



ICOM Kyoto 2019 General Conference was held in Kyoto International Conference Center. Conference participants enjoyed interesting program and networking.

## Letter from the Chair

*Danielle Kuijten*

Best wishes to you all for 2020! I am happy that we can present our first newsletter as a new board to you. Many thanks to our contributors (known and new ones) for sharing their insights and experiences with us, so that we can share them with all of you. We start the year by briefly looking back; back to the year of the terrible fires in the Notre Dame in Paris and Shuri Castle in Okinawa, the year of demonstrations at the MET and the British Museum, fueled by ongoing discussions about decolonization and transparency. But 2019 also showed inspirational efforts on repatriation and an active approach of museums to contribute to (some) of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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It was also the year of ICOM's General Conference in Kyoto – 'Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition'. Most importantly, it was the year a new museum definition was proposed. The way to Kyoto and the actual conference was imbued with the definition buzz. In sessions, roundtables, but also during breaks, lunch and dinner, heated discussions about the process, the wording (is this a definition?) and the usability of it in policy-making were unfolding. Can we find enough common words that would cover and include the huge variety of institutions worldwide? Words that fit not only to contemporary urgencies, but also those to come? Words that are dynamic enough, but also give necessary grip for policymakers? Do we still need a definition in such times of fluidity and constant change? The buzz... that continues, since, many colleagues have been writing, reflecting and debating about what happened in Kyoto, and about the final postponement.

So what will 2020 bring, besides more museum definition discussions, as June, the time of the annual meeting in Paris and the resumption of the official discussion, gets closer? Close to home (our COMCOL home) things are getting exciting! We started the preparations for our next Annual Meeting this coming September in Kazan. For this conference COMCOL joins forces with ICOM Russia and the National Museum of the Tatarstan Republic. Our theme Collecting Diversity: Divergence as Dialogue is derived from this year's International Museum Day theme Museums for Equality: Diversity and Inclusion. The Call for Papers is available now and can be downloaded from our website. We look forward to your proposals and we hope many of our members (old, new and future ones) will join us in Kazan. Keep a close eye on our website and Facebook for further information.

In the meantime, enjoy reading our Newsletter, stay tuned and have a great start into 2020!

*Danielle Kuijten*  
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Danielle Kuijten

# *The COMCOL Pre-Conference in Nara, 29-31 August 2019, gave us food for thought*

*Leen Beyers*

The pre-conference of COMCOL, which anticipated the big ICOM Conference, was organized by the Nara National Museum from 29 to 31 August 2019. The Nara National Museum, which is specializing in Buddhist art, created a highly interesting program and offered us excellent food, but also food for thought! During our visits to the museum itself and to several temples in Nara with which the museum collaborates, we were given the opportunity to discuss a number of contemporary, shared challenges faced by museums all over the world today.

An important theme of this two-day event, which was also central to the keynote lectures on 29 August, was the difference in meaning between religious objects in a devotional context and in museums. A number of temples in Nara have their own Treasure Houses. In these rooms displaying artworks there is also always a place of devotion (an altar for a Buddha statue or a Bodhisattva statue, with the possibility of offering money and praying). The Nara National Museum also houses an altar as one of its masterpieces. This method of display differs greatly from how religious art is presented in most Western European museums. For instance, in the MAS, a museum on worldwide connectedness in the Belgian port city of Antwerp, where I work, we consider our permanent Life and Death Exhibition, which shows a lot of devotional objects, as very immersive. We hope to capture the spirit of devotion, but we would not want to install a true place of devotion. Hence, while I don't think we should install an actual altar in our museum, we must be aware that our 'immersiveness' has its limits.

Another topic that was discussed in Nara was appreciation for the authentic piece versus the replica. In the temple Treasure Houses and, to a lesser extent, in the Nara National Museum, a number of replicas are presented as particularly valuable because they were created in the same style and for the same emperor or bodhisattva as older objects. The appreciation of professionally created replicas was also evident in the many other museums in Japan. Later there was a lot of discussion at the ICOM conference about the value of craftsmanship as living heritage versus the value of 'authentic' objects. While I tend to be very critical of replicas, I must admit that the Japanese approach has widened my perspective. I have come to think about situations in which we overemphasize authenticity, for instance when objects are part of a living heritage practice, such as the procession carriages which are part of the MAS collection. Should restoration of these objects entail a return to a certain point in time, or should restoration allow the further use of the carriages?

Thirdly, the challenge of caring for the many scattered temple collections in Japan was discussed. This seems very similar to the challenge of caring for religious heritage in Flanders. Temples which attract fewer believers today sometimes tend to sell their heritage to survive. The best protection against the sale of heritage in Japan is the recognition of national masterpieces, but this is only possible for a limited number of objects. Our Japanese colleagues were quite worried about this situation. In Flanders the challenge is obvious too, but for about 20 years now the CRKC centre of expertise is developing policies and good practices in this domain:

<https://www.crkc.be/centre-religious-art-and-culture>



# *Inspirational exchanges in the COMCOL workshops at the ICOM Conference: 2,3,4 September 2019*

*Leen Beyers*

COMCOL organized 3 workshops at the general ICOM Conference in Kyoto: one workshop just for COMCOL (2 September), one joint workshop together with CIPEG (3 September) and one joint workshop together with CIDOC (4 September). The program of these workshops is available here: [https://comcol2019.weebly.com/uploads/5/4/9/9/54999487/20190823\\_program\\_comcol\\_v2.pdf](https://comcol2019.weebly.com/uploads/5/4/9/9/54999487/20190823_program_comcol_v2.pdf)

The three workshops were very inspirational and I am happy to share my impressions here.

On **2 September**, Leontine Meijer-van Mensch, founder of COMCOL in 2000, gave a keynote presentation on “Performative strategies of collections,” in which she developed Fiona Cameron’s views (author of *The Liquid Museum*, 2015) and gave a number of examples of a more “liquid” way of working with collections. Fortunately it was not a purely theoretical reflection. A number of concrete cases were cited. This stimulated the entire afternoon session, because many presentations actually focused on actively giving meaning to collections in collaboration with many different groups: professional and other organizations as well as visitors. Furthermore, in the session on 2 September, a number of recent developments concerning digital collecting, innovative permanent



**Child in front of the Crowned Buddha Shakyamuni sculpture in the MAS exhibition Life and Death**

collection presentation, contemporary thematic collecting and contemporary participatory collecting were discussed. While some of the projects we do should be: in the MAS, Museum aan de Stroom, are very similar to the ones mentioned in the workshop, I became aware of a difference in strategy. Up to now, in the MAS participation focuses primarily on co-creation of exhibitions or co-organization of events. In contrast, this COMCOL workshop was much more



**MAS.0115.001, Procession carriage representing a ship, earlier than 1875, from the MAS collection (in need of restoration and research)**

about the museum collections as a hub in society. The MAS collection comes from the society. Hence, we can be much more ambitious and creative in connecting the MAS collection to society, for instance through participative collecting, participative documenting, loans for performances with objects, etc.

