



## **CANDIDATES TO THE COMCOL BOARD 2016**

It is with great pleasure we present the candidates to the Executive Board of ICOM International Committee for Collecting (COMCOL) for the period 2016-2019.

The e-mail and mail voting period is 15 April - 15 June and a there will be a final opportunity to vote at COMCOL's Annual Meeting on 6 July in Milan, Italy.

### **Candidate for the position as Chairperson:**

Åsa Stenström, Sweden p. 2

### **Candidates for the position as Board member (in alphabetical order):**

Virginia Curry, USA	p. 3
Riitta Kela, Finland	p. 4
Danielle Kuijten, Netherlands	p. 5
Kiprop Lagat, Kenya	p. 6
Cláudia Fernandes Porto, Brazil	p. 7
Venkata Ramana Rayaprolu, India	p. 8
Tanja Roženbergar, Slovenia	p. 9
Kim Smit, Ireland	p.10
Helene Vollgraaff, South Africa	p.11

## Candidate for the position as Chairperson:



Surname: STENSTRÖM

First name: Åsa

Country: Sweden

Year of birth: 1969

Title/position: Head of Collections and Ethnology

Institution/organisation, web address: Västerbottens museum,  
www.vbm.se

### ***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

Being part of the board of COMCOL during the last three years has been interesting and inspiring, not least through all the meetings with colleagues from all over the world in conjunction with the yearly conferences. There we have shared our knowledge in a constructive dialogue which has consisted of both theoretical and practical approaches to contemporary collecting and collections. These meetings are very important for the development of COMCOL and its focus areas. It is also truly important for us as museum professionals to meet and discuss, inspire and support each other to face sometimes difficult tasks in our everyday working lives and to create new best practices and methods together.

After my first three years on the COMCOL board I now feel ready to take on more responsibility and work hard for the committee and its fantastic goals set by some of our now retiring board members and chair. In their spirit I would like to continue the great work of COMCOL, to cooperate with other ICOM committees and networks around the globe and welcome all old and new members from all around the world, to be a part of COMCOL and to work together on the further development of the committee.

### ***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

Åsa Stenström is an ethnologist and head of the department of Collections and Ethnology at Västerbottens museum. She has studied archaeology, ethnology and museology at Umeå University/Sweden. Åsa has worked in the museum sector since 1991, at first with museum education, exhibitions and as responsible for the activities at an open-air museum. Between 2004 and 2010 she worked as an ethnologist, foremost with contemporary collecting, developing a dialogue method in collecting memories and objects. After becoming the head of the Collections and Ethnology department at Västerbottens museum in 2010, she has worked more with questions about collections and collecting and has lectured both in Sweden and abroad about contemporary collecting and collections.

Åsa has been a board member of ICOM COMCOL since 2013. Since 2012 she is the chairperson of the network Contemporary Collecting Sweden, the successor of Samdok, a Swedish national network focusing on contemporary studies and collecting. The network arranges a yearly national conference to inspire and educate colleagues all over Sweden. She is also a board member of NORSAM, a Nordic network focusing on research and contemporary collecting. Furthermore, Åsa is a guest teacher at the museology department at Umeå University.

**Candidates for the position as Board member (in alphabetical order):**



Surname: CURRY  
First name: Virginia  
Country: USA  
Year of birth: 1954  
Title/position: Doctoral Research Assistant, Barrett Museum  
Planning Committee  
Institution/organisation, web address:  
The Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History, University of  
Texas at Dallas, <https://www.utdallas.edu/arhistory/programs>

***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

As a retired FBI Special Agent I worked diligently to protect museum protections and successfully solved crimes of theft from collections and restored the stolen cultural heritage to the museums. I have not tired of this task, I have forged alliances with museum professionals in the United States, Canada, Mexico and in western Europe during my employment with the FBI, and I recently wrote a chapter for “Art Crimes, and their Prevention” for Lund Humphries Art Publishers, in the United Kingdom, which will be released in June, 2016.

I am highly organized and motivated; I presently study with two scholars who help develop my natural curiosity about private collections, donation to public museums and strategies for obtaining donations of art as well as the arranging for gift funding which will provide for the self-sustaining museum in the future. I believe that my participation as a committee member will allow me to implement my ideas to help grow our membership in North America, through our Art Historian Network in the United States, and through our professional contacts.

My participation in The Edith O'Donnell Institute, which is part of the Dallas Metropolitan area, presents an affordable opportunity in Dallas/Fort Worth to access world class public and private collections as well as to the collection professionals who are partners in The EODIAH Institute.

