

## Words from the Chair

20.12.17

Issue 83



### Season's Greetings

Dear colleagues, dear friends,

I open this, our last ICME Newsletter of the year 2017, with the image of three friends wearing lucky god masks in Hong Kong. This is my Season's Greeting to all ICME friends, at a time of gift-giving in many parts of Europe.



### With love to mummy XXXXOOOO Erika

At the end of this year my thoughts and writing, drawing on Jaques Derrida and Marcel Mauss, have increasingly been on friendship and kinship, politics and the gift (Golding 2018 forthcoming). Perhaps this may seem like an academic indulgence when so many people are struggling financially simply to exist but

intellectual work is part of what we all do in ICME and I want to share some ideas with you here.

Plate 2 shows a gift my daughter gave me earlier in the year. My caption clearly tells of my personal recent history. It has – love and kisses – emotion. Now let us imagine this gift on display in a museum. A traditional museum caption might read 'Horse & Rider Puppet, cotton cloth & brass, c.21st century, Rajasthan, India', telling audiences many aspects of the object they might see for themselves if encouraged to look closely, which is a key task for those of us interested in the museum's educational role.

While looking is seen as vital to learning in the museum, to such an extent that Hal Foster observes museums as empires of visual imperialism, contemporary educational practice seeks to employ a wider range than the five senses we commonly count in the West: sight, taste, smell, sound and touch (Golding 2016). In museums of all sorts, but specifically in the ethnographic museum, I have found multisensory experiences can offer particularly valuable routes to audience engagement and cross-cultural understanding if coupled with dialogue, reflection and action.

Many ICME members are also interested in widening the range of topics brought into the learning conversations we can have in our

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particular museums. For example, how can we progress creative connections with ways of thinking from outside of our rather binary Western – nature/culture, black/white/, woman/man – patterns? My long-term research partner and dear friend Professor Joan Anim-Addo and I have found the Southern African notion of Ubuntu, which roughly translates as 'I am because you are', inspiring. Ubuntu, for us, vitally points to human interdependency across the globe and the importance of respecting not only the 'Other', but also the myriad ways we might come to recognise the 'other-within' and enhance self-understanding.

My friendship with Joan, like all friendships, is always located within wider relations of power. Joan is one of the few Black professors in a UK university and the only Black

professor of English, which may say something about how race intersects with gender and class in the academy. Similarly, when we began collaborative work at the Horniman Museum London in the 1990s, where there was one of the very few Black curators in a UK museum at the time, our projects shone a light on power in the museum. We posed questions on who had the power to speak in our museum, who listened and why? The creative writing, storytelling and music workshops we organized invited local and international communities, youth through to elders, to share their ideas and experiences within the walls of the museum as well as back in their community and school venues. We found that sharing power in the museum does not necessarily weaken scholarship, as our academic publication and the award of grants from prestigious bodies such as the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) testifies.



**The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford**

Collaborative work with another dear friend, Andy McClellan, of the Pitt Rivers Museum highlights this point on power sharing and scholarship. Andy has been training the future museum professionals with us at the University of Leicester for more than a decade. Like Horniman, Pitt Rivers locates material culture, multisensory experience and dialogue at the heart of museum programming for

diverse audiences. Plate 3 demonstrates one particular project that helps to make museum practice transparent. Lighting techniques are central when considering power in the museum as the 'art' spot-lighting of a single object on a plinth versus the crowded display of 'Other' Peoples' culture next to natural history objects shows. In plate 3 we see the results of putting the power of lighting in the hands of the visitor, simply offering a torch to families during a nighttime event, means visitors can zoom in close on a hand-written original label or cast their light through the cases close by right across to the other side of the museum. The wonderful photograph shows the kinesthetic pleasure of this simple torch technique with some of the 22,092 objects *gifted* to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford on 30 May 1882, by Augustus Henry Lane Fox (1827-1900) who took the Pitt Rivers family name and fortune in 1880 (Golding and Lima 2013).

The idea of the donation returns us to the notion of the gift. My puppet horse, a gift from my daughter on my birthday, July 16th, is now on display in my kitchen. It sits alongside a number of gifts from friends around the world and is illuminated with fairy lights to cheer us during the long cold days of a British winter. As I look at it I think again of friendship, of dear colleagues who become friends and of the gift of object-experience in museums.



## **World Stories, Refugee Photography at Brighton Museum**

In Plate 4 we can see some of World Stories, an excellent photography project with refugee at Brighton Museum. The images show the photographers creatively working with framing, with light and shadow, with techniques that underpin exhibitionary practice in museums. It has been my great pleasure to work on the media of museums with young people training to become museum professionals over the past 15 years, at the University of Leicester's School of Museum Studies.

Some readers of the News will know that I retired from the School of Museum Studies on 1st October 2017. I have had a very happy career in the university teaching museum studies (2002-2017) and in museum education (1992-2002). My excellent colleagues and many students over the past decades have become dear friends and I remain indebted to their, most inspiring writing. I am particularly reminded of Dr Sandra Dudley, now Head of the School of Museum Studies, whose reflections on her encounters with a Chinese horse, displayed in Compton Verney, offer a rich and detailed account of the power of objects in museum displays, which resonate with my own thought. Dudley (2012) captures the power of the object, to speak across time and continent to contemporary audiences in museums, even through the glass case. Her introduction (2012: 18) notes how touch would enhance her experience when she images, raising a metal sculpture to touch

her cheek and listening to the sound of her fingernails against the surface, to more fully appreciate its temperature, weight, density, musicality and texture. Perhaps Dudley's scholarship can be seen as a gift to museum professionals.