On **3 September**, COMCOL and CIPEG, the ICOM committee for Egyptology, jointly organized a workshop. In this session, COMCOL and CIPEG mainly had presentations on collecting archaeological artefacts and ethics (origin research, restitution, illegal trade), on contemporary presentations of Egyptian collections in Egypt and beyond, and on community participation in chronologically distant archaeological or geological collections. The session was instructive for COMCOL because it mainly concerned contexts in which there is no longer active collecting, as well as contexts in which ethics receive a lot of attention. Among other things, the alliance initiative of the British Museum against current theft of archaeological objects was discussed. During the discussion, however, it became clear that the British Museum is

less proactive with regard to possible restitutions of its ancient archaeological collections. The session was interesting for CIPEG, because in this session the bond between contemporary society and the archaeological collections received much more attention than they were used to. Two Egyptian museologists gave an overview of the recent museum boom in Egypt. A colleague from the Iziko Museums in Cape Town presented the new approach to the Egyptian collection as “African culture” in the museum. In the past, this museum had Egyptian and European collections on “culture” and indigenous South African collections on “nature.” Actually, also in the MAS, the Egyptian collection moved in 2009 from the European applied arts collection to the African art collection.

On **4 September**, COMCOL and CIDOC, the ICOM committee on collection documentation, organized a joint workshop. Both COMCOL and CIDOC work on collections in a general sense. The typical CIDOC approach, however, is concerned with the questions of how and with which technology we can document collections and make them accessible. Due to the collaboration with COMCOL, in this session much more attention was paid to the questions of who can be involved in collection documentation and why. The papers presented in this section dealt with digital disclosure and the question of making collections available to the creative industry for free or for money, documenting living heritage (with a very interesting paper on spiritual practices in Malaysia), community collecting (training heritage associations to self-archive, document and digitize), researching collections in order to support legal claims for restitution, and my own paper on collaboration with Congolese partners for new perspectives and new research on the African collection of the MAS. Questions came from CIDOC colleagues about how the new knowledge and Congolese insights would be embedded in the inventory in the longer term. In a number of cases, existing descriptions will be corrected and supplemented. But for some fields of the inventory, such as those about provenance, the field itself should be adapted.

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COMCOL members and conference participants in Kyoto

## ***ICOM Kyoto 2019: A New Beginning in my Career in Museums***

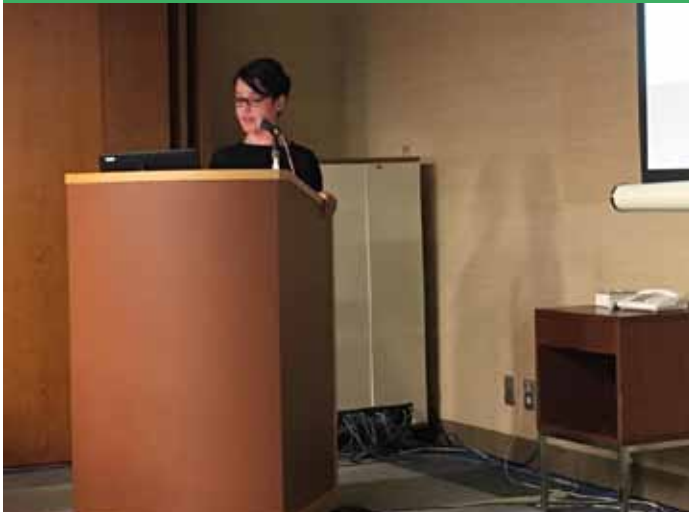
***Gloriana Amador***

During the week of 1-7 September 2019, I traveled to Japan to attend the 25th *International Council of Museums (ICOM) General Conference “Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition.”* Thanks to the ICOM Strategic Allocation Review Committee (SAREC) and COMCOL, the ICOM International Committee for collecting, I received a Young Member Travel Grant. Along with 4.000 participants from around the globe, I could be part of the discussion of *the museum definition, the backbone of ICOM*, a very important topic for museum professionals.

Additionally, I presented my ongoing research at Pratt Institute “Art Collections Maker: Digital Engagement in Contemporary Art,” which is also my Fulbright project, in the session “*Traditions, Collections, Management Systems, and Digital Tools*,” a joint assembly between COMCOL and CIDOC. At this conference, I was elected as a new member of the *COMCOL Board* for a three-year term, an important opportunity to serve and collaborate with the international community of museum professionals.



Taking part to the Extraordinary General Assembly



**Gloriana Amador**

## Benefits from my presence at the ICOM General Conference

To foster mutual understanding and a more peaceful world it is important to have a mindset connected with a global context, as ICOM offers. At the conference, I was able to engage with museum professionals from around the world, catch up with old friends, and make new ones as well. Additionally, I attended a curatorship mentoring session with curator Maja Chankulovska-Mihajlovska. This session allowed me to have a better understanding of what curatorship is in our contemporary museum world.

Furthermore, I presented my ongoing research undertaken at Pratt Institute in New York and received important feedback from my peers and colleagues. Meanwhile, the museum definition presented in the plenary session was one of the most exciting moments in my early career as a museum professional. As stated on the website of ICOM Kyoto, "this triennial gathering promises to inspire a range of discussions and exchanges on museum-related issues," I was very inspired, indeed.

Finally, I very much enjoyed our time on the excursion "Time for contemplation, tea, and ceramics," that allowed me to immerse myself in Japanese culture outside of the conference site.

## Contributions to the development of actions within your ICOM Committee

As a new COMCOL board member, I will contribute with specific actions to engage with younger audiences, activate the digital platforms, and have a strong online to reach and attract new members. Moreover, a potential working group in Museum Digital Strategies, in conjunction with CIDOC and COMCOL, represents a great opportunity to put into practice the knowledge I have received during my MS program in Museums and Digital Culture. These topics are part of the core foundations of my studies at Pratt Institute in New York.

## ICOM Kyoto and Beyond

One of the most positive outcomes from this experience was reflected when I came back to New York. My professors and classmates were interested in knowing more about my experience in Kyoto and the benefits of being a young ICOM member. At the Pratt Emerging Museum Professionals Meeting I shared my experience in Kyoto and the conversation was full of curiosity and interest about the role of ICOM for young museum professionals. Additionally, my experience was featured in the News from *Pratt Institute School of Information*, allowing me to disseminate the knowledge about all the benefits of being a member of ICOM.

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**Gloriana Amador at the Pratt Emerging Museum Professionals Meeting**





Extraordinary General Assembly, ICOM 25th General Conference, Kyoto 2019

## *ICOM 25<sup>th</sup> General Conference, Kyoto 2019 from the perspective of new COMCOL members*

*Polina Nikolaou and Despina Andriopoulou*

This was the first time we attended a triennial conference of ICOM, so we arrived at Kyoto with great

anticipation. For us, the next few days presented a unique opportunity to get a grasp of the current state of affairs in the museum field and the many possibilities of its future(s). In this article we share our thoughts on the voting process to establish a new definition of the museum, which took place on 7 September in the Extraordinary General Assembly, and how it relates to us, the professionals of the sector.