***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

I hold individual Masters Degrees in Spanish Literature, Italian Literature and Art History. I speak Spanish, Italian, French and English and elementary Russian. I am in my final semester of seminars for my doctorate degree at the University of Texas at Dallas, and serve as a museum researcher for the University's new Barrett Museum and a separate Art History library. My dissertation concerns the international development of the Athenaeum and its collections. I also hold a professional degree in graduate gemology from the Gemological Institute of America (GG).

I am a professionally trained teacher and taught high and college language classes before joining the FBI as a Special Agent. My speciality working as an FBI Agent was art crime investigation. I successfully investigated the first major embezzlement from a museum by a museum director and obtained the return of many unique and valuable artwork and artefacts for the museum. Many of my cases concerning cultural property investigation and recovery appear in contemporary literature, such as the Medici Conspiracy. I have previously presented papers to COMCOL meetings in Celje/Slovenia, Seoul/South Korea, and will present a paper in Milano in 2016. I am very motivated and always do what I set out to do. I would be honoured to be of service to COMCOL and ICOM.

## Candidate for the position as Board member:



Surname: KELA  
First name: Riitta  
Country: Finland  
Year of birth: 1966  
Title/position: Head of Collections  
Institution/organisation, web address: Tampere Museums,  
Museum Centre Vapriikki, <http://vapriikki.fi/>

### ***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

In my work with different kinds of museum collections I have noticed that the most important issues can be summarized in the following questions: What is the museum's mission concerning its collections? Why is the collection-related work carried out? For whom is this work carried out? And last but not least, how are collection work and its results and impact evaluated?

All these questions, and some answers that I have already found, are also the main motivation for my candidature. As a member of COMCOL Board I would be ready to share all my knowledge and opinions. I would like to discuss a lot, share our best practices and learn more about collection work.

During the last years I have focused on mostly to the accessibility of collections and collections-related services. In these fields I believe I can give to the COMCOL Board some good examples of trials and even new practices that have been developed. Also different ways of collecting e.g. participative collecting, object -type collecting, phenomenon-specific documentation, or contemporary documentation have been in our museum's focus lately. We have tried to work out the new ways of collecting and also the new ways of communication with the users of our collections. I would really like to share all these experiences with other COMCOL members!

### ***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

Riitta Kela has 20 years of collections management experience. Project Specialist in different IT projects at museums and archives. Specialized in digital collections, accessibility of collections and collections-related services. MA in history, social sciences and museology at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Post-Graduate Diploma of Business Management in the Institute of Commercial Management, UK.

#### **Experience**

Head of Collections, Tampere Museums, Finland, 2012- ; Head of Photograph Archives and Curator, Tampere Museums, Finland 2005-2011; Archivist, University of Tampere, Finland 1999-2005; Curator, University Museum, Jyväskylä, Finland, 1996-1997; Curator, Research Assistant and Trainee, University Museum, Jyväskylä, Finland, 1991-1994

#### **Professional Committee Memberships in Finland**

Finnish Museums Collection Network, Member of the Executive Committee, 2010-2014; Finnish Museums Collection Network, Chairman of the Subgroup 3, 2010-2014; Museum 2015 Project, Member of the Requirement Specification Group for the new collection management system; SAKU – Project for the Development of the new kinds of collection services for different audiences, Chairman, since 2011.

## **Candidate for the position as Board member:**



Surname: KUIJTEN  
First name: Danielle  
Country: Netherlands  
Year of birth: 1971  
Title/position: Freelance Museums & Heritage Consultant  
Institution/organisation, web address:  
[www.heritageconcepting.nl](http://www.heritageconcepting.nl)

### ***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

COMCOL's open approach towards all facets of collecting practices, its drive to explore new ways to address collecting issues, its inclusive attitude towards all members and non-members, makes me feel at home at this committee. My personal interests lie in the theory and practice of participatory and contemporary collecting methodologies. In my work I explore the possibilities and limitations of community-based work; I critically research collections development in museums and search for new ways to work with communities in the field of heritage. Since my master at the Reinwardt Academy in Amsterdam I have built a broad international network. This network keeps me well connected to the field of contemporary and participatory collecting. With my application I would like to continue developing COMCOL internationally as a platform to exchange and discuss collecting matters; I would like to develop COMCOL's online presence further to include more practitioners across the world, with the potential to develop future collaborative projects and a wider understanding of best practice.