To my fellow ICME colleagues and friends I must once again say what a great honour it is to be serving my second term as your Chair. I am confident that 2018 will see the dissemination and publication of more excellent ICME work, from the past, the present, and looking to the future. Dr Jenny Walklate and I will be publishing some of your projects in a forthcoming volume for CSP, *Museums and Communities: Diversity and Dialogue in an Age of Migrations* in 2018. An editorial team consisting of Sarah Gamaire, Graeme Wear and Esther Chipashu will join Jenny, as Editor in Chief of the Newsletters next year. Please send us your News in 2018.

## Notes

Dudley, S. 2012, 'Encountering a Chinese Horse: Engaging with the Thingness of Things', In: S. Dudley (ed.). *Museum Objects: Experiencing the Properties of Things*. London, UK: Routledge. p. 1-16.

Golding, V. 2016, *Learning at the Museum Frontiers: Identity, Race and Power*, London, UK, Routledge.

Golding, V. 2018 (forthcoming), 'Feminism and the Politics of Friendship in the Activist Museum' in Sandell, R. and Janes, R. *Museums and Activism*, London, UK, Routledge.



# 50th Anniversary Conference Report from the Chair

## By Viv Golding



### Thanks

The National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) as part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, generously hosted the ICOM-ICME 50th Annual Conference on the theme of Migration, Home, and Belonging in October 17–19, 2017. ICME owes a debt of thanks to Martin Earring (Mnicoujou/Oglala Lakota), Board Member of ICME (2013-19), for his master-planning of this excellent event. In his opening address Martin told us 'A wise person once told me that it takes a village to makes things happen' and my village came to assist when I requested help'. ICME warmly thank Martin's village, notably including his wonderful conference team at NMAI, Director Kevin Gover and Deputy Director Machel Monenerkit. The NMAI and ICME are indebted to Dr. David J. Skorton, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution for his support. ICME would like to thank the ICME Chair (2007-2013) Dr Annette B. Fromm, ICOM Executive Council member Diana Pardue, and Deputy Director Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden Elizabeth Duggal. It is Martin however, who must take the lion's share of the credit, for working tirelessly over a number of years, to make the ICME 2017

meeting such a success.

ICME must also thank Ulf Dahre Johansson Board Member and Treasurer of ICME (2016-19) for his extensive work on the 2017 ICME conference programme. In addition, we thank Ulf for ensuring the smooth management of the 2017 ICME Fellowships. It is largely due to Ulf's efficiency that two fellows were able to participate in the 2017 ICME meeting.

This year Ralf Cepak, Laurie Kalb and Tone Karlgard worked as an efficient team on the Fellowships. ICME is grateful to their efforts from the Call for Fellows through the checking and judging processes to the announcement of three awards, to Rema Zeynalova, Esther Chipashu, and Desiree Nanuses (who was unable to take up her ICOM and ICME awards). We thank Rema and Esther for writing their excellent Fellowship Reports that can be found in this News.

As always, ICME must also thank our Secretary Sylvia Wackernagel and Webmaster Mario Buletic for publicizing conference and post-conference tour information at Facebook and at the website.

Last but by no means least, ICME thanks the presenters. This year ICME received an overwhelming response to our call for papers and every fascinating paper selected for delivery in DC spoke to the theme most pertinently.

### Attendance

The numbers of speakers and delegates attending the ICME 2017 Conference was excellent. In total

62 from 17 countries joined our annual meeting in DC (US 29, UK 7, Estonia 1, Canada 6, Turkey 1, Japan 2, South Africa 1, Azerbaijan 1, Czech Republic 3, Hungary 1, Sweden 1, Norway 2, Croatia 1, Israel 1, India 3, Germany 1, Zimbabwe 1).

### Programme

Over three days of conference delegates listened to a series of opening remarks from: Diana Pardue, Dr David J. Skorton, Machel Monenerkit, Martin Earring, and myself as Chair of ICME. The opening speeches established a framing for each of the five sessions: I Museology and Research; II Collection Analysis; III The Inclusive Museum; Session IV Repatriation and V Exhibition Analysis. Finally, Dr Kevin Gover and Elizabeth Duggal delivered the closing remarks and outlining the importance of the theme to ICME as seen in the presentations.

Presentations on day 1 in Session I focused on analyses of the role and work of ethnographic museums. Most of the papers in this session took the perspective of theoretically grasping the work done at museums in relation to the theme of the conference.

Papers in Session 11 Looked at collections, an important part of the identity of the ethnographic museum and subject to challenge in post-colonial and post-modern times, with new ideas emerging out of the controversies. This session looked at collecting today and how collections themselves can be re-interpreted in new social and historical contexts.

Session III on day 2 posed questions about inclusion, asking for whom museums work, collect, and exhibit objects. Papers discussed ideas about integrating so-called target groups into museum work, which are now firmly established in many museums and presenters outlined practical and theoretical experiences of museums that are socially and culturally inclusive.

On day 3 Session IV presenters tackled the question of object ownership in the museum, outlining how previously ignored claims for repatriation by originating communities is on the agendas of ethnographic museums. Papers demonstrated sensitive museum practice in discussions of why objects are being repatriated and the social and cultural consequences.

Finally, the papers in Session V addressed the conference theme from the perspective of the exhibition. Speakers analyzed key displays and ideas, such as interactivity and the digital, to progress engagement and understanding.

The attention so many papers gave to issues surrounding contemporary migration, the plight of refugees and human rights in the context of the thoughtful and creative ethnographic museum, was truly heartwarming. It was also most impressive to hear how 'native' communities are keeping their diverse cultures alive around the world through innovative collaborative projects. There was some inspiring discussion by

presenters interested in audiences and improving access to collections so that the museum might become an ever more welcoming home and place of belonging, where 'difficult' issues such as racism and sexism are not ignored. Overall, we can say that ICME were privileged to hear about the excellent practice of colleagues around the world and we look forward to hearing how these projects progress in due course.