Perhaps, one feature that came prominently to the fore is the diversification of the identity of the museum professional. The more than 4,000 delegates – creating a mosaic with their cultural, political, economic, linguistic and historical differences – came to the



conference with many different or similar thoughts on the new museum definition. Having in mind that geography forms distinct cultural phenomena, we started thinking about the identity of the museum professional and how it was never really singular but plural, disguised under a definition that no longer adequately defines the sector in its entirety. The majority of national and international Committees voted for postponement to further discuss the definition for many different reasons: either because the professional language used in the definition bears little sense in some countries and needs refinement, because the definition looks more like the mission statement that we already use and it can't be used legally, or because key functions of the museum, such as education and enjoyment, are not included. Others highlighted the urgency of the matter, arguing that if we want to continue serving our societies, this was the moment to take the leap towards our future. It was highlighted that the profession has already changed and the definition needs to change accordingly, prompting us to ask: do we need to reinvent ourselves or have we already done so?

The discussion on the voting took place everywhere, from the corridors to the sessions; we heard different stories about museums, collections and practices and how they relate to the new definition. The dialogue illuminated how complex the museum field has become, with an ever-increasing specialization and diversification that causes tension when we collectively reflect on the praxis of the museum profession. Does this tension constitute an emerging identity crisis, as has been noted already in the literature? Or perhaps is it a moment of unity? Such a moment was when ICOM Iran and ICOM Israel stated that for the first time they agreed on something, and this was to postpone the voting in order to discuss the definition further. Many calls were made to vote for postponement so as to retain the unity of the organization.

The museum definition was neither voted on nor rejected. Instead it was postponed as the majority agreed to have a current formulation of the new museum definition as a basis but asked for further consideration and discussion. The question of what it means to be a museum professional (can it be globally defined?) still needs to be answered. For us, as young professionals and newcomers in the ICOM General Conference, this discussion was both inspirational and welcoming. The conference became our space of

dialogue where we were given the floor to share our thoughts, aspirations, and worries individually or collectively. We found this to be a truly democratic experience.

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Jan-Erik Andersson's (b. 1954) installation *The Romantic Painter Caspar David Friedrich Sitting on an Iceberg. Trying to Capture the Magic Triangle on His Canvas after Having Thrown His Painting "The Wreck of the Ship Called Hope" 1821, in Ice-Cold Water (1986)*. The materials of the work consist of, at least, plywood, chipboard, steel tubing, chicken wire, rope, glass, artificial fur, wire, foam rubber, cotton fabric and acrylic and spray paint.

Photo: Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova/Jari Nieminen 2015

## *Best Practices of Deaccessioning A Finnish Experience*

*Minna Sarantola-Weiss*

Collections management has undergone a fundamental change in recent decades in terms of communication with audiences and shareholders, but also with regard to upkeep and logistics. These two aspects have put a spotlight on collections prioritisation, deaccessioning

and disposal, which are themes many museum professionals still regarded as difficult and even provocative as recently as ten years ago. National differences in attitudes and practices still exist, but it is evident that deaccessioning is developing into a tool among others in the toolbox of museum professionals. The pendulum has swung from ethical reservations against deaccessioning to ethical reservations against not deaccessioning. Dieuwertje Wijsmuller charted the possibilities and attitudes towards deaccessioning and disposal within the European Union member states in 2016–2017 (*Deaccessioning & Disposal in Europe 2008–2017. A Research on Possibilities and Attitudes Across the European Member States*), and noticed that most countries have either legislation, national guidelines or various best practices developed professionals.



The results are published at <https://www.mondriaanfonds.nl/en/supported/dieuwertje-wijsmuller-deaccessioning-and-disposal-europe-2008-2017/>

The overview should be of interest for all COMCOL members. It is very much in line with the mission of our committee to consider collecting as part of a systemic approach to collections work in which collections management, including deaccessioning, is one central element. Artefacts and other objects come in, but something might also have to go out, and that must not necessarily be a loss.

The focus of my article is a deaccessioning project that was carried out by six museums in Finland in 2014–2016. The work of Wijsmuller gives an excellent opportunity to put the Finnish project and its results into a wider Nordic and also European context.

## The Starting Point

In Finland, a more thorough discussion about deaccessioning started in the beginning of the 2010s, although museums of cultural history had practised collection valuation and even deaccessioning even earlier. There was a certain need to come together and discuss both the ethics and practices of deaccessioning on a national level. Six museums launched a project in 2014–2016 that addressed these issues. The museums involved initially were the Helsinki City Museum, the Historical Collections of the Tampere Museums and the Museum of Technology. The Historical Collections of the Tampere Museums have applied a value classification to the collections since 1994 and are thus a forerunner in this field in Finland as well as internationally. The Helsinki City Museum adopted its first deaccessioning policy in 2001, whereas the Museum of Technology included deaccessioning in its collection policy in 2013. The aim was to develop a model process on the basis of the ICOM Code of Ethics. The initiative came thus from museums of cultural history, but we realised that many questions were worth considering together with art museums, and HAM – Helsinki Art Museum, The Tampere Art Museum and the Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova Museum of history and contemporary art in Turku soon joined the project. At Tampere Art Museum, deaccessioning had not been carried out yet, while in Helsinki Art Museum further specifications of deaccessioning policy became topical when a number of works of public art in poor condition were removed from the collection. Aboa

Vetus & Ars Nova felt a need of in-depth discussions of the lifespan of contemporary works of art with their often numerous materials.

## The Finnish operating environment

The project was launched at a stage when collections work was developed in multiple ways in Finnish museums, very much in tune with the concept of dynamic collections or the vision of COMCOL. Various procedures and tools were developed that are also helpful when working on deaccessioning practices.

During the 2010s, museums of cultural history in Finland created a network for collection management collaboration (TAKO-network) within which museums agree to a nationwide division of the tasks involved in collecting. The related agreement with the National Board of Antiquities has been signed by over a hundred professionally-managed Finnish museums. There are about 150 museums that are professionally managed and (partly) funded by the state, meaning that the network can truly coordinate accessions in professionally-run museums. The well-functioning and partly web-based network can increase knowledge of the contents of collections and the ways in which the museums wish to develop them. One important



Visitors to the Tampere Museums' collections centre on Museum Night in 2014. Fabric sample batches disposed from the collection are on the clothing rack in the corner. A total of about 10,000 samples were assessed during the project.

Photo: The Historical Collections of The Tampere Museums/ Merja Honkasalo.

goal is to bridge the gap that sometimes exists between collecting and collections management. The network can also support a shared knowledge of the contents of the collections and the national cultural heritage.

These aims are also served by the Finna-portal of all Finnish memory organisations, through which both the public and professionals can study the cultural heritage collected and stored by libraries, archives and museums. <https://www.finna.fi/?lng=en-gb>

Most Finnish professionally-run museums have a written collection policy. A checklist for museum collections management policies was published in 2013 with the intention of facilitating discussion about the practices, processes and details of collection activities and to unify the terminology in use. Even the significance analysis tool developed in Australia had a Finnish adaptation. Both publications offer tools that help museums to assess and evaluate individual objects and whole collections in accordance with their mission and collection policy, even in terms of deaccessioning and disposal.