### ***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

Danielle Kuijten graduated as Master of Museology at the Reinwardt Academy in Amsterdam (2014). During her study she was part of an Erasmus Exchange program on participation. In 2013 she started working as a freelancer under the name Heritage Concepting. As a freelance heritage consultant she has built up an extensive experience in the field of contemporary & participatory collecting. Since 2012 she works on collecting projects for Imagine IC, a pioneer in the field of heritage of the contemporary society. The latest being the realisation of a community archive on Amsterdam Southeast.

Furthermore she has been an affiliated board member at the COMCOL since 2012. She worked closely with the chair on the annual conferences in Cape Town/South Africa 2012, Rio de Janeiro/Brazil 2013, Celje/Slovenia 2014 and Seoul/South Korea 2015. Furthermore she has been responsible together with board member Claudia Porto for COMCOL's online presence.

Her research interests are contemporary collecting, participative collecting, community archives, intangible heritage and social museology.

## **Candidate for the position as Board member:**



Surname: LAGAT  
First name: Kiprop  
Country: Kenya  
Year of birth: 1970  
Title/position: Principal Research Scientist  
Institution/organisation, web address:  
National Museums of Kenya, [www.museums.or.ke](http://www.museums.or.ke)

### ***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

I offer my candidature to serve in the board of COMCOL for the period 2016-2019. My motivation is derived from my great interest in the research, collection, preservation and dissemination of knowledge pertaining to museum and other heritage collections for the benefit of humanity. I am keen to promote the sharing and exchange of knowledge, expertise and collections through collaborative research, publications and loan of objects between museums in various parts of the world. Additionally, I will advocate for the upholding of professionalism in the performance of our work through the adherence to ICOM's Code of Ethics in the Committee. Lastly, considering that COMCOL is a relatively young committee of ICOM, I will seek to expand its membership through recruitment of new members, especially from the African continent which is currently underrepresented.

### ***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

I am an Anthropologist working as a Principal Research Scientist and Curator in the Department of Cultural Heritage at the National Museums of Kenya. I have over 15 years of experience in the management of cultural heritage and have been involved in various projects focused on the research, documentation, preservation and curation of ethnographic collections. During this period, I have participated in the formulation of various policies, locally and internationally, geared at the management of museum collections.

I hold a Bachelor's of Arts Degree in Anthropology and a Postgraduate Diploma in the Care and Management of Museum and Heritage Collections from the University of Nairobi besides a Master's degree in Museology and a PhD in Anthropology from the University of East Anglia, United Kingdom. I have also written extensively and made presentations in conferences and seminars on the arts and cultures of eastern Africa in various parts of the world. It is this experience, training and exposure that I will bring to the Board to advance the interest of COMCOL and ICOM as a whole. I am passionate about heritage collections and believe that being the memory of humanity it should be managed, shared and appreciated by all, now and in posterity.

## Candidate for the position as Board member:



Surname: FERNANDES PORTO

First name: Cláudia

Country: Brazil

Year of birth: 1960

Title/position: Independent consultant

Institution/organisation, web address: Independent consultant,  
[www.claudiaporto.com](http://www.claudiaporto.com)

### ***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

Since I joined COMCOL board in 2013 I have been focusing on strengthening the committee in Brazil and encouraging the debates about COMCOL's topics of interest. We then created a small group of COMCOL members willing to actively participate in the elaboration of an action plan and then invited other museum professionals to join a larger group, that is now composed of 25 museums, consultants and public institutions related to heritage and collecting.

The discussions we had in 2015 led to a COMCOL seminar in Rio de Janeiro that gathered almost 100 people and had COMCOL member Danielle Kuijten as special guest. As an elected COMCOL board member, in the next few years I intend to broaden the discussions about themes such as ethics of collections, collecting the present and mobility, as well as to carry out a few key projects chosen in collaboration with Brazilian members. I will also be happy to share this experience with other COMCOL members that may want to develop similar initiatives in their countries.

### ***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

I am an independent museums consultant. My main areas of interest are digital technology, collections interpretation, collaborative curatorship and the study of museums as soft power tools. I'm currently involved in developing partnership between museums in Brazil and abroad. I have a degree in Museum Studies (UNIRIO), a specialization in Conservation of Works of Art (UIA, Italy), an MBA in Business Management (UFRJ). In 2013, I've also specialized in Management and Preservation of Scientific Collections (Fiocruz).