#### **Museum visit**

On the afternoon of Day 2 a limited number of tickets were made available for the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) on a first-come, first-served basis at registration. You can read about NMAAHC later in this News.

#### **Annual ICME Dinner**

The Annual ICME Dinner was a Dutch treat at Restaurant Tunnicliffs Tavern, 222 7th St SE, Washington, DC, 20003. ICME members enjoyed the food and company at the site across the street from the historic Eastern Market on Capitol Hill.

#### **Closing Reception**

ICME members also enjoyed a closing Reception with a 50th birthday cake and bubbly, which was generously sponsored by NMAI.



#### **ICME Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Members**

At the ICME Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Members all 8 board members in attendance give a brief outline of their personal museum and university projects during 2017 and forthcoming. Three ICME members attended the meeting.

The board outlined:

- a) Conference work and committees for 2018 in Estonia (led by Agnes Aljas) and 2019 in Japan (led by Keiko Kuroiwa and Taku Iida);
  - b) Communication 1 through publication, Golding, V and Walklate, J. 2018, *Museums and Communities: Diversity and Dialogue in an Age of Migration*, CSP;
  - c) Communication 2-5 through Facebook, Twitter, the Yahoo list and 3-4 Newsletters that are published annually with Dr Jenny Walklate as Editor in Chief;
  - d) Special Projects 1: ICME gained ICOM special project funding for work in 2017 on human remains, which is led by CAM and Jeremy Silvester ICOM Namibia. Details of this project will be made available in the 2018 ICME and CAM final reports at our websites;
- Special Projects 2: Following the Memorandum of Understanding signed by ICME, ICOM Pakistan and the Museums Association of Pakistan in 2016 Sylvia Wackernagel and Viv Golding have been developing a series of collaborative workshop and training

projects, for delivery in Lahore December 2017. This work is now scheduled for 2018 due to the political situation in Pakistan at the end of 2017.

Special Projects 3. Horniman Museum and Gardens are in the early stages of conversation with Sylvia Wackernagel and Viv Golding over the development of a workshop/seminar for mid-career museum professionals on object-handling in September 2018 when their new galleries open.

e) Treasurer, Secretary and Webmaster Reports: Ulf, Sylvia and Mario gave overviews of the 2017 work. Ulf specially thanked NMAI for their support that leaves ICME in a healthy financial situation. Full reports will be available at the website in due course, as usual.

f) Fellowships Committee are pleased to remain in place for another year. They suggest publicising awards in: Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean regions in 2018. Viv noted ICME will be able to make an extra award for youth members to attend conference in 2018 since Peter Keller ICOM decided to delegate its annual youth award to ICs in 2018.

g) Operational manual for ICs Viv noted the Chair of the ICs, Kristiane Straetkvern, who has been leading work on the development of an operational manual with guidelines for all ICs, which will be available in 2018/19.

f) ICME rules on Board membership; Martin noted the proposal from Ralf to limit board memberships from 2019. Martin seconded this proposal. The board vote at their meeting in DC was for the words 'no more than 12-15' members to be added to our rules.

As usual, in accordance with correct procedure, the whole board will be canvassed about this change, then the membership will be invited to discuss the issue in the News, Yahoo list and Facebook early in 2018, so that a vote can be taken in Estonia at the next conference.

## **Q&A**

### **ICME 'What we do' statements (2007-2016 & 2016-)**

Annette Fromm raised a concern about a change to the ICME 'what we do' statements at the website, which she had recently noticed. Annette expressed an anxiety that ICME did not follow correct procedure by consulting the membership before making this change. Viv explained that this statement was expanded and the whole website completely by Mario following a hacking incident in 2016, just before the Milan meeting. Viv assured Annette that membership was consulted via the News and the Yahoo list on several occasions but she warmly welcomed further discussion in the months to come.



# A Visit to the National Museum of African American Culture and History

## By Viv Golding

I am fortunate to have dear friends in Washington DC. This brought invitations to extend my visit to the US before conference and meant I could make three visits to the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) with my chums. We were able to have lunch and sample delicious African American cuisine from all over the US in the Sweet Home café on the concourse between visiting the exhibitions.



NMAAHC has 3 history galleries in the basement levels and visitors are advised to begin at the lowest level C1 with Slavery and Freedom 1400-1877, before entering C2 Defending Freedom, Defining Freedom: The Era of Segregation 1876 – 1968, and finally C3 A Changing America: 1968 and Beyond. Level 1 has the Heritage Hall, Level 2 Explore More!, Level 3 Community Galleries and Level 4 Culture Galleries. At each level video footage shows a rich display of objects, text, sites and scenes of resistance as well as enslavement and repression.



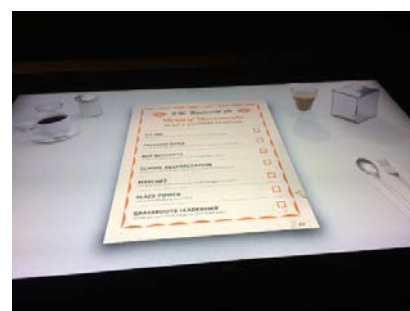
While the history galleries were so harrowing, how could they not be, as a visitor I was not left despairing. For me this is because resistance and activism was such a strong theme throughout. It is also because the text is consistently excellent. Some of my favourite wall text includes:

America ... needs citizens who love it enough to re-imagine and re-make it (Cornel West)

Differences are not intended to separate, to alienate. We are different precisely in order to recognise our need of one another (Desmond Tutu)