**The Museum of Technology has sold 14 tons of deaccessioned machinery and equipment for waste metal when moving collections to new premises. The compensation received covered part of the moving costs of the objects remaining in collections but was not significant in relation to the overall budget for relocating the stores.**

**Photo: Museum of Technology**

## The project: Good practices of deaccessioning

Our deaccessioning project started with a survey that charted what was found to be problematic in deaccessions. A total of 65 replies were received and formed a basis for further actions to be taken. The practical work consisted of 14 case studies with a wide range of ethical, legal and practical questions in the participating museums. The case studies covered a wide spectrum with a focus on curatorial aspects, conservation and storage (KUMI), collection objects, collections policy, legal issues and life span of arts in public spaces. After these analyses, we prepared a process framework that museums can apply according to their own needs. The contents were also discussed in some twenty seminars and workshops, and we felt that we could reach the Finnish museum field very well. A wide network was crucial for the development and the implementation of the process framework. The support the project got from the Ministry of Culture and Education, The National Museum of Finland, The Finnish National Gallery and the National Board of Antiquities was, therefore, decisive.

Suomen Museoliitto (The Finnish Museums Association) has published two reports based on the project in Finnish and the English report Deaccessioning. Sharing Experiences from Finland in 2016. <https://www.museoliitto.fi/index.php?k=12613>

All the reports address various aspects of deaccessioning and the first Finnish report contains a model process based to a great extent on the British Disposal Toolkit.

## What did we learn?

The concrete result of the project was the model process. This process helped museums to assess the realistic possibilities and preconditions of deaccessioning with regard to issues including the collections management policy of individual museums, existing agreements and legal considerations, motives for deaccessioning, and selection of decision-makers and resources. Our particular aim was to stress the importance of a collections management policy. Today, the achieved results form a basis for all the actions taken in collections management. Deaccessioning is just one of the tools in developing and dynamic collections management.



Even more important than the model process was the implementation and enhancing of analytical professional discussion on deaccessioning. It became obvious that all the museums involved shared ethical and practical questions, but the answers and practical solutions could be very different. In particular, the collections and traditions of museums of cultural history and art museums are different in many ways. Copyright issues and working with living artists make a difference in the everyday life of art museums, but this difference does not prevent good discussions and also cooperation when, for instance, replacing deaccessioned objects. What is essential is the dismantling of myths and taboos in both individual museums and in the museum field.

### The Nordic reference

Wijismuller divides European attitudes towards deaccessioning into two main traditions: the Latin tradition and the Anglo-Saxon or Northwestern tradition. According to her, the Latin tradition adheres to the fact that cultural heritage is inalienable and to keep it is the responsibility of individual museums. The museums are, therefore, very cautious when it comes to deaccessioning. In the Northwestern tradition, the emphasis lies more on the significance and dynamics of the individual museum collections. The curatorial motives for deaccessioning often have first priority, and removing items for curatorial or pedagogical use is a much practised method of disposal. From this point of view, valuation and deaccessioning are essential elements of actively developing collections.

Discussion about collection valuation and deaccessioning has been on the agenda in all Nordic countries during the 2010s, and this discussion has led to both legislative actions and national guidelines. All those actions and guidelines have in common that they take the ICOM Code of Ethics and also the museum collections management standard Spectrum as their starting point. The Disposal Toolkit of the British Museums Association has also been an important source of inspiration. From a Finnish point of view the developments in the other Nordic countries are a natural point of reference because of the (in many ways) shared history and development of legislation.

In Denmark, the possibility of disposal is mentioned in law but only applies to museums owned by the state. The guidelines are implemented and supervised by Slots- og Kulturstyrelsen (Agency for Culture and

Palaces) since 2003. Other museums act independently and create their own guidelines.

<https://slks.dk/museer/museernes-arbejdsopgaver/indsamling/udskillelse-og-kassation/vejledning-til-udskillelse/>

In Sweden, the 2017 museum legislation requires active collection management. This legislation states that the government may issue regulations requiring state museums to transfer items from their collections to other museums and to issue regulations about items in the collections of the state museums that have a limited cultural historical value.

<https://www.sverigesmuseer.se/nyheter/2017/08/nugaller-museilagen/>

The formulation in law is interpreted as a positive stand for deaccessioning, and Riksantikvarieämbetet (The Swedish National Heritage Board) has published guidelines on an ethical deaccession policy based on the British Disposal Toolkit in 2017. <https://www.raa.se/kulturarv/samlingsforvaltning/stod-for-museer-i-gallringsprocessen/> The guidelines have plenty of leeway for individual decision making in museums and emphasise the legal responsibility of individual museums.

The Norwegian guideline was completed in 2015 and was an important model and a source of inspiration in Sweden. The process of the guideline was quite similar to that in Finland. For the museum field in Norway, many rather small local museums are typical, and there was a certain need for national guidelines. The Bergen City Museum submitted a project application to Kulturrådet (the Arts Council of Norway) together with the Randsfjord Museum and Oslo Museum. The two-year project started in 2013 and resulted in the publication Guidelines for Prioritisation. Transfer of ownership and destruction of cultural history museum objects, in 2015 <https://www.kulturradet.no/vis-publikasjon/-/guidelines-for-prioritisation>. The publication presents the various steps and tools needed during a deaccessioning process but does not give any recommendations. There is no specific museum legislation in Norway, so that each Norwegian museum must consider which means and tools are best suited to its situation.

In Iceland, a reorganisation of the National Museum and new collections centre created both the need and an opportunity to develop national collection guidelines, and deaccessioning is mentioned in the museum

legislation. The responsible body is the National Museum, which also has the task of supporting the other museums in their collection work.

An obvious conclusion from our project and the developments in the Nordic Countries is that the more pragmatic and liberal mindset is predominant in Finland and Scandinavia – and, according to Wijsmuller, also in Estonia where the rapidly developing museum field is to a great extent influenced by Northwestern European museology. An important reference has been the work done in the Netherlands and in the United Kingdom. However, this does not mean that collection valuation or deaccessioning would be actively practised in all museums. There are big differences between museums, and there is a certain need of collegial support in defining collection profiles and developing valuation and deaccessioning practices.

### Lifespan and deaccession

There are also big differences in how disposals are carried out in practice by various museums. Particularly in the Netherlands, sales are a widely accepted method of disposal, whereas in Finland, destruction has been the most practised method until the last few years. At the moment, though, the curatorial use of deaccessed objects is a growing trend. The differences in attitudes towards the methods in these two countries at least partially reflect the character and economic value of the collections to be removed.

Interestingly, Wijsmuller names Finland as an example of a country where the lifespan of objects is discussed more than in other European member states. We found during our project that so-called modern materials, i.e. rubber and various plastics are not made to last and are, therefore, problematic in museums collections. These materials, however, are used in most modern objects and in many works of contemporary art. The lifespan of these objects should be taken into account when acquiring them. This is particularly sensitive when acquiring works of living artists. But also on a more general level it is worth considering the fact that a deaccessioning process might require more time and resources than adding objects to a collection.

### Conclusion

To conclude, I return to the reflection of Wijsmuller on the differences between the Latin and the



The Helsinki City Museum tested the significance analysis method in association with the City Transport Department and local tram enthusiasts for the purpose of deciding on the deaccessioning of two trams. An open and participatory method sought to avoid negative publicity possibly resulting from deaccessioning. Public transport is one of Helsinki City Museum's national areas of collecting responsibility.

