ethics of some professionals (women primarily) guided experiences in which indigenous peoples participated as active subjects in

certain processes and not just as 'informants.' We have, therefore, long been observing what specialists have called the 'indigenization' of Brazilian museums. Traditional museums are shifting their practices; and what is emerging is not yet fully formed, as Marília Xavier Cury points out. There are also dozens of truly indigenous museums in different regions of the country. While on the one hand the question of the repatriation of musealized objects is still an issue, one of

the main current guidelines in Brazil has been the relations established between anthropologists, museum professionals and indigenous peoples, as researcher Lucia van Velthem has noted. The process is difficult, but possible! In this sense, the projects of ethno-education and appreciation of the indigenous heritage of the Katxuyana people have taught us a lot about how to build a partnership in which negotiation is absolutely vital.

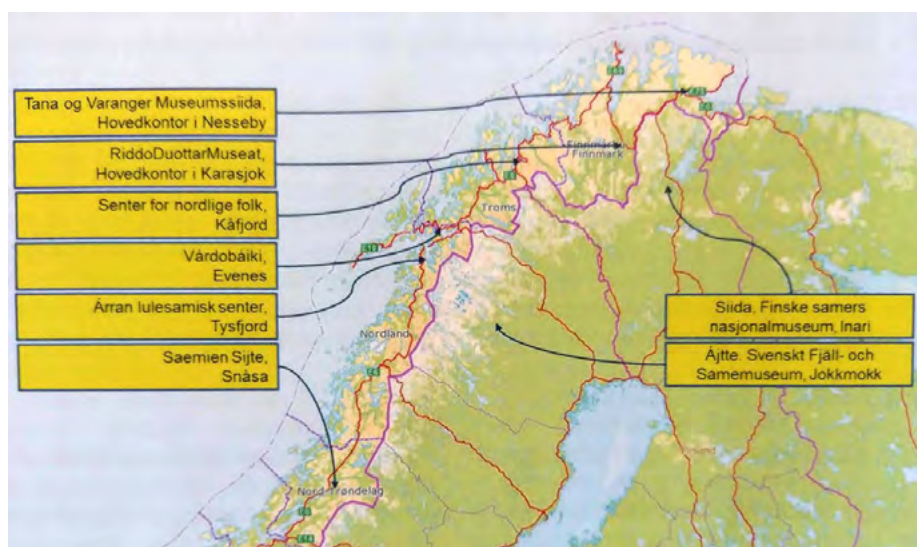
# BÅÅSTEDE – A REPATRIATION PROJECT THAT MAY BENEFIT INDIGENOUS MUSEUMS WORLDWIDE

**Leif Pareli**

In 2007, Norsk Folkemuseum – The Norwegian Museum of Cultural History – decided to take the initiative to discuss with the Sami Parliament the possible return of parts of its Sami collection to museums in the Sami areas. A Work Group was established with representatives of the Museum, the Parliament and the Sami Museums Association, to work out the framework for a repatriation project.

The Report of the Work Group recommended that half the collection, some 2000 objects, should be transferred to the six Sami museums situated in Sami communities further north in the country. The Report also laid out a procedure for selecting which objects should be transferred and which ones should remain in Norsk Folkemuseum, plus what conditions the Sami museums must fulfil in order to be able to take over the collections, in terms of security, adequate storage facilities and competent staff to handle the objects.

In June 2012, The Agreement on Repatriation was signed by the President of







the Sami Parliament Egil Olli (at right) and representatives of Norsk Folkemuseum and KHM, the former Ethnographic Museum, which owns much of the collection.

In preparation for the selecting process, a series of seminars were held where representatives of the museums involved, plus other experts, discussed various problems that had

to be sorted out. That way, everybody would be better prepared for making good decisions when selection started.





The collection comprises a wide range of types of objects, some are ordinary household objects, others are rare or unique, such as this shamanic drum, one of only a very few that have survived since 18th century missionaries forced the Sami to become Christians.

There has also been a great interest in inspecting and studying garments,

since many Sami areas have long since lost their local clothing traditions due to efforts by Norwegian authorities to make the Sami “become Norwegian”.

The project has received much positive attention in the press and media. In February 2017, when the Sami in Norway celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Sami national movement,

an exhibition was made as part of the celebration. The opening was attended by Norway's King Harald V and a host of dignitaries, including the Prime Minister and several other cabinet ministers. Still, there has been no funding provided by the government.

An advantage in this project is that it takes place within one state and within the same framework of legislation and museum practices. It is of course more complicated where repatriation means transfer from one country to another. Still, there are many places where indigenous peoples could benefit from repatriation from within the same state, as illustrated by this map of the circumpolar regions.

Another reason why the project has proceeded so well is that the participants have all worked together during a long period, discussing matters and solving many issues before the concrete selection began. This gave everybody a better basis for making sound decisions. By May 2018, when the selection process was completed, there was agreement to transfer some 1600 objects. Now remains the improvements necessary in the various museums before objects can be physically moved. Only then will the Bååstede Repatriation Project be completed.