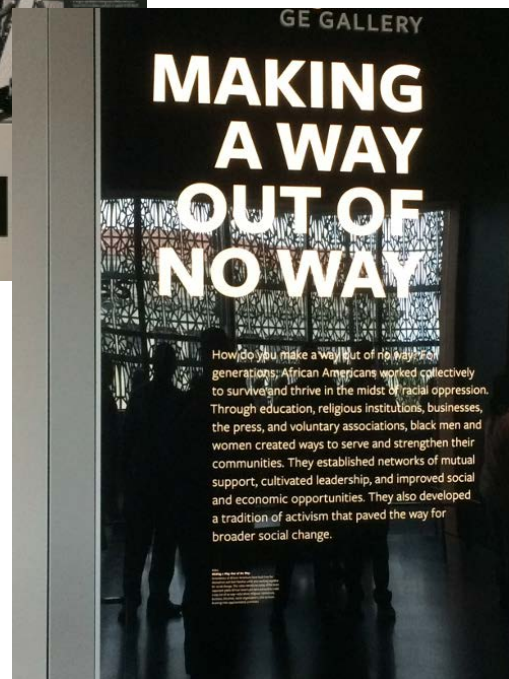
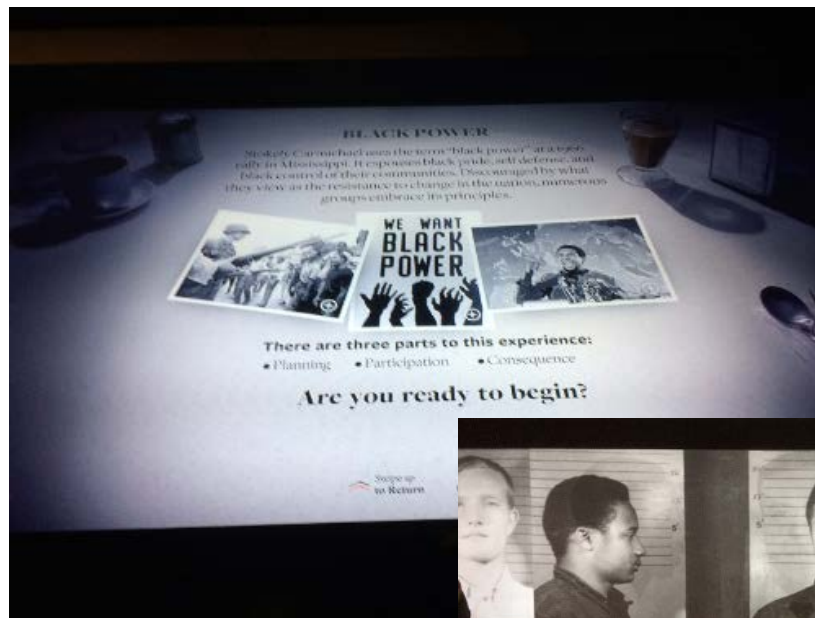
I have not been animate in my life to fight against race and sex discrimination simply because of my own identity. That would mean that one must be South African to fight Apartheid, or a poor white in Appalachia to fight poverty, or Jewish to fight Anti-Semitism (Eleanor Holmes Norton)

The opportunities for visitor reflection and engagement were also impressive at each level, with the Interactive Lunch Counter at C2 one of the most engaging exhibits for my friends and me.



I sat at the interactive table with my girlfriend, Dr Vicky Arana, recently retired from Howard University, and we decided together what particular periods of this history we would explore and what action we would have taken. Vicky lived through the time in 1960 when four Black students sat at the white's only Woolworth Lunch Counter, Greensboro, North Carolina. They were refused service but continued to sit 'for justice' all day until closing time. The next day 25 students arrived to sit for equal rights and refused to move despite being spat at and physically threatened. Over six months, increasing numbers of students, Black and white, took passive resistance in the diner until the policy changed.

Three days is not long enough to appreciate this wonderful and important museum. I must return!





# **A Report on the Post-Conference Tour**

## **By Martin Earring, ICME Board Member since 2013**

The post conference tour started early on Friday morning to board the Amtrak train. Everyone went back to sleep except ICME Board member and annual conference host Martin Earring who was excited for the post conference adventure ahead. Upon arrival at New York's Pennsylvania station, the group made a beeline for the National Museum of the American Indian, New York (NMAI-NY) in Manhattan's financial district. After the tour led by NMAI-NY Cultural Interpreter, Carrie Gonzalez-Mendoza (Mixtec) and lunch, the group enjoyed the ferry ride to Ellis Island via the Statue of Liberty on a pleasant sunny day. Some post conference tour participants enjoyed an early evening dinner at the historic Fraunces Tavern. Fraunces Tavern's historical significance dates back to 1762 and has been a staple of the neighbourhood up to the modern day as many daily commuters stop by for an evening libation before boarding the ferry home to Staten Island.

Continuing with the early bird timing, the group enjoyed a Saturday morning viewing of the beginning of the fall foliage season en route to the southern New England museum, the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center. The Pequot museum is an American Indian operated and owned museum campus that highlights their indigenous cultural impact in the state of Connecticut as well as their global presence as they traveled the world as whalers, historically.

ICME Board member Earring thought the historical re-creation of Aunt Matt's home was an excellent example of the conference theme, Migration, Home, and Belonging, from a Western Hemispheric and American Indian perspective with the notion of perseverance and resilience as a small American Indian (federally recognized) tribal nation in the United States. The group took lunch in the Pequot Café, a native café specializing in food of the regional area and returning to Manhattan during early Saturday evening traffic on the Cross Bronx Expressway!

On the final day, the group was more relaxed and had the choice of visiting the following museums, each of which tell stories about immigration and home: Lower East Side Tenement Museum, Museum of the Chinese in America, Museum at Eldridge Street, The Ukrainian Museum, and and/or a walking tour of the African Burial Ground, National Monument New York. Long time ICME member Galia Gavish enjoyed herself on the post conference tour and shared many stories of the past ICME post conference tours with the group.

ICME would like to thank the following organizations for their generous support in relation to the post conference tour: Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration Statue of Liberty National Monument, the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, and ICOM-US.