Photo: Helsinki City Museum/Bertel Okkola 1955.





Northwestern tradition. In the latter, the wording of the legislation is quite open and the imperative status of the guidelines varies a lot thereby giving much freedom and responsibility to individual museums. One vital question is, how the museum fields in the different countries support discussion about the total sum of national cultural heritage. In Denmark, since 2004, state-owned and state-subsidised museums must report their collections to two national registers. The registers provide a nation-wide overview that makes it easier for the museums to coordinate and prioritise their object collections. In Finland, the TAKO-network and the Finna-portal give a similar tool when considering the collections and the collections profile of an individual museum in the wider context of national cultural heritage. The responsibility is decentralised, though, and based on the activity of the individual museum. We also lack an authorised national guideline or a body that could take a stand in, for example, ethical issues. On the other hand, a new museum law is to enter into force in 2020 and the collections are referred to in very much the same manner as in the corresponding law in Sweden leaving plenty of space for individual museums to organise collections management and development. Deaccession as a tool of collections management is mentioned in the museum policy programme published by the Ministry of Education and Culture that extends to 2030. The programme emphasises museum collections as a resource for communities and the whole of society. [http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/160600/OKM\\_11\\_2018.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y](http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/160600/OKM_11_2018.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y)

Museums face multiple expectations from society and the sustainability of public finances puts pressure on publicly owned museums. The critical questions of decision-makers and shareholders need to be answered, and museums must be able to present good coherent arguments for the value of material cultural heritage in order to safeguard our collections. The collections management policy of an individual museum is a good tool, but legislation or another kind of guideline of a public authority gives an even stronger basis.

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# ***“Let’s be late!” and “Have a gas!” in the Industrial Gas Museum of Athens***

*Despina Andriopoulou*

The Industrial Gas Museum (IGM) of Athens opened its doors to the public in 2013. The main aim of the museum is the promotion and protection of the old Athenian Gasworks plant, an industrial heritage monument that supplied energy and lighting in the Athens metropolitan area for almost 130 years, from 1862 to 1984. A visit to the Industrial Gas Museum includes a museum path with 13 stops in 6 buildings which comprise the old gasworks. The museum path tour helps the visitor to follow the gas production line, observe the mechanical equipment and the old machinery, learn about the role of the managers and workers of the factory, find out about the working conditions, and become familiar with terms such as industrial heritage and archaeology. The IGM holds a rich collection of photographs and archival as well as audiovisual material, including short films and oral testimonies of gasworkers and residents of the area. The museum’s collection is further enriched with objects from the factory, such as gas lamps, gas meters, gas appliances, as well as interactive applications. Apart from its research and scientific direction (archival research, documentation, scientific publications etc.), the museum organizes cultural actions that aim at the engagement and involvement of the broader public and local communities. Museums nowadays seek to incorporate unexpected leisure activities in order to engage a wider audience as users of their venues. Following these trends, this year the Industrial Gas Museum of Athens has launched two new projects aiming to offer a different interpretative approach to its collection to its visitors: the theatrical tour for English speakers “Have a gas!” and a series of three “Let’s be late” events.



**"Have a gas!" theatrical tour**

## **“Have a gas!”**

Through an original theatrical tour led by a professional actor, the old Athenian Gasworks comes into life. A unique historical site of industrial heritage becomes a living museum where the buildings, the streets, the machinery and their surroundings turn into a natural setting of this unexpected walking tour, enriched with a theatrical performance! The visitors are experiencing, through active participation and role-playing games, the working conditions of the factory since 1857, when the factory opened its doors, until its closure in 1984. While the museum’s buildings turn into theatrical scenery and the museum’s collections become an inspiration, we are going to “Have a gas!”



“Let's be late” late night event for adults.

### “Let's be late!”

During 2019 the IGM has organized three late night events for adults. Each one of these events had a different theme. The first event took place on 1 March under the title “Let's be late!”, the second event took place on 17 May under the theme “Lost in space!”, and finally the third event that took place on 1 November carried the title “Horror after Dark”. In order to become established in the public consciousness, the events took place regularly - more than once per year. In each “Let's be late” event the visitors were able to attend workshops, performances, role-playing games, projections, etc. related to the theme of each “Let's be late.” At the end of the night all the “Let's be late” events ended up with a DJ installation from a well-known DJ, in the Old Retorts House, the most visited building of the museum. The activities offered were designed by the museum team but also by carefully selected collaborators (e.g. British Council, Delta - Vocational Training Institute, Horror Film Festival and National Observatory of Athens) who share similar goals and inspirations with the museum's team. The IGM is now seeking new collaborations for the next “Let's be late” events scheduled for 2020.

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## *Visitors' Generic Learning Outcomes of Museum*

### *A Case Study of SOKA Culture Interactive Education Corner*

*Da-Yuan Hung*

#### **Abstract**

Since 2003, the Soka Culture centers of the Soka Gakkai International Association (SGI) has been curating with “Searching for the Roots of Culture—Constructing the Centennial History of Taiwanese Arts” as its main curatorial theme. It is presented as a solo exhibition of artists to promote education and community art. From 2003, it has now entered its 17th year. SGI is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) group. It is a humanist group dedicated to promoting cultural, educational and peaceful activities. The cultural centers all around Taiwan, including Yunlin County, Tainan City, Kaohsiung City, and other 9 arts and cultural centers, exhibiting outstanding artists' works in Taiwan's art history for a century.

The Soka Culture centers have organized a series of exhibitions. Using multimedia materials, the curators of these exhibitions explored the topic “Searching for the Roots of Culture – Constructing the Centennial History of Taiwanese Arts”. Till now, the exhibition has included works of more than 120 Taiwanese artists. As time goes on, museums would therefore deal with a number of collections. For the growth of the museum collections and documentation, it has been important to use assessment indicators in the form of Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs), propose new ways to expand the art of contact, and establish methods to assess the influence of the learning experience, and then achieve the purpose of evaluating the design exhibition corner. The Generic Learning Outcomes are underpinned by a broad definition of learning which identifies benefits that people gain from interacting with arts and cultural organizations.



Visitor research undertaken by Soka Culture explores the audience experiences of the Soka Culture Education Interactive Corner. In order to do this, the research operates with the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) theory in order to explore the audience participation, motivation, and performance, as well as characteristic learning outcomes of different audiences.

The researcher has chosen one of the solo exhibitions: "Pursuing His Dream-The Works of H. N. Han", held at the Zishan Art Center as the research case of the Interactive Education Corner. The study aims to get to know the audience of Soka Culture, and attempts to evaluate the level of interactive education in the exhibition by promoting the educational activity. The aims of the research were to understand and evaluate visitor's learning outcomes after seeing the exhibition.