I am a board member of COMCOL since 2013 and a board member of ICOM National Committee - Brazil since 2015. Together with a fellow journalist, I have produced in Brazil two museums events: the American initiative #DrinkingaboutMuseums (editions in four Brazilian states) and the British initiative Museums Showoff.

I am visiting professor of Museums & Social Media at the MBA Museums Management (UCAM). I was director of the *Casa da Marquesa de Santos* in Rio, consultant for *Oswaldo Cruz Foundation - Fiocruz* in a project for the requalification of historical and architectural heritage; and Arts and Exchanges Coordinator for the British Council Rio. Presently I am involved in the creation of two digital projects for Brazilian museums that want to stay connected with their audiences through their collections although being closed during the restoration of their premises.

## Candidate for the position as Board member:



Surname: RAYAPROLU  
First name: Venkata Ramana  
Country: India  
Year of birth: 1962  
Title/Position: Assistant Professor of Museology  
Institution/organisation, web address: The Maharaja Sayajirao  
University of Baroda; [www.msubaroda.ac.in/](http://www.msubaroda.ac.in/)

### ***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

Collecting due to curiosity, a sense of accomplishment, unique contribution to society at personal level, and as a bestowed responsibility at institutional level would continue to be an activity. With growing awareness about the importance of antiquity and the rarity of the chance of its recurrence, a variety of new items are joining the existing list, as collectibles. As museums, galleries, collecting institutions and collectors continue to play a vital role in fulfilment of this task, an exclusive agency such as COMCOL would have a significant role to support and promote this purposeful activity through its programmes and events.

Through my candidature on the board, I seek to bring more visibility and attention to COMCOL and propagate its agenda. I would encourage enrolment of membership to COMCOL from this region. I would also explore and promote possible collaboration between local professional associations and cultural agencies with COMCOL to organise any event/s that help improve the quality and practices related to collecting. I seek to be in the fray, in absentia, if possible, as I would not be able to attend the Milan event, and also if COMCOL feels the need to have a representative from this region.

### ***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

Rayaprolu Venkata Ramana is an Indian by birth and citizenship. He is an academic of postgraduate courses and research programme of museology. Dr. Ramana edits the journal *Studies in Museology*, and is a member of Board of Studies of Museology and Fine Arts at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, India. He has masters in Botany, Museology and doctorate on Museum Architecture from India and MA in Euroculture from a consortium of universities of the European Union (as an Erasmus Mundus recipient).

He was trained at National Museum, New Delhi and National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property, Lucknow; and he surveyed regional beneficiary museums of Gujarat, under financial assistance scheme by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture of Government of India. He did internship at the National Museum, and the Manghha (Japanese) Centre in Krakow/Poland. He visited museums and allied cultural institutions in Russia, France, Poland, Spain, Finland, Brazil, Qatar and Taiwan. He is a member of ICOM from 1991, COMCOL board member since 2013, and served the board of National Committee for two terms from 2004-2009. He participated in events held by ICOFOM, ICMAH and presented papers at conferences by CIDOC, COMCOL and ICR. He published articles in newsletters of UMAC and COMCOL.



## Candidate for the position as Board member:



Surname: ROŽENBERGAR  
First name: Tanja  
Country: Slovenia  
Year of birth: 1965  
Title/Position: Director  
Institution/organisation, web address:  
Slovene Ethnographic Museum,  
<http://www.etno-muzej.si/>

### ***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

I have been professionally involved in cultural heritage for over 25 years and I have worked in various museum fields. To be active also in COMCOL, which is one of the most dynamic and actual ICOM committees, with value and significance for museums in the 21st century, means to me a special challenge. Collections are the basis of each museum, but we have to reflect, understand and communicate them from the perspective of recent society. The different topics COMCOL rises, from collecting policies, to principles of dynamic collection, sustainability understanding, collecting objects from consumer society and many others, develop understanding of museums and museology.

To serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member, present me with a professional and personal challenge. I am convinced that my experiences in the field of museology, working with the public, professional theoretical work and my personal attitude provide a good starting point and a good qualification for successful work in COMCOL committee.

### ***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

A graduate of ethnology and sociology, and a curatorial adviser, Tanja Roženbergar gained her bachelor's, master's degrees and a PhD at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana/Slovenia. 1990-2003 she was employed as ethnology curator at the Museum of Recent History Celje/Slovenia and 2007-2015 as its director. She was employed from 2003 to 2005 as a secretary at the Slovenian Ministry of Culture, working primarily on formulating development strategies in the area of protecting the movable cultural heritage.