# ICME-ICOM 50TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT

## OCTOBER 16-22 2017, USA: Conference Theme: Migration, Home And Belonging

### By Esther Chipashu



#### Abbreviations

**NMAI** - National Museum of the American Indian (Smithsonian)

**NMMZ** - National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe

**ZMHS** - Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences

**ICME** - International Committee for Museums of Ethnography

**ICOM** - International Council of Museums

**NMAHC** - National Museum of African American History and Culture (Smithsonian)

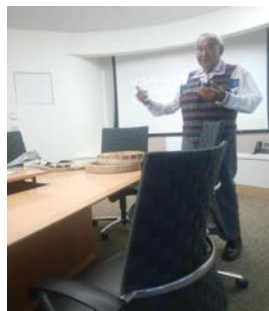
**MPMRC** - Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Centre.

#### Introduction

This report is a reflection of the activities that transpired during my travel to the USA. The 2017 ICME conference and the post-conference tour remains a memorable and historic event in my lifetime. Insightful conference presentations, and tours of fascinating exhibits in various museums in Washington DC and New York, among other activities, is what characterized the 2017 ICME ICOM event. Needless to mention, I am forever indebted to both NMMZ and ICME -ICOM for the unwavering support they rendered to me in order to successfully attend the aforementioned historic events in the USA.

#### 16th October 2017: ICME BOARD MEETING

My trip to Washington DC commenced with my attendance of the ICME Board Meeting at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). The ICME Board chairperson Dr. Viv Golding gave opening remarks. The opening remarks were followed by light and exciting entertainment, in the form of a song by Zotigh. After the song, all Board members gave presentations on various projects relating to their countries. My participation at the ICME Board Meeting where I gave an overview of events occurring at the museums in Zimbabwe aided in putting National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe on a world map. I also learnt a lot from presentations by other ICME Board members during the meeting.



After the Board meeting I had an opportunity to tour exhibits at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) and other surrounding museums in Washington DC. Pictures below are a cross section of exhibits at NMAI.



#### October 17-19: ICME-ICOM Conference

ICME (the International Committee for Museums of Ethnography) -

ICOM (International Council of Museums) held its 50th Annual Conference in the American capital, Washington DC, in collaboration with the NMAI. The conference theme for the year was Migration, Home and Belonging. The conference was attended by a culturally-diverse group of over 32 participants from 14 countries. North America, as a whole and Europe were well represented. Conversely, the Asian continent was fairly represented, with five participants, but the African continent was poorly represented, with only 2 representatives, namely South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The conference was divided into five sessions, which were discussed over the three-day period. The sessions of discussion were: Museology and Research, Collection Analysis, The Inclusive Museum, Repatriation and Exhibition Analysis. continent was poorly represented, with only 2 representatives, namely South Africa and Zimbabwe.

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#### **Day 1-October 17**

The first day of the conference consisted of the discussion of the

first and second sessions of the conference's theme for the year; Museology and Research as well as Collection Analysis, respectively. The presentations on Museology and Research provided an educative platform on the way how various museums across the globe use the concept of ethnography in presenting the concepts of migration, home and belonging, of other cultures, to the general public of the communities in which they operate, as well as using these ethnographic practices in reaching out to immigrant communities and integrating them into their host communities. An example of this practice being carried out in museums is highlighted in a presentation by Kadriye Tezcan-Akmehmet, ("Connecting with Immigrant families through Museums' Parent Involvement Programs"), which shows how museums should reach out to immigrant families and interact with them, so that immigrant communities have a sense of belonging to and a connection with their host communities.

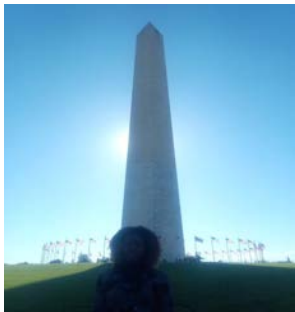
The Collections Analysis session was appropriately presented alongside the Museology and Research session. The presentations concerning Collection Analysis highlighted and discussed how various museums collect artifacts and how their collections are interpreted and challenged during times of changing social and historical contexts. An interesting paper by Kayte McSweeney ("Object Journeys: Reimagining and Disrupting the role and Value of Community Co-Creation") highlights this issue. The day ended with a discussion as well as an Opening reception.

#### **Day 2- October 18**

The second day of the conference saw the discussion of the concept of The Inclusive Museum. Presentations on this topic provide an insight into how museums integrate immigrant communities into their host communities, when working with the former party; mainly through collecting their objects and showcasing them in exhibitions, to host communities. A presentation by Hakimah Abdul-Fattah ("Where Artworks End and People Begin: Managing Black and African Identities in Museums") provided a clear perspective on this issue. The day ended with a tour of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, a trip to the historic George Washington Memorial Monument and the Annual ICME Dinner. It was a great experience visiting the popular National Museum of African American History and Culture where I was overwhelmed by fascinating and informative exhibits, some chronicling history of Transatlantic slave trade, death of Martin Luther, African American churches etc. It was also a pleasure viewing the amazing cultural exhibits at this popular museum.







### Day 3- October 19

The final day of the conference saw the discussions of the concepts of Repatriation and Exhibition Analysis. The concept of repatriation raises questions about why objects are sent back to original communities and how new generations of people in objects' home communities receive and interpret them. An intriguing paper by Eva Dagny Johansen titled "Na, Maid Dál? (Now, What) Our Cultural Heritage Heading Home", illustrated this concept. The Repatriation session also highlighted the sensitive nature of (object) repatriation as a practice and acknowledges the need to handle the issue with care and respect. The paper "Moving Human Remains" by Meghan O' Brien Backhouse, Benjamin Hill and Nicholas Crowe, emphasized this point.