**Keywords: Visitor Studies, Soka Culture, Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs), Interactive Education Corner**

## Research Method

In order to achieve the results, the researchers used mainly the Questionnaire Survey method: the researchers conducted the research through Questionnaire and Participant Observation and supplemented it by literature on educational interaction, visitors research and display in museum, using to use the Zhishan Art Center as the research field, and using the researcher to adapt the self-made "Zhishan Art Center Exhibition Questionnaire" as a research tool for investigating audiences who have visited the exhibition and participated in the interactive education corner. The key areas addressed by the questionnaire were:

1. **Knowledge and Understanding**
2. **Skills**
3. **Attitudes and Values**
4. **Enjoyment, Inspiration and Creativity**
5. **Activity, Behaviour and Progression**

## Research Findings

During the exhibition, 200 valid questionnaires were collected, and the effective questionnaire rate was 96%. The study sample data were analyzed by statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, independent sample t-test, and one-way analysis of variance to explore the relationship between the research variables. The findings of this study that the 'typical' visitor group was:

- (1) Women, (2) 51-60 years old, (3) vocational students, (4) educational background university / college, (5) the place of northern residence, (6) traffic time of 31-40 minutes.

According to the study, it was found that the cause of the conflict between the "51-60 years old" and the "professional students" was that the occupational "housekeeping" category was not added to the questionnaire design. After participating in the observation, it was found that most of the audience was made up of housewives who are 51-60 years old. Occupational category studies will be considered in the future.

In addition, other characteristics of the audience were analyzed, including the number of visits made by a visitor, whether they were Soka Gakkai members, the source of exhibition information, exhibition motivation, preferred leisure activities, and promotional education activities. The corresponding findings were that: (1) the number of visits is four or more, (2) the audience was typically Soka Gakkai members, (3) the audience learns that the exhibition center of the Arts and Culture Center will use the "Soka Culture Promotion Channel to publicize", (4) the motivation for the majority of visitors was an interest in arts and cultural centers (5) the preferred leisure activity of the majority of the audience is attending musical events (6) the audience's preference for the promotional activities planned by the Supreme Art and Culture Center is exhibitions. These findings relating to current visitors can be used in Soka Culture's strategy to promote education with the main audience at present and understand or target the audience to be developed.

## Conclusion

According to the above research findings, there are following suggestions for curatorial and planning units: (1) Promoting the "enhancement skills" of the Interactive Education Corner planning (2) Implementing the exhibition audience research to make the target audience more precise (3) pay attention to sample pickup limit (4) Targeting the interactive education corner execute learning and guidance of the personnel.

"Enhancement skills" including: intellectual skills, progression skills, emotional skills, communication skills, and physical skill.



**THE GENERIC LEARNING OUTCOMES** (Dana Allen-Greil, 2018, <https://twitter.com/danamuses/status/1062856848636731393>)

Intellectual skills – reading, thinking critically and analytically, making judgements...

Progression skills – towards further learning, registering as a library user, developing new skills – is the result of a purposeful action which leads to change.

Emotional skills – recognizing the feelings of others, managing (intense) feelings, channeling energy into productive outcomes...

Communication skills – writing, speaking, listening...

Physical skills – running, dancing, manipulation, making...

Ikeda Daisaku is a Buddhist philosopher, peacebuilder, educator, author and poet. He is the third president of the Soka Gakkai and the founding president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI). He once said: “The art must be returned to the people, and the concept of new museum science emphasizes putting people in the center.” The museum is paying more attention to the needs of the audience. In the future, when organizing documentation-based educational activities, we can identify accurate target groups in time and maintain this relevant work with pertinent internal departments. Therefore, it is extremely important to establish the audience research as a core task of the museum’s work. In the future, it will be the era of professional talents and paying more attention to caring for related talents in museums. The perfecting of the audience research and collecting more information, is expected to identify the main audience.

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# ***Museum as Hub of Creativity: A Study of Open Innovation in Digital Image Licensing of National Museum of History in Taiwan***

*Ya-Hsuan Wang*

Museum professionals have been aware of the fundamental changes in the museum’s social roles over the past few decades, and are committed to creating different dialogues, embracing issues such as social inclusion, and facing different challenges in practical operations. In response to the topic of the conference “Traditions, Collections, Management Systems and Digital Tools,” we reflect on how the museum can make collections accessible and interesting for the public. In this context, we introduce digital image licensing in the Taiwanese cultural environment, and then explore how the museum applies the digital image licensing system for co-creation based on open innovation



**The former building of NHM was the second pavilion venue of the Taiwan Industrial Mutual-Progress Fair in 1916**  
(Public Domain)



**The discussion wall of NMH x JUST IN XX licensing project**

Photo: Wang, Ya-Hsuan

theory from the field of business management. We are using a dual-brand cooperation between the National Museum of History (NMH) and a young Taiwanese fashion brand “JUST IN XX” as our core example.

### Step into the Past of Today

Interestingly, back in 1916 under a period of Japanese rule, the NMH was “The Second Pavilion Venue” of the Taiwan Industrial Mutual-Progress Fair and continued to serve as a merchandise gallery after that. After over a century, the National Museum of History still maintains a close connection with creativity in the contemporary era. In the 1990s, the Taiwanese government invested in the development of a digital archive, with such programs as “Taiwan e-Learning and Digital Archives Program” and “National Repository of Cultural Heritage.” Therefore, Taiwanese museums have experienced a rapidly-expanding era of digitalization. These National Programs allow

museums to accumulate a large number of high-quality digital images for their collections.

Throughout the process of digitalization, many museums have assumed the role of copyright owners for some national collections of digital images under the copyright law in Taiwan. Therefore, in addition to the social responsibility of “protector” for collections, museums now also play the potential role of “licensor.” The way museums define this emerging role and systematically manage a huge number of digital assets has become an important, widespread issue in the digital collection era.

### The Next Road of Digital Archive in Taiwan

Regarding the background of digital licensing of museum images in Taiwan, we focus on two important areas of development, the national digital archive, and the development between the cultural and creative industries. In the 1990s the Taiwanese government invested in the development of a digital



**Invitation Card of 2018SS NYFW “Meet Sanyu: Co-Branding of NMH x JUST IN XX”**  
Photo: JUST IN XX





### Brainstorming meeting of NMH and JUST IN XX

Photo: Wang, Ya-Hsuan

archive, allowing museums to accumulate a large number of digital images for their collections. In 2011, they enacted the Cultural and Creative Industry Development Law, wherein cultural institutions would provide digital images for others to use via licensing, one of the important objectives being to promote the development of the cultural and creative industries.

This connection between creativity and collections establishes an important new direction after the initial digital collection era, and gradually transforms museums from their former service of academic licensing to becoming vibrant innovators of cultural assets. This also brought on a change in organizational structure for some museums. The Taiwanese museum community began to expand and set up specialized divisions for creative and marketing licensing matters. In 2012, the NMH established their “Creativity and Marketing Division” in response to the trend of cultural policy, and specialized in commercial licensing and cultural creativity-related businesses.

### Beginning of Licensing Alliance

In 2017, the National Museum of History held a special exhibition titled “Parisian Nostalgia: The National Museum of History’s Sanyu Collection” for the 50th anniversary of the death of Sanyu. The designer of JUST IN XX, Justin Chou, was invited by the Creativity and Marketing Division to come and view the exhibition and see Sanyu’s work. After viewing the exhibit, JUST IN XX was deeply inspired by the impact of seeing the pieces in real life and also

by Sanyu’s creative encounters in life. After more than half a year of discussion and planning between the two sides, the dual-brand licensing project of NMH and JUST IN XX was started.