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# Коренные народы арктических стран

# Indigenous peoples of the Arctic countries



## Группировка народов по принадлежности языковым семьям Subdivision according to language families

<b>Макросемья на-дене</b> <b>Na Dene family</b>		<b>Эскимосско-алеутская семья</b> <b>Esikmo-Aleut family</b>	
Атабаская группа	Атабаская группа	Инуктитская подгруппа эскимосской группы	Inuit group of Eskimo branch
Алгонкинская группа	Алгонкинская группа	Юпикская подгруппа эскимосской группы	Yupik group of Eskimo branch
Эйакская группа	Eyak branch	Алеутская группа	Aleut branch
Тлингитская группа	Tlingit branch	<b>Уральско-юкагирская семья</b> <b>Uralic-Yukagrian family</b>	
Хайдакская группа	Haïda branch	Финно-угорская группа	Finn-Ugric branch
<b>Пенутская языковая семья</b> <b>Penutian family</b>		Самодийская группа	Samodid branch
<b>Макро-алгонкинская языковая семья</b> <b>Macro-Algonkian family</b>		Юкагирская группа	Yukagrian branch
Алгонкинская группа	Algonkian branch	<b>Алтайская семья</b> <b>Altai family</b>	
Васакская группа	Wakashan branch	Тюркская группа	Turkic branch
Салишская группа	Salish branch	Моногская группа	Mongolic branch
<b>Макросемья сиу</b> <b>Macro-Siou family</b>		Тунгусо-маньчжурская группа	Tunguso-Manchurian branch
Группа сиу	Sioux branch	<b>Чукотско-камчатская семья</b> <b>Chukotko-Kamchatkan family</b>	
Ирокезская группа	Iroquois branch	Кеты (изолированный язык)	Ket (isolated language)
<b>Индоевропейская семья</b> <b>Indo-European family</b>		Нивхи (изолированный язык)	Nivkhi (isolated language)
Германская группа	Germanic branch	Айны (изолированный язык)	Ainu (isolated language)

### Примечания:

Для США показаны только народы штата Аляска. Для Российской Федерации показаны только народы Севера, Сибири и Дальнего Востока.

Основное население независимых государств не показано, даже если оно составляет национальное меньшинство в соседних странах (например, финны в Норвегии).

Территории обозначены цветом в соответствии с исконными языками соответствующих коренных народов, даже если сегодня они не говорят на этих языках.

Группы населения, перекрывающие друг друга, не показаны. Границы между отдельными группами, обозначенные на карте, не претендуют на точность.

В Российской Федерации коренные народы имеют особый статус если их численность составляет менее 50 000. Названия наиболее многочисленных групп обозначены зеленым цветом.

### Notes:

For the USA, only peoples in the State of Alaska are shown. For the Russian Federation, only peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East are shown.

Majority populations of independent states are not shown, not even when they form minorities in adjacent countries (e.g. Finns in Norway).

Areas show colours according to the original languages of the respective indigenous peoples, even if they do not speak these languages today.

Overlapping populations are not shown. The map does not claim to show exact boundaries between the individual groups.

In the Russian Federation, indigenous peoples have a special status only when numbering less than 50,000. Names of larger indigenous peoples are written in green.

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# WORDS FROM THE EDITORS

Good lord, it's been a while. I'm truly sorry for that. I had intended this to be the October issue, but clearly, as you can see, it's January. I can only apologise.

From the end of October, Leicester is a city of lights. The Diwali lights switch on took place on the 28th October, with Diwali Day itself on the 7th November. On Campus at the University of Leicester last week, a large menorah was put up to celebrate Hanukkah. As I write this, the holiday is still ongoing. The city is full of Christmas lights, and a gigantic Christmas tree has appeared, as it always does, by the Clocktower. In front of the Town Hall, a gigantic Christmas scene has been erected (this year, it's Alice in Wonderland themed).

I dislike Christmas. I dislike the crowds, the pressure to send cards, the stress of forgetting who to send cards too, the rampant commercialism. Specifically, I dislike our local mall at this time of year, and the Christmas drinkers who ruin my regular haunts. I dislike having to tell my mother what I would like this year in October, when, in actual fact, there aren't very many things I really want at all. I dislike that Christmas starts before Halloween. I dislike twee Christmas songs and the forced attempts to be kind and polite to each other when, in fact, you should be kind always. I dislike arguing with my mother over whether or not we can fit both an unnecessarily large turkey, and a small vegan main in my Grandfather's diminutive oven. I dislike the pressure to perform sacrificial acts of self-improvement the New Year brings when you can always be better than you are.

But.

But.

I like seeing people I love whom I don't get to see all that often.

I like celebrating community with my work colleagues, and my friends.

And I like giving gifts, and trying to choose the perfect thing to make the recipient happy.

I like Jolabokaflokkur, the Icelandic tradition of gifting books, and staying up all night to read.

Most of all, though, I like the lights.

Wherever you are, whether you celebrate or not, I do hope the winter brings you a lot of lights.



# CONTACT THE NEWS

We hope you enjoyed this new-style edition of ICME News. Let us know what you think by emailing [jenny.walklate@gmail.com](mailto:jenny.walklate@gmail.com).

This newsletter is published every three months. You can contact the News with anything you think the wider ICME/Museum Ethnography community would like to hear. Please email us with anything you'd like to include.

ICME's website is <http://network.icom.museum/icme>

See you next time!

The editors.

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