The Exhibition analysis session

examined the conference theme from an exhibition viewpoint, that is to say, how exhibitions allow host and immigrant communities to interact with each other as well as how exhibitions promote understanding relationships between various cultures in society. Galia Gavish illustrated this concept in her paper, "The Escape Route of My Family". Overall, the day, as well as the conference itself, ended with and ICME Annual Members meeting and a Closing Reception.

### October 20-22 2017: ICME Post Conference Tour

The ICME conference ended with a tour to New York during the aforementioned dates. I felt privileged to be a participant in an exciting and informative tour.

Day 1- October 20

The day started with a four-hour trip to New York City, NY, from Washington DC. I travelled with several other post- conference tour participants. Upon our arrival in New York, at Penn station, we proceeded to NMAI New York, where we embarked on a tour of exhibits at NMAI Museum in New York.



There were several exhibits to be seen during the tour and school children could not be spared from visiting the NMAI museum where some were seen capturing notes.



After touring the NMAI (New York), we proceeded to New York City's premier landmarks, the Ellis Island Museum of Immigration where, as the ICME group, we managed to meet with Diana Pardue, the Museum Services Division Director at the Ellis Island Museum and Statue of Liberty National Monument. Our visit at Ellis Island Museum was complimented by touring the museum exhibits in the historic halls and galleries of the famous Ellis Island Museum of Immigration. The museum was aptly linked to the theme of this year's conference, as it allowed members of the public to "...explore the immigrant experience across the span of United States History...". The museum showcased various aspects of the recent conference theme (Migration) such as migration and enslavement as well as various aspects of re-creating familiar community spaces (Home and Belonging) such as various music styles that were introduced to America from the Old World and incorporated into American music today.





The pictures above are cross sections of exhibits at the Ellis Island Museum of Immigration

As earlier alluded, the Ellis Island museum tour was complemented by not just a memorable but an exciting tour of one of the most popular tourist attractions in the US, The Statue of Liberty National monument located in middle of the New York harbor in Manhattan. Cruising in the Island bearing the Statue of Liberty Monument proved to me that beyond any reasonable doubt the Statue of Liberty is one of the most famous and iconic landmarks in the United States of America with thousands of tourists from diverse cultural backgrounds visiting the historic monument daily.



During the post conference tour, a particularly eye-catching exhibit, in my opinion was the diorama of a Native American village at Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Centre. Its layout was not only informative, in terms of giving viewers an insight into how daily life occurred in a typical Native American village, it also turned out to be a great comparison to the Shona village that is displayed in the NMMZ Human Sciences Museum Gallery. Below are pictures of the cross section of the diorama village at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum.





New York. I am also appreciative of the fact that the conference proved to be the perfect platform for interaction, in the sense that during the conference I interacted with a culturally-diverse group of museologists and gained exposure from their works and personal experiences. No doubt the museum visits and tours as well as presentations were highly informative.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, I found this year's ICME conference and post-conference tour, to be insightful, informative and an educational event. The presentations and touring of numerous exhibitions were both beneficial and inspiring, in the sense that they have given me ideas on how I can improve my functioning as a curator at the museum here in Zimbabwe, as well as improving the daily functioning of my department and the museum itself. Fascinating interactive displays and free audio listening devices which characterize most museums I visited in the United States is what museums in Zimbabwe should also embrace and move away from static displays. Furthermore, the 2017's conference theme Migration, Home and Belonging resonated well with our recent history in Southern Africa that was shared and reshaped by demographic movements of the mid-nineteenth century. I learnt that museums the world over are fast becoming educational centres, as evidenced by the number of school children I witnessed visiting museums in Washington DC and



# CONFERENCE AND TOUR REPORT: 50th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF ICME-ICOM, 17-22 OCTOBER 2017, WASHINGTON, DC, USA

## By Rema Zeynalova

This year's 50th Annual Conference of ICME-ICOM took place during 17th - 19th October at the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington, DC, followed by the Post-Conference Tour from 20th till 22nd October in New-York, USA.

Over 50 participants from 17 countries attended and participated in the conference, which brought together museum professionals from around the world to share their research results. The theme of this year's conference was 'Migration, Home, and Belonging', allowing museums to explore these complex contexts. The conference theme aimed to explore how to make the museum into a place that is inclusive for all voices to be heard in an age of global migration.

On October 17th, 2017, the conference was officially inaugurated by Diana Pardue, Member-ICOM Executive Council, Dr. David J. Skorton, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and Dr. Viv Golding, President- ICME.

The 2017 ICME annual conference has brought one new interesting topic for museum workers to consider. From 17th to 19th October, the conference had five sessions, including 21 papers, with different focuses. The presenters gave interesting presentations covering topics how diverse audiences are making the museum a "home" and how the museum is facilitating them to find a sense of

"belonging" at their sites. Some papers analyzed the continuous discussions of the meaning of collections and why repatriation of objects is still somewhat controversial, and necessary, at the same time. Other speakers discussed historical and contemporary interpretations of collections and consider "migration" from the perspective of object biographies. Migration, Home, and Belonging touches issues that are very real for many museums of the world. Their collections include objects of different regions, and in the present days there is necessity to re-think the cultural heritage in connection with communities of their origin and a new home for the objects. On the other hand, belonging could be interpreted in the sense of belonging to local tradition as an important source of identity for local communities. In this regards, the presentation "Museums and Identity: a Story of a Tradition Keeper" by Eva Kuminkova was of special interest of mine. It discussed the role of the museum in the process of formation of its visitors', local communities' and wider public's relation towards their cultural heritage. This is what my museum, Azerbaijani Carpet Museum, is pursuing within the framework of the museum's policy to safeguard and revive the cultural heritage of local carpet weaving.