Prior to this co-operation project, JUST IN XX was a young fashion brand from Taiwan. This brand has collaborated with the NMH on a Ministry of Culture program, where the two sides enjoyed a good relationship of trust. The NMH and JUST IN XX formed a cross-disciplinary creative team, including art, fashion, music and other fields. The museum licensed 14 classic pieces by Sanyu to the fashion brand, and entered the official 2018 S/S New York Fashion Week as a co-branding project in the form of the “Meet Sanyu” fashion show, where the brand showcased a total of 3 series comprising 37 pieces.



### Showpieces of Meet Sanyu

Photo: JUST IN XX



### Runway of Meet Sanyu/

Photo: JUST IN XX

### Opening Boundary for Innovation

This big successful project led to a new model for image licensing in Taiwan. We have found that the National Museum of History has surpassed the single linear licensing co-operation mode, boldly exploring

and developing the licensing strategy of the museum's image archives, authorizing strategic alliance with a well-thought-out legal contract, giving the two parties rights and obligations and giving the museum a position and role to enter the chain of co-creation.

This study uses the "Open Innovation" theory to interpret the image licensing system of the NMH, wherein the museum consciously allows professional cross-boundary knowledge flow to enter each other's application scope and collaborates to create new knowledge generation. These innovations may attract more domain contributors to enter the image licensing system, making the public aware of the special value and influence of digital image collections, while maintaining the vibrancy and appeal of the museum.

### **New Ventures, New Partners and New Licensing Possibilities**

Above all, we can also see the openness of boundaries in the model; "open" means that through the museum's idea scouts and idea connector talent pools, knowledge flow is enabled inside and outside the organization, and is not limited to its boundaries. Boundaries are like a permeable cell membrane, no longer a closed barrier. We share knowledge internally and externally and promote the creation of new things, breaking through the shackles of "not invented here (NIH)".

In general, NMH re-defines the boundaries of competition and cooperation, and the museum also has asserted four major values in Taiwan: protecting rights, generating income, making co-creation, and reaching out to the public. We aspire to create an inclusive model that benefits all participants, and enables these innovations to face the complexity of the 21st century and enhance public interest.

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**"Intangible Heritage: A challenge for management and collection policy"  
Conference participants.**

## ***Conference: "Intangible Heritage: A challenge for management and collection policy," Zagreb, Croatia, 17-20 October 2019***

***Alexandra Bounia***

An international conference on intangible heritage and museums took place on 17-20 October in Zagreb, Croatia. The conference was an initiative of ICOM SEE and the Ethnographic Museum of Croatia and was organized in partnership with the Regional Alliance of ICOM for South-East Europe National Committees of ICOM Croatia and ICOM Slovenia, as well as the International Committees of ICOM INTERCOM and COMCOL. The MIMARA Museum hosted the event, which was financially supported by a Special Project Grant by ICOM, the Croatian Ministry of Culture and the City of Zagreb.

The conference aimed to shed light on an aspect of the relationship between intangible heritage and museums that has received little attention so far. The main discussion was concerned with the

challenges which the process of collecting intangible heritage poses for museums' collection policies and management. The conference was structured around five themes, each discussed in a separate panel. The conference opened with introductory greetings by the host museum director, a representative of the city of Zagreb and the Vice-Minister of Culture. The opening panel was dedicated to the question of 'how an international day of intangible heritage can be initiated'. The keynote speaker at this panel was Tvrtko Zebec, from the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore, Director of the International Folklore Festival and member of the National Committee of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) at the Ministry of Culture in Croatia. The panelists included Darko Babic, chair of ICOM Croatia, Alenka Cernelic Kroselj, Vice-chair of ICOM Slovenia, Goranka Horjan, board member of ICOM SEE and director of the Ethnographic Museum of Zagreb, Slavko Spasic, board member of ICOM INTERCOM, and Alexandra Bounia, secretary of the board of ICOM COMCOL. Tanja Rozenbergar, director of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum and vice-chair of ICOM SEE coordinated the discussion. The participants presented in brief different aspects of intangible heritage – from football to majlis (an Arabic word meaning reception room where intangible traditions pass from one generation to the other) – in different parts of the world – from Slovenia and Croatia to Qatar – in order to argue that there is a deep relationship between museums and ICH. It became clear, however, that these links bear various challenges and that museums need to reconsider their policies and strategies of collecting and presenting ICH in order to deepen this relationship and make it more inclusive. The discussion highlighted the need to coordinate the effort to establish an international day of ICH, which will provide an opportunity for all institutions to focus and promote that aspect of their work.

The challenges of collecting and documenting intangible heritage were also the focus of the first theme of the conference. The keynote speaker, Alexandra Bounia, provided an overview, and the panelists gave specific examples of the challenges they face in their institutions in different countries of South East Europe: Iris Biskupic Basic from the Ethnographic Museum of Zagreb presented the challenges the museums faces in order to collect 'disappearing heritage' and offered examples from the museum's toys collection. Goran Sanjev, director of the Archaeological Museum of the Republic of Northern

Macedonia focused on the efforts made by his country to collect and promote ICH. Nirha Efendic from the Ethnology Department of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina provided the example of the *sevdalinka* songs and the challenge musical heritage poses for museums and their collections. Lebib Dzeko, from the same institution, provided some more examples of traditions that need to be recorded and safeguarded in the country. An interesting and thought-provoking discussion of the examples presented by the speakers and the general challenges was led by the moderator, Alam Leka, chair of ICOM Bosnia and Herzegovina. More specifically, the discussion focused around the role of communities, tradition-bearers and practitioners in the safeguarding of traditions; the financial implications for museums that want to be active by collecting in this field; as well as the relationships institutions need to cultivate with communities and among themselves.

The second panel of the conference focused on ICH and communities. The keynote speech was given by Inhye Lee, curator of the Folk Research Division of the National Folk Museum of Korea. Dr. Lee, coming from a country and an institution that has a long tradition in the study and promotion of ICH, presented the example of the Jeju Haenyeo community and their maritime culture. Further examples of the relationship of communities with ICH and the importance this relationship has, were given by the panelists: Matija Donjik from the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, who has been collaborating with the National Folk Museum of Korea, gave a very interesting presentation of what other museums can learn from the endeavours to safeguard the culture of Jeju Haenyeo and elaborated on the points made by the keynote speaker. Yannis Markakis from the Ethnographic Museum Lychnostatis in Crete, Greece, gave an example of the close relationship of local communities with different aspects of ICH on the island. Lidija Nokocevic from the Ethnographic Museum of Istria presented an example of the collaboration of the museum with the local communities in order to safeguard what they consider important for them, but also emphasized the changes that ICH goes through constantly as a result of the development of communities. Finally, Adela Puki from the Slovene Ethnographic Museum presented the benefits the institution acquires by collecting and researching ICH. The discussion was moderated by Tanja Kockovic Zaborski from the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb.