In her museum work she has set up a variety of projects. Special areas of her work are visual documentation and presentation, urban ethnology and museology. Since 2015 she is working as director at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana.

Tanja Roženbergar is a member of several professional associations, and under the international association ICOM she is president of the Slovenian ICOM committee, an active member of COMCOL from its beginning in 2010 and its treasurer in the current mandate. In 2014 she was the main organizer of COMCOL's annual conference named *Collecting and collections in times of war or political and social change*.

## Candidate for the position as Board member:



Surname: SMIT

First name: Kim

Country: Ireland

Year of birth: 1977

Title/position: Head of Exhibitions & Collection Services

Institution/organisation, web address: The National Gallery of Ireland, <http://www.nationalgallery.ie/>

### ***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

I have been a COMCOL board member for the last three years and I have found it very exciting and rewarding to work with such interesting people on topics so close to my heart. I have also taken up the role as Chief Editor of the COMCOL newsletter, which is a challenging but wonderful job. I feel that I have made a valuable contribution to the board due to my experience in collections management and enthusiasm and commitment to the area of collections care as a whole. However, I also feel that I have more to offer and I would like to continue to be part of a growing and developing COMCOL. Going forward it is particularly important that we find new ways to increase our membership and develop our working groups. There is always more work to do to make the committee bigger and better and I am keen to contribute to the development of COMCOL and its newsletter. I look forward to exchange ideas with other COMCOL members and contributors to the newsletter. I hope that the COMCOL voters will be happy for me to continue to serve on the COMCOL board.

### ***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

Kim Smit was born in The Netherlands where she obtained her Masters in Arts & Culture Studies from the University of Maastricht. In 1999 she moved to Dublin/Ireland to study Arts Administration at University College Dublin. She worked at several museums and galleries and held the post of Registrar at the National Gallery of Ireland (NGI) for 10 years. She is now Head of Exhibitions & Collection Services at the NGI responsible for; exhibition project management, collection registration & digitisation, management of all incoming and outgoing loans, store & location management and the art handling function. She has completed a Diploma in Art Law Profession and Ethics and a Diploma in Law and Collections Management from the Institute of Art & Law. She was the Irish representative on the European Commission's OMC (Open Method of Communication) Group 2011/2012, researching 'ways to simplify lending and borrowing' and co-chair of the risk-assessment subgroup. She is an Irish expert for the CEN (European Standards Committee) contributing to the publication of European Standards for the Transport of Cultural Heritage.

## **Candidate for the position as Board member:**



Surname: VOLLGRAAFF  
First name: Helene  
Country: South Africa  
Year of birth: 1966  
Title/position: Museum Consultant  
Institution/organisation, web address:  
Helene Vollgraaff Projects

### ***Motivation for my candidature; how I wish to serve and develop the committee and accomplish as a board member:***

To me, ICOM has opened up a wonderful world of networking and sharing of ideas – it is the space where new ideas and initiatives are discussed in order to continuously evolve the museum sector. However, for members from developing countries such as South Africa, it is difficult to fully participate in the network due to financial constraints. Yet, we have valuable contributions to make to museum theory. If elected, I would like to explore ways to make the COMCOL network more accessible for members who cannot travel regularly to conferences.

In addition, as ICOM South Africa Board member, I have been involved in a number of initiatives to discuss and find solutions to challenges facing the African and South African museum sector. I would like to continue contributing to such initiatives within the COMCOL network while sharing the South African perspective on museology and collecting in particular.

### ***Background/short bio/CV, special competences and interests beneficial for COMCOL and ICOM:***

I have been active in museum associations for many years, first as Council member of the South Africa Museums Association (2000-2007) and then as ICOM South Africa Treasurer (2006-2010). I am currently the Chairperson of ICOM South Africa.

As a curator/scientist at Iziko Museums of South Africa for many years, I focused on memory projects and social movements. During that time, I started collecting ephemera, documents and photographs of new social movements in South Africa. After Iziko, I became involved in heritage and museum policy development while working at the National Heritage Council of South Africa as a heritage policy specialist. For the last 18 months, I worked as an independent museum consultant focusing mainly on training and policy development. Amongst other projects, I teach Museum Management as part of the University of the Western Cape Post-graduate Diploma in Heritage Studies. I am also a research fellow associated with the University of South Africa's Archaeology and Anthropology Museum.