It was a great opportunity for me to attend this conference and give a presentation. At the conference I

gave a presentation about 'Ethnoidentity of Azerbaijani Carpets in the Context of Migration, Home, and Belonging'. In this presentation I talked about the role of carpets in the household and traditions of the Azerbaijani people, the migration of Azerbaijani carpets over the world, and recent return of some carpets back home through independent financial sponsorship. During the very long history of Azerbaijan, this land was home to many peoples who came to Azerbaijan and influenced the development of various handicrafts. Among these cultural achievements, we may indicate the Azerbaijani carpet that has embodied artistic traditions of local peoples. The carpet as a product of nomadic lifestyle has turned into a shared cultural heritage in Azerbaijan. The carpet was closely connected with the communities' way of daily life. People used the carpet to cover and decorate the inside and outside of dwellings. Carpets were used as furniture, hung on walls and spread on the floor. People used carpets as bags during migrations. They made both clothing and horsecloth of carpet textiles. They protected their horses with carpets when it was cold or hot. Along with day-to-day life, rugs and carpet products were widely used in traditional ceremonies and religious rites. From the middle Ages, Azerbaijan turned into an integral part of the Great Silk Road. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Azerbaijan was not only an

international mediator in trade along the Road, but was also an active participant in exchange of goods and cultural values. From the fourteenth century, active commerce along the Great Silk Road provided the major channel for imports of huge amount of carpets from Central Asia, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Iran to Europe. Due to that fact, Azerbaijani carpets were widely spread around the world. Having entered into the daily life of well-off Europeans, the Azerbaijan carpets were represented on canvas of many European painters. In the second half of the twentieth century, Azerbaijan urgently needed to preserve its own heritage of carpet weaving. As a result, the Azerbaijan Carpet Museum was established in 1967, the world's first specialized carpet museum. In accordance with the national policy for the protection and development of the carpet making art in Azerbaijan, the Carpet Museum takes measures in order to get national carpets back to Azerbaijan. As a result of the taken measures, some old carpets had been returned to the Azerbaijan Carpet Museum.

To attend this conference, I was awarded a 'Travel Grant' by ICME-ICOM. This Conference was a great opportunity and a learning experience for me as I was able to meet several museum professionals from all across the globe and also with the experts in the field.

From 20th to 22nd October in the Post-Conference Tour of ICME, we visited the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in New-York, the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration and the

Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center. Additionally, I visited the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art and the George Washington University Museum, the Textile Museum. All museums which I visited were very interesting, but some of them, especially the National Museum of African American History and the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington DC impressed me more. Bright and colourful, the exhibitions were very attractive. Furthermore, I liked 'way of display' at the George Washington University Museum, the Textile Museum, especially how they highlighted a new collection in the exhibition.

Moreover, during conference with board members of ICME, I also got an opportunity to visit the stores of the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington, DC. This tour was special tour, organized for the ICME board members only. It was especially interesting for me to get information about how they keep exhibits, especially textiles in storages, how they conserve and restore the exhibits, which databases they use, etc.

I learned many new and useful things from this tour. I met with a textile conservator and we had an interesting talk about preserving textiles. She gave me some useful advice regarding keeping and protecting of textiles. She also showed me their way of keeping of textile in storages.

The 50th Annual Conference of

ICME-ICOM was one of the most significant events in museum fraternity. I got an opportunity to connect with other experts in the museum field, which was an excellent occasion to share our views and experience.

The knowledge which I gained at the conference, I will share with my colleagues by giving a small presentation at my office and submitting a report at my workplace.

The contacts I made with museum professionals in my field from different countries will be a boon for my organization as we can think of future collaboration in terms of workshop, exhibitions and seminars with museums across the world. Moreover, I got a chance to closely look at the teamwork of ICME-ICOM and learned how international events of that kind are organized and work is completed under the guidance of experts.

In general, I felt enthusiastic, happy and motivated after this conference where I have learned many new things which helped me in improving professionally and personally.

Finally, I would like to thank ICME for giving me the opportunity to attend this conference with their grant which covered all of my expenses.

# Reconnecting Struggles

## The PhD Community at the University of Leicester

On June 5th 2017 PhD students at the University of Leicester organised an interactive workshop/symposium called "Reconnecting Struggles". Speakers, activists, artists and scholars from near and far were invited to take part in sharing their work on struggles and resistance related to gender inequality, racism, colonialism and oppression.

Since the event Sara Thornton and Mette Stendevad have been working on a webpage and a video to document the talks and interactions of the day. They have kindly given ICME permission to benefit from the knowledge and experiences shared on the day by visiting the webpage and accessing the videos here:  
<https://reconnectingstruggles.wordpress.com/video/>

The filming and editing was kindly made by Ambrose Musiyiwa and CivicLeicester.

Videos can also be accessed via the playlist on YouTube:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crjHSqJphey&list=PL-kiElc\\_8yhTk9x\\_nQ98bNtCO-FDwi3CC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crjHSqJphey&list=PL-kiElc_8yhTk9x_nQ98bNtCO-FDwi3CC)



Dr Lory Janelle Dance inviting the audience to play "celebrities" in her speech "Dreaming for America to

Practice What Jefferson Preached" (part 2)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=538&v=QXcXfIMB594](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=538&v=QXcXfIMB594). filmed and edited by Ambrose Musiyiwa and CivicLeicester.



# The AMA Museum By You-Luen

The Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (TWRF) is a social welfare institution which established the Peace Memorial Museum of Comfort Women and Women's Rights in Taiwan. In December 2016, the TWRF set up the new museum (the AMA museum, Figure 1) for Taiwanese comfort women.

Taiwanese comfort women's situation today is disadvantaged due to their historical suffering, yet, those who survived the Japanese Military's sexual slavery system still bravely stand up to accuse the Japanese government (TWRF 2005). Recently, the TWRF has adopted the strengths model to use the term 'comfort women' instead of 'sexual slaves' to change social attitudes towards female victims' negative stereotypes.