The third panel put the emphasis on the discussion of the challenges decolonization and restitution of cultural heritage pose for institutions and their collections. The keynote address was given by Boris Wastaiu, the director of the Ethnographic Museum of Geneva. He argued that ethnographic museums have changed considerably because of decolonization and that maybe ethnographic museums should change even more and become city museums instead. The panelists provided examples from other countries as well: Cyril Isnart from MUCEM in Marseilles, France, provided another example of a postcolonial museum, which aims to address its history and rethink its collections, developing a collaborative approach to both collecting and interpreting these collections. From a slightly different perspective, Rut Carek, chief secretary of the Croatian Commission for UNESCO, presented the multinational nominations for the ICH UNESCO list, as another form of collaboration and, in effect, decolonization. The panel also included a presentation by Kate Sikic Cubric and Mirela Bilic, from the Museum of Wooden Shipbuilding in Betina, Croatia, who discussed the future challenges for their museum and the intangible heritage aspects which are at its core. The debate was particularly lively during this panel, since its topic went to the heart of the future for museums and ICH and the presentations encouraged many questions.

The fourth theme focused on sustainability and ICH. The keynote presentation was given by Mirela Hrovatin from the Ministry of Culture in Croatia; she focused on a very important aspect, i.e. the financial sustainability of ICH projects and how they can get financial support. Issues of sustainability were also discussed by the panelists Svetla Dimitrova from the Regional Ethnographic Open Air Museum ETAR in Gabrovo, Bulgaria, Virgil Stefan Nitulescu from the National Museum of Romanian Peasant, Romania, and Katarina Sekirnik who represented the Craftmanship Consortium in Slovenia. The moderator for this panel was Ralf Ceplak Mencin, the chair of ICOM ICME.

The fifth and final panel focused on issues of education and attempted to answer questions about how we can ensure the transfer of knowledge and skills to younger generations. The keynote speech was given by Ralf Ceplak Mencin and the panelists presented examples from different museums: Mirjam Gnezda Bogataj from the Idrika Municipal Museum in Slovenia focused on how skills of bobbin lacemaking are transferred to younger people in Slovenia; Jelena



**Conference participants in Brezice Castle Museum, Slovenia**

Dukanovic from the Niksic Museum in Montenegro discussed an educational programme on dyeing wool with herbal dyes; Mirela Milicevic Secic from the Federal Ministry of Culture and Sports in Bosnia and Herzegovina presented the educational programme "Should I stay or should I go?" and, finally, Maja Zebcevic Matic from the City Museum in Pozega presented the programme "Museum in the pot."

On the last day of the conference, the participants travelled to Slovenia and visited Trbovlje: the power plant and the coal mining colonies in the city. They also had the opportunity to participate in an open discussion around possible ways to promote ICH in the region and to combine it with touristic development. In the afternoon, a visit to the magnificent Brezice Castle Museum and its underground cellars provided the perfect end to a highly inspiring conference.

The hospitality of the organisers and all the museums visited was incredible. This was a very well organized conference, rich in ideas and experiences, that really achieved something that only a few conferences achieve: to create a network of professionals with similar interests and enthusiasm for ICH and museums, who will continue their communication and organize more events in the future.

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# Short report Taiwan 2019 – with pictures

15-24 October

In October last year our new Chair, Danielle Kuijten, was invited by the Chinese Museum Association Taiwan for a 7- day visit to Taiwan. During this trip she delivered a keynote address in Kaohsiung during the *2019 International Conference on Contemporary Challenges for Museums* and in Taipei she gave a presentation and Q&A at the National Taiwan Museum.

The organizers of the conference in Kaohsiung were the National Science and Technology Museum; Graduate Institute of Conservation of Cultural Relics and Museology, Tainan National University of the Arts; National Cheng Kung University Museum; Department of Theater Arts, National Sun Yat-sen University; and Chinese Association of Museums Taiwan.

The purpose of “**2019 International Conference on Contemporary Challenges for Museums**” is to provide a platform for international, interdisciplinary exchange to explore the challenges faced by museums in the twenty-first century. During the conference a wide range of museum projects and research from the Taiwanese museum field were presented. Their topics varied from inclusive practices, accessibility and social cohesion programs to new digital tools and meant to increase engagement in museums.

From Kaohsiung Danielle Kuijten traveled to Taipei for a speech and round table talk at the National Taiwan Museum. Here she talked as she had done in Kaohsiung about the challenges of museums to face their own histories and update not only their collections but also the way they handle those collections; how they represent them and how they collect.

During the seven day program she visited the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, National 228 Memorial Museum, MOCA Taipei, the National Central Library, National Palace Museum, the ShungYe Museum of Formosan Aborigines and Ama





Museum, giving her a broad sense of what these museums and cultural institutions are working on.

A very big thank you to the Chinese Museum Association Taiwan for this opportunity to meet so many enthusiastic and inspiring museum professionals as well as professors and students from museum programs at various universities and to share the spirit of COMCOL with them.





## EDITORIAL

# 象牙、犀牛角 來博物館 欣賞就好！

本館舉世聞名的象牙及犀牛角收藏，總是讓觀眾讚歎不已。在欣賞這些古代藝術品精湛技術及藝術成就的同時，也請別再漠視野生動物保育及環境保護觀念。

長久以來人們對象牙及犀牛角製品的大量需求，已經造成生態失衡及動物滅絕的危險，世界各國無不盡力遏止。2013年12月20日，聯合國通過每年3月3日是世界野生動物日，呼籲世人要愛護瀕臨滅絕的野生動物植物；拯救大象及犀牛更是刻不容緩，也是做為地球一份子責無旁貸的任務。因此，請您欣賞博物館內美麗的牙角藝術品後，不要購買象牙及犀牛角製品。讓我們的孩子與孫子可以與大象和犀牛一起共享美好的世界！

## Ivory Collections Only Belong in Museums

The world-famous collection of ivory and rhinoceros horn treasures in the National Palace Museum have always interested visitors. While we celebrate the beauty and craftsmanship of these works, we should remember not to ignore the related wildlife conservation and environmental stewardship issues.

The high demand for ivory and rhinoceros horn products is causing serious environmental damage, and is threatening to cause the extinction of these majestic creatures. On December 20, 2013, the United Nations declared every March 3rd as World Wildlife Day, while calling on people around the world to protect endangered wildlife. To save the elephants and rhinos from extinction everyone must do their part. As beautiful as these craftworks are, we urge you to never buy ivory and rhino horn products. Let's ensure that our children and grandchildren will get to enjoy a world with elephants and rhinos!



**COMCOL** – Committee for Collecting – is the International Committee of ICOM dedicated to deepening discussions and sharing knowledge of the practice, theory and ethics of collecting and collection development. COMCOL Newsletter provides a forum for developing the work of COMCOL and we welcome contributions from museum professionals, scholars and students all over the world: short essays on projects, reflections, conference/seminar reports, specific questions, notices about useful reading material, invitations to cooperate, introductions to new research or other matters. Views and opinions published in the newsletter are the views of the contributors. Contributions for the next issue are welcomed by 15 March 2020. Please contact the editors if you wish to discuss a theme or topic for publication.

COMCOL Newsletter is available at

COMCOL's website

<http://network.icom.museum/comcol/>

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