On the one hand, the TWRF aims to exhibit and outline the convention of international women's rights in order to raise further awareness among the public and to promote peace and safety for all women. On the other hand, this foundation intends to represent Taiwanese comfort women's traumatic memories by presenting its strengths model, such as artwork and the collections of family stories from previous art therapy workshops (Figure 2 & 3; TWRF 2005).

## Reference

The Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (2005). **Ah-Ma's Stories: Elder, Trauma, and Physical-mental Healing**. The

Taipei: Teacher Chang Press.



# Macaron's Declaration By Sarah Gamaire

**French President revives the  
debate about African Artefacts'  
repatriation**

28 November 2017 : During a speech in Burkina Faso, Emmanuel Macron the French President of French Republic called for the restitution of African artworks and artefacts currently held in France. This announcement has been followed by sharp debates among museums professional and also jurists and collectors. Below a list of articles accessible for free for those who would like to explore different perspectives around the topic ((non exhaustive neither representative list)

- <https://frieze.com/article/macrons-pledge-return-african-artefacts-ignores-deeper-colonial-injustices>

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[https://hyperallergic.com/414996/emmanuel-macron-restitution-african-art/?utm\\_campaign=coschedule&utm\\_source=facebook\\_page&utm\\_medium=Hyperallergic&utm\\_content=French+President+Emmanuel+Macron+Promises+Restitution+of+African+Art](https://hyperallergic.com/414996/emmanuel-macron-restitution-african-art/?utm_campaign=coschedule&utm_source=facebook_page&utm_medium=Hyperallergic&utm_content=French+President+Emmanuel+Macron+Promises+Restitution+of+African+Art)

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<http://theartnewspaper.com/news/restitution-experts-react-to-president-macron-s-pledge-to-return-artefacts-housed-in-french-museums-to-africa>

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<http://theartnewspaper.com/comment/macron-repatriation>

# Contribute to the Discussion on 'What We Do'

We warmly invite ICME members to JOIN THE DISCUSSION!

Dear ICME members,

Sometimes it is best to take a step backwards and start moving forward from the beginning again. This is what we'll try now.

For some time the following text, let us call it the new text, has been the ICME-description meeting you when you opened the ICME web page:

*ICME is dedicated to promoting and safeguarding the human rights of all the peoples of the world, their cultures, societies and environments as well as the tangible and intangible heritage held in museums. Since ICME views identities as dynamic, fluid and multiple rather than essentialist and fixed it is committed to contemporary collecting and collaborative action together with diverse global heritage communities. ICME recognises the colonial histories and the sexist legacies that underpin so many of our traditional ethnographic collections and pro-actively engages with colleagues worldwide to progress intercultural understanding amongst museum audiences as opposed to prejudice and stereotype.*

It replaced the old text:

*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. ICME is concern[ed] with the challenges facing ethnographic museums and collections in a changing world while representing people and their cultures. Ethnographic collections are found in all types of museums – ethnography, art, folk, history, natural history.*

There is also a somewhat longer old text, headlined "About ICME" (and "ICME Aims"), on the webpage:  
[network.icom.museum/icme/about-icme/mission-and-aims/](http://network.icom.museum/icme/about-icme/mission-and-aims/).

When you now go into the ICME homepage (and "Mission and aims" page), the old text has been brought up on top again and the new text is found below, see:  
[network.icom.museum/icme/](http://network.icom.museum/icme/).

We invite all ICME members to respond to the following questions:

- 1) What is your opinion about the old text presenting ICME on ICME's web page? Can it be improved and eventually how?
- 2) What is your opinion about the new text? Can it be improved and eventually how?
- 3) Can the old text and the new text be integrated into forming a whole? Eventually how?
- 4) If you should instead propose a new self-presentation for ICME, what words, formulations or full text would you suggest?

Send your contribution to the ICME

Yahoo list:  
[icme@yahoogroups.com](mailto:icme@yahoogroups.com).

Or

If you do not want it to be accessible to all - send to: [pbrekdal@extern.uio.no](mailto:pbrekdal@extern.uio.no). and it will be taken into account by the small work group established for this debate. We are Per B. Rekdal (former ICME Chair), Annette Fromm (former ICME Chair) and Viv Golding (present ICME Chair).

If you are still not a member of the ICME Yahoo Group, you can subscribe to the list following these INSTRUCTIONS.

We look forward to your contributions!

Sincerely,  
Viv Golding  
ICME Chair



# Words from the Editor

## By Jen Walklate

A short one from me this time - I think you've had enough to read, don't you?

I just want to wish all the ICME family a very very happy holiday season, whatever you celebrate, or indeed if you do not celebrate at all, and find yourself surrounded with a catastrophe of festive tat.

I would also like to thank Esther, Sarah and Graeme for agreeing to help with editing this News. It is not as easy as you might think to put together, and they're help sourcing material will be much appreciated. I - and I think a number of us - have aims for the News in 2018, and we want to make it better and closer to what you would like.

So, to that end, please send your suggestions, comments, criticisms, to [jenny.walklate@gmail.com](mailto:jenny.walklate@gmail.com).

Clearly mark the email ICME News Suggestions, otherwise I will very likely miss or delete it.

Please, when you're submitting items to the News, can I ask you to do the following:

Submit the text in *plain text* - this means in a format such as .txt, with no formatting whatsoever.

Submit your images *separately*

Please make your images *as small as you can* - 500px width would help. I mean file size, not image size.

Please submit *no more than 10 images per article* - I am not a wizard, and no matter how much I try, I can only make so many fit into a PDF which is sendable.

*Second star to the right, and straight on til morning...* Captain Kirk, Peter Pan, or whoever you